

NORTH WELCOMES GAY PRIDE: p3 * S D P & GAYS: p12

GAY NEWS

PLUS ENTERTAINMENT & INFORMATION SUPPLEMENTS

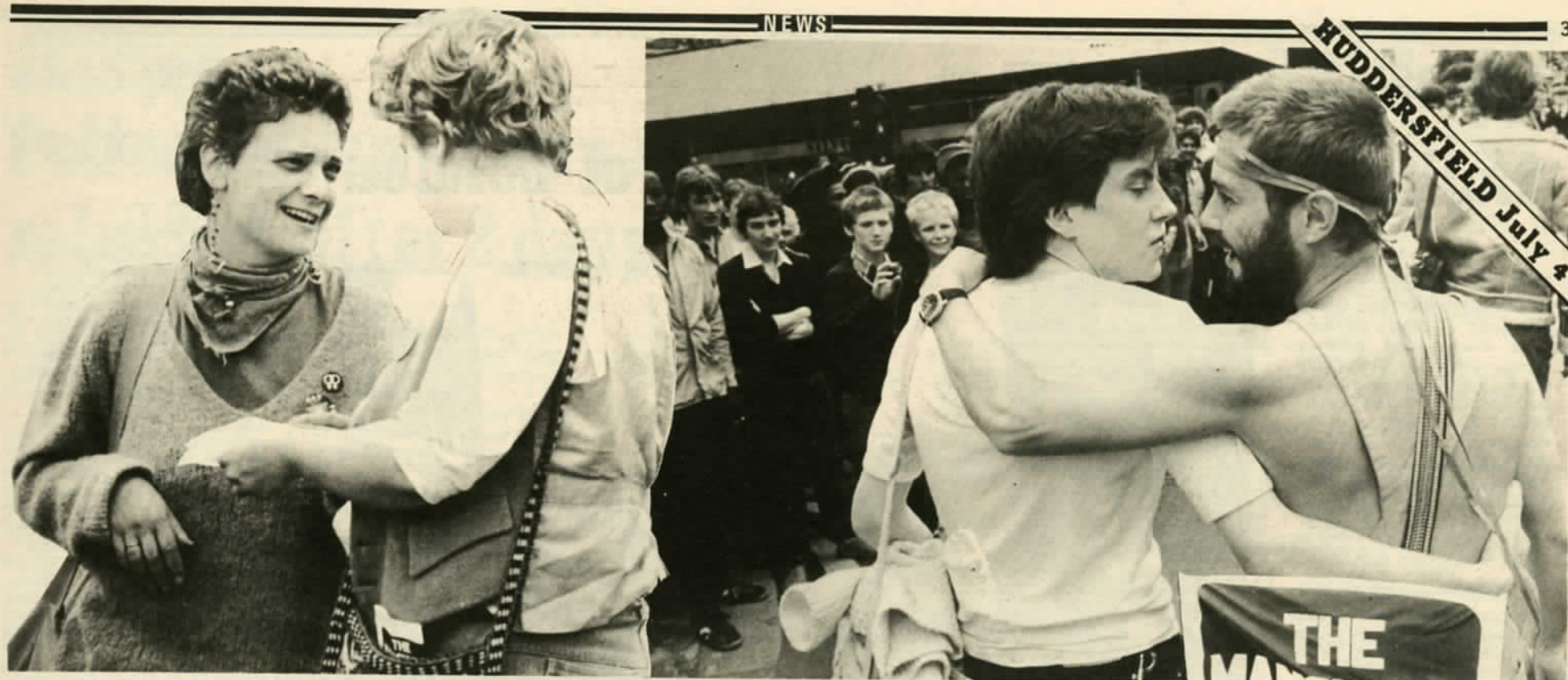
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FORTNIGHTLY

**«AS I laid my head
on Paul's shoulder
I saw a few students
start to stare at us.
I closed my eyes
and listened to
the music...»**

**REFLECTIONS
OF A
ROCK LOBSTER**

— see page 16



'I don't know what the world's coming to, never mind Huddersfield!'

by Chris Kirk and Andrew Lumsden/photographs by Bob Workman

IN A HOLLOW of the West Yorkshire hills they saw what they'd never seen before — lesbians and gay men walking through the town, from football ground to park, banners aloft. Women twined lovingly with women, men with men. If you've seen it before, you know what it's like. But if you've never seen it . . .

A crowded cafe, people rushing to the door to see what was coming up the hill: "My God, it's a banner saying Liverpool Gay something or other!" Five or six pre-adolescent boys stopping two of us in the street: "You with the parade?" "Yes." "Are you . . ." (pause, were they rejecting 'queer', not quite daring to use it to our faces?) " . . . are you gay?" "Yes." Nonplussed children, unable to think what to say next.

Comments out of the crowds looking on: "There's an awful lot of them, aren't there?" And the woman who said, "I don't know what the world's coming to, never mind Huddersfield!"

Hassles after the March

THE WORLD was coming to Huddersfield, that's what. London had reluctantly given up its own Gay Pride March so that as many as possible would make, this year, for Yorkshire. And it worked. The Lesbian Celebration in London (see next page), the first ever, went off the Saturday before with all the more unique an impact for the lack of the customary, largely-male, Gay Pride March.

And those who got to Huddersfield last Saturday had the sense of achievement and real-life campaigning which has seemed absent, to some, from last year's London

march. Yvonne, a lesbian from Bradford, said "It's after marching here that you'll see the difference. If you walk off alone you'll get hassled, it's not like a Gay Pride March in London."

And people did get hassled, not on the March, nor at the rally in Huddersfield's Greenhead Park, among the swings and children's playground and ice-cream vans, but as they walked back through the town to the Gay Fair, films, and other afternoon events. Kevin, who came from Bradford with Yvonne, and Jane, was kicked in Westgate by "young heterosexuals out of pubs". Anna Durrell, of Lesbian Line, one of the speakers, was walking down from the rally with lesbians and gay men and describes how they met the same hostility, and "just waited till there were enough of us to go through chanting 'Glad to be Gay'."

National Front murmurs

MENACE was vaguely in the air, in the last hours before the March set out, and during the whole day, but in the end it never became real. The National Front had been threatening all week to hold a march somewhere in West Yorkshire, in Leeds or Bradford or Huddersfield, and there'd been fears of a blanket ban on all marches in Huddersfield on July 4, which would have knocked out the Gay Pride one.

Technically, it's for the police to request such a ban, and though Kirklees Council (controlling Huddersfield) apparently wanted such a request, they didn't get one. Simultaneously with the Gay March, some 300 demonstrators, mainly Asians, assembled in the town's Piazza to protest against the lack of a ban, though leaders, acknowledging the gay activity, said "We realize the police's difficulties with other events taking place."

The British Movement had said that 200 of their Yorkshire and Lancashire members would march in Huddersfield even if the NF pulled out, and though Gay News reporters saw a gathering on the London road into Huddersfield which looked very like NF or British Movement, and gays thought many individuals

in the town could well have been NF or BM, there was no march, and no real trouble. Nor did marchers have any complaints about the police.

"I have a message . . ."

ORGANIZERS thought there were about 2000 on the March. Spread out on the grass in Greenhead Park, with only four or five police looking on, we were a brilliantly colourful sight, surrounded by families getting on with their own afternoons. Anna Durrell kicked off the speeches with a rousing "I have a message for you . . . Somehow we have to reach 2½ million people. It's wonderful you're here. It would be absolutely wonderful if everyone here helped us build a gay community. We can build a gay community so big no-one will dare oppress us."

Dave Landau of CAPM (Campaign against Public Morals) said "We are corrupting, corrupting and beautiful" and criticized the gay movement for fear of the issue of paedophilia. Jackie Forster, of Sappho, said "I bring greetings and love from lesbian sisters everywhere," and, "darlings, we're going to have to fight for our privacy."

First speakers had got the mood right up, with roars of applause, when an unscheduled speaker took the microphone to complain of the ribboned Rolls Royce, with a Lady Di and Charles in the back, which had led the parade together with a float satirizing American Independence Day (also July 4). The Rolls belonged to John Addy, owner of the Gemini Club — it was police raids on the Gemini last December which sparked off the whole focus of gay interest this year on Huddersfield.

The speaker, to cries of "Off! Off!" from some, and shouts of agreement from others, described the Rolls as an insult to unemployed gays on the March. Many local gays, calling Addy a "rip-off artist", joined in. It was at this point in the rally that the watching police smiled, and there were calls from the platform that "Today we should be united!"

And the best news of the afternoon? That though charges against six gay men, for "indecent" behaviour of one sort or another, are still pending, 59 others threatened by Huddersfield police earlier this year have definitely been dropped. □



ON THE PARADE

Huddersfield Gay Action Group • Liverpool Gay Community • Leeds CHE • Manchester Gay Group • Gay Rights at Work (led by Susan Shell) • Liverpool Gayline Centre • Mancunian Gay • Wirral CHE • NUS Gay Group • Brixton Housing Co-op • CHE Tyneside • Metropolitan Community Church • Halifax Area Gay Group • Keele University • Islington & Haringay CHE • Huddersfield CHE • Lesbian Line • University of Nottingham Gay Group • Marylebone & Paddington CHE • Gay Youth (a huge banner) • Croydon CHE • CHE Bristol • Gay Teachers Group • Consenting Adults in Public (theatre group) • Keele University Gays against Fascism • C.H.E.ster • CHE Medway • Aberdeen GAA Huddersfield SWP • Sappho • Gay Helpline • Irish Gays in London • Oxford Gay Pride • Gays against Imperialism • Brighton Lesbian Group • Gay Video Group filmed the March throughout, with Andy Lipman as camera.

STOP PRESS!

BELFAST's first-ever club premises for gays opened successfully the night before Huddersfield's March. The RUC (Royal Ulster Constabulary) "had a squint round" early on the Friday and Saturday nights, and apart from "going ashen-faced when they glimpsed the disco" did nothing to interfere. Well-wishers came up from Dublin to join the 80-100 gays (women as well as men) who stayed, despite the lack of a license as yet, till 2am. Just completed in time for the opening, the Carpenter Club's launch was "a great success, a party."



50,000 lesbians and gay men on New York's Pride March. Report next issue.