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NEWSLETTER FOR THE NOTTINGHAM CHE GROUP

JANUARY 1980

PROGRAMME

JANUARY

- THUR JAN 3RD BUSINESS MEETING at CVS at 8 pm.
- FRI JAN 4TH COFFEE AND QUIZ at Mike's, 19 Thomas Close, St. Ann's. Telephone 55196 in case of difficulty in finding the way.
- WED JAN 9TH PUB CRAWL, beginning at the Trip to Jerusalem Meet in the Upstairs Bar at 8 pm. The route will include the Salutation and Royal Children at least.
- TUES JAN 15th NOTTINGHAM GAY SWITCHBOARD QUARTERLY MEETING at CVS at 7.30 pm. All CHE members invited.
- THUR JAN 17th BUSINESS MEETING at CVS at 8 pm. This meeting will include consideration of the CHE Working Party report on Telephone contacts.
- MON JAN 21st MEETING WITH THE SAMARITANS. Meet in the Toll Bar at the bottom of Derby Road from 7 to 7.15. The meeting is to help the Samaritans to a greater appreciation of CHE, the need for it and the work it does, and could provide members with an opportunity for a bit of discreet coming out, during what often turns out to be an enjoyable type of evening.
- WED JAN 23rd GAY SWITCHBOARD DISCO at HEARTY GOOD FELLOW 8-11pm
- WED JAN 30th TEN PIN BOWLING. Meet in the Old Cricket Players pub on Barker Gate (just around the corner from the Bowling Alley and opposite the Ice Stadium) from 7.30 to 8pm. This time we do hope to be sure of getting a game.
- THUR JAN 31st BUSINESS MEETING at CVS at 8pm. At this meeting we shall be looking at the report by the Women's Commission of CHE and we hope that all our women members will be there to comment on it and to advise us on how best to implement it.

FEBRUARY

- WED FEB 6th WINE AND CHEESE EVENING at Tony's, Flat 4, 19a Pelham Crescent, the Park (Tel. 49137). Please bring a bottle complete with alcoholic contents of some description. We are told that the evening will contain some sort of a surprise, but no further details were forthcoming!
- THUR FEB 14th BUSINESS MEETING at CVS at 8pm followed by Valentine's Night trip to Shades.

PROGRAMME(Continued)

THUR FEB 21st PROGRAMME MEETING at CVS at 8pm. Let us know about that idea you had for the programme but dismissed as too silly, impracticable etc - it might just be the thing we're after.

FRI FEB 22nd PETER KATIN, a CHE Vice-President as well as being a well-known concert pianist, is performing at the Albert Hall. He is playing Mozart's 9th Piano Concerto and the English Siinfonia under Neville Dilkes will be providing the backing and playing works by Grieg, Stravinsky and Ibert when they're not. No-one has yet offered to organise people to go - this is just by way of information to anyone who's interested.

WED FEB 27th GAY SWITCHBOARD DISCO at the HEARTY GOOD FELLOW 8-11pm

THUR FEB 28th BUSINESS MEETING at CVS at 8pm.

ADVANCED DATES TO NOTE

CHE's March National Council has been brought forward to the 1st instead of the 22nd as planned, possibly still in Coventry, but possibly somewhere else - contact Switchboard for more up to date info nearer the time if you want to attend.

NOTTINGHAM CHE's AGM will take place at the CVS on Friday March 28th at 7.30pm. We hope that as many members as possible will attend and that a few more will be willing to help in keeping the group going than has been the case in the past. Make a note of the date and be there!

THE DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER WILL BE SATURDAY FEB 23RD

INFORMATION SHEET

At the end of this edition of the newsletter you will find a two-sided information sheet with up-to-date local and national information. While you can be sure that parts of the sheet will become outdated fairly soon, much of the information should remain valid for quite some time and you may wish to remove the sheet and keep it for reference.

LOST: A one-legged Parrot. May be identified by the stuffed pirate on its shoulder.

ATOMIC GRAFFITI

Heisenberg probably rules, OK!
Schrodinger rules the waves!

CHE NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING: MANCHESTER, 15TH DECEMBER

This National Council Meeting was slightly better attended than previous ones. Forty one groups were represented (only two short of a quorum to make its decisions binding on the Executive Committee) by delegates and there were about an equal number of non-voting visitors.

The great event of the day was expected to be the debate on the resignation of three members of the Executive Committee Terry Munyard, Richard McCance and our own cuddly Chris Beer (and Roy Burns, who tendered his resignation during the afternoon) A number of motions were put to the meeting, with a excessively long and boring debate on a no-confidence-in-the-EC motion. This was eventually defeated by the surprisingly heavy margin of 34 votes to 7. (After consultation with John and Mike there was a 2:1 majority for supporting the motion and I duly cast the Nottingham group's vote in favour of the no-confidence motion).

The victors in the debate wasted no time in rubbing salt in the wounds of the vanquished by forcing a vote of confidence in the Chairperson, Robert Palmer. This was passed by 27 votes to 12 abstentions - of which I was one.

Some good did come out of the debate. A long motion was passed which calls an Extraordinary Conference in March of next year to consider setting up a Special Commission to investigate the organisation of the gay community in the UK and the future of CHE.

Is this the end of CHE as we know it? It may well be. The preamble to the motion reads "This National Council, noting with grave concern the sense of a general lack of direction in CHE and the feeling that the organisation no longer meets the needs of the gay community" Other business conducted at the NC included consideration of the Treasurer's Report, which shows a much improved financial situation, but one which was achieved at the expense of cuts of Thatcher-like proportions. The commissions, for instance, have had their budgets reduced to the laughable amount of £5 per month!

A long discussion took place on the relatively minor matter of where next year's Conference should take place and the debate reached its peak with deliberations on such weighty matters as the state of the boilers at Huddersfield Town Hall.

CHE will soon have Regions, and we shall be joining Lincoln, Derby, Leicester and Boston to discuss how we can co-operate etc. More details are available from Mike who has proposals in more precise form. Whether the Regions will function before we are re-organised is another matter.

The Extraordinary Conference will replace the March NC and will be held in the Midlands. Host groups will be welcomed

Groups are asked to consider the report of the CHE Women's Commission, the CHE telephone contacts report and a proposal that the 25% rebate on membership subs. to local groups cease and all money go to National Office. These will probably be discussed at our next business meeting. Mike and I have copies of the relevant documents should anyone like to see them before then.

Finally, the NC passed unanimously an Emergency Motion in support of a gay student at Leeds who had applied for a place on a teaching course, was sent for a medical examination and was refused a medical report unless he agreed to see a psychiatrist on account of his gayness; the case is an appalling one and, to my mind, one of the most serious matters to be raised at the meeting. If this sets a precedent it would mean a severe setback for gay rights.

CAMPAIGNING REPORT

Y One of the results of the recent NC meeting was to dispense with the "rolling programme". This means that we shall not be involved in conducting an opinion poll in the streets of Nottingham - a fact that will be welcomed with a sigh of relief by more than one member of the group! On the other two issues in the last rolling programme we have made progress on both. We now have a date for our meeting with the Samaritans (see the January programme) Anyone who would like to go should let me know. This is a useful way of getting involved in the work of CHE and can be done without a great deal of worry or apprehension. Up to 10 of us will be going along.

Y The other item from the rolling programme with which we have successfully dealt is the application to take part in the elections to the Community Health Councils. I have recently received notice of the elections in the Spring of next year and we shall be taking part in them. Any member who would like to become a member of a CHC should let me know as soon as possible so that we can nominate you as a CHE member.

In January we shall be speaking to the Trades Council, which represents the trade unions of Nottingham. This could be a useful way into the union branches to speak there on gay rights at work and anyone who would like to take part in the Trades Council visit should let me know soon.

Our County Council campaign moves slowly. The National Union of Teachers has let us know that they have already taken up the discrimination exercised by the County against CHE in their bookings policy for the Teachers Centre. Meanwhile we have applied for another booking and been refused. I am still waiting for an explanation of the reasons for the refusal from the Director of Education. The next moves will be discussed at business meetings and if you are interested, please come along to the meeting and take part in the direction of this campaign.

Happy New Year,

Chris Richardson

My next door neighbour was given a vibrator for her Christmas present, but she complains that she has already had four fillings knocked out.

*+ Pet. Parties
+ Dier at Work
+ Leeds Union*

RAMBLING THOUGHTS ON LOVE, SEX AND FRIENDSHIP

One subject which still causes discussion among gays is that of promiscuity. Usually, the question is put bluntly: do you believe in one night stands/cottaging or not?

The answers place one in either the 'repressive' or the 'liberated' camp, with consequent disunity. This is a pity, because it is an important topic. I would like to know what other people in CHE think - and hope they will reply in the next issue of Chimaera.

A bit of personal history here: my sexual life up to 1977 had been one of pickups. This was because, having accepted my gayness (late in life) I wanted sex. The idea of a partner was not on my immediate horizon, though it might have been at the back of my mind. I did become infatuated with people - falling 'in love' - although this was never more than platonic. I was still seeking sex apart from a loving relationship.

And then this changed. For the first time in my life, I had a relationship with someone that was based on friendship and led on to sex. Although the relationship has ended as far as the sex part is concerned, it made quite an impression on me, to such an effect that a night spent with someone recently has been built up in my mind into something that might hold great expectations. What does one do now? Does one have a succession of one night stands to obliterate the memory, until someone turns up with whom one might start again? or does one wait patiently in hope, not cherishing any illusions?

After the joy of a relationship, even over a short period of time, I have no wish to return to one night stands/cottaging, for I see myself as being 'impotent' in anything other than a mutually loving one-to-one relationship.

Rictor Norton, who used to write frequently in Gay News, once said that to him 'friendship is more than love'. C.S. Lewis includes friendship as one of his 'Four Loves' calling it the 'least natural' ie. it is not as instinctive in man as eros (desire) or affection. While we may hold people in affection, we may not regard them as friends, ie. people at work. Friends are those people whose company we enjoy, whom we see frequently on a social basis, and whose life, thoughts, feelings we respect. Lewis deals with friendship after his chapter on affection and before those on eros and charity, thus highlighting the delicate position friendship occupies. And it can happen that friendship progresses to the third love, eros. Someone once told me that, as soon as he fell in love with a friend, the whole basis of the 'friendship' relationship was changed: he would from that point on regard the other as a lover, and should the love not survive, he could not regress to a simple relationship. I disagree.

The basis of a friendship between two people is a 'loving' relationship, involving concern for the other's welfare, responding to the other's needs and respect for the other as a separate person. The basis of love is exactly the same, with the additional activity of sexual desire and expression. If then, one attempts to take one's friendship on to the plane of eros and it is rejected, does this mean the end of the friendship? I believe not. For if one respects another, and acknowledges him as a beautiful, unique individual, then one has to respect his right to reject one on a sexual basis. And I see no reason why the whole friendship should be thrown into jeopardy. What do other people think?

SHORT STORY

Tonight's visit to the cinema has not helped. I'm still gripped by the melancholy which has pursued me these last few weeks. And when I'm in this mood, I can beat all the fictional gay characters at their games: I plug in the record player, put on a Garland or Ross LP, mix a bacardi and lime and sit in this armchair in a deep meditation on life - and especially on Alan.

I admire Alan: there's no doubt that, at 24, he has all the self assuredness that I'm still trying to acquire at 31. His small, rather dumpy figure, the curly black hair, those grey eyes - I can see him now as he used to appear opposite me at so many tables, where we drank so much coffee.

He was not always so self-assured. When I first met him, at a very pleasant party given by Douglas on his birthday, I got the impression that he was looking for someone: his eyes were forever darting about the room. When I challenged him about this later, he said "Well, I was rather embarrassed talking to someone much older!" And that was the one big disadvantage I could see to starting a relationship with Alan: the difference in our ages.

But Alan did admit that he had enjoyed our conversation that night. Over the next few months we would meet at lunchtimes in town for a meal or just a drink. It was not a long walk for him from the Polytechnic and I worked in the town centre. I remember snippets of our conversation:

"I think you're very nice," Alan said to me one day. I forget what commonplace thing I said then. As I walked back to work, I thought of all the things I should have said. We talked about being gay, relationships, love, life and feelings (that's a Basse LP!) - our talks covered everything.

Once, when he mentioned John, a friend of his to whom he had taken a fancy, I felt a slight pang of jealousy: as if this person I'd not met would take Alan away from our lunchtime dates.

What of evening dates? Oh, there were cinema visits, trips to the country when the weather was suitable, pub crawls (and Alan could certainly down the beers). I did invite him back once for coffee - but I was too nervous to ask him to stay. What we had was something higher than the merely sexual, I thought pretentiously.

And then in August our pattern of meetings changed. We saw each other less often and when I queried this, Alan told me that John was jealous; he also told me that they were going to live together from the middle of the month.

That was a bombshell. When I got home the tears started and the gloom descended. There I was, 31 years old, wetting more handkerchieves than a kid of 5 or 6!

Gradually the depression lifted, replaced by the melancholy I have now. This will disappear in due course. I know this for certain, because today I saw Alan and John together in town and invited them both for a drink. We talked for an hour or more, and I was late back for work. But after I left them, I was glad for them both. They looked suited to each other.

Perhaps tonight's gloom on my part has been caused by my choice of film: but I couldn't resist seeing 'Love Story' for the 5th time!

Anon.

CHIMAERA INFORMATION SHEET - JANUARY 1980

Nottingham C.H.E. Group

Convenor/Treasurer	Mike Raymond (tel. Nottingham 55196)
Membership Secretary	Tony Barker (tel. Nottingham 49137)
Campaign Officer	Chris Richardson
Gay Lobby Officer	David Hicks
Switchboard Co-ordinator	John Clarkson

The publishable address of Nottingham C.H.E. is:

Nottingham C.H.E., c/o Nottingham C.V.S., 31a Mansfield Road
Nottingham

Nottingham Gay Switchboard operates from the above address every MONDAY & THURSDAY from 7 to 10 pm, and the phone number to ring is Nottingham 46881

Derby C.H.E. Group

Convenor/Membership Secretary	Jeff, 14 Farningham Close, Spondon Tel. Derby (96) 64234
Treasurer	Maurice, 130 Brighton Road, Alvaston
Gay Information	Philip, tel. Derby (96) 752260, Friday evenings

Lincoln C.H.E. Group

Convenor John Ockenden, tel. Metheringham 20851

Meets second Tuesday each month at hall behind St. Mary-le-Wigford's Church (next to Central Station), 7.30-9.30 pm. Most other Tuesdays at the Horse and Groom, Carholme Road, upstairs in the clubroom. Entry is from car park via back bar - enquire over the bar if you cannot find them.

Also meetings every Wednesday at Convenor's house in Dunston, coffee from 7.30 pm, retiring to a pub at 10 pm. Phone Metheringham 20851 for details.

Women's group meets at the Horse and Groom 8 pm, first Friday each month.

Neighbouring Gay Switchboards

Bassetlaw	Befriending Group: tel. Worksop 86211, Mondays, 7.30-9.30 pm
Boston	Tel. Sleaford 304399 (Brian), Wednesdays, 8-10 pm
Derby	Tel. Derby (96) 752260, Fridays, 8-11 pm
Leicester	Gayline/Friend: tel. (0533) 826299, Mon.-Fri., 7.30-10.30 pm C.H.E.: tel. Nottingham 396507 (John)
Lincoln	Tel. Metheringham 20851, Wednesdays, 6-10 pm
Sheffield	Information: tel. 307142, Mon.-Fri., after 6 pm Counselling: tel. 27516, Fridays, 7.30-9.30 pm

Nottingham Organisations

Nottingham Gay Switchboard Lesbian Group	meets C.V.S., 31a Mansfield Road Mondays from 7.30 pm
Lesbian Link (Nottingham area)	Tel. 410652 Mon. and Wed.
Nottingham Friend	c/o C.V.S.; tel. 46881 Mon. and Thurs. 7-10 pm
Gays Against Nazis	c/o ANL, P.O.Box 1, Western PDO, Nottingham
Gaysoc (University)	Students Union, Portland Building
Gayline (University)	Mondays during term, 8-12 am, tel. 50421 (external)/3474(int.)
Quest (Catholic group)	Tel. Nottm. 49137 (Tony)
Samaritans	18, Clarendon St., tel. 40506
Marriage Guidance Council	84, Mansfield Rd., tel. 57836
Nottingham Counselling Centre	Tel. 46714, office hours

GAY NEWS outlets in Nottingham

Nottingham C.H.E. Group - profits go to group funds
Shades, Stanford Street
Brid docks, Parliament Street
Matthews, Mansfield Road
Frank's Kiosk, Broadmarsh Bus Station
Newspaper Kiosk, Theatre Royal Underpass

Gay venues

Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow, Maid Marian Way, Basement bar, 8pm, mainly men
CHE Discos held in upstairs lounge 4th Wed. of month, 8-11 pm
Foresters, behind Victoria Centre, mainly women
Dog and Partridge, Parliament Street, back bar, tends to be mixed
Shades Club, 8 Stanford Street, tel. 55736, closed Mondays
Bacchus Wine Bar, Bridgford Hotel, Mondays only, 6pm-2am, Tel. 868661

Derby Pavilion Club, 123 London Road, Shardlow, tel. 792581, Sat.-Sun., 8-11 pm.

Lincoln Horse & Groom, Carholme Road, mostly non-gay, but always welcoming
Falstaff, top of High Street, mixed

Leicester Dovef Castle, 34 Dover Street; disco, Wed., Fri.-Sun.
5 Star, 102 London Rd., Mon.-Sun., 8pm-2am., tel. 549622

Sheffield Cossack Hotel, Howard Street (near Station)
Salutation Inn (Club), Attercliffe Common, tel. 449550
Mon.-Sat. 10 pm. - 2 am.

National Organisations

Gay Switchboard 01-837-7324 (24 hour service - national coverage)
Lesbian Line 01-837-8602 (Mon, Fri 2-10 pm; Tues, Wed, Thur. 7-10 pm)
Friend (Counselling) 01-359-7371/2 (Nightly 7.30-10 pm)
Icebreakers (Counselling) 01-274-9590 (Nightly 7.30-9.30 pm)
C.H.E. 01-289-9335 (office hours); BM-CHE, LONDON WC1V 6XX
National Council for Civil Liberties 01-278-4575 (office hours); 186 King's Cross Rd., W.C.1.
Parent's Enquiry Rose Robertson, 16 Honley Road, Catford, London SE6 2HZ
Sappho 01-724-3636; The Basement, 20 Dorset Square, NW1 6QB
Gay News 01-381-2161; 1a Normand Gardens, Greyhound Road, W14 9SB
Labour Campaign for Gay Rights 01-993-0017; 1 Westbourne Avenue, London W3 6JL
Gay Conservatives 47a, Wilbury Crescent, Hove, Sussex
Gay Legal Advice 01-262-2892 (Nightly 7-12 pm)
National Abortion Campaign 01-278-0153; 347 Gray's Inn Road, WC1