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— Pubs and Clubs —

NOTTINGHAM GAY SWITCHBOARD for the latest info. on pubs, clubs & discos in the City.

— SOCIAL GROUPS —

LESBIAN/GAY WELFARE WORKS GP. (social & support), inc. Health & Education works, meets monthly, Central Nottingham, Info. Chris Williams, 27 Moore Rd, Mapperley, Nottm, or 602164 (after 7pm).

NOTTINGHAM LESBIAN/GAY YOUTH ORGANIZATION, (up to age 26), info. NLGYO, Box 11, c/o 118 Mansfield Road, Nottingham, (s.a.e.).

QUEST for gay Catholics, meets fortnightly, 419137, write c/o Flat 4, 19a Pelham Crescent, The Park, Nottingham.

GAY CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT, Meets 2nd Friday in month, MEN: Mark 394624, WOMEN: Sheila/Chris, Loughborough 236871.

NOTTINGHAM GAY SOCIAL GROUP, Meets every Thursday, Tel: David 216447, or write c/o 31a Mansfield Road, Nottingham.

NOTTINGHAM UNIVERSITY GAYSOC, c/o Students Union, Portland Building, Nottingham University, Nottingham.

GAY OUTDOORS GROUP (EAST MIDLANDS), Rambling Group, 3rd Saturday of month, Tel John (Leicester 266177).

TV/TS CAMELION GROUP, c/o Nottingham Friend, 31a Mansfield Rd, Tel Clive, Long Eaton 727710.

— HELPLINES —

NOTTINGHAM GAY SWITCHBOARD, your helpline to the gay/lesbian communities, Mon-Thur, 7-10pm, tel 411454.

LESBIAN LINE, Confidential help/advice for lesbians, Mon & Wed, 7.30-9pm, 410652, c/o Womens Centre, Shakespeare Street, Nottm.

NOTTINGHAM FRIEND, Tuesdays, 7-10pm, counselling & befriending for lesbians & gay men, bisexuals, TV/TS's 474717, c/o 31a Mansfield Road, Nottingham.

QUEST PHONELINE, for gay Catholics, Weds. 7.30-10.30pm, 419137.

AIDS HELPLINE, Worried about AIDS? call up Morn & Tues. 7-10pm, Nottingham 585526. Accurate info. can help reduce anxiety.

VD TREATMENT, General Hospital, Postern St. (Nr. Mount St. Car Park), Perth House. (Men) Amberley House (Women) daytime 476161.

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No. 13, April, 1986.

Deadline for May Edition: Monday 21st May

Published by GAY NOTTINGHAM, c/o Box 11, 118 Mansfield Rd, Nottingham

Six hundred swamp on Stockport



Looking to stop the ban, marchers in Stockport on Saturday. Photo: Charlie B

SIX HUNDRED protesters descended upon the sleepy northern town of Stockport last Saturday in protest at the Borough Council's decision not to offer equal treatment to the town's lesbian and gay

The demonstration was called by the 'Stop the Lesbian and Gay Ban' group, the people who organised the campaign which led to the climb-down by Rugby District Council on the same issue only a year ago.

The protest was organised in response to the January 7th decision of the Council to uphold previous decisions to deny equal opportunities to lesbian and gay men.

The march was attended by lesbians, gays and heterosexual supporters from around the country with large contingents from nearby Manchester and from Edinburgh and Liverpool. The event passed off peacefully but unsuspecting Saturday shoppers were evidently shocked to discover so many jubilant but determined 'deviants' marching through 'their' town chanting such standards as 'We're here because we're queer' and 'She'll be coming with a woman when she comes' from the lesbian contingent on the march.

The Council is due to discuss the issue again after the local council elections in May and campaigners are hoping that the political complexion of the Council will have changed sufficiently to allow the vote to be won by the pro-gay lobby.

One of the obstacles to the adoption of a comprehensive equal opportunities policy in Stockport was removed last week when one of the rebel right-wing Labour councillors who voted against the party's decision to support the sexuality clause in the equal opportunities statement lost his battle to stay in the Party.

One of the main reasons for his expulsion from the Labour grouping was his decision to vote with the Conservatives to prevent lesbians and gay men from achieving equal status in the eyes of the Council.

Andrew Lowry

CULTURAL EXCHANGE

A new group has been set up in London to bring together gay and bisexual people of both sexes, different races and different interests. The People's Gay and Lesbian Group was conceived by black gay man Vernal Scott and plans talks and lectures, outings, discos and sport with the help of organisers for each interest. The group meets every Thursday at the London Lesbian & Gay Centre from 7.30.

Vernal Scott

Aids figures top 300

With over 300 AIDS sufferers nationwide, cases are bound to occur in Nottingham. But exposing these, does nothing to advance public health but only adds anguish to sufferers, their families and friends. Like other diseases, AIDS patients have a right to privacy and confidentiality. Nottingham doctors have dealt responsibly with the news surrounding the recent admission of a suspected AIDS sufferer. Ben Benson, City Council spokesperson said: "We welcome Nottingham Health Authority's initiative in funding Nottingham AIDS Information Project, and look forward to their continued support. He also stressed the importance of training and counselling for people with AIDS.

The NUJ have issued guidelines to their members about reporting of AIDS which includes not confusing AIDS with other diseases, avoiding invasion of privacy of AIDS patients, keeping "the risks" in proportion, and not stereotyping people with AIDS.

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 Fri. 11th 7.30 p.m. Sun. 13th 5.00 p.m.
 Sun. 13th 8.00 p.m.

(15) GB 1985. 94 mins.

Director: Stephen Frears

Starring: Daniel Day, Gordon Warneck, Saeed Jeffrey, Shirley Ann Field



A gay Asian entrepreneur and his ex-National Front boyfriend realise their dream - a ritzy washerama, all neon and piped muzak, in this sharp comedy which never ducks the issues, or reverts to stereotype. "The strength of the film is in its vision - cutting, compassionate, hilarious - of what it means to be Asian, and gay, in Thatcher's Britain." Richard Rayner: Time Out. Best Film - Standard Film Awards, 1985.

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Queer Bashing by Trent Poly Law Dept.

Trent Poly Law Department are under fire for queer bashing and can't see why anyone should be offended by it. Law student James Grattan complained when an exam paper contained the word 'queer', but was told that if he didn't like it, that was too bad! James took the matter to Prof. Card, Law Dept. Head, who stated that he didn't share the views of the lecturer who set the paper. A union meeting passed a strong resolution calling for an official apology and a guarantee of no repeat performances, plus liaison with the lecturers' union, NATPHE. But a motion asking for separate microphones for 'homosexuals', to prevent the spread of AIDS, was resoundingly defeated. Said James: "I was appalled and outraged at this blatant prejudice of the law department. Sue Dingley, Deputy Union President said: "We won't tolerate prejudice of this kind within the Polytechnic, and we will campaign to ensure equal opportunities for all our students. Meanwhile, the matter is expected to be raised at the City Council's Lesbian & Gay Sub Committee.

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Almost anything you can say about Los Angeles is true. It's large; it's a mess; it lives; it's vulgar; it's beautiful.

It is both the most cosmopolitan of cities and the smallest of small towns. For Los Angeles represents, more than any other city, the fulfilment of the American Dream... of wealth, speed, mobility, freedom. Without doubt it is a good place in which to be gay. Miraculously the city's extremes include remarkable tolerance — for Angelenos, to be able to choose what you want to be and how you want to live, without worrying about social censure, is more important than the fact that they do not have a Piazza San Marco — and gays and straights mix together with ease.

Some southern Californian myths are true. Yes, you need a car. It's possible to survive without one, but driving is a way of life in Los Angeles and you either get used to it or you don't go very far.

Cars reflect people's lifestyles, philosophies, ambitions — usually everything except their wallets. Gay men naturally favour the intimacy of the coupe over the family nightmare implied by four doors but convertibles of any sort are valued too, since they are hard to come by and reveal more of the owner's head and torso. And since the car is an exact statement of personality, it must be clean, costly, ideal — people will go hungry to meet the payments on their new Corvette.

The leather set drives pickup trucks and vans, which can be either big or little, old or new. These vehicles are reminiscent of blue-collar jobs and masculinity; you can also have curbside sex in them and not need to walk more than twenty paces away from the bar to do so. Jeeps — elaborately painted and often crested by a golden eagle — also spell M - A - C - H - O.

All-American Boys

Yes, the beaches are magnificent — as much for the beauty of the men as for their scenery. From Malibu to Balboa, a distance of over 70 miles, the wide white sands team with blonde, athletic all-American boys — tanned, blue-eyed, smily, their surfboards tucked under their arms. Lording it above them are the lifeguards, bronzed deities on white wooden towers, their muscled legs dusted with golden hairs, their faces alert.

The beachside communities of Los Angeles are ideal breeding grounds for such young men, their families rich enough to give them flawless white teeth, to nourish their slim, powerful bodies on expensive proteins and to instill in them that fearless blue gaze, that easy sovereignty over the white sands. At twilight they can be seen working out or pacing the shore, the fading light boosting the brightness of their shorts and deepening their tans.

Yes, people are genuinely polite and friendly, even in gay bars and discos. So few human contacts in Los Angeles go unmediated by a car windscreen that direct confrontation renders the participants docile, stunned, kind. Snubbing isn't at all fashionable, and I doubt that the English stare that says, "I despise you but I might condescend to fuck you" would go over very big on the West Coast. Nor do they go in for camp. They're not the least bit witty but then again they're not bitchy either. No-one talks about anything that might be troubling or sequential. No politics, no religion, nothing really except sex, cars, and the movies.

Despite this laid-back attitude, Angelenos are as frantic as anyone. They work long hours for money and status, the two gods of the city, and their efforts are generally rewarded. Unlike England, with its dead-end economy and high unemployment, Los Angeles is a boom town. Gay men here are rich, powerful and intelligent, forming one of the most élite gay communities in the world.

The Boystown Gang

The main gay neighbourhoods are West Hollywood ("Boystown") and the Hollywood Hills ("the Swish Alps"), where even the smallest houses are in such demand they are selling for \$100,000. Angelenos can, of course, live anywhere, the car and the freeway having made the idea of neighbourhood redundant, but if you're white, wealthy and beautiful, West Hollywood — a recently incorporated municipality with a gay majority city council — is a charmed precinct.

For cruising gays go to Robertson Boulevard, especially the small park where bare-chested men sunbathe or work out. Everyone in Los Angeles is obsessed with their bodies and it's easy to see why, for the weather permits year-round outdoor sports and a perpetual tan. Surprisingly, however, the macho look is not so dominant here. Most men want to be handsome in the classic mould — and so, of course, they are.

Appropriately enough in Dreamland, West Hollywood has bars which cater for every fantasy. The leather bars are mainly on Melrose Avenue, as is Drakes, a high-tech store selling the usual slave bracelets and athletic socks, as well as a comprehensive selection of porn. Melrose itself is the big scene for the trendy and fashionable on weekends, and bars like Spike, The Stud and Griffs nestle incongruously among big names such as Flip and Bruce Halperin. Also on Melrose is the wonderfully named Moustache Café and Ma Maison (known as "Mommy's Own"), which remains L.A.'s most 'in' restaurant.

You can live out your cowboy fantasies in any number of Western bars, like the Bunk House Beer Bar on Santa Monica Boulevard. Here live bands play rousing country and western tunes, while cowboys perform the two-step across a sawdust floor. Boots hang in pairs from slats over the bar and a stationary stage coach stands in one corner. The prevailing looks is Lacoste's, Levi's and cowboys boots, and you jostle past stoned smiles under ten-gallon hats that cast beguiling arcs of shadow across friendly eyes.

A different scene altogether is Numbers on Sunset Boulevard, where Hollywood's kept boys, handsome athletes with beautiful manners and clothes, are entertained each evening by movie executives and oil moguls. During the day they can also be spotted on Rodeo Drive, in glitzy Beverly Hills, shopping on someone else's credit account in Armani, St. Laurent and other names from the world of high fashion. Keeping someone tends to be a far more popular and less covert pastime in Los Angeles than anywhere else, and wealthy men openly compete with one another for the privilege, no matter how short-lived, of supporting an attractive newcomer.

The place to be seen at the moment is Studio One, currently enjoying the kind of glamorous, neon-glazed success that Angelenos find so irresistible. Stars like Elizabeth Taylor and Liza Minelli drop by to catch cabaret acts at the Backlot, as the showroom at the Studio styles itself, and at weekends the queues stretch endlessly under the ten-storey tall palms that line La Peer Drive.

Yet by all objective standards, Studio One is just another loud, crowded, flashy disco. One can thrill to its wall-to-wall sounds and beautiful, bronzed bodies, but sexual energies never run very high at the Studio. There is convivial socialising and there is dancing. And there is inevitably a good deal of posing. But cruising per se is kept to a minimum. What makes Studio One a continuing hit is that it is the first gay venue in Los Angeles to have gone public in a big way. It regularly takes out prominent ads to trumpet its attractions, throws open its doors to host film and theatre premieres; and has become as much a part of the Hollywood scene as the Polo Lounge in Beverly Hills.

Not all fun and games

Gay life in Los Angeles is not totally given over to hedonism however; the city possibly has the most active and civic-minded gay movement in the world. As the national centre of glamour, it holds a benefit every few weeks, including star-studded banquets at the best hotels and fabulous fashion shows in private houses. In England, wealthy gay men pour scorn on the whole, dreary notion of gay politics ("my dear, all those bearded vegetarians") and respond only to class

loyalties. In LA the rich, mostly self-made, have no such loyalties and bestow their wealth and prestige on the gay community.

The Gay and Lesbian Community Services Centre has facilities for handling employment, health, psychotherapy, prison probation etc., and more than forty gay groups, supported by leading gay citizens, flourish in the city. Inevitably the most up-front of these is the Aids Project of Los Angeles, the city's Aids counselling and health education centre. Aids is the subject on everyone's lips at the moment. The disease is currently killing one person a day in LA and it is estimated that up to half a million people in the city have been infected by the virus that causes it.

The Aids Project has a budget this year of \$2.2 million, almost as much as the total UK expenditure on Aids over the past three years. 60% of its funding comes from the government; the rest is raised by individuals and businesses within the gay community. It employs 22 people, assisted by 150 volunteers. It provides food, shelter, clothing, friendship schemes, counselling and legal services but above all support and encouragement.

A key element of the Project is a health education campaign called LA Cares. The campaign aims at limiting the spread of infection by the HTLV 3 virus, with the emphasis on risk limitation through "safer sex". Wherever you look in Los Angeles you cannot avoid "Mother", a diminutive woman, usually surrounded by bare-chested gay men, arising from huge advertising hoardings, newspapers, magazines and television commercials. Her message "Play safely".

What effect this is having on people's lifestyles in Los Angeles is hard to tell, but in neighbouring San Francisco a recent poll revealed that 80% of gay men there were limiting their number of partners and adopting "safer sex" practices. Certainly many of the men I met in LA expressed a keen desire to find a regular lover and so avoid the need to spend so much time in the baths and backrooms.

Despite the threat of Aids, for gay men Los Angeles remains one of the most exciting places on earth. It is a city full of allure. If you like flawless blue skies, pretty people, and stunning physiques, LA is the place. For my part, as a person of average looks and income, the city gave me some of my greatest experiences but at the same time filled me with insecurity. As a spectacle of gay affluence and gay male beauty, however, it is probably unrivalled.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

The Gay Outdoor Club has released news of over twenty main events for this year, ranging from a weekend in Devon to a three-week trek across Malawi and Zambia taking in the Mulanje Mountains, a game reserve and Victoria Falls. Skiing in the Scottish Highlands, cycling in the Yorkshire Dales and bird-watching on the Norfolk coast all feature in the diary as well as the regular swimming sessions and walks. If you would like a sample newsletter and membership details, send a stamped addressed envelope to GOC (O), 30 Plum Lane, London SE18 3AE.

Robert King cruises Los Angeles



Gay MP quits for TV



Matthew Parris has been Tory MP for Derbyshire West since 1979. He has recently left politics to take over from Brian Walden as presenter of "Weekend World". "This presents a great challenge which I felt I just couldn't turn down", says Matthew.

He feels he was chosen because of his political background and for his reputation for fairness. "I have always tried to be balanced. I'm not someone who just goes unthinkingly down the party line", he adds.

Matthew Parris has often spoken out in Parliament in defence of gay rights even

though it has never been popular in his party. But he hopes that other sensible and liberal Tory MP's will continue his work, and admits that one of his regrets will be that he will have to give up direct campaigning on gay issues.

During the homophobic by-election campaign in Bermondsey in 1983, Matthew was almost alone, apart from several Labour MP's, in attacking the press treatment of Labour candidate, Peter Tatchell. At the time his Commons speech was a brave act of coming out, and he was commended from all sides on his courage. "The media treatment of that campaign was way below what ought to be the standards of the British press", he said.

As a former Thatcher-aide, Matthew Parris must seem a strange bedfellow for the Tories, who as a party, have always opposed gay rights all the way.

But then it's not surprising when you meet the man who has a quality few politicians of any party possess — an abundance of integrity and someone who is not afraid to speak out when others remain silent.

CHE worker resigns



After six years as administrative worker with the Campaign for Homosexual Equality Anna Durell is leaving for a "full time career as a lay-about and author". She has worked for CHE longer than any other full-time worker. Also it is no secret that one of Anna's long-term aims was to pursue a career in writing.

A spokesperson for CHE, David Green, said that every one would be extremely sorry to see her go. "Anna was a superb person to work with and an inspirational force in the organization".

There are no plans to replace her but it is hoped to run the London office in future with volunteer help.



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