



PRIDE MARCH - for full report see page 9

# BARMAN VANISHES WITH £2,700

## London pub loses weekend takings

Bar Cellarman Noel O'Sullivan vanished with £2,700 from The Croydon pub in Croydon last week.

His boss asked him to take the weekend's takings to the Post Office round the corner from the pub. He put the cash in a plastic carrier bag and that was the last time he was seen.

Det Sgt Richard Taber who is leading the investigation into what happened after that, said: 'His boyfriend, his ex-boyfriend and his associates don't know where he is. They are as surprised as the landlady.'

## Writers read for right to read

The Bloomsbury shop that houses Gay's The Word was packed to overflowing for a very special public reading by gay authors on Thursday last week.

They were there partly to protest at the action of Customs officers who last April stripped the shop of most of its imported books; and partly to raise money for the legal defence of both the books and the people who run the shop.

Emptying the plastic collecting buckets at the end of the evening, the Gay's The Word Defence Campaign, who organised the reading counted out donations totalling more than £50.

Authors who took part were Tom Wakefield, Simon Burt, Bryan Allan, Peter Robins, Tenebris Light, Barry Nonweiler, Paul Gurney, Ivor Treby and Bernard Padden.

There were no signs in Noel O'Sullivan's room that he had planned to leave the pub. His personal possessions were all in their usual places. And he left behind a full wardrobe of clothes including a new suit when he disappeared on Monday last week.

## Reward

Pub regular Chris Oakins said: 'The staff and customers are going to offer a reward. We are talking about something like £100.'

Croydon CID said that Noel O'Sullivan, 25, had worked in the pub trade before moving to The Croydon in May. It is also known that he used to be a regular at the Royal Vauxhall Tavern and Two Brewers pubs.

Det Sgt Taber said: 'Ask him to get in contact with the police as soon as possible. We'd like to talk to him about what happened; and his friends are concerned for him.'

## Union dress ball

The Union Tavern, in Camberwell New Road, SE5, is holding a big drag and fancy dress ball tonight (Friday) in aid of the Terrence Higgins Trust.

They have applied for a late licence and have roped other pubs around London to join in the event.

There will be drag entrants from the Elephant and Castle, Angel and Vauxhall Tavern. The staff of the Kings Arms, Poland Street, will do a song and dance routine; and other pubs have yet to commit themselves.

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## 2,000 on Lesbian and Gay Pride March

HAPPY SURPRISE FOR  
PRIDE MARCH

The surprise turnout of nearly 2,000 people for the Lesbian and Gay Pride March on Saturday proved that this annual event is an unshakeable part of the gay calendar.

There had been fears that only a handful of people would turn out because of the poor publicity and lack of organisation. As it was the march set off late because the police were unable to contact the organisers.

Attempts by the three people on the organising collective to change the name of the annual march to "The It's Not Just a Phase Week March" met an icy response. They even had difficulty giving away badges bearing that name.

But the number of people on the march was almost exactly the same as last year.

The march went from Hyde Park down Piccadilly, Shaftesbury Avenue, and Tottenham Court Road to the University of London Students Union (ULU) building in Malet Street, WC1.

## Shortage

The remarkable lack of organisation reared its head again at ULU with little information on where events were taking place, no women-only floor which is now traditional, and a shortage of stewards for the swimming. There were even men in the pool during the women's swimming session at one point.

Many events went off successfully: Eric Presland and Norman Penney gave a performance of their favourite songs to a big crowd; A Welsh miner spoke to the Labour Campaign for Gay Rights, John Cartwright MP (SDP, Woolwich) urged a meeting attended by 30 people to step up the lobbying of SDP MPs on gay issues; and there was a screening of the *Framed Youth* video, among other events.

The response to the attempt to change the name of Pride Week, and to the chaotic organisation, has been an early interest in organising next year's events.

## Survival

A call to *Capital Gay* from a group of five friends in Camden wanting to announce steps to get Pride Week '85 off the ground, was only just pre-empted by a press release from members of four gay organisations.

A meeting has been called for 2pm on July 29th in County Hall to "discuss the future of Lesbian and Gay Pride Week".

The statement said: "Coming after a year which saw a change of name, few official events and minimal publicity, members of the London Lesbian and Gay Centre Committee, Gay's The Word Defence Committee, Icebreakers, London Gay Switchboard and previous Lesbian and Gay Pride Week Committees have got

together to call a meeting of all lesbians and gay men interested in ensuring the survival of what has come to be regarded as an institution of the London gay scene."

London Gay Switchboard has offered to co-ordinate the formation of a broad-based committee to gain wider participation from all sections of the lesbian and gay community in future years.

A Switchboard volunteer said: "It's a poor reflection on the gay movement here when New York can muster 200,000 marchers — and more to cheer them on — and we can't even make 2,000".

Among those who did turn up this year carrying banners, were the following: London Gay Switchboard, Gay Men's Disabled Group, Gemma, Brothers and Sisters, Basingstoke Gay Pride, GLAD, Hyde Park Gays and Sapphics, Hackney Lesbian & Gay Action, Hampstead GCO, Metropolitan Community Church of North London, Friend Gay Helpline, Scottish Homosexual Rights Group, Icebreakers, Gay Unemployed Group, Gay Teenage Group, Streatham Area Gay Group, London Monday Group, Consenting Adults in Public, London Bisexual Group, Greenwich Lesbian and Gay Group, South London Gay Young People's Group, SM Dykes, SM Gays, Gay Teachers, Gay Youth Movement, Labour Campaign for Gay Rights, Islington Haringey Gay Group and GALA (Gays and Lesbians Against Abolition of the GLC).



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