

C H I M A E R A

Newsletter of the Nottingham and Derby Groups of CHE

MARCH 1978

CONTACTS

NOTTINGHAM

Richard	(Convenor)	Nottingham	74870
David	(Treasurer)	"	216447
Tony	(Social Organiser)	"	49137
Howard	(Political Activities)	"	625266
Bob	(Switchboard Co-ordinator)		

The publishable address of Nottingham CHE is

C/o Nottingham Council for Voluntary Service, (CVS)
31a Mansfield Road, Nottingham from where the
Gay switchboard operates every Monday & Thursday
from 7 - 10pm. The telephone number is :-

NOTTINGHAM 46881

DERBY

Chris (Convenor) 14 Farningham Close, Spondon, Derby

Tel: Derby 64234

Philip 29 Severn Street, Alvaston, Derby. Tel: Berby 752260

Derby Gay Information Service operates every Friday
from 8 - 11pm. The telephone number is:-

DERBY 752260

NOTTINGHAM GROUP AND C.V.S.

We are continuing to hold our Thursday meetings at CVS (See programme page 2) but we are finding that the switchboard is becoming difficult to operate because of crowding in that room. We would much prefer to see you in the other room which we shall be using for informal discussions, meetings, etc.

In order not to strain CVS's hospitality and to achieve a more efficient operation of the switchboard service we would prefer to keep this to Thursdays and would ask those of you who are not coming along in connection with the switchboard and/or befriending activities to try and make it on a Thursday rather than a Monday.

PROGRAMME FOR THE NOTTINGHAM GROUP.

- MARCH Thursday 2nd BARRY WARD local solicitor meets the group at cvs 8pm
- Week end 4/5th CHE NATIONAL COUNCIL at Croydon. Details from Richard
- Thursday 9th BUSINESS MEETING at CVS 8pm
- Saturday 11th VISIT TO THE PAVILION CLUB, SHARDLOW. Contact Bob or Richard for details.
- Sunday 12th GEORGE MELLY CONCERT at the Theatre Royal.
- Tuesday 14th SOCIAL EVENING at The Newmarket, Lower Parliament Street from 8pm then Shades.
- Thursday 16th DISCUSSION GROUP at CVS 8pm
- Friday 17th REVD MICHAEL HALL meets the group at CVS 8pm
- Tuesday 21st PLAY READING at Richard's, 13 Balmoral Road 8pm
- Wednesday 22nd DISCO at The Hearty Good Fellow 8-11pm
25p CHE members 40p others
- Tuesday 28th HINGE & BRACKET CONCERT at the Theatre Royal. Party being organised - details from John. Please book as soon as possible.
- Thursday 30th DISCUSSION at CVS 8pm
- APRIL Tuesday 4th GROUP DINNER at The Vernon Arms, Forest Road/Waverly St. Meet there at 8pm. The aprox cost is £3 (Including wine)
- Friday 7th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING at CVS 7.30pm
- Tuesday 11th SOCIAL EVENING at The Newmarket followed by Shades. From 8pm.
- Thursday 13th BUSINESS MEETING at CVS 8pm
- Thursday 20th PROGRAMME DISCUSSION at CVS 8pm
- Friday 21st QUIZ at Mike's, 19 Thomas Close, St. Annes.
- Tuesday 25th ??? EVENING at John's, 17 Balmoral Road from 8pm. Buffet provided for 25p per head donation to Group funds. Bring a bottle.
- Thursday 27th (MARY WHITEHOUSE speaks on "The Media" at Stanford Hall, near East Leake 11.15am Adm. by ticket only - from Richard
- Wednesday 26th+ DISCO at the Hearty Good Fellow 8-11pm

Nottingham Group Programme (Cont)

MAY Tuesday 2nd TEN PIN BOWLING at 8.30pm. Meet in the
Dog & Partridge at 7.30pm.

 Thursday 4th DISCUSSION at CVS 8pm

 Tuesday 9th SOCIAL EVENING at the Newmarket followed
by Shades from 8pm

 Thursday 11th BUSINESS MEETING at CVS 8pm

++ March/April Discos. to be confirmed. Check details with the
switchboard. IGNORE - Now confirmed as detailed in programme.

During May there will be a visit to Grantham and Howard will be
gambling.

MAN TO MAN

The following is an extract from a circular recently sent to
customers of Man to Man publishers:

"Dear and valued customer,

Please bear with us and read this letter carefully - in our
own interest.....

Customers who subscribe to our periodical MAN TO MAN QUORUM
will know it was the amalgamation of QUORUM & MAN TO MAN. They
were combined when Roger Baker, editor of QUORUM left us (he is
now editor of MEN ONLY) & we were not happy with the content of
MAN TO MAN so we invited John Barrington to edit the combined
magazine. Another editorial crisis arose when Mr Barrington de-
cided to publish his own mag. which seemed to compete with MMQ.

So we were back to square 1. To find an editor at short
notice was impossible so we looked at current gay periodicals
and decided MISTER was the nearest to QUORUM and most likely to
be enjoyed by MMQ readers. We therefore came to an arrangement
whereby we now co-publish MISTER which has been re-named
MISTER QUORUM. The first issue to be published under this title
is No 9 now available from stock.

MISTER QUORUM will continue to be published every 5 weeks,
price £1.50

MAN TO MAN will continue in its own right as a picture/
information magazine to give fully illustrated details

The details of how to amend one's subscription from one mag to
the other or even perhaps the other, or to opt for both at special
rates defy interpretation, but occupy some 21 lines of very
small print followed by some 14 lines on how to fill in form
A or form B (dependent on one's option) to enable one to get
it, the other or both; or form C for a new publication or even
form D to go onto their mailing list.

Concluding comment from a member: "Thank God for Briddocks"

D E R B Y

DERBY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ON MARCH 17th AT 8.00pm PROMPT.
AT CHRIS', 14 FARNINGHAM CLOSE, SPONDON. PHONE DERBY 64234

Due to severe lack of support at past meetings the only Derby meeting for this newsletter is:

The AGM on Friday 17th March at 8.00pm prompt

At this meeting nominations are invited for the posts of Convenor and Treasurer as Chris and Charles are both resigning. So if anyone has any interest in the continuation of Derby C.H.E. would they please make an effort to attend.

Please note:

Visit to The Pavilion, Shardlow on Saturday 11th March in the Nottingham programme. We hope Derby members as well as Nottingham will come along and make this a together evening.

Derby members are also welcome at all meetings in Nottingham.

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NOTTINGHAM GROUP NOTES

Winds of change have been blowing in the group recently with particular reference to the withdrawal of the group from CVS as a social centre (which it really could never be and constitutionally should not be) but using it for a base for the more serious activities, i.e. Switchboard, discussions, Business Meetings, befriending, etc., whilst removing social events on a more regular basis to other venues. The most relevant of which are monthly discos (for the time being at The Hearty Good Fellow) and social evenings at The Newmarket and then Shades in addition to the various 'outing' and evenings in members' homes - some of which have been so successful that they are being repeated in the current programme.

In fact a glance at the programme reveals an excellent choice of varied events, some of which should appeal to all members, so I hope each will be well supported by you and your friends thus proving that we, as CHE, can offer some alternative to the comparatively boring and in some cases oppressive 'commercial scene' in Nottingham. In fact, from these tenuous beginnings could grow our own Gay Community Centre and many other things, which I am sure that all dedicated CHE members would really like to see happen.

May I particularly draw your attention to the visit of the Rev Michael Hall to the group on 17th March? Some of you may not know that this gentleman has several times on his weekly Radio Trent 'God Slot' dished out some extremely misguided criticism of gays which has resulted in us protesting to Trent and taking the matter up with the C of E hierarchy.

Other events of importance during the last 2 months, and the forthcoming important AGM are reported upon below.

John.

VISIT OF KENNETH CLARKE MP (Tory - Rushcliffe)

Kenneth Clarke arrived promptly expecting to address a formal meeting and seemed a little relieved when it turned out to be an exchange of views and ideas with 7 members of the group. He was very pro-Wolfenden and thought it's implementation should be extended to Scotland, N.Ireland, the armed forces and merchant marine. He was, however, totally opposed to any reduction in the 21 age limit although he felt that equality was desirable in all other fields except employment of teachers and social workers. Our discussion with him gave him, I think, food for thought in this field. He was tremendously sympathetic to our ongoing problems with the Evening Post ads and said he felt that our switchboard service was worthy and essential and he could not understand Pole-Carew's attitude. He suggested we tried to 'plug' on local radio as much as possible and if we experienced any difficulty with this he would try to help. In spite of the fact he had a further party meeting to attend on that evening he stayed with us until 9.30pm.

John.

NOTTINGHAM GROUP DISCO

I am delighted to report utter astonishment at the outcome of our first disco. First time round we anticipated a homely evening and probably a financial loss. We never dreamt that we'd

see 60 people happily enjoying themselves upstairs at the HGF, amongst them, I'm glad to say, enough women to make it a definitely 'mixed' event. What with the landlord talking about extensions and the final accolade from Wilf, organiser of Preston's famous CHE discos who simply said "you're made"; we are still a bit bemused. Thanks to everybody who supported us but most of all to someone who would probably apply an editorial red pencil if I named him. Come early to the next ones (see programme) or you may find them full.

Richard.

WEST BRIDGFORD HOUSEWIVE'S REGISTER

On 7th Feb. a group of 7 from Nottm & Derby met about 20 of the West Bridgford Housewife's Register. The meeting took a while to get going possibly because they didn't know quite what to expect. We began by talking about CHE's basic aims and impressing upon them the very large number of people who are gay. We also talked about the anti-gay movements led by Anita Bryant and Mary Whitehouse. One or two had preconceived ideas which they said were due to TV stereotypes but the ice was broken by now and they realised how inaccurate such stereotypes were. A lively discussion followed when some of us said we preferred a gay pub or club than a het one and a point was made by one of the housewives that we couldn't achieve full acceptance by society if we cut ourselves off this way. This led to a discussion of difficulties of isolated gays. We then went on to the problems of discrimination at work, loss of friends by coming out and the problems of married gays. The pleasant evening was rounded off by coffee and informal chats in smaller groups.

Dave.

GAYS CONVERGE ON LONDON FOR GAY NEWS APPEAL DEMO.

On Sat 11th Feb over 4000 gays in defence of Gay News and their sympathisers descended upon London to announce to the world that we are sick & fed up of being harrassed and oppressed. Although the rally was called to draw attention to the Gay News blasphemy appeal it had wider implications of drawing attention to the plight of homosexuals in today's 'free society'. A few of us from Nottingham went by mini bus (with thanks to the Peoples Centre for help with this). After only 2 breakdowns we arrived in London to join the march at Oxford Circus. The mad, screaming figure dashing across the road was me having spotted the NALGAY banner and leaving the Nottingham contingent for a while. After footslogging and croaky voices from chanting Trafalgar Square loomed ahead. There were a number of speakers putting forward good cases for law reform and repeal of the blasphemy laws. Tom Robinson got us into good singing spirits. After the rally a few hundred went to Smiths bookstall at Charing Cross to protest at the W.H. Smith ban on Gay News. It was effective even if it did become a little rough. The local cafe was full of gays!. We then trekked back to where we were to meet the bus and after a frustrating hour's wait it arrived & our friends had had trouble getting petrol. All in all quite an eventful day.

Howard.

POLITICAL

Since the last A.G.M. we have spoken with M.P.'s, tried to obtain a policy from the County Council, tried to speak to local Liberals, spoken to the Fabian Society, taken an active part in our anti-Fascist Committee, marched in protest against the Leicester Mercury's virulent Editorial against gays, and played a full part in the National Gay News Defence Committee.

Political activities are an essential part of our work - the C in CHE - and I urge all those who can contribute to the political campaign in the coming year to do so. Progress and reform are only achieved by consistent hard work and perseverance. The more who play a part, the easier the load. Much Gay Love and a 'happy new year',

Howard.

Howard, after dashing round the country for a year, often representing us where we would otherwise have gone unrepresented, feels that it is time someone else had a go. He has shown how valuable a political co-ordinator can be and how important it is that the work should be continued.

R.J.W.

BEFRIENDING

Andrew writes: Start with an old cliché - we all need friends. Friends, or rather the lack of them is still one of the basic problems faced by gay people. With this thought in mind, several of us over the past few weeks have disappeared into the further reaches of C.V.S. to discuss the possibility of setting up a befriending group. In these seemingly clandestine meetings what have we talked about? A difficult question to answer, not because I can't remember but because after discussing papers on 'criteria' and 'moral standpoints' we seemed to reach few definite conclusions. One substantial thing is that we have decided to remain as flexible as possible and if anybody feels they have something to contribute, do get in touch with one of us.

Richard writes: I don't think we ever shall reach definite conclusions but what we have started to do is to raise our own awareness of ourselves so that, as ordinary gay men and women, we are better able to help lonely, isolated, often frightened people to find themselves. We know from our experience in CHE that it isn't easy: sometimes we have helped newcomers win through, sometimes they have gone away. It is because of those 'gone aways' (and all the others who have never come in through the door) that we started talking, not just about ourselves but about how we could help to fill the gap in the network of befriending groups which exists in the East Midlands. We have talked of it before. This time we hope we are going to do it. So far our 'how' discussions have been limited to a few but we need the help of everyone with help to offer.

Editor's note : See the article "Kenyon's Komment" in Gay News issue 136 for further reading about "Friend".

NOTTINGHAM A.G.M. AND WHY YOU SHOULD BOTHER TO ATTEND

Two years ago Nottingham and Derby C.T.E. decided we might work better as two groups than as a group trying to do things in two places. One result was that we found we no longer needed a Committee and, during the year, could take decisions together as we went along. If we ever fell out amongst ourselves we still had a constitution we could resurrect.

In these two years we've got through quite a lot of work: we've campaigned, we've helped people and I hope we've all had quite a bit of fun. I'm sure we are feeling healthier than we were two years ago, not least because people have become involved. They haven't left everything to 'officers' - who are not a remote elite but who are there to be relied on when they are needed; to help us get some things done together and to carry out those chores without which the group would start to fall apart. We haven't been too fussy about how many we ought to have or what they should be called. But we need them.

At the moment we have someone looking after money and keeping the membership together; someone keeping in touch with national C.H.E. (without which we'd be just a little group of people on our own); someone making sure the switchboard functions smoothly ... When at last year's A.G.M. we transformed a member into a Political Activities Officer we started to rise high in the league table of C.H.E. groups which have worked on politicians. He didn't achieve that on his own but his enthusiasm got us to do it with him.

Getting ourselves together for the coming year is what the A.G.M. is all about. In an informal group like ours that's especially important. Even if you can't stand 'formal' meetings, even if you are sure you have nothing to contribute, you ought to come along just to keep an eye on things, to encourage people to go on volunteering for old tasks and new tasks, if you want the group to carry on effectively - even if wild Whitehouses wouldn't make you stick your neck out for a job. Otherwise we might all fade quietly away.

A word about the convenorship. I don't think anyone sees me as a conjuror who's been pulling rabbits out of hats. It is simply that for two years one person has been doing certain jobs in certain ways. Now I feel both the group and I will benefit from a change. If there are things for which you think my voice is needed I'll do them if I can. But the convenorship is not something remote and weird and we could organise its work in several ways. A spokesperson, a meeting starter, a liaison with national C.H.E., a writer of letters..., these are jobs that have to be covered - but whether by one person or two or more is up to you.

I see the A.G.M. as important, not just because it is our annual opportunity to sort out the help we can each give one another, but because it gives us a chance to look at where we are going and to renew ourselves. I wish we were a larger group but for our size we have become a remarkably effective one. Now we are developing new social aspects which I hope we'll all want to make successful. Soon I hope we shall be providing, with the women's group, a nucleus for a befriending network which has been talked about so long. And I hope the A.G.M. this year will demonstrate our determination to remain effective and to enjoy ourselves while we're about it.

AN A.G.M. AGENDA

Maybe an Agenda is a bit of a bureaucracy we could do without but it isn't very democratic for the Convenor (sic) to be reading items off a private scrap of paper, so here are some things we ought perhaps to report on or discuss:-

1. Minutes. None from last year but annual minutes are not a bad idea and I'd like someone to take them please.
2. State of our finances.
3. Advertising (linked with finance)
4. Work of the group - organisation in the coming year.
5. Work of the group - people in the coming year.
6. The joint Newsletter.
7. The Switchboard.
8. The proposed befriending group.
9. Whatever else you may want to bring up.

Richard.

I.B.A. CODE OF ADVERTISING STANDARDS & PRACTICE

The following are extracts from the IBA Code of Advertising Standards and Practice which I thought amusing. I hope you do too:-

"The true size and scale of the product must be made easy to judge preferably by showing it in relation to some common object."

"Advertisements shall not encourage persistent eating of sweet, sticky substances at bedtime"

"Advertisements for products or services specifically concerned with the following are not acceptable:-

..... (f) products for the treatment of haemorrhoids"

"No advertisement shall make exaggerated claims"

"No advertisement shall encourage excess"

"Advertisements must neither claim nor suggest that any drink can contribute towards sexual success"

John.

P R I Z E C R O S S W O R D

FOR NOTTINGHAM MEMBERS ONLY: Inserted in this issue is a crossword puzzle compiled by Tony for which he is generously contributing a substantial prize of a book or record token for the first correct solution drawn at the AGM on April 7th.

To qualify please return your completed entry (showing name, address and choice of prize) to Tony Barker, Flat 4, 19a Pelham Crescent, The Park, Nottingham before April 1st.

The following is a list of novels available from Gay News Mail Order which are stocked by Nottinghamshire County Library:-

<u>Author</u>	<u>Title</u>
ANDREWS Terry	The Story of Harold
BURFORD Lola	Edward, Edward
BURROUGHS William	The Wild Boys
CAMPBELL Michael	Lord Dismiss Us
CLAVELL James	King Rat
DUGGAN Alfred	Family Favourites
GENET Jean	Querelle of Brest
	Journal of a thief
	Our Lady of the Flowers
	Funeral Rites
HERBERT James	The Fog
	The Rats
HOBSON Laura	Consenting Adults
HORNER Lance	Child of the Sun
(ONSTOTT Kyle)	
ISHERWOOD Christopher	Mr Norris Changed Trains
	Down there on a Visit
MURDOCH Iris	The Bell
NAVARRE Yves	Sweet Tooth
RECHY John	City of Night
STOREY David	Radclyffe

William Burroughs' WILD BOYS is on reserve stock and has to be requested at the counter (though it was actually on the shelves a little while ago. John Rechy's CITY OF NIGHT is catalogued but is "thought to have been lost".

The card index system is behind the small enquiry desk at the rear of the ground floor. It is now for "staff use only" but tell the librarian that you have a list of 60 books to look up and you might be allowed to use it yourself!

Chris.

The central and branch libraries stock many more books with gay themes e.g. Simon Raven's "Alms for Oblivion" series, several by Robin Maugham, Gore Vidal, James Baldwin etc. etc. Perhaps Chris might be able to catalogue some of these for inclusion in a further newsletter.

Ed.

TEACHER FIGHTS NOTTS C. C.

Members will probably have read of the case of the schoolteacher dismissed last year by the County Council after conviction for a minor sexual offence, whose appeal against the Council was recently upheld by an Industrial Tribunal. You may like to know that his case was fought for him by his union, that they are still fighting the Council's refusal to accept the verdict and that he was supported by his school. We hope the County Council branch of NALGO will pass a resolution supporting him as well. And we would like to congratulate him on his bravery in what amounts to "coming out" in the most difficult of situations.

Richard.

MARY READ A LITTLE POEM

Mary read a little poem, it's theme all of you-know.
"It's not allowed, it's blasphemous. It's off to law we go!"

The prosecution Mary took became a cause celebre.
The legal wranglings still go on until this very Feb. (sorry)

Mary's counsel at Old Bailey achieved a wondrous thing:
He got the judge and jury to declare the ode a sin.

"You wicked man," the wise judge said to Denis Lemon, Ed.
Of Gay News, the paper where the wicked ode was read.

"You've done a very naughty thing - to Society you'll pay
Five hundred pounds and go to jail for 9 months from this day."

And Gay News for its folly too paid four-fifths of the cost
And fined a thousand pounds as well. It seemed that all was lost.

"A victory for common sense," our Mary did proclaim.
Whilst telly men and journalists and all the gays said "Shame!"

Poor Denis and his paper said "We must go on and fight."
We'll shout and roar and cause a stink. We'll prove that we are
right."

Then all the gays throughout the land rallied to the cause;
And lots of other people too began to make a noise.

So on a cold mid-winters day Five thousand marched to Town
With banners high and voices raised ("As gays, don't put us down!"
(Did Smithy's bookshop down.

Then three wise judges of appeal considered all the case
And umm'd and Aah'd and tutted too and said with stony face:

"We've heard the facts from Mary's side and G.N's point of view -
There's legal snags we all agree. We don't know what to do."

Four days of arbitration but no verdict could they reach.

"Judgement reserved," is what they said, "'cos this case is a
peach!"

So readers, dear, you'll have to wait to find out the result -
But rest assured, you will find out: In Gay News (on the front).

John (with sincere apologies to anyone who is
idiotic enough to read the above trash but
especially to the authors of the Rupert books)

P.S. If Boston group reprint this, as they have implied, they'll
obviously print ANYTHING.