

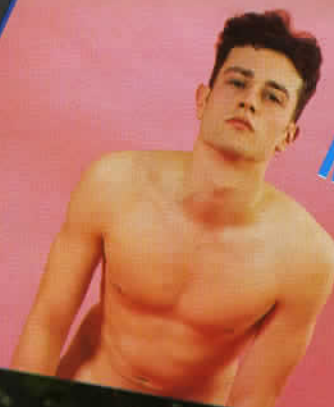
# GAY times

incorporating GAY NEWS

AUGUST 1992

£1.50

MAN of the  
MONTH  
MARCH



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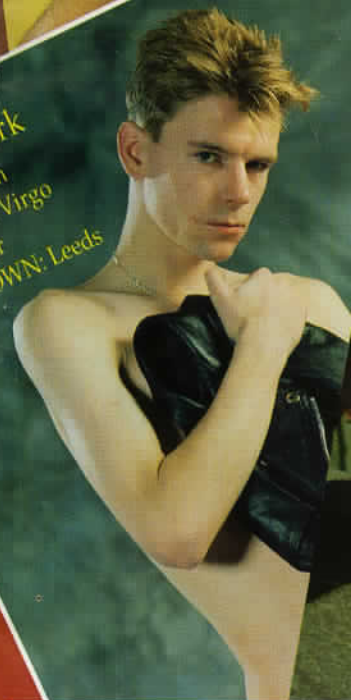
LAIN

Lain is  
a  
twenty year old from  
Surrey who likes to  
keep himself very  
busy. A lot of his  
spare time is spent on  
his hobbies,  
photography and  
writing.

PHOTOGRAPHS  
BY  
NIGEL HATTON



Mark  
teen  
GN: Virgo  
alter  
ETOWN: Leeds



## LOOKING at erotica

EUROPRIDE '92:  
'A pure vision of paradise'



9 770950 610017



# A community triumphant

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BILL SHORT

COMMENTARY BY DAVID SMITH

EUROPEAN visitors to London for EuroPride 92 are said to have been stunned by the sheer size and scope of the festival, and most especially by the huge numbers of people who turned up for the main events of the day in south London's Brockwell Park. Best estimates put the total at almost 100,000, the biggest lesbian and gay event that the continent of Europe has ever seen. But it isn't just continental Europeans who have been stunned; the British too have been so overwhelmed, that all of our concepts of what a lesbian and gay community is and what it could be, every aspect of the language we have used to describe that community over the past twenty five years has been strained to the limit.

The glorious, baking sunshine was certainly an asset to the day; the milling crowd had stripped off its outer protective layers even before the festival parade, which started the day's proceedings, had got underway from the Embankment by the side of the Thames. But this was to be more – much more – than a 'wonderful', 'magnificent', 'fabulous' sunny day out. A few minutes before noon, as the parade was about to set off, led by the EuroPride banner and the banner of the Aids-memorial quilt, the teeming thousands were hanging from the overhead bridge craning for a view of friends and once-a-year acquaintances, and pressing up against the crush barriers with a tingling sense of nervous anticipation.

The pre-march crowd had never felt so busy, so eager, so tremblingly aware that something very special was in the air. It wasn't just the sunshine that had brought 35,000 people out onto the streets of the West End of London on this historic Saturday June 27th, not just a physical warmth which had helped to sweep away anticipations of the problems of transport to Brockwell Park, for the post-march festivities. What was much more important was an emotional warmth, an intellectual warmth, a gut feeling about the tender warmth of a community together.

The feeling had been building up for several hours, and for those coming from the further fields of Europe, even for several days. It had been palpable on the platforms on the underground, on the coaches and trains bringing people to the capital, in the central London gay bars, even on the steps of the church of St Martin-in-the-Fields which had rung out a celebratory peel of bells. It was – as has been said of so many lesbian and gay events over the years – a very real sense of homecoming, a sense of belonging, a sense of discovering one's roots which one had never really known, and a confirmation for once and for all that none of us is and none of us need ever be alone.

Such feelings were shining on the face of every lesbian, every gay man, every bisexual man, every bisexual woman and even – paradoxically – on the faces of every apparent heterosexual couple who



● Dykes to the fore: Front-stage crowd



● Real family relationship: Mum came too



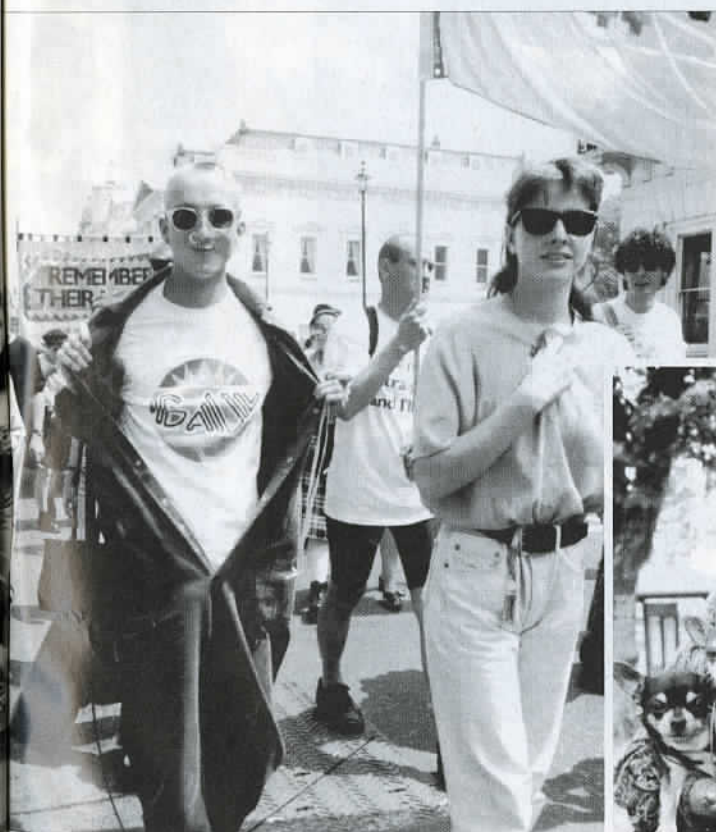
● Dykes with attitude: Read my lips



● Cross-channel chic: Sisters from France



● Flashing our credentials: Gay day out



● Absolutely Sixties: Man with dogs



● Black and white: We're here and queer



● ACT UP Paris:  
'We want you  
to live'



● Absolutely  
Swedish:  
From the  
land of ABBA

joined the march as it wound its way through Trafalgar Square and along to Hyde Park.

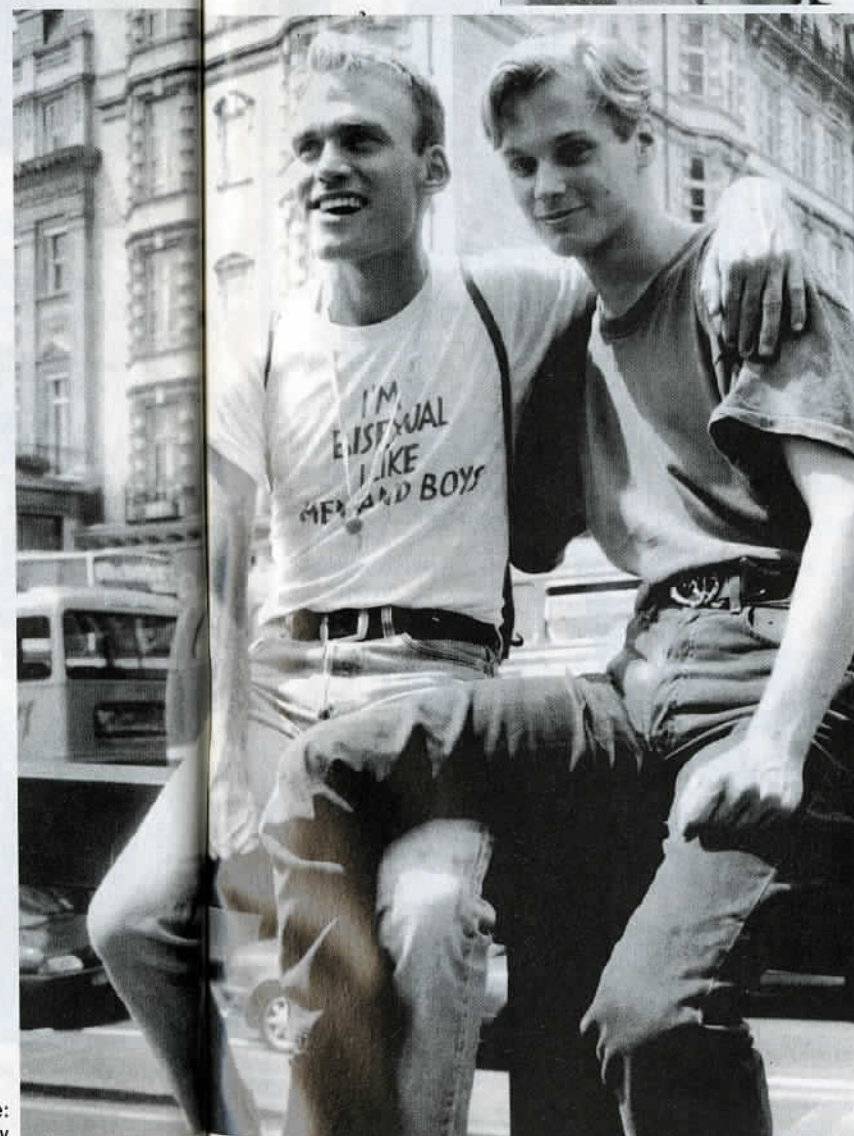
It didn't seem to matter that having been diverted away from Piccadilly Circus and the West End's busiest corners, the early part of the parade followed quiet and almost spectator free streets; to the chagrin of those whose slogan was: "Having a good time is not enough", most of us weren't there to shout defiance at onlookers, we weren't even there seeking justice or the righting of a wrong. We were there with our banners, our dogs, our boyfriends and girlfriends, our children, our friends, our placards and our memories, to repair our much-damaged sense of belonging, to answer the all-too-often unheeded inner voice pleading with us to enjoy - ourselves.

With whistles and whoops and laughing and singing, those feelings reached almost fever pitch in the tubes which were packed for the rest of the day taking the crowds of marchers - and then yet another fifty or sixty thousand late-comers - south to the main festival site in Brockwell Park, a place which when invested with such magical emotions would have seemed, whatever its qualities, a latter day Garden of Eden. As it turned out of course - fully justifying the confidence of the EuroPride organising committee - the park was a totally inspired choice.

The perfect slopes, the bright sun, the lush shade, the seemingly endless space were a metaphor for freedom. Freedom not to have to ignore our inner voice, not to have to feel alone; freedom to shake off the doubt and anxiety which so often dogs our everyday lives, freedom to truly believe after many years in a



● Bare cheek:  
Go-go boys backstage



● Love in the fast lane:  
bisexual man and boy



● Deviant  
diversity:  
SM stall  
promotes  
fetishism



● Pink pooch  
power:  
Clone family  
picnic





● Jump and jive: Bang disco tent

lonely wilderness that everything we are belongs not just to ourselves and to each other but to a greater intangible whole which that much maligned word 'community' comes close to but will never entirely succeed in encapsulating.

Every tangible facet of our community and communities was of course there; the drag, the cabaret and the music, political, religious, trade union and lesbian and gay rights organisations, people of colour, the disabled, health education and an exhibition of quilts in memory of those who have died of Aids, the fashion and the clothes, the intellectual and the cultural, the drink, the DJs, the drugs and the dancing, everything that binds our culture together in conflict and harmony.

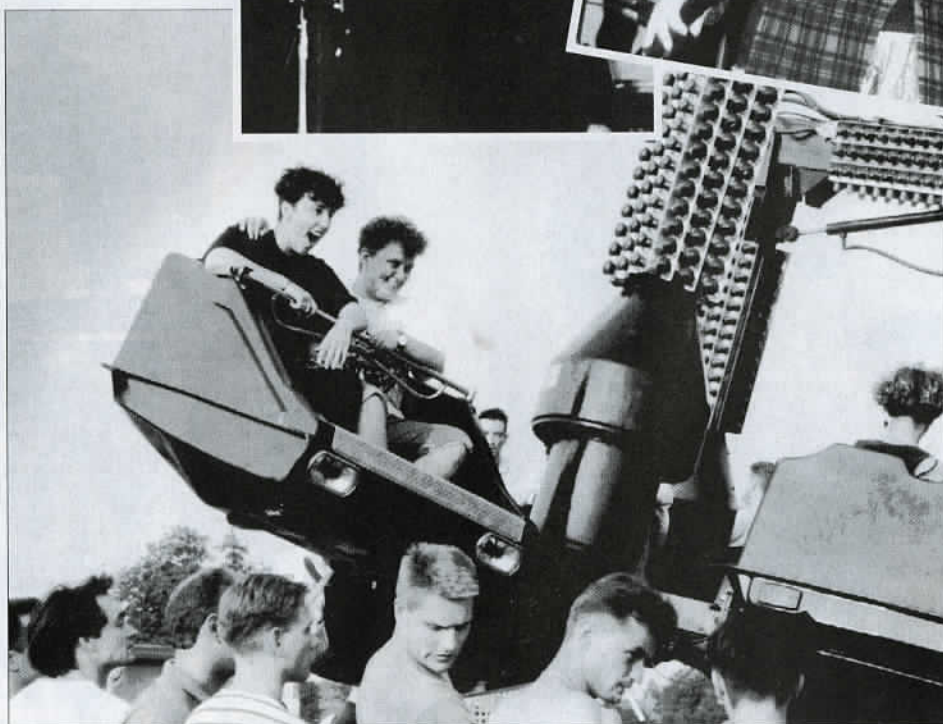
The EuroPride organisers had done us proud and our stars and our heroes were magnificent. Late in the evening as the sun was setting, people cried with emotion as Boy George appeared on stage to perform some of his most popular and moving songs. And as darkness fell, to the music of Queen and the late Freddie Mercury, the firework display seemed a final orgasmic release.

As we went our separate ways to our varied walks of life, we were none of us alone. We had discovered a new dimension – beyond the notion of community. A sense of safety, a sense of being part of an unstoppable movement, part of a tribe that had been scattered but is now reunited. An embattled community which has sensed its moment of triumph. ■

● Sonia:  
'You'll never  
stop me  
from loving  
you'



● 'We must stop fighting each other': Boy George unites the generations of love



● Funfare fun: lesbians taken for a ride