

February 1985

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GAY Nottingham!

put together by gay men No. 1.

LESBIAN & GAY MEN'S COMMITTEE GETS GO AHEAD

Nottingham City Council has endorsed the formation of its own Lesbian and Gay Sub-Committee, and so becomes the second local authority outside London to take this step. Discussions have taken place over the last eighteen months between the City Council and the lesbian/gay community over what form the new sub-committee would take. Although it will not have any direct policy making functions it will make recommendations to the Equal Opportunities Committee, and follows the successful launching in late 1984 of the Women's Sub Committee.

Among other things, the Sub-Committee will act as a "watchdog" over the main committee to ensure that lesbian/gay rights are properly represented. Awareness training for Councillors and Council Officers and monitoring of jobs to prevent discrimination against gays and lesbians are just two of the functions the sub-committee will cover.

There will be fifteen places on the Sub-Committee, five for lesbians five for gay men, and five places reserved for Nottingham city councillors.

At the Equal Opportunities Committee meeting on the 23rd January, the Conservative members of the committee refused to take up the places. Opposing the setting up of the sub-committee, Cllr. John Carter (Con.) said that Tories had "compassion" for minority groups and one had to accept that lesbians and gays were a section of society. "They may see themselves as deprived, but they are not on my priority list," added Coun. Carter.

Labour Councillor Richard McCance told GAY NOISE that, from the outset the Tories had tried to sabotage any meaningful progress on the Equal Opportunities Committee, including lesbian/gay rights. At first the Tories claimed to support the work of the Equal Opportunities Committee because they thought it would not get off the ground. "Now the Committee is a success, the Tories are crawling out of the woodwork and showing just what hypocrites they really are", added Councillor McCance.

And a strong note of support for the Lesbian/Gay Sub-Committee came from Council Leader, Betty Higgins (Lab) who stated: "...Is the Tory Opposition Leader really saying that lesbians and gay men are only acceptable if they stay in the background. Does he not accept that they should have the right to choose whether they want to be visible or not?"

The election of the lesbians and gay men to the Sub-Committee will take place within the next few weeks and meetings are expected to be held monthly, and will be open to members of the public at the Council House.

Tempers flare in Rugby scrum

Rugby's ruling Tory Council seem set to make a startling U-turn over their "gay jobs" policy. Only last September they voted down a Labour proposal to guarantee no discrimination on the grounds of "sexual orientation" when hiring staff. Council leader, Gordon Collett (Con.) went further the next day saying Rugby would not in future employ lesbians or gay men. This led to a highly successful rally of over 1,000 people in Rugby in November, organized jointly by Labour Councillors, NALGO and the Lesbian/Gay movement.

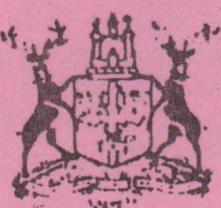
Since then, the Tories have had had a generally bad press over their antics, and in a bid to stop further discussion of the matter, have introduced new rule changes, which now prevents the "gay jobs" issue being raised more than twice in one year. But the signs are that they will still attempt to reach some formula which is acceptable to the town hall union, NALGO, which has a strong policy nationally on lesbian/gay rights.

This new move follows January's chaotic Council meeting when rebel Tory Councillor, Tom Ravenhall, backed by Labour members, put forward a motion calling for "sexual orientation" to be reinserted into the Council's code. In the debate Cllr. Ravenhall said: "This Council is on the slippery slope that leads to the crucifixion of a minority. People ought to decide here and now whether they believe in justice and equality. We were not elected to judge other people". The motion was defeated by only four votes.



At this point other Tory Councillors jumped from their seats as an avalanche of tomatoes and smoke bombs rained down on them from the public gallery. (This followed a day of protest when several public buildings and hoardings were adorned with slogans. A spokesperson for Stop the Lesbian & Gay Ban told GAY NOTTINGHAM that the pressure would continue until Rugby Council changed its policy. "We have the Council on the run!" she added.

Meanwhile, the Labour-controlled Council of Sandwell near Birmingham which followed Rugby's lead, has reversed its policy. Councillors now say that they only have reservations about employing people with criminal records for sexual offences against children.



LESBIANS' MEETING AND GAY MENS' MEETING

will be held at the International Community Centre, Mansfield Road at 7.30pm on Thursday 7th March Access for the disabled.

Items include the election of representatives to the Gay/Lesbian Sub-Committee.

All lesbians and gay men welcome.

Further information from the Equal Opportunities Unit, the Guildhall (401571 ext 4513)

Thursday, Friday 14, 15 March 7.30pm GAY SWEATSHOP present 'POPPIES'

On Parliament Hill two elderly men look over London. It is 1986. The radio gives out the news of international crisis and security measures. It is Remembrance Sunday.

On Parliament Hill two young men look out over London. It is 1939 and war is in the air.

Set simultaneously in 1986 and 1939, POPPIES is about Love and War, particularly in relationship to men and the choices they make in both spheres. "...This is very much the product of gay consciousness, but contradicts a common criticism of gay theatre by looking out from the ghetto and addressing itself with wit and sometimes brilliance to the biggest questions of the day." City Limits

If you missed POPPIES last time, catch GAY SWEATSHOP'S reprise at the Midland Group's Performance Space, 24 Carlton Street, Nottingham, Box office 586100.



MUSHROOM BOOKSHOP

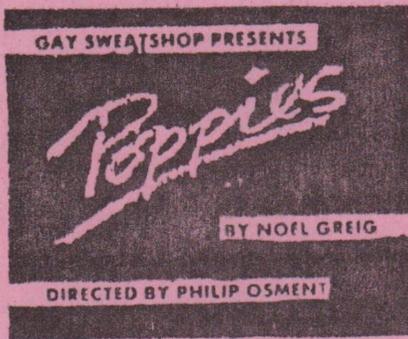
10 HEATHCOAT ST. NOTTINGHAM, tel 582506
Open 10am - 6pm six days a week

Books for and about gay men and lesbians stocked. Sexuality, sexual politics, feminism and much more. New 'Gay Writing' section.

UNION GROUP ORGANIZES

A new national campaign and support group for lesbians and gay men is just forming in NUPE (National Union of Public Employees), the second largest public service union. Whilst the union already has a paper commitment to sexual preference, one of the aims of the new group will be to ensure that the union places a stronger emphasis on its day-to-day commitments to lesbian and gay rights. Organizer, Richard McCance said that with over 600,000 members there must be at least 60,000 lesbians and gay men in NUPE, around the country who may be isolated in their workplaces and feel unsure about promoting gay rights on their own. "If a number of us link up we will be that much more effective in placing our demands. We have seen how a strong lesbian and gay group in NALGO (National Association of Local Government Officers) has made important gains in the last few years, culminating in NALGO's central involvement in helping to organize the rally in Rugby which protested at the Tory-led Council's ban on recruiting lesbians and gay men to their workforce. If NALGO can do it I think our town hall, hospital and school members should have a go".

Anyone wishing to know more about the group should contact Richard McCance, NUPE Lesbian/Gay Group, 21 Devonshire Promenade, Lenton, Nottingham. Tel: (w) 818118 or (h) 780124.



Gay Youth on the move

The Nottingham Lesbian & Gay Youth Organisation began in mid-1984 and now has over 20 members. GAYNOISE spoke to Ben, a founder member about the group's aims. "The group is for young people under 25. Although we have a number of aims and ideas in mind, like a "youth" paper, drama/theatre group, video project and a band, the first and foremost objective is to establish a flourishing lesbian and gay youth group which will provide a focal point for young people to meet, and find support and friendship".

The Group's next meeting takes place at 10am, Saturday, 16th February, International Community Centre, 61b Mansfield Road, Nottingham.

Topics up for discussion include future developments, grant applications, participation at the Nottingham International Youth Festival, publicity and the Youth paper.

More information about the group's meetings and activities, from N.L.G.Y.O., Box 11, Community Groups Centre, 118 Mansfield Road Nottingham, (stamped addressed evpe).

The Crystal Set..

The first (and the last?) in a new series about these fascinating gay men we've just got to know and can't wait to tell you about.

The first thing that comes across about Nigel and Julian is that they're just like any other gay couple you can meet at any gay disco on a Saturday night - the fact that they've got three houses, a service flat in Belgravia, and four cars including a Silver Ghost Rolls Royce is really neither here nor there.

A basic simplicity shines through their lifestyle, which some might consider extravagant. "Really," said Nigel, "I think half these people who make snide remarks about the way we live are just plain jealous, ducky."

What is the secret of their success? Nigel, a slim, petite 31 year-old, sighed and ran his fingers through his immaculate tinted hair. "In a word darling, drive," he said. Julian looked up admiringly from the gold-plated jigsaw puzzle (from Cartier's of course) that he was idly toying with. "Oh he's so hutch that one," he breathed.

Nigel first realised that he had a flair for property in 1971, when house prices rocketed under the Heath government. His breakthrough into the property world came when his Aunt Gertie died and left him her two-up and two-down terraced house in Heckmondwyke. Nigel charmed a couple of thousand out of his bank manager ("one of US dear, actually, but very discreet about it," confided Julian), conned the local council for an improvement grant, installed a peach and mushroom bathroom suite ("cerise actually," murmured Julian, "he's got no eye for colour, that one.") and sold it for £50,000.

After that came the service flat in Belgravia and the house in Brighton. Nigel and Julian were on the way up.

I asked them how they felt about the gay activist scene.

"Oh I LIKE active men," said Nigel excitedly, dabbing at his ever-so-slightly greying temples with a hint of Tabac, "especially those lorry-drivers. I mean quite often--"

"ACTIVIST" dear," hissed Julian through clenched and expensive teeth. "Do listen to the man."

"Oh those," said Nigel. The manicured eyebrows drew thoughtfully together. "Well of course one tries to be tolerant. I don't mind in the least people doing their own thing, if they have to, but I can't help feeling all these marches and things - well they do draw attention to us don't they? I mean I think it's so much better for gay men to be respectable. I'm sure people will like us better if we are."

As the housekeeper came in to collect the champagne glasses I sensed that I was overstaying my welcome I made my farewells feeling confident that, as long as the gay scene is decorated with such lustre by people like Nigel and Julian, there is never any danger that we shall cease to be thought of as respectable.

John Carson

CLASSIFIED ADS

Classified ads in GAY NOTTINGHAM cost £1 for up to 20 words, and 5p. per word thereafter. Box number, is 50p. extra. Please make cheques/postal orders payable to "GAY PRIDE 83". All Classified ads must be prepaid. CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTANCE We reserve the right to refuse or amend advertisements, and refunds cannot be given on advertisements which have had to be altered or amended.

ANSWERING ADS

When replying to GAY NOTTINGHAM numbers, please put your reply in a sealed envelope. Write GAY NOTTINGHAM number on outside of envelope then place in a second envelope and send to GAY NOTTINGHAM Box 11, c/o 118 Mansfield Road, Nottingham.

PERSONAL

Gay man researching homosexual lifestyle 1957-1967 would like to hear from anyone with collection of gay novels and soft porn, or just good memories, of that period, BOX GN 11/1.

Anyone interested in joining a gay men's health group to look at how we cope with the scene (or don't!), info. on AIDS and the promotion of good health. BOX GN 11/2.

AIDS Steering Group now forming, first meeting mid-March for those professionally involved, (medics, health and social workers, researchers. Details, BOX GN 11/3.

Gay Welfare Workers' Group for all those involved in the welfare industry (field/residential work, E.S.W's Youth Work, health workers etc). Meetings, 3rd Saturday afternoon of month in central Nottingham. Speakers, discussions and socials. Details, BOX GN 11/4.

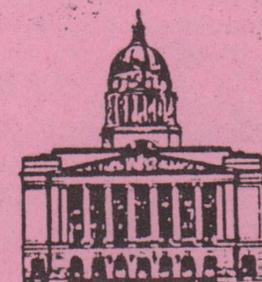
LESBIAN MEETING and GAY MENS MEETING, International Community Centre, 61B Mansfield Road, 7.30pm, Thursday, 7th March, Access for disabled persons.

45 year-old, youthful man seeks younger, athletic man for fun times [redacted] BOX GN 11/5.

NOTTINGHAM

CLUB: Part Two, Robert House, 5-13 Canal St, Disco/Bar/Restaurant, open Tues-Sat, 8.30-3am. Tues-Thurs members free, guests £2. Fri-Sat members £1.50, guests £2.50. Tel Nottingham 558868.

COUNSELLING: Nottingham Friend tel 478714 Tues evgs 7-10pm or write c/o CVS, 31a Mansfield Rd, Nottingham.



The Foresters, behind Victoria Centre, mainly Women. Gateby's (formerly Central Tavern) Hurlingham St (near Palais de Dance), two Lounge bars, one exclusively gay

GROUPS: CNE (campaigning only): write c/o CVS, 31a Mansfield Rd, Nottingham NG1 3FF, or tel Mka, 55196

Gay Christian Movement meets 3rd Fri of month alternately in Nottingham and Derby. Tel Charles, Derby 833294
Gay Welfare Workers Midlands Group Tel Richard McCance, Nottingham 780124, or send SAE c/o 21 Devonshire Promenade, Lenton, Nottingham
Labour Campaign for Gay Rights. Contact Chris Richardson, 21 Devonshire Promenade, Lenton, Nottingham, tel 780124.

Nottingham Gay Social Group (NOGSG) meets 2/3 times weekly Write c/o CVS, 31a Mansfield Rd, Nottingham, or tel Peter 861521, Tim 802894, David 218447 or via Gay Switchboard.
Nottingham University Gaysec: c/o Students Union, Portland Building, Univ of Nottingham, NG7 2RD. Meets fortnightly Weds in NSQR term time. Tel 504211 Mon 8pm-12 for info.
Trent Poly Gaysec meets Thurs Evg at the Dragon. Tel Gay Switchboard for info

INFO: Lesbian Line tel 410852 Mon 7.30-9pm.
Nottingham Gay Switchboard: tel 411454, Mon, Wed & Thurs, 7-10pm for confidential help and advice for gay and bisexual people

VD Treatment: General Hospital, Perth House(?) or Amberley House(?), Postern St, Nottingham, tel 45896