

Lesbians and gay men

"Gay and Straight, Black and White, Here to Stay, Here to Fight." This was one of many chants to be heard on last month's national demonstration in Manchester to support the right of Viraj Mendis to stay in this country.

Viraj Mendis has lived in this country for over 12 years and the Government are threatening to deport him to Sri Lanka where he would face imprisonment and probably death because of his support for the Tamil liberation movement. In order to prevent this Viraj has been in sanctuary in a local church in Hulme for over six months. The recent *Brass Tacks* programme clearly showed the range of support he has received from churches, trade unionists, local schools and community groups. One noticeable fact about the campaign has been the involvement of lesbians and gay men. They have been active both in their own sub group and in the general work of the campaign.

There were over 150 lesbians and gay men on the demonstration marching under a variety of different banners. Gay groups from all over the country were represented and have been working locally to support Viraj's right to stay here.

What, you might ask, has this do to with lesbians and gay men? Linda, from the lesbian and gay group, gave some of the reasons when she spoke at the rally before the march. She stressed that we are affected directly by the immigration rules. Lesbians and gay relationships are not recognised by the government. If you have a lover from another country they don't have the basic human right to join you which non gay white couples have.

Black people, including lesbians and gay men are directly affected by the racist and sexist immigration rules which separate families, friend and lovers and make travel a nightmare.

And at a basic level the civil rights of black people and of lesbians and gay men are under threat. At such a time standing together makes sense. Viraj still needs support and lesbian and gay groups and individuals are still being asked to get involved in the campaign.

march to help Viraj



Dona Herlinda knows her son is gay and has a lover but she is still anxious that he should make a good marriage and give her grandchildren. She has chosen the ideal wife, and all she has to do is fix the date and get all three - son, lover, wife-to-be - used to the idea. This Mexican comedy owes much to the films of Buñuel and Eric Rohmer - successfully debunking Mexico's macho image.



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Doña Herlinda
AND HER SON

LATIN AMERICAN PROGRAMME WOMEN IN STRUGGLE

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City Lights Cinema
Cinema 2

TIGER'S MILK
GB 1987 30mins

City Lights Cinema
Cinema 2

This remarkable testament to the strength of the women of Nicaragua uses images and interviews with women from different backgrounds and varying degrees of involvement with the political changes since 1979. We are made aware of the strong sense of solidarity among the women, their relation to the revolution, to men and to each other. Introduced by ALTA HOOKER, from Puerto Capuzas on the Atlantic coast of Nicaragua, who was involved with the research for the book *TIGER'S MILK* by Adriana Angel and Fiona Macintosh, which inspired the film.

CARMEN CARASCAL

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SHUBB-VIVAH

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**IF YOU
BELIEVE IN
DESIGN...**

Mention Gay Derby on the drive from Nottingham to Birmingham and people would look at you gone out, for apart from Rolls Royce and British Rail, what else is there they might say. Well, over the years, Derby gay scene has been slowly, almost unnoticed, been growing so although no one would lay claim to the city being England's answer to Greenwich Village, it does have more to offer than you think.

Probably the busiest place is the Rising Sun on Friargate. Recently redecorated, complete with new friendly hosts, Tim and Simon, the Sun has a mixed, fairly young clientele. Wednesday is cabaret night, usually drag or a male stripper, which ensures a packed house. Friday and Saturday are disco nights with resident DJ, Chris and Sunday evenings are always popular with oldies disco or occasional home grown-cabaret. (Don't forget the Rising Sun's Alternative Xmas on 31st August, complete with decorations and your chance to enter the talent contest). Smack in the middle of town, the Rising Sun is easy to find, with car parking nearby.

The oldest-established gay watering hole is the Green Lane Gallery in Green Lane. This is a very pleasant, quiet wine bar with a cosy, relaxed atmosphere, presided over by Jeffery and Robin. Both are long-serving city councillors, and ten years ago this

GAY DERBY

GAY DERBY



ROBIN,

Green Lane Gallery

month, saw Jeffery as Lord Mayor, welcoming the Queen at the Guildhall steps, here to confer on Derby its city status.

This is the place to come if you want to hear yourself think and have a quiet drink or a game of pool. As the name suggests, you can come in and browse among the paintings as well.

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Paintings galore,

Green Lane Gallery

A happy barman, Rising Sun.



A group of punters, Rising Sun.

There are two women-only venues; a monthly disco in the Station Inn, (Long Room), first Saturday of month and popular. and Tuesdays at the Greyhound Pub, Findern (cellar bar). The Derbyshire Lesbian Group meets the 4th Friday of month, with a different venue each month. There are also Lesbian Social evenings, 1st & 3rd Fridays of month, (details Lesbian Line, Derby 41441, (7-9pm Wednesdays).

Derby Friend, now in its 4th year operates on Wednesdays & is now an established part of the Derby scene - and there are several other groups as well, so next time you're passing why not stop off.

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BROOKSIDE REVISITED

I turned off the main road and for a moment thought I was driving into the set of "Brookside". I arrived at the last house - the coach house and squeezed past the Porsche, which I was later assured belonged to a neighbour. My knock brought Carlton, a bundle of white fur, hurtling down the stairs, closely followed by Peter Martine. "My real name is unpronounceable - my father was a Polish Count". Paul Andrews the other half of the duo was busy constructing a patio at the side of the house and I ask him to take a break so we can talk.



PAUL ANDREWS & PETER MARTINE

What happened the fateful night they first met? "It was across a crowded disco. I saw Paul staggering up the staircase in the Club and I thought 'he's for me', and bingo, three months' later we were living together. At first we lived with a friend and then with my father who was very accepting of us. He used to bring us breakfast in bed... treated us like a couple, he did.

Then we became homeless and decided to look around for a house to buy. We saw this building site, and knee deep in mud, waded over to this corner where we are now. All we had to go on was a set of plans but it was quite exciting, seeing our own house taking shape".

Peter began his career as a disco dancer and part-time DJ at Shades (now The Club), got into running his own disco and soon his sounds were in demand around town, and for several years he DJ'd on Saturday nights at Part II, whilst also working in another club during the day. All his working life has been spent in the entertainment business, until he went off to live with a lover in London for six years.

"My lover was very, very wealthy, but it was still important for me to have my own career, even if my salary as a beautician with Lancome didn't amount to much", he added.

Peter can now lay claim to starting the now legendary Astoria one-nighters

once a month. "It all began with me playing hi-energy, until then only heard in gay clubs, to the straight crowd. They loved it". Soon he was off to work in the Isle of Man to promote a similar gig there. This was swiftly followed by the First Monday of the Month Gay gigs.

Meanwhile, Paul had only recently left school and started work in the retail trade.

"I lived at home with my parents and brothers and sisters in a small North Notts. town. A night out in Nottingham was an event to see the bright lights, if you could afford it and had transport". These days Paul works in a menswear shop in the city and at the Cafe Royal in the evenings. They both work long hours.

I asked Paul whether he was out as gay to his family. "I'm sure my parents know that I am gay. For one thing they knew that I couldn't have afforded to buy this house on my own and there again, there is only one bedroom. Peter often comes with me to see my parents and they seem to accept him". Though he says that when his family come to Nottingham to visit him, Peter is usually, conveniently, away...

"If they were ever brave enough to come out and ask me whether I was gay, I wouldn't lie to them", he adds and smiles.

It is said chalk and cheese do go together; their interests couldn't be more different. Peter likes cooking, especially Cantonese food and Nouvelle Cuisine (I had to crave their indulgence as I didn't know what it was).

"It's all fiddley bits and bobs", says Peter.

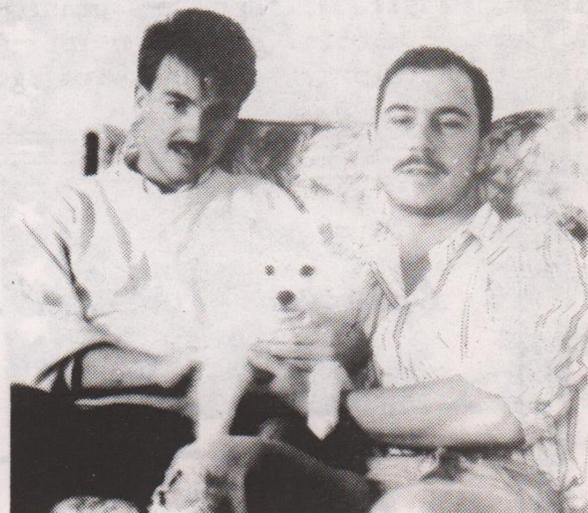
It seems that Paul does little around the house which he admits; on the other hand Peter did little in the garden which seemed clearly Paul's domain. "I love DIY and home decorating and sports, especially tennis. (He modestly admits he was Junior Tennis Champ in his town and is currently playing in the Devon Tournament). And wait for it, he is a Buck's Fizz fan, one of a loyal band of followers, though he confesses right now that Julie Walters is his current idol.

But at present Paul & Peter's relationship is taking a new turn; after four years together, they have decided to split up.

What prompted this was it a sudden decision, I asked.

"For the last year I have felt that our relationship has been getting stale - we have rowed a lot more than usual, and whilst making up can be quite fun, it made me question where we were both going. Three months after I came out, here I was in this relationship with Peter.

I have got used to having responsibility and we have had a lot of laughs. Also living with Peter has helped bring me out and I have grown up a lot since then. But I haven't had time to live my own life yet, which I want to do. I also want to retain the childlike part of me, I



think that is vital for everyone", he adds ruefully. "I decided I wanted us to break while we were still a relationship rather than just a living-together-habit. Living as part of a relationship makes for all sorts of compromises and you can't come and go as you please".

Right now they both have career plans. Paul says he may go to work in the South of England whilst Peter has something up his sleeve in the Midlands. They are both sad that the relationship is ending but are glad that they are going about it in a mature way, they say. Neither rule out the possibility of getting back together again in the future.

Suddenly, the interview was brought to a halt by the arrival of some friends to take them to see Julie Walters in "Personal Services" for the fifth time, says Paul.

For the moment, Buck's Fizz have got to take a back seat.

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WHAT'S IN A NAME

Radford cartoonist, GROC, has been helping to launch a new book to combat AIDS. The book, STRIP AIDS was put together in record time -

"Just 2 months. Don Melia, the creator of MATT BLACK, was fired by a particularly vicious "Sun" cartoon about AIDS sufferers" said GROC who joins such notables as David Shenton, of "Stanley" fame, Kate Charlesworth, JAK, Mel Calman & Cath Jackson who have donated their cartoons to aid the London Lighthouse Project, a residential and day care home for people with AIDS, now



nearing completion. Despite much prodding I was unable to find out GROC's real name so I came to the conclusion that GROC the character and and GROC the cartoonist are virtually indivisible, which was confirmed for me later by GROC.

"I've always drawn since I was small and for a time I was doing a Fine Arts course at Newcastle and then Mansfield Colleges of Art, but in the end I found it all a bit pretentious so I left. I suppose you could say that GROC is autobiographical, so although I'm not formally out as gay to my mother if she cares to look at my work closely, she would probably get the message. I think my cartoons are a glorified contact ad", he muses.

His material is drawn from his own experiences as a gay man. "In a way this is all a kind of therapy, me coming to terms with my-

self and expressing myself through my drawings".

Groc comes from a small village outside Nottingham, and is an only child. He admits to not liking children. "I like my own company and when I first moved into Nottingham I was sharing a flat with a gay friend, but although we got on well, I still hankered for a place of my own" which he now has.

He admits to watching too much T.V. likes chocolate and chips not necessarily together, and when he's not drawing works off his surplus energy keeping fit, swimming and dancing with a bit of weight-training thrown in.

At the moment he is still based in Nottingham, contributing his regular page to GAY LIFE. There is also an appearance on "Network 7" in the offing and he is considering moving to London to follow a full-time job as a cartoonist. He would also like to do some work for Red Wedge - "they only have one cartoonist in their group, at present"

STRIPAIDS is selling well in Japan, the States and Europe and a further print run may be made, which will help to establish the growing reputation of Nottingham's own gay cartoonist.

GROC SPOT Thanks to GROC and GAY LIFE for permission



The Aids Information Project stall at the Rock & Reggae Festival, at the Forest. It may have rained but they remained, rock-solid.

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Dear Dorothy.....

Dear Dorothy,

I am thirty-five years old, single and very shy, and, after much heart searching, I have come to the conclusion that I must be gay, as I have always been attracted to men. I have never had sex with a man, so I have never had a chance to find out whether I like gay sex, though when I masturbate I always think of naked men's bodies and that I am one of them. Over the years I have had secret passions for different men that I have known, but have never been able to let them know how I feel. I know I should not be behaving in such a childish way, but I can't seem to help it and wonder whether there's something wrong with me. Can you help?

Dear gay miner,

It is even more difficult at present with AIDS being linked to everything gay. It is good to have a sense of humour and to be able to laugh at yourself, but is it really funny when your workmates make "queer" jokes or jokes about "niggers", which is trying to attack someone's very existence. From what you say you seem to have worked down the pit a number of years and built up trust and respect with your workmates. The next time "queer" jokes come up, why not try and not laugh with them, and if they remark on this, you might be able to say that you think it's time to stop running other people down, and anyway, it takes allsorts to make a world. That way you won't have had

to come out to them as gay, but they will know that you no longer find these jokes funny. Who knows, there might well be others like yourself in the gang who feel as you do, without necessarily being gay themselves. They might well respect you all the more for having the courage to disagree with them on an issue that is controversial. If as you say, they are really your mates, then they will not want to deliberately hurt or offend you, but until you make your protest known to them, they won't know they are offending you. By taking a stand in this way, it may give you less pressure than all the pressure going on inside your head at present.

Dear Dorothy,

I have always known I was gay but have never made an issue about it. I am a miner working in a Notts. pit and get on well with the other lads although they don't know that I'm gay. I go drinking with them regular, but keep my gay social life separate when I go to Nottingham. Lately I am getting fed up with all the anti-AIDS jokes. It really hurts me when my mates start going off about AIDS and "queers", but I have always felt I had to laugh at these jokes with them, because I think you should always be able to laugh at yourself. Sometimes though, I just want to shout out at them to stop, but then my secret would be out and I still have to go on working down the pit with them. We depend on each other a lot down there, and they would never trust me again. What should I do?

Dear Isolated,

From what you say it would seem that you are probably gay yourself, from the things you say turn you on, but until you have met someone real and been involved in a sexual/emotional encounter it is best to keep an open mind. For heterosexual women and men of all ages growing up, there are always numerous positive images to copy and feel reassured by, whether they are successful sportspeople, politicians or whatever. For lesbians and gay men there are generally only negative images of homosexuals and homosexuality for us to see, and this is reinforced by papers like the "Sun". But despite this lack of positive images, people of all ages, some into their seventies, having married and had children, often as a cover up to hide or deny their feel-

ings are eventually deciding that they are lesbian or gay. So at 35, you are re-discovering what you think you really are, and in a way it's like starting out on an adolescent journey, which is a time when young people are expected to experiment with different kinds of relationships and lifestyles to find one that suits their needs. The fact that you are 35 and are just setting out on this path, should not worry you. It's good that you now feel ready to do something positive about things. Indeed, the marvellous thing is that, despite all the poor images, thousands of people are not prepared to deny to themselves what they are, despite the overwhelming pressures on them to do so, which just shows that being gay or lesbian is not a passing phase.

At great expense, we have secured the services of Aunt Dorothy, who has years of experience in dealing with problems. She will be here each month, just waiting to help you. Concerned about Relationships? Something medical on your mind? Write to her, anonymously, if you want. Just state your problem and then Aunt Dorothy will follow up your letter in METRO GAY. Remember letters will be edited for publication and we regret that no personal correspondence can be entered into. Write to METRO GAY (Aunt Dorothy), Box 34, West P.D.O., Nottingham NG7 2DL.

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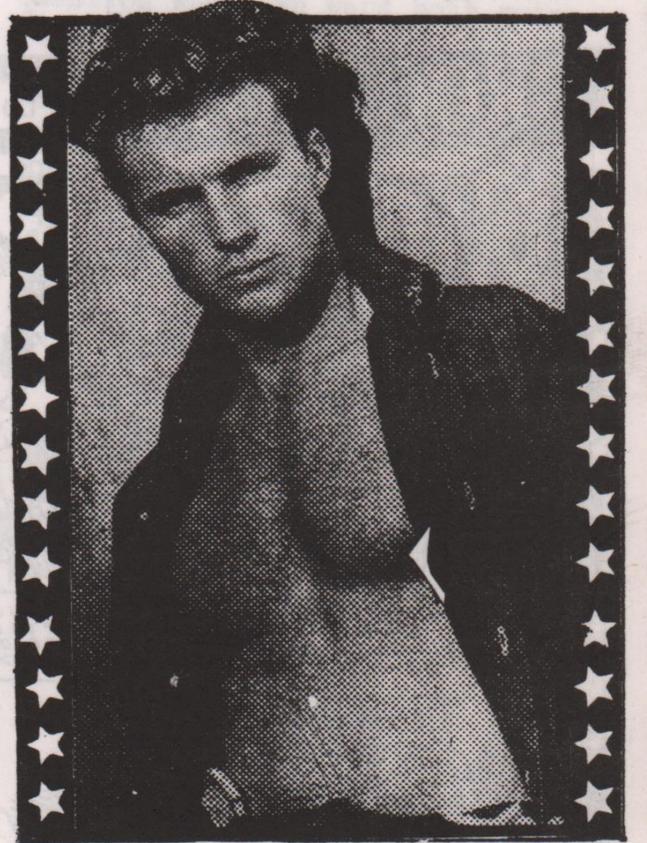
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Job description and further details available from Personnel Department, Sheffield Health Authority, Westbrook House, Sharrow Vale Road, Sheffield S11 8EU, tel (0742) 670333 ext 145, to which applications in writing, incorporating a full curriculum vitae should be sent by 19 August 1987.

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CITY LIGHTS
C I N E M A S

CASTAWAY

Thursday-Saturday 6-8 August

Dir: NICOLAS ROEG

With: Amanda Donohoe, Oliver Reed
GB. 1987. 120 mins. 15.

A seductively cinematic treatment of Lucy Irvine's true-life adventure. Donohoe is splendid as the city girl facing up to her dreams when she acts as 'wife' to a beer-bellied MCP (Reed, effectively type-cast) on a Pacific island. Familiar Roeg-ish concerns - strangers in a strange land, eroticism, love, pain and the whole damn thing - inform the simple narrative: a lifetime of marriage condensed into a single year. Shot in sub-aqueous blues and sun-drenched yellows and greens this is paradise found, lost and finally abandoned.

"A visually stunning and intellectually engrossing study of two sun-worshippers who peel off their clothes only to find their souls stripped bare!" New Musical Express.

THE GREEN RAY

Wednesday-Saturday

19-22 August

Dir: ERIC ROHMER

With: Marie Riviere, Lisa Heredia, Vincent Gauthier.

France. 1985. 90 mins. PG. Subtitled The winner of the Best Film prize at the 1986 Venice Film Festival is a deceptively simple tale, but told with all the spare elegance and wit that characterises Rohmer's work: it's not what people do that matters, so much as the states of mind and feelings that inform their behaviour. The latest in a series of comedies and proverbs, it is both hard-edged in its perception of people and places, and finally generous towards its heroine - an indecisive girl who can't find a holiday companion.

Working Girls...

Wednesday-Saturday

26-29 August

Dir: LIZZIE BORDEN

With: Louise Smith, Deborah Banks, Liz Caldwell.

USA. 1986. 90 mins. 18. An attempt to "film sex for the female spectator", and the idea that prostitutes are working girls, like any other professionals, are the central concerns of Borden's graphic (never pornographic), naturalistic movie. Molly is a college graduate who moonlights at a comfortable, downtown Manhattan brothel. Through her eyes we witness the course of a hard day at the office; clients arriving punctually as if for a dental appointment; the girls trotting upstairs to do their job, fetching towels, disposing of used condoms. "Made with warmth, humour and commitment, it's an abrasive comment on prostitution amongst a New York bourgeoisie whose discreet charm is only skin deep." Time Out.

CITY LIGHTS
C I N E M A S

CINEMA 2			
TUES 4	Page 9	CUL DE SAC (15)	8.00
WEDS 5		CUL DE SAC (15)	8.00
THUR 6	Page 8	CASTAWAY (15)	8.00
FRI 7		CASTAWAY (15)	2.00/8.00
SAT 8		CASTAWAY (15)	5.00/8.00
TUE 11	Page 9	TEMPEST (15)	7.30
WEDS 12	Page 10	TRICK OR TREAT (18) and MORE BAD NEWS (15)	7.30
THURS 13		TRICK OR TREAT (18) and MORE BAD NEWS (15)	7.30
FRI 14	Page 10	ONE-TRICK PONY (15)	2.00/8.00
SAT 15		ONE-TRICK PONY (15)	6.00/8.00
TUES 18	Page 9	EYE OF THE NEEDLE (15)	8.00
WEDS 19	Page 4	THE GREEN RAY (PG)	8.00
THURS 20		THE GREEN RAY (PG)	8.00
FRI 21		THE GREEN RAY (PG)	2.00/8.00
SAT 22		THE GREEN RAY (PG)	6.00/8.00
TUES 25	Page 9	LORD OF THE FLIES (15)	8.00
WEDS 26	Page 5	WORKING GIRLS (18)	8.00
THURS 27		WORKING GIRLS (18)	8.00
FRI 28		WORKING GIRLS (18)	2.00/8.00
SAT 29		WORKING GIRLS (18)	6.00/8.00

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That's Life-or is it

Insurance companies have started questioning applicants about their sexuality and are re-checking gay people. It is the latest step in the tightening up by insurance companies responding to the AIDS crisis. But it is still possible to get insurance. The new rules affect life assurance and endowment mortgages which include life assurance. Last summer insurance companies started asking applicants a variety of questions about AIDS. But now major companies like Norwich Union, Guardian Royal Exchange, and Standard Life Assurance, which is Scotland's largest life and pension group, have banned gay men. Norwich Union ask the toughest questions. They want to know whether applicants are gay, bisexual, haemophiliac, IV drug-users or whether they are receiving advice on AIDS or about sexually-transmitted diseases. Information that leads to the rejection of life assurance policies is often supplied by doctors. The Trust advises potential applicants to tell their G.P's to provide ONLY strictly medical information. The most important thing is to avoid a refusal for life cover as this has to be declared on future applications and insurance companies exchange information amongst themselves. People with Aids and with the Aids Virus are considered unsuitable. However, Dai Harris of the Terrence Higgins Trust Legal Section believes people who are HIV Negative or who have not yet been tested can still get insurance if they go about it the right way. People HIV negative need to get a good insurance broker to find the right company, plus a trustworthy G.P. who will not gossip to insurance companies about patients' sex lives.

Queerbasher's galore

A 20-year old restaurant owner from Southall, out walking with his boyfriend in Earls Court was beaten up by five soldiers in army uniform, who were taking part in the Royal Tournament at Earls Court. The youth was hospitalised with a broken jaw, nose and two cracked ribs. AND in Brighton two gay men were attacked by a gang of straight men, as they left a gay club. They sustained cuts and bruises, and one of the gay men, who is deaf, had stitches in his head. The following night the couple were out walking in another part of town, when they were attacked again. Tim Williams, a spokesperson for Brighton Gay Switchboard said that there seemed to be an increase in the rate of queerbashing in recent weeks in Brighton.

▼ ▼ Lesbian ▼ ▼ Information Service

A new information service for lesbians was launched in Leicester during mid-July with the aim of improving communication between lesbians and to promote understanding of lesbian experience in order to fight discrimination. The first priority will be the development of the newsletter which will circulate nationally on a monthly basis. The idea for the service came from the production of a local lesbian newsletter which was to let local lesbians know what was happening in relation to the local lesbian group and Leicester City Council Lesbian and Gay consultations. Already, a number of lesbian and other organisations have responded and Jan Foster the contact person for the project hopes that the newsletter will be just one of many initiatives the Information Service will take on. Further details from L.I.S., P.O. Box No. 194, Leicester LE1 9HP, (price 50p, plus S.A.E.).

School's a real drag



Best Foot Forward...Brunts School drag queens, George Robinson, (r) and Glenn Wormsley stepping out for charity at the Mansfield school's afternoon of fund-raising for Age Concern, last month.

Men for Change

That's the title of a new pamphlet, produced by Chris Bristow which lists a number of men's events around the country this summer, including sexuality workshops, as well as anti-sexist mens groups. 'Men For Change' can be bought at MUSHROOM BOOKSHOP, Heathcote Street, Nottingham, (20p).

CHE seeks Liferaft

The Campaign for Homosexual Equality, will be discussing the possibility of a merger with another organisation at its annual conference in Malvern in August. In the seventies CHE was the main gay campaigning organisation, but now faced with a dwindling band of activists it plans to mount a life-saving exercise. There are currently around 120 committed activists, plus over 200 supporting members, but with an annual income in excess of £13,000 it would prove a useful ally. The most likely bedfellow would be the Legislation for Lesbian & Gay Rights Campaign, a robust membership organisation with similar aims to CHE, but without CHE's financial stability. A possible umbrella-name for the two organisations already put forward is DLGA (organisation for Lesbian & Gay Action).

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