



CHIMAERA

NEWSLETTER FOR THE NOTTINGHAM GROUP OF CHE

MAY/JUNE 1980

PROGRAMME

MAY

- SUN. 4th (DERBY GROUP) CAR RALLY - phone Jeff Blood on 664234 for details.
- THUR 8th BUSINESS MEETING at CVS at 8pm. This will include discussion of the Group's submission to CHE's Social Commission.
- Sat. 10th (LINCOLN GROUP) DISCO at the Horse & Groom, Carholme St., Lincoln. From 8pm. Phone John Ockenden on Metheringham 20851 for details.
- FRI. 9th to SUN. 11th GAY OUTDOOR WEEKEND camping in Edale. Phone Peter Lockwood at Sheffield 740307 for more details.
- WED. 14th Skating at Nottingham Ice Rink. Cost about 75p. Assemble in the Old Cricket Players Pub, Barker Gate between 7.30-8pm. This pub is to the right of the Ice Rink as you face it.
- TUES 20th PUB GAMES EVENING (Darts, dominoes, cards) in the Forest Tavern, top of Mansfield Road, from 8pm - the large room at the back. If anyone has any darts etc, it may be as well to bring them along.
- THUR 22nd BUSINESS MEETING at CVS at 8pm.
- FRI 23rd to MON 26th NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GAY SWITCHBOARDS CONFERENCE in NOTTINGHAM. Nottingham Gay Switchboard is host to this event. We have some offers of crashpad accommodation for the visiting delegates, but any further offers would be welcome. If you are prepared to let someone sleep on your sofa or floor and to provide them with some breakfast each morning, please let John Clarkson know. There is no obligation on you to do anything more.
- WED 28th SWITCHBOARD BENEFIT DISCO at HEARTY GOODFELLOW from 8.30pm
- FRI 30th JOHN HILEY, Convenor of the East Midlands Young Liberals, will be coming to talk to us at CVS 8pm. Please be prompt!

JUNE

- TUES 3rd COFFEE EVENING at Chris Cook's, Flat 4.11, Victoria Centre, Nottingham from 8.15pm.
- THUR 5th BUSINESS MEETING at CVS at 8pm.
- SAT 7th CHE NATIONAL COUNCIL in Southampton. All group members welcome to attend. Contact Mike if interested.
- THUR 12th PROGRAMME PLANNING MEETING at CVS at 8pm.
- FRI 13th TERRY DONOVAN of CHE's Discrimination Commission will be describing the work and findings of the Commission at CVS at 8pm. All those who think that gays are not oppressed just because they happen to be all right may learn a thing or two if they come along this evening. Please be prompt.

PROGRAMME (Continued)

- TUES 17th SWITCHBOARD GENERAL MEETING at CVS at 7.30pm. Part of the evening will be spent discussing a purely switchboard training programme that is being proposed. Plus the usual attractions.
- THUR 19th BUSINESS MEETING at CVS at 8pm.
- MON 23rd GAY PRIDE WEEK CHE DISCO at SHADES 10pm-2pm. Ring Switchboard nearer the time for details of admission, special attractions etc.
- WED 25th SWITCHBOARD BENEFIT DISCO, Hearty Good Fellow from 8.30pm.
- FRI 27th Lobbying JIM LESTER, Conservative MP for Beeston at CVS at 8pm prompt. Mr Lester seemed supportive when his majority was a mere 121. Will he have changed now that it's over 10,000?
- SAT 28th GAY PRIDE WEEK MARCH in LONDON. Again, there are no details as yet, but if enough people are interested we should be able to organise some transport to London which will make it cheap. There's no obligation to actually march, but we would hope that lots of you want to once we're down there. Let Mike, John or Chris know if you're interested in the trip.

JULY

- THUR 3rd BUSINESS MEETING at CVS at 8pm.
- SUN 6th AFTERNOON TEA and a QUIZ at Mike's, 19, Thomas Close, St Ann's, Nottingham. 3.30 pm for 4 pm. Earl Grey will be provided as will cucumber sandwiches, but help with sickly cakes etc would not be unappreciated.

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For those new to the group and/or to Nottingham, the letters CVS stand for Council for Voluntary Service. The address of the CVS is  
31a, Mansfield Road, Nottingham

and the phone number of the Gay Switchboard is Nottingham 46881, from 7-10 pm every Monday, Thursday and soon on Wednesdays too.

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THE NEWSLETTER - contents, production, presentation etc.

I am going to produce this newsletter, and hopefully future newsletters, by a different printing process than that which we have used previously. This should result in a slight improvement in overall appearance. More important, it will present opportunities for using more imaginative layouts and graphics. Can I ask you to be forthcoming in your contributions in addition to those which relate directly to what the Group has done and will be doing. It does help to brighten up our reading if people can send in a few articles, poems, quizzes, crosswords and cartoons (cut from newspapers or magazines - we are never troubled by copyright!) - the less serious the better. Give them to any Group Officer by the next DEADLINE, WHICH IS SATURDAY 21ST JUNE.

David Edgley.

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 NOTTINGHAM CHE GROUP - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
 

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This was held at Nottingham CVS on Friday March 28th 1980.

PRESENT: J. Clarkson, D. Hicks, D. Edgley, T. Barker, D. Corden, R. Tunnicliffe, C. Richardson, P. Lockwood, S. Smith, D. Turner (part), A. Furness (part), A. N. Other (Gary).

CHAIR: Mike Raymond.

Minutes of previous AGM 30/3/79 and EGM 30/8/79 were read and accepted.

Constitution: After discussion, it was proposed to amend section 8g to read 10 instead of 12 (prop. JC, voting 6-0-2)

It was unanimously agreed to defer acceptance of the Constitution until later in the meeting.

### Reports

1. Convenor: MR summarised group's activities and highlighted 3 major topics. (a) A need for ongoing and practical support for Nottingham Gay Switchboard. Switchboard had seemed to be the major source of new members. Group advertising had been unproductive. (b) A member of the Policy Advisory Committee to the Criminal Law Revision Commission had been met and a group submission had ensued. The quality of the submission elicited praise from the EC. (c) Recently the group had vigorously supported the Geoff Brighton case.
2. Treasurer MR (again) reported details of the group's accounts. Expenditure had been £422-33 and Income £420-33 - a net loss on the year of £2. The group's assets now stood at £186-45. It was noted that in spite of apparent extra activity over the year, the expenditure of the group showed a marked decrease over the previous year, which was applauded.
3. Gay Lobby DH reported that he had taken over Gay Lobby from 30 Aug. Since then all the area's MPs had been lobbied re Corrie Bill and the Group had supported and participated in Gays against Corrie. The General Election had produced 2 new MPs who had been lobbied:-  
 F. Haynes (L: Ashfield) was fully supportive. R. Alexander (C: Newark) was fairly supportive. The new Euro MP M. Gallagher: L, was fairly supportive. Further efforts had been made to meet J. Lester (C: Beeston) and a tentative date for June had been fixed. J. Concannon (L: Mansfield) had indicated he would only meet constituents at surgery. It was agreed to regard him as unsupportive. The state of MPs was:-

<u>Full Support</u>	<u>Partial Support</u>	<u>Partially Opposed</u>	<u>Totally Opposed</u>
Ashfield(L)	Beeston(C)	Bassetlaw (L)	Nottm.N.(L)
Bolsover(L)	Newark(C)	Carlton(C)	
Nottm.W.(L)	Nottm.E.(L)	Mansfield(L)	
	Rushcliffe(C)		

The Group's Lobbying had elicited praise from Nigel Warner of National Gay Lobby.

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 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (Continued)
 

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4. Campaign: CR reported that all campaign activities had been regularly published in Chimaera, but highlighted the main topics that had been undertaken. These were:-
- a) Aversion therapy at Mapperley Hospital.
  - b) Local Samaritans (fruitful meeting).
  - c) National Union of School Students.
  - d) Local constituency political parties: there had been a poor response. Notts Young Libs and Nuthall Young Cons had resulted in meetings arranged but out of 31 letters only another 4 replies had been received.
  - e) Discrimination at work: we had spoken to Notts Trade Council and were endeavouring to meet the Chamber of Commerce, Junior Chamber of Commerce and Institute of Personnel Management.
  - f) Notts County Council: Teachers' Centre - still ongoing.
  - g) Community Health Councils: reps of group were to attend general meeting of S Notts CHC and CR was to be nominated for election to CHC.
  - h) City Councillors: Lobby had been unproductive but one councillor had met the group and was fully supportive.
  - i) Tape/slide kit: had been used in a local school and a near future meeting was arranged with the staff concerned to discuss the apparently positive response and to see the pupils work as a result of the showing.

JC proposed thanks and congratulations to CR for the amazing amount of work and his tremendous achievement.

5. Membership: TB reported that the group had 5 women and 51 men members at the start of the year, but now had 7 women and 42 men - a decrease of 7. He gave details of reasons for non-renewals, source of membership and special offer membership results and outcomes. He had written to all lapsed members and those who were not known to the group, encouraging them to become involved or to rejoin.

Constitution MR proposed - seconded JC - that the draft constitution as amended, be adopted. Agreed 8 - 0 - 2.

Appointment of officers

CR proposed that the group should appoint a group archivist. Agreed 8 - 0 - 1. The following officers were elected:-

Convenor	M Raymond	Caring Officer	R Tunnicliffe
Treasurer	J Clarkson	Newsletter Editor	D Edgley
Membership Sec	T Barker	Social Organiser	S Smith
Campaign Officer	C Richardson	Archivist	P Lockwood &
Gay Lobby	D Hicks		R Hollier to
Women's Liaison	D Hicks	liaise with convenor and report to business meeting on 10/4/80	

Switchboard

There was unanimous agreement to continue to support Switchboard financially. The monthly discos should be continued, but in the face of declining support it was agreed to investigate other means of fundraising. MR proposed (AF seconded) "That the Nottm.CHE group will guarantee the provision of at least £100 for the support of Nottingham Gay Switchboard during the financial year 80/81". The motion was accried unanimously. A proposed agenda for the Switchboard AGM was discussed.

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 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (Continued)
 

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Any other business

1. It was noted that the group would be 10 years old in late 1981 and it was agreed that special events and/or publications be organised.
2. The convenor announced at the request of Lincoln Group a performance by Alan Pope and Alex Harding which was being promoted by Lincoln CHE on Friday 2nd May.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 10.05pm.

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 TRAIN OF THOUGHT
 

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On a recent visit to an expatriate ex-campaigner now living somewhat secludedly half way up a mountain in Snowdonia, I chanced to stumble upon near civilisation in the form of the Festiniog Railway main terminal at Porthmadog ( a mere two days before the well publicised effort to blow it - and the neighbouring holiday home complex - to smithereens.

Never having regarded myself as a steam fanatic (although I regret I can remember the awful stench of Nottingham Victoria and tend to nostalgia over belches of steam and smoke attacking Parliament Street in the vicinity of the Dog and Partridge) I found myself quite amused with this somewhat overgrown model train - perhaps signs of a deprived childhood! This cursory interest persuaded me to invest in a badge and to nick a printed serviette from the cafeteria (the windowsill of which was the site of the bomb that never was) thinking that someone whom we all know well would appreciate the same. I also obtained a rare Welsh bargain in a leaflet entitled "An Introduction to the Festiniog Railway Society Limited," priced at 5p, but given away free "because we don't get many tourists at this time of year".

And an interesting little leaflet it was too. I quote:-

"Originally simply called the Festiniog Railway Society, at the end of 1954 a similar organisation registered as a company limited by guarantee and incorporated as a non profit distributing company. For most practical purposes the two are synonymous, but the Festiniog Railway Society (not limited) had to remain in existence to provide status for the members under the age of 21 (now 18) and to umbrella the formation of regional groups. The term "Society" is normally used to cover both bodies indiscriminately, whilst the term "Company" is normally applied to refer to the Railway Company rather than the Society Limited."

And I though the organisation of Nottingham Gay Switchboard was confusing.'

John.

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MARCH NATIONAL COUNCIL: BIRMINGHAM

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A report of this is on the noticeboard of CVS for those who want the full details, but here is a resume of the 'highlights':-

- Council recognised the All London Women's Group and de-recognised groups in Truro and Norwich. It was also necessary to de-recognise Richmond group which has amalgamated with Kingston.
- the CHE deficit continues to get smaller and it is hoped that we shall be back in the black by the time of Conference. Concern was expressed at the falling rate of membership renewals (CHE now has approximately 3,800 members).
- The Discrimination Commission continues its grisly work and is particularly keen to hear of any discrimination by GPs. Members who can contribute in this area should write to the Commission in confidence c/o National Office.
- reports were also heard from the Parenthood and Women's Commissions. The latter wants CHE to undertake a National Women's Week.
- the Rolling Programme is likely to be revived.
- reports on regionalisation and Telephone Contacts were accepted.
- the proposal to cancel the 25% subscription refund to local groups was not voted on. There was some feeling against this proposal, but it may yet rise again once the confused state of affairs arising from the Special Commission is resolved.
- introduction of Supporter's Cards was deferred when contention arose over the cost of them - 25p or £2?
- the date of the next National Council will be 7th June and its venue, contrary to what it says in the official report, will not be Liverpool but Southampton. (Liverpool was agreed upon, but apparently the group there has run into some hitch) Although the group has only one vote at National Councils, any member may attend and speak. If you would like to go, let Mike know.

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LOCAL GROUP NEWS

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CHE CONSTITUTION As you will read elsewhere, the Constitution which you received in draft form with the last newsletter was adopted at the AGM on March 28th. The following amendments were, however, agreed:-

Section 2: Preamble to read: "The aims of the group shall be in accordance with the aims of the National Organisation, and in addition shall be:" etc.

Section 2(g) delete "religion".

Section 8(g) amend the general quorum from "12" to "10": amend from "21 days" to "14 days" the time within which a second meeting must be called if the first is inquorate.

SUBMISSION TO CHE SPECIAL COMMISSION As was agreed at the Business Meeting 20/3/80, a draft of the Group's submission has been sent to the Special Commission to reach it before the rather premature deadline, but it has been made clear to them that it is only provisional and has to be agreed by the group. A copy of the submission should reach you with this Newsletter. The Business Meeting on May 8th is the time to voice your disagreement or otherwise with this document - after that date the submission will either be confirmed as it stands, or amended, and the amended version confirmed with the Special Commission.

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 LOCAL GROUP NEWS (Continued)
 

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SWITCHBOARD VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

From Wednesday May 15th, Nottingham Gay Switchboard will operate on a 3rd night each week. To ease the burden on the present operators, more volunteers for switchboard operators would be welcome. These operators will be that and no more: there is no need for them to join the Friend group or to undertake befriending or counselling of callers, though if they find that that interests them, there is no reason why they shouldn't go on to do so if they are suitable.

Before being allowed to operate the switchboard, volunteers will have to undergo a short period of training, probably on one or two evenings, and to perform a switchboard duty on two or three evenings with an experienced operator. Once trained, they would be expected to commit themselves to a duty on switchboard at least once or twice a month.

If you are interested in this, or would like to know more, contact John Clarkson or any present switchboard operator, who will be happy to give you more idea of what is involved.

NEIGHBOURING CHE GROUPS

As part of the regionalisation trend that CHE is fostering at the moment, we hope to establish closer links with the CHE groups in Derby, Lincoln, Leicester and Boston. We exchange Newsletters with them and these can be found pinned to the CVS Noticeboard. Please read them (but please don't take them away!) and feel free to go along to any of the special events - or any other kind for that matter.- listed in the group's programmes. It is hoped that occasionally two or more groups will get together to organise a joint event of some kind. But in the meantime you will be welcome in any of the other groups. There is usually a telephone number to contact if you want any further information about the events.

"GAY LIFE" TV PROGRAMMES

These have attracted a good deal of publicity of one kind or another, as you will be aware. But how infuriating it is to have to take the word of other people for it, when we want to know what they are like. (The group is hoping to provide the chance for members to see the programmes at some stage in the future - but more of that when we know more) In the meantime, we have been urged to get group members to write and ask for the series to be networked over the country as a whole. So, pick up your pens and apply them to paper. You don't have to admit to being gay to do it: just express the wish to have the opportunity of seeing these programmes for yourself. The address to write to is:-

Independent Broadcasting Authority, 70 Brompton Rd., London SW3 1EY.

Or, for Midlands region, to: ATV Network, ATV Centre, Birmingham B1 2JP.

VISIT TO CARLTON WEST LABOUR CLUB

The visit of Chris and Mike to speak to this group on April 18th must be counted a success, though somewhat muted by the fact that a lot of what was said seemed to be spoken to the converted. Not in every case, however: one elderly gentleman described what was said as "hogwash", called the speakers "devil's advocates" and "corrupters of youth" and hinted at a cure for our condition in the form of a "strong knife in his fishing basket"! (Potential speakers should not take fright: there was no sign of the basket, and most audiences do have rather more politeness than this). Happily at this point he was shouted down by the rest of the meeting, but how

clearly he demonstrated the kind of ignorance and intolerance that gay people are faced with. Next stop Nuthall Young Conservatives, who may hopefully give us rather more to get our teeth into.

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### CAMPAIGN REPORT

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Our dispute with Nottingham County Council and their refusal to allow us to use the Teachers' Centre to show the CHE Tape/Slide kit continues. Since our last newsletter, the Director of Education wrote "..... after consultation with the Chairman of the Education Committee, I have to confirm that it will not be possible for you to use the Teachers' Centre for the purpose you indicate".

It appears that most, if not all, of the organisations which have used the Teachers' Centre in recent times have booked the Centre via the NUT or some other educational body. We have therefore asked the City NUT to book the Centre in our name for a showing of the tape/slide kit to teachers. We hope that they will agree to do this at their next meeting in early May. If they are refused a booking on our behalf we shall be in a position to take our complaint about the Director's injustice elsewhere.

Some progress is being made on our programme of meetings with local political parties. A delegation of CHE members have met the Nottingham Young Liberals and the Carlton West Labour Party in the last few weeks. The Nuthall Young Conservatives will be next and you will see from the Programme that the former Liberal Parliamentary Candidate for East Nottingham will be meeting the group in May. We hope to meet the Rushcliffe Liberals sometime in the near future as well and follow up letters have been sent to some of the organisations which did not reply to our first letter in January.

The Nottingham Junior Chamber of Commerce have not replied to our two letters asking to meet them, nor has the local branch of the Institute of Personnel Management. However, the director of Notts. Chamber of Commerce and Industry has replied as follows: "..... I have your letter of the 10th February 1980. I, like many others, have always had the greatest sympathy for those who are disadvantaged, are handicapped, or abnormal. However, I cannot see any reason to give any special preference to your own campaign."

We were not successful in securing a place on the South Nottm. Community Health Council, but were placed on the reserve list of organisations which might be invited to nominate if a vacancy occurs.

Gay Pride Week will soon be upon us. The approach to the Broadmarsh Centre for a display space was unsuccessful as the Centre was already booked for Saturday 21st June. I have written again to ask for space on Saturday 20th June 1981! The Victoria Centre Manager has also been unable to extend facilities to us, as "..... at a meeting of the Merchants Association Council it was decided that an exhibition of this nature would not be in the interests of the Centre...." More on Gay Pride Week appears elsewhere in the Newsletter.

No news to report on our approach to the National Union of School Students or from the Trades Unions as a result of our earlier visit to the Trades Council. Gay News has now gone from the County Library along with all other publications on the ground floor.

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CAMPAIGN REPORT (Continued)

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Our offer to supply the Library with Gay News free of charge was refused on the grounds that it would give it undue prominence - a similar reply was received by a local Labour Party who offered a free copy of Labour Weekly for display. There seems therefore to be no anti gay discrimination involved in the County Librarians attitude to Gay News. However, the second and third floors contain a cosmopolitan selection of magazines amongst which Gay News would not be out of place eg. Practical Camper, Coal News, British Journal of Sociology, New Age - Magazine for Age Concern, Theatre Notebook and others.

NB. It would seem that we now need some new initiatives in local campaigning, so if you have any ideas please bring them along to the next business meeting.

Chris.