



Newsletter of the Nottingham C.H.E. Group. No. X + 4

April 1979.

NATIONAL COUNCIL AT ST ALBANS, 10th March 1979

After the initial welcome by the South Herts group, the Council got under way and was one which is distinguished, in my mind at least, by the fact that it was on schedule all the way, and even finished slightly ahead of time.

Two new groups were up for recognition, Feltham and Coventry. There was no problem over the former, but since no representative from Coventry was present (out of a membership of 25) their recognition was deferred.

Robert Palmer then gave his report on what had been happening since December and what would (hopefully) be happening in the future - and it certainly was a lot. More goes on in small ways than one gives National Office credit for. The Tyneside tape/slide kit had been launched with gratifyingly conspicuous publicity and between 150 and 200 had been sold so far. Membership has grown by 30% over the year and - encouraging - the % renewing membership is also up. Annual Conference made a loss but there are several fundraising events planned, although mainly in the London area; efforts are being made to encourage younger gays and to improve their position. (The National Association of Youth Clubs Conference has supported 16 as the age of consent and asked to help us!) Efforts are still being made on the Law reform front and also on external communications via the media. The detailed list of what's been done covers one and a half closely typed foolscap sides - if anyone wants to read it I can let them.

The Treasurer's report followed - need one say that we're in the red, to the tune of £800, occasioned by the Coventry Conference and the move of National Office. Income from donations is down, offsetting increased income from subscriptions. All groups are strongly urged to go out to gay pubs and clubs and unashamedly ask for money (from the patrons one assumes.)

A report for plans for the 1979 Conference followed. It is being held in Brighton from August 24th to 27th. Bookings have been made of the Dome, the Pavilion Theatre and the Corn Exchange. Accommodation for over 700 people is being planned. A comprehensive programme of discos, concerts, theatre, films, and excursions is being laid on. Motions for debate must be submitted by April 30th: these will then be circulated to all members so that they can indicate their priorities for what they want to see discussed at Conference. Possibly the Conference may be given a theme, such as Coming Out or Being Gay at Work, to enable more delegates to take an active part. It was stressed that people should book early and a booking form will be mailed out shortly. There is an error on it though: the £3.00 deposit is non-returnable, contrary to what it says on the form.

Then came a report from the Discrimination Commission. The most important thing here is a request form for people to report cases of discrimination of which they have personal experience - don't worry, it's confidential. The importance of monitoring the media for examples of discrimination was also stressed. Hopefully the result of these two activities will be the compilation of a report which can be produced as evidence on our behalf whenever necessary.

The Information Commission reported back on a factsheet they had prepared on W.H. Smith and their attitude towards Gay News. The intention behind this is for it to be distributed to the public on pickets to persuade people to write to WHS and complain - it even gives a sample letter to make things easier. There was some implied criticism of the Commission that this was the only result of six months' work, but apparently other factsheets are in the pipeline on GAA, the churches, paedophilia, Scotland and the National Abortion Campaign.

After lunch, the Women's Commission reported and as might have been expected there was quite a bit of discussion on this. We have an official aim of a 50-50 balance in membership to achieve before CHE becomes truly representative of gay people's interests. Apparently the national average women's membership is 9.7% - 5.75% in London, 10.5% in the provinces. It was argued that sexist attitudes within CHE

(and within women too, some felt) would have to be eradicated before any successful recruitment of women could happen; that few women are sufficiently politically motivated to want to join CHE; and that we consciously try too hard to attract women.

Discussion of Gay Pride Week followed. As it will be the biggest gay event in Europe ever, it is imperative that CHE is fully involved. An office and two workers have been provided to organise it, and this year there would be a Carnival on Hyde Park rather than a march. A great deal of effort is being put into its promotion via badges and stickers, the media, gay pubs and clubs, etc.. All groups are urged to participate at a local as well as national level and to try and organise support for the Carnival on June 30th.

When the executive was open to questions, a great deal of concern was shown over local groups, which tied in neatly with the next item on the agenda, a discussion on running local groups in which Iain MacArthur of Colchester detailed the way in which his group is organised. Melanie Goodman emphasised the need for keeping her informed about local group activities.

A resolution was passed recommending the EC to affiliate CHE to the Frank Kelly Defence Fund and to provide whatever financial assistance is considered appropriate. It was noted that the December National Council would be held in Manchester, and the Spring 1980 one probably in Kingston-upon-Thames. A member of NIGRA urged groups to write to MP's to support a Northern Ireland Order in Council relating to gay rights that would be coming up before the House in the next three weeks or so. The EC was asked to report to members its findings on the question of a General Secretary before the next National Council. As I said at the beginning, the session finished just ahead of time.

Mike.

G.A.N. GIG AND DISCO On Tuesday 6th March, 315 people packed into "Shades" to hear local rock band Slip Hazzard and the Blizzards, and the Under Eights, from Bradford. The event was the first of its kind to be organised by Nottingham Gays Against Nazis, who were staggered by its success. Non-gays outnumbered gays by about two to one, but no-one seemed to mind, and a good time was had by all. The resident Shades DJ brought some new rock singles with him to supplement the disco between and after the bands.

The bands got a good reception from those present, some of whom had travelled from Leicester, Leeds and Bradford for the occasion. They played from a raised stage with the 'Nottingham Gays Against Nazis' banner hanging behind them. Also displayed across one wall was an enlarged message of 200 words sent by Tom Robinson especially for the event.

Nottingham GAN are being coy about the profit they made, but it runs well into three figures and will give the group a substantial fund to keep its activities going for quite a while. Organisations such as the local CHE group, which had agreed to underwrite part of the expenses in the event of a loss, will not now be asked to pay out any money. The Nottingham Rock Against Racism group, whose help and advice proved invaluable to GAN in organising the gig, had also agreed to underwrite part of the expenses, as had Nottingham Anti-Nazi League. Indeed, the latter will be one of the beneficiaries of the event, as GAN decided at the early planning stage that part of any profits should go to the ANL. A cheque for about £35 will be handed over to them publicly, possibly at the national RAR Roadshow which comes to Nottingham on April 6th, at which Slip Hazzard are the major local support group.

Nottingham GAN would like to thank all those who helped them in organising the event and everyone who came along. We hope to organise something even bigger and better later in the year.

Chris.

From "Professor Branestawm's Dictionary" (by Norman Hunter)

Abundance	A waltz for cakes
Aldershot	A tree killed in action
Already	Completely crimson

NOTTINGHAM GROUP PROGRAMME - April and Early MayApril

- Tues 3rd Gay Switchboard A.G.M. at 120 Mansfield Road. A joint meeting with the Friend group to elect Switchboard Co-ordinator etc.. All CHE members invited, especially as afterwards we hope to show the Tyneside Tape/Slide Kit.
- Wed 4th "In the Best Interests of the Children" - filmshow by the Nottingham Lesbian Group and women members of Friend, also at 120 Mansfield Road. Admission 50p. See last month's newsletter for full details.
- Thurs 5th Business Meeting at CVS, 8.00pm.
- Wed 11th Coffee Evening at Tony's (Flat 19a Pelham Crescent, The Park). There will be a prize for the best Easter Bonnet.
- Wed 18th Coffee and Quiz at Mike's (19 Thomas Close, St Ann's). Bring along sharpened wits and pencils, because there might be another prize going.
- Thurs 19th Programme Meeting at CVS, 8.00pm.
- Wed 25th Disco at the Hearty Good Fellow, upstairs lounge, 8.00-11pm.

May

- Tues 1st Dinner with the Friend group at the Vernon Arms. Names and money to John by 19th April at the latest please. NOTE CHANGE OF DEADLINE.
- Fri 11th to Sun 13th As mentioned in last month's "Chimaera", we have received an invitation to visit the Wimbledon Area Gay Society over this weekend. Just what is in store for those who go we do not know, but there will be a party on the Friday night, a Garden Party on Saturday afternoon and possibly a picnic on Sunday, though the last two will obviously depend upon clement weather. I gather that there will be opportunities to tour around the area if you want to do that instead.
- If you are interested in participating in this, then let John know by the programme meeting on the 19th April, indicating whether you are part of a couple willing to share a double bed (they want to know that, it's not just John's curiosity) and how you intend getting down there so that you can be met in becoming style.

The Gay Switchboard number to ring about any of the above events is 46881 on a Monday or Thursday between 7.00 and 10.00pm.

GAY PRIDE WEEK 1979 Gay Pride Week '79 will be the biggest celebration of Gay Pride ever seen in Europe. A broad programme of social, cultural and political events, all over the country, will culminate in a national Carnival in Hyde Park, London, on Saturday 30th June.

To bring together all the events the theme of Stonewall '79 has been chosen: to represent the stonewall of discrimination and oppression we are still faced with, and, by taking the events at the Stonewall Bar in New York in 1969 as a pointer, to mark ten years of the emergence of a strong public demand for their rights by lesbian and gay communities all over the world.

Perhaps the most important phrase from the above, which is taken from a leaflet put out by the Gay Pride Week Committee, is "all over the country". This year Gay Pride Week is not to be just a London event and gay groups everywhere are being urged to participate. In Nottingham the CHE group should be linking efforts with those of Friend, GAN, Gaysoc, Quest, the Nottingham Lesbian group and the Nottingham Women's Group. All members of the group should join in CHE's part if the group is to justify the high esteem in which it is held nationally.

More from PROFESSOR BRANESTAWM

Bandeau	Forbidden French water
Buoyant	Male insect
Caerphilly	How to cross a road in Wales
Copper Nitrate	What policemen get paid for working evening overtime

REPORT OF BUSINESS MEETING, 15th March 1979

1. As nothing had yet been done about collecting boxes in Shades and the Hearty Good Fellow, it was decided to hold this over until the A.G.M..
2. It was not possible to take any action over the listing of National Office's phone number in the Nottingham directory, as such a listing had to be requested by them.
3. It was noted that members of the group had spoken to Ashby-de-la-Zouch Housewife's Register, but there was no-one to report back on it present.
4. Chris reported that the group's expenditure was still slightly in excess of its income. He asked that in his absence at C.V.S. on a Monday or Thursday some effort should be made to collect any donations towards coffee and the rooms. It was agreed to forward the sum of £25 to the National Appeal Fund. The fact that we had not received our requested grant of £250 from the students' Karnival was noted. In accordance with National policy the sum of £5 was voted to the funds of National Friend, although at least one member present felt that Nottingham C.H.E. gave adequate support to friend already.
5. It was noted that Gay Sweatshop would be in Nottingham to perform "The Dear Love of Comrades" at the Midland Group Gallery on March 23/24. This news had unfortunately arrived too late to publicise widely through the group, but the Gallery had agreed to notify us of any future events they had with a gay significance.
6. John read out a letter from Trent Polytechnic Students' Union (received rather belatedly as it has been addressed to the People's Centre) inviting our participation in a Talk-Shop. He had replied indicating our interest.
7. He also read a letter from Professor Smith, a law lecturer at the University and a member of the Criminal Law Revision Commission Committee. Professor Smith seems to be quite willing to talk to the group and has promised to write again and arrange something.
8. Further to the meeting of the Gay Pride Week Committee arranged for Thursday 22nd March, members from CHE, Gaysoc, Friend and Gays Against Nazis had so far indicated their intention of attending. It was agreed to ask the Nottingham Lesbian Group and the Nottingham Women's Group to participate as well; also that the AGM should allocate a specific sum of money to be spent on Gay Pride week activities, £25 being recommended by the meeting; and that the CHE representatives should be able to suggest activities for consideration by the committee. A stall in the Victoria or Broadmarsh Centre, coverage by the local media, some kind of open air event, balloons and an attempt to involve Shades were all possible suggestions.
9. It was agreed that an official letter of thanks should be sent to the Colchester CHE group for their hospitality between 2nd and 4th March. Mike to write this.
10. It was agreed to recommend to the AGM that an attempt be made to obtain a Gay Community Worker under the S.T.E.P. scheme, to work with and draw together the efforts of the various local gay groups, and possibly establish a Gay Centre in Nottingham. The group had already been asked by the Pavilion Club to join with them in looking for premises in Nottingham to which the Club could transfer. John and Chris to undertake this.
11. It was noted that the CVS Executive Committee had decided to charge the group £1 per week for use of rooms at CVS from January 1st.
12. It was noted that 30th April 1979 was the closing date for receipt of motions for the Annual Conference in Brighton, and was decided to raise this at the first Business Meeting after the AGM.

ANSWER TO LAST MONTH'S LOW-KEY PUZZLE

Officially it's a fire extinguisher, but there may be other equally correct ones.

Still more from PROFESSOR BRANESTAWM

Dozen	Opposite of does
Enchant	Chicken song
Fungi	Comedian

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Richard takes me to task in the March newsletter for alleging that CHE and Friend have opposing philosophies and suggests too that I have forgotten how difficult it has been for many of us to accept our gayness. I have not forgotten. It is less than two years ago since I accepted that I am gay (I celebrate my second anniversary on April 4th). Maybe I would have come out years ago if I had known that there was a CHE group in Nottingham, and had found the courage to meet some of its members - but I didn't. It was only after a brief encounter with an openly gay man who happened to be counselling gays in another city that I began a nine-month process that led to my coming out, first to myself and four days later to the first of my closest (straight) friends. Only then did I join CHE by responding to a National CHE advert in "Gay News". I had had no idea that CHE existed in this city, even though I had lived here for seven years.

I wonder how many other gays have lived, and continue to live, in the closet totally, without realising that there is anyone to help them come out of it. And they will stay there unless CHE and Friend are more open and show that there are human faces behind the anonymous advertisements that are our almost only public face. And that means coming out. As long as we remain in the closet we cannot expect our demands for acceptance of our sexuality to be taken seriously.

It is because I am resentful of gays who have come out to themselves long ago but still refuse to show themselves publicly that I am critical of Friend, whose object seems to be to make the closet more comfortable by drawing into it those who were previously in individual closets of their own.

It is because CHE (in theory at least, if not always in practice) goes beyond the worthy aim of "healing the wounds society has inflicted" to changing society itself that I suggested that Friend and CHE have opposing philosophies. The one organisation finds its reason to exist in treating the symptoms - the other seeks to cure the disease.

Chris.

WOMEN'S COMMISSION NEWSLETTER The first newsletter from the CHE Women's Commission is available at CVS. It contains news and information of importance and relevance to all CHE members - especially the chauvinists!

COMING OUT ON B.B.C. Starting in April, BBC Television are making a documentary about coming out.

They intend to follow the life of one or two people in detail. Ideally they would like to film somebody who is in the process of coming out to either family, friends or work; but failing that, they are prepared to interview those people if the person has come out already. It is very important that any CHE member who feels able to take part contacts Robert Palmer through national office - P.O.Box 427, Manchester M60 2EL, tel. 061-228-1985.

* * * * *

David recently gave me the following howler from a 3rd Form English Exam paper:.

"Mother and father went to Kent to watch the whores racing."

Having taught for two years myself I managed to build up a collection of these which I noted down. Alas, I have mislaid the list, but two do stick in my memory:

"In California, farmers often rape each piece of fruit individually."

(a distinct double-entendre as far as we're concerned!)

"In African huts there is rough mating on the floor."

Which in turn reminds me of the story about the interior decorator and his wife who always ended their lovemaking by rolling out of bed onto the floor because they preferred a matt finish.

And the last words go to PROFESSOR BRANESTAWM

- | | |
|---------|----------------------------------|
| Furlong | Coat of a Persian cat |
| Gable | Jolly male cow |
| Khaki | A thing for starting a motor car |

GAY SWITCHBOARD ACCOUNT

Advertising:-		CHE Discos	119 . 56
Kirk group	43.20	Donations received	23 . 75
Guardian group	48.00	Sponsored slim	20 . 80
CHAD	72.36	Underwritten ads	24 . 96
Long Eaton group	19.00	Discount Scheme	2 . 95
S.Notts group	26.28	Collection	2 . 30
Nott'm News	<u>12.00</u>		
	220 . 84		
Info. Calendars	11 . 10		
CVS Rooms	34 . 00		194 . 32
50% NAGS Affiliation	2 . 00		
Conference Attendances	7 . 39	Excess of Expenditure	
Post & Miscellaneous	<u>1 . 89</u>	over Income	<u>82 . 90</u>
	£277 . 22		£277 . 22

REVENUE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR

Donations made	70 . 15	Subscriptions (nett)	54 . 25
Post/Phone/Stationery	52 . 07	Coffee & collections	75 . 62
Affiliations (CVS & ANL)	8 . 00	Donations received	26 . 85
Coffee, Milk, Sugar	8 . 56	Gay News Profits	26 . 00
Rooms	5 . 00	Sale of Diaries	2 . 50
Speaker's expenses	8 . 85	NIGRA benefit disco	26 . 40
400 Club membership	12 . 00		
Miscellaneous	9 . 75		
Gay Switchboard (nett)	82 . 90		211 . 62
Adjustments:-		Excess of Expenditure	
GN advance payment	6.20	over Income	52 . 74
Error written off	<u>.88</u> 7 . 08		
	£264 . 36		£264 . 36

BALANCE SHEET as at 16th MARCH 1979

Balance b/f at 1.4.78	241 . 19	Cash at Co-op Bank:	
LESS excess of exp over		Deposit a/c	100 . 00
income	52 . 74	Current a/c	88 . 45
	<u>£188 . 45</u>		<u>£188 . 45</u>

AUDITOR'S STATEMENT: It has not been possible to carry out a complete audit for the period between April & October 1978 since the cash book entries are unsupported. However, I have examined the cash book carefully and after making the two adjustments shown in the revenue account statement I am satisfied that the accounts for this period should be aggregated with the accounts for the remainder of the year which are fully supported by vouchers, cheques and bank statements and which I have found to be in order.

(signed) R.J.Webster - Auditor.

Notes on the Switchboard A/c: 1) In 77/8 a Karnival Grant of £100 for the 78/9 costs was received; this effectively reduces the £82.90 loss into a £17.10 surplus. 2) This a/c represents the CHE proportion only - Full a/c including Friend proportion will be published at Switchboard AGM.