

# GAY NEWS



**PLUS**  
**12 PAGE**  
**PULL OUT SECTION**  
with GAY GUIDE, DIARY of EVENTS,  
CLASSIFIEDS & FILM/THEATRE GUIDE

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THE WORLD'S LARGEST CIRCULATION NEWSPAPER FOR HOMOSEXUALS

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FORTNIGHTLY



Photograph: Bob Workman (Gay News)

## **DANSE MACABRE?**

An extract from the bestselling novel about the gays who live only to dance -p19

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Taste the delights of Hawaii -p17

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Charles Hix has written a book which aims to be all things to all men -p23

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## **THAT WAS THE WEEK THAT WAS**



Murder, scandal, fairies, ogres, Marlene, 72 breasts and a gay guru were just some of the ingredients in Gay Pride '79's shows, exhibitions and plays -pp24-27

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How you can come to terms with your own - and other people's -p22

# WE ARE FAMILY!



Photograph: Michael Mason (Gay News)

Gay Pride celebrations in London (top) and San Francisco (bottom). Full reports start on page 11.

by Harry Coen  
Staff Reporter

There was Supergay, cloak afloat in the wind and funny bumps on his chest, with a chant all of his own: "Out of the phone boxes into the skies!"

There was Bionic Dyke, she of the cast-iron lungs, belting out *Gay Sera* with a gusto that would make Doris Day blush, possibly with envy. Possibly not.

And there was — Well, it seemed like everybody in the whole gay world only, of course, it wasn't. But it was an amazing feeling, you and me and us and all those policemen and police-women and Uncle Tom Robinson and all, out on the streets. A traffic stopper if ever there was one.

**Biggest ever**

It was Gay Pride Carnival in London, the biggest single gay event Europe has seen. Not that that mattered a whit at the time — all that was important was that more gay people than most of us had ever seen in one go were on the march.

We'd talked about it for months, worked on it, written about it, passed the word on, believed in it, willed it all to happen. We arrived in droves, in clumps, in pairs and alone, we'd booked coaches, bankrupted ourselves to meet British Rail fares, cadged lifts, dressed up, down and across — and there it was, all of a sudden, happening, really happening.

Unbelievable. Whaddayamean, you weren't there? Sorry if you missed it

# LONDON



because you were stuck in a broken-down coach in the middle of nowhere. Or if you were ill or disabled, or simply couldn't make it. You were with us in spirit and we knew it because we could feel it, out there striding and dancing along through the streets of London.

It was for you, for all of us, that we paraded — nay, *flaunted* — ourselves down Aldwych, through Trafalgar Square, along Piccadilly.

And the ones who didn't come because they hated the idea, they were frightened, or disdainful or contemptuous? Well, we marched for you too.

**Roses**

You should have seen us when we reached Hyde Park Corner, balloons and banners galore. It was encircled for

what seemed like hours, gays as far as the eye could see. If we'd joined hands and danced, it would have been in the Guinness Book of Records as the biggest ring o' roses the world had ever seen. And still there were more coming.

It made a change from the paranoid trip there, our particular crew with our badges and picnic bags and me with a fluorescent pink triangle on my left cheekbone. Proud and determined we set off for the

tube. The smiles became fixed grins when a gang of youngsters hissed "Bent!" at us at Victoria.

The determination became defiance disguising unease when the thug with the National Front badge glared at us when we caught our train. He was going the same way — were there more of them? Were we going to have to be brave instead of just having fun?

When we got to Temple tube station late, the question became

*(Continued on next page)*



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Photographs: Bob Workman (Gay News)



(Continued from previous page)  
— is there a march at all? How could it be any size worth bothering with if all that was left was a single forlorn steward ("They went thataway") a trampled placard and a few policepersons de-deploying themselves?

#### Blind eye

We picked up a few extra stragglers, bunched together and made a forced mini-march all of our own — finally catching sight

of balloons trailing off the Zipper float as it passed beneath the unseeing gaze of Nelson in Trafalgar Square.

Tourists had stopped and were gawking. A few teenaged girls shrilly yelled "freaks" and giggled self-consciously. A foreign tourist smilingly shrugged and explained to his (presumably) family: "Flikkers". I knew what that meant, pointed to myself, said: "Fliker," waved and dived into the march. They grinned.

Paranoia had gone, euphoria was setting in. It took a boost when one of the GPW organizers, Roy Burns, came my way — glowing. The march was so big the police had to split it to cope with the traffic, he said. Just by eye, he reckoned, there had to be rising 10,000.

My memories of that march are vivid and kaleidoscopic, heightened and multitudinous.

I remember Trevor Thomas, at 72 almost certainly the oldest marcher, with a mischievous

glint in his professorial eye, waving his walking stick in salutation to onlookers. "I thought I'd only do a little of it", he said as we reached Hyde Park. "But I seem to have come all the way again..."

I remember the glorious fantasy we had about storming the Ritz, only you couldn't get 10,000 people in a revolving door. I remember the Red Indian ullulations when our part of the march stopped — for a red traffic light, of all things —

right by some muscular construction workers, a hard-hat fetishist's dream. The blond one loved it.

All this and more — the incredible line of London buses along Park Lane, thousands of necks on the upper decks craning to see what was going on, the male motorist stuck in a traffic jam who did the slowest treble-take I've ever seen, shook his head disbelievingly and gave us the most brilliant of warm smiles.



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Photographs: Bob Workman (Gay News)



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And did I — indeed, did we — really kiss all those people without giving a damn what was thought by the mostly friendly slightly embarrassed and only occasionally boorish and bossy police marching in tight lines alongside us? Yes, indeed I did and we did, spontaneously and naturally. We were friends and lovers and family.

**Faltered**

Shame it had to end — but there we were suddenly in the park and realizing it was cold and probably going to rain. Euphoria faltered. So too, alas, did solidarity. Just a bit. Polly Perkins, clad in satin shorts and a pair of lapels drew vociferous criticism for pandering to men's sexual stereotypes. She was sharing the comparing with Tom Robinson and while most people didn't give a damn or were happy to let it slide, just this once, Polly's

attire displeased a group of women at the front and elicited a condemnatory statement from the stage by the Rock Against Sexism band, Spoilsports.

The breach was healed, or papered over, when Tom paid tactful tribute to Polly's 20 years out of the closet and she changed into something warmer anyway.

The PA system wasn't so hot, in keeping with the weather. The hot dog sellers were trying to make a killing (as ever) and while you could tell Qva was a right-on band once you'd reached the front, and so was Spoilsports, it didn't exactly carry to the back. Neither did it help when the tape machine broke down, preventing fill-in music.

Backstage Tom chatted across the barrier to anyone who wanted to chat. Sylvester popped up and said hello and merged back into the crowd

again. Stewards went around their mysterious tasks with a single-mindedness that brooked no distraction — not even if you were trying to launch a protest letter to the American Embassy about visa regulations for gays (which is what I was trying to do. Thanks for the signatures, folks — and please send more in — see story on page 4. End of plug).

**Kokomo**

Then Kokomo lifted the whole thing back to pride and elation and solidarity. Sporadic bopping extended to one vast bop, everyone bouncing up and down, everyone singing along.

*We Are Family* they sang and we all went along with it. Music brought us together again, banished the cold, set us up for the evening.

*We Are Family* hummed the crowd, hummed the World In

Action camera and sound crew filming the event for an action replay the following Monday night which brought the whole thing back to us.

As we finally split up and drifted away to our tubes and coaches and the bars before the final discos, the song kept on. I had my brothers and my sisters with me — and it felt good. It still does.

How many of our sisters and brothers were there? Roy Burns's 10,000? The police's 6,000-plus? GN's guess of 8,000?

However many there were, there's never been anything like it before. Many of us, from all over the country, had never ventured so far out of the closet before. Now we know there's no going back.

For one thing is certain — there'd never be a closet big enough to hold us all.

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