

Campaign for Homosexual Equality

Annual Report
2006-2007

**The anniversaries.
The upsides.
The downsides.**

**Allan Horsfall (right), CHE's Life President,
brings us a special report.**

**Plus a review of what has concerned CHE
over the past year.**



C a m p a i g n f o r H o m o s e x u a l E q u a l i t y

A n n u a l R e p o r t 2 0 0 6 - 2 0 0 7

Welcome to another CHE Annual Report, which once again has brought together some of the significant events involving or concerning CHE over the past year or so.

Our featured article this year looks at two of the most significant moments in gay history, but also examines the setbacks as well as the gains. In this article, CHE Life President **Allan Horsfall** asks why queerbashing is the new blood sport.

Among the many issues covered in this Report, we also look at efforts to launch the **Derek Oyston Awards**.

The words '**murder music**' have been in the gay campaigner's lexicon on and off over the past few years. We welcome developments on that score (as it were!).

One of CHE's most major decisions taken during the year has been that it would abandon its desire to seek **charitable status**. We have a report on that, too.

CHE is also looking at ways to mark the late **Jim Edgell's** work for National Friend. He'd been on CHE's executive committee as well as performing work for the National and his local Friend organisations.

We remember two more people who've died during the year: **Ken Glazier**, of Marylebone and Paddington CHE Group, and **Brian Hill**, a member of Southampton CHE and a former conference treasurer.

The Gay and Lesbian Humanist Association has lost its 'captain', **George Broadhead**, who has resigned after

being GALHA's secretary for most of its life. We look at how George and CHE have worked together.

Among sponsorships by CHE have been two cheques for **Gay's the Word** bookshop, which has seen its fair share of problems.

Also, it's easy sometimes for older people to be overlooked. **Alan Louis**, CHE's Community Liaison Officer, reports on an important awareness project; and **Ray Gosling** reports on the sad, tragic, busy year of Gay Monitor.

As well as annual reports, CHE also produced an **Annual Review** earlier this year to mark the anniversaries of the Wolfenden Report and the 1967 Sexual Offences Act, and some Executive Committee members are now considering that this publication might become a serious/academic LGBT journal. Such a publication is currently missing, they believe. In the days leading up to the passing of the 1967 legislation, the Albany Trust published the booklet *Man and Society*.

So a lot to think about. We hope you enjoy this report, and enjoy our 2007 annual conference on 9 September.

While this Annual Report covers the Executive Committee's activities since the CHE annual conference in July 2006, the financial year runs from 1 January 2006 to 31 December 2006. The audited accounts for 2006 are contained in a separate document.

Campaign for Homosexual Equality

Executive Committee 2006–2007

Bernard Crowe – Treasurer

Barry Cutler – Secretary, Newsletter Organiser

Alan Louis – Community Liaison Officer

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C o n t e n t s

Murder music	3
CHE drops charity bid.....	4
Jim Edgell . . . and others.....	4
Creating awareness.....	5
Anniversaries – the ups and the downs	6–7
CHE cash for Gay's the Word	8
Oyston bequest and other stories	8
Moscow official and Pride ban.....	9
Gay Monitor – a special report.....	10
Secretaries' reports and news in brief	11

Murder music goes underground

So, Beenie Man, Sizzla, and Capleton have now signed a statement to follow the line of Bob Marley's 'One Love' after Peter Tatchell's campaign cost them thousands of pounds in cancelled performances and contracts (*Pink Paper*, issue 928, 14 June 2007). Others are likely to follow suit.

This welcome news must be tempered by the belief that the only reason these homophobic people have signed away their promotion of gay hate is that of the loss of huge amounts of money, and the fact that the law is now in place to prosecute them – *not* because their attitudes have changed to 'Peace and Love and Happiness'.

Equally to blame for that promotion are the major outlets that sold the tracks to young people who thought it gave them 'street cred' to own the latest CD from one of these 'Big Brothas'.

Thousands of these hate tracks were sold across Britain and played by DJs in many outlets, even in gay venues until the gay DJs discovered what the lyrics were advocating.

In the black and ethnic communities, the tracks were perceived as 'anthems' and no DJ was worth his salt if he didn't play tracks for the delight of his homophobic fans – in pubs and clubs, at weddings and private parties, on record stalls, on the Walkman, in the street.

Even worse, these tracks were played in thousands of family homes across the country. Indeed, 'murder music', as it has become known, was widely played and popular. We now have a generation of young potential homophobes who still play these tracks – at private parties or in family homes. It is not a crime to own, play or listen to 'murder music' tracks in private, but it *is* now a crime to promote openly the killing of homosexuals.

Peter Tatchell's life was threatened by fans queuing at a venue where Beenie Man was about to perform, when he and other protesters suddenly found fans shouting abuse and threats that he would be set upon by 'Yardies' (drugs barons).

There are still the fundamentalist preachers who proclaim that the 'will of God' is to destroy the sodomite as in the Holy Scripture, and they will deny condoning the killing of homosexuals, but will not condemn it. It is up to the homosexual to change his or her ways and turn to the Lord for forgiveness, according to them.

These attitudes are conveyed to the classroom



A protest against so-called murder music. The human-rights campaigner Peter Tatchell is seen in profile.

(Picture: Alan Louis)

every day in every school in Britain, and yet no one seems to realise that the problem lies within the communities that support homophobia within their culture.

Homophobic school bullying may be eliminated from the school playground, but reports suggest it will transfer to the streets, and pupils may be in danger going to school or, more likely, going home from school. Remember Damilola Taylor? Young people do not have to be homosexual: they can be targeted because they are clever, show sensitivity or just seem to be different. Homophobic taunts, such as 'gay boy' and 'batty man', are used to intimidate and to denigrate the victim.

It is implausible to believe that, because the law has changed in our favour, the problems have been resolved. Homophobia remains firmly within the confines of many communities, backed up by religious dogma. Unfortunately, the damage done cannot easily be undone. This attitude remains a tragic legacy from Jamaica to young lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgendered people living in communities, not only in Britain but worldwide. The roots of homophobia are deep, and legislation will not easily extinguish it.

– Alan Louis

CHE drops charity bid

Probably the major decision taken during the year has been that CHE would abandon its desire to seek charitable status.

Past Annual Conferences have been told what progress was being achieved. A consultant, Mick Denton, was invited to steer us through the maze to achieve charitable status. A cheque for £875 was paid as half the fee necessary to reach that goal.

However, the majority of the current Executive Committee did not believe they were sufficiently knowledgeable of the legal duties of being a charity trustee and a director of a company limited by guarantee. There was also serious concern that the Charity Commissioners' requirements of a minimum age for membership of 18 and the need to make members' names and addresses available on request was contrary to CHE's long-held policy of confidentiality and open membership. So it was

agreed to abandon the aim of charity status and be one of the few LGBT organisations free of the charity regulations.

It means CHE could back political activity, such as financially supporting a candidate in a parliamentary election, which requires a £500 deposit. The idea is that, if and when it would be politically advantageous to sponsor a candidate to campaign or challenge LGBT issues, a scrutiny panel of, say, three senior CHE members would examine the value of contesting a particular seat, and then give financial support from CHE funds.

In 1977, CHE Executive Committee member Griffith Vaughan Williams was the agent when Peter Mitchell contested the Cities of London and Westminster South by-election as the Westminster Campaign for Homosexual Civil Rights candidate.

Remembering Jim Edgell . . . and others

The CHE Executive Committee is seeking to mark the late Jim Edgell's work for National Friend.

There is no longer a nationwide organisation, and so it missed out on receiving a £500 bequest in his will.

Jim died in October 2005 and had been on CHE's Executive Committee as well as being involved in National Friend and his local organisation, Bedford Friend.

So CHE is considering that a gift might be given to London Friend.



Jim Edgell, left, and Ken Glazier (latter photo by B J Cross)

Ken Glazier

Marylebone and Paddington CHE Group members lost their original chairman when Ken Glazier died during March 2007.

The following notice about Ken's death and career was sent to the members of the Group:

'It was with deep regret that we heard of the death of Ken Glazier, who died unexpectedly from a massive heart attack on 20th March at the age of 72. Ken founded the Marylebone and Paddington Group in 1971; he was the first chairman and held the position three times in the group's first decade.

'The funeral took place on 12th April at the West London Crematorium, Kensal Green. There were

about 100 people present – family, friends, former London Transport colleagues and other transport enthusiasts.

'The simple Humanist ceremony included music and readings chosen by Ken, and a comprehensive account of Ken's life, activities and interests, which included buses and trams, music,

opera and the arts in general.

'Two tributes were given by John Gent, who spoke of his long friendship and his working with Ken at LT, and by Mike Walton, who gave an account of Ken's substantial contribution to the LT museum. Ken's long relationship with Aspi Daver was also mentioned and that Aspi had sadly died in 1992 not long after they had both taken early retirement.'

Brian Hill

CHE is also remembering another stalwart, Brian Hill. Brian had been treasurer for the 1976 CHE Conference in Southampton's Guildhall, and passed away after a six-month battle with cancer, which had developed over Christmas 2006.

As a member of Southampton CHE, he was a valuable source of information about the campaign that developed among the port's churches to stop the CHE Conference being held at Southampton.

Creating awareness



In late November 2006, Hanover in Hackney Housing Association arranged three LGBT awareness training sessions: two days for two separate groups of staff, and one day for all their Hackney sheltered-housing tenants, to attend a session at one of their schemes. CHE's Community Liaison Officer ALAN LOUIS (left) reports.

All three of the above events were facilitated by Antony Smith from Age Concern, England, and I attended as a CHE member and also as a Hanover in Hackney tenant.

There were up to 30–40 employees at each of the events for different members of staff, who were obliged to attend. The atmosphere was attentive, and there was a project where photographs of gay men and women were presented and staff members were asked to identify a gay person by appearance.

The daily sessions went well and each lasted from 10 o'clock in the morning until 4.30 in the afternoon, with a short break for lunch.

My assessment for both these events is excellent. My congratulations to the staff and to the Equality and Diversity team, and to Antony Smith for facilitating the events. More awareness sessions have been requested from within the service.

The third awareness training event was for the tenants. There were six tenants and two members of staff, and Antony Smith again facilitated.

Hanover in Hackney is a growing organisation and it is difficult to engage older tenants, who were probably busy with their daily chores or with more important things to do, or not really interested.

My assessment for this event was again excellent for those who attended, but the event was not supported by over 90 per cent of the tenants.

Conclusion

As more older LGBT people move into communal housing and care, provision and awareness will certainly need to increase. To raise and maintain this awareness on such a scale, it has to come from inside the housing schemes.

New tenants coming into the schemes must be made aware that LGBT people are also tenants, with

the same provisions and rights as all tenants at the point of their assessments. Publications, such as newsletters received by all tenants across the board, could be a useful tool to generate a sense of awareness and respect.

This is not as difficult as it may seem. Small boxed advertisements about facilities specifically for LGBT people's needs – such as counselling services, and groups such as London Friend, PACE, East London Out Project, the Metro, the NAZ Project and others that offer safe places for people to meet or contact by telephone – could help immensely to boost the self-esteem of LGBT people living in covert isolation, and offer a sense of inclusion.

However, inclusion cannot be achieved in the sense of freely being yourself, as you are always aware of restriction to your personal behaviour, when there are no recreational facilities offered to LGBT people in heterosexual environments.

The alternative might be that some schemes could be basically formulated for gay men and women, which might, in the present climate, be the only way that older LGBT people could live their remaining years openly, with the dignity they deserve – with services and care facilities tailored to their needs and provision of LGBT people's recreational facilities.

CHE would value your views on the conclusion of this report, to give a statement of opinion for future input relating to LGBT people in care and sheltered housing. CHE will publish the results of your replies in 2008. Please contact us by letter (at CHE, PO Box 342, London, WC1X 0DU) or send an email to secretary@c-h-e.org.uk

Two anniversaries

As we celebrate two notable anniversaries in the gay calendar this year, we also need to take stock of the downside. Here, CHE's Life President, **ALLAN HORSFALL**, puts matters into perspective.



In this year, which has seen the fortieth anniversary of the 1967 Sexual Offences Act and the fiftieth anniversary of the Wolfenden report, on which that Act was (loosely) based, we have until now celebrated – and rightly – the many gains that have been won in the intervening years.

However, just in case we become too self-congratulatory, let us pause for a moment to record some of the setbacks that have accompanied those gains.

In my years as a high-profile campaigner in the 1950s and 1960s, the thing that I found most dispiriting was the opposition I found among gay men. 'Don't rock the boat,' they would say to me, and 'Let sleeping dogs lie' and 'You're only going to make things worse.'

How I longed for the day when we could prove them wrong – and we have, haven't we? Well – not quite. Some of them still treat me as though I were solely responsible for the destruction of the country's public conveniences!

But there have been more serious setbacks. In my day homophobia in schools was unknown, even though gay sex among schoolboys was rife. Rampantly heterosexual boys who were approached for a bit of gay nookie simply made it clear that that was not for them, but bore no hostility towards the proposer.

Children are not *naturally* homophobic any more than they are naturally racist. These attitudes are learned, and the teachers of them in this case can only have been their parents and family, in a process that began long before the infamous Section 28.

'Rolling a queer'

Although queerbashing existed before the 1960s, it was not of the vicious nature that we now find on Clapham Common and in hundreds of other cruising grounds. It was then known as 'rolling a queer' and was an acquisitive offence rather than a hate crime. The objective was to get hold of a gay man's wallet, often in the course of a sexual or simulated sexual encounter.

Far from wanting to cause injury, the aim was usually to get away without the victim realising he had been robbed and, of course, the lack of injury meant that the incident was less likely to come to the attention of the police.

Now queerbashing has developed into a new blood sport, as many recent sad events illustrate.

So how did we get from there to here? The guilty men – always men – were those journalists who adopted as their mission a commitment to carry on the war against homosexuals that the State had begun to abandon.

These men are too numerous to mention, but we could start with Richard Littlejohn in one or other of the national tabloids and, on what he would no doubt consider to be a higher plane, Richard Ingrams in *Private Eye* and elsewhere.

These two had their counterparts across the country in numerous local evening and weekly papers. A notorious example was Andrew Grimes in the *Manchester Evening News*. Amazingly, Grimes once produced a sympathetic interview with Paul Temperton when Paul was secretary of CHE. But since that time his pen has dripped with homophobic poison.

The *Lancashire Evening Telegraph* carried a pseudonymous column under the name of John Blunt – written in turn, I used to suspect, by staff members seeking to outdo each other in who could put the knife the furthest into gays.

Notwithstanding the early rantings of John Gordon and, later, John Junor, both in the *Sunday Express*, there was little or none of this journalistic malevolence before the late 1950s.

Campaign of hatred

But from then it went on, nationally and locally, in town after town, spreading the poison until it seemed to stop suddenly, maybe a couple of years ago. I like to think that the offenders underwent a change of heart, but I suspect that they were stamped upon by editors who had realised that this primitive vindictiveness was no longer selling papers. But the damage has been done, and it will take generations for it to be undone.

And who gave the journalists the green light to embark on this long campaign of hatred?

The papers and journalists took their lead, I would suggest, from the parliamentary opponents of reform who predicted a future worse than the fall of the Roman Empire! It is instructive to look back at some of the more notable contributions to that long-running debate, for these were the advance guard, the banner carriers, of that considerable – but fortunately now diminishing – force that took over the persecution of gays as they witnessed, to

It is difficult to believe that this kind of bias is absent when a predominately heterosexual jury is dealing with a gay defendant.



My fellow campaigner Ray Gosling. We've looked at quite a number of court cases over the years.

their horror, the State withdrawing from this role.

Let us take for example the views of Mr Godfrey Lagden, the Conservative member for Hornchurch: 'Those who support the motion . . . tell us continually about these consenting males. Have we reached the stage of misguided thinking that we say that, providing two evil

people consent, then their actions should be considered legitimate? In my opinion, in the general run, the homosexual is a dirty-minded danger to the virile manhood of this country.'

And then we have this psychobabble from Dr Broughton, the Labour member for Batley and Morley, who as well as being an MP was also a practising psychiatrist: 'Homosexuality occurs in all personality types, but two types ought to be particularly mentioned. The first is described as the adolescent and mentally immature adult, some of whom overcompensate for their inferiority by bravado. They are aggressive types, apt to be bullies, and those of them who are homosexuals I believe are dangerous as homosexuals.'

A psychiatrist from the other side of the House was Dr Reginald Bennett, the Tory MP for Gosport and Fareham, who declared, 'I absolutely refuse to accept that the man who accepts another adult male as his partner will not seek an adolescent male above the age of puberty, because I think they all do.'

As these two pieces of medical enlightenment were conveyed to the House and the nation, one had to wonder whether these psychiatrists had a pecuniary interest in resisting any relaxation of the law. The game was rather given away by a later intervention in the debate by Dr Broughton: 'Is it not possible that it works the other way, that at the present time homosexuals come to psychiatrists in the hope that they may be changed because they fear the law? If the law allowed homosexuality between consenting adults, would they not be so worried about it?'

And here is Richard Shepherd, the Conservative MP for Cheadle: 'There is a category of 24 per cent [of homo-

sexuals] who will be prepared to engage in, perhaps, a variety of circumstances, in homosexual activities with boys.'

The level of debate was hardly enhanced by Brigadier Terence Clarke, the MP for Portsmouth West, a constituency that must have seen more than the average share of both homosexuality and queerbashing: 'Would my honourable friend be happy to go into a public house and find a couple of hairy old males sitting on each other's knees and liking it? Is that what we are going to allow?'

Historic child abuse

Then we have Mrs Jean Mann, the Labour MP for Coatbridge and Airdrie: 'I cannot imagine the miners' lodges welcoming a report which will mean that it will no longer be an offence to procure an adult male to set up house in a mining village for a male friend. I cannot see the Cooperative Women's Guilds welcoming this, or the Townswomen's Guilds.'

A current concern of mine is grave suspicion of anti-gay prejudice on juries. The value of now having a law that is equal in its enactment is diminished if it is not equal in its enforcement. A recent report commissioned by the Ministry of Justice has revealed that black and ethnic-minority jurors tend to find white defendants guilty more often than white jurors do. There is also some evidence that white jurors also show 'same-race leniency'.

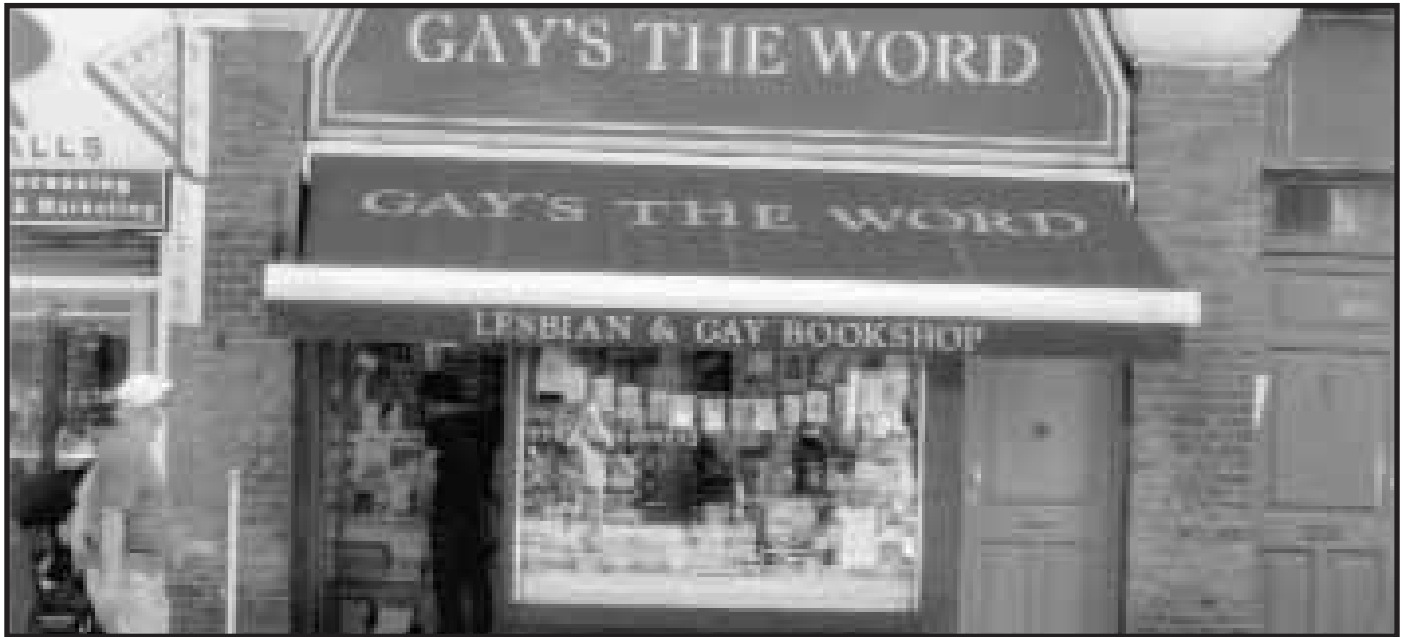
It is difficult to believe that this kind of bias is absent when a predominately heterosexual jury is dealing with a gay defendant. Indeed, in the court cases that have been observed by my fellow campaigner Ray Gosling and me over the last few years, I have become certain that this process is at work, particularly in allegations of historic child abuse dating back twenty or even thirty years.

In these cases it is impossible for a defendant to mount a defence and the situation cries out for a Statute of Limitation, similar to that in the USA, to prevent stale cases being brought to court.

So there we have, I would argue, in certain journalists and politicians, the root cause of the war against gays that is now conducted privately, rather than by the State, and manifests itself in the schoolyards, in the cruising grounds, in some kinds of popular music and even in the courts.

Those early and intense expressions of hostility towards gays have been passed down from generation to generation, sometimes gathering strength as they proceed, and will surely take many generations to eliminate. We have won the battle for equality before the law and have made a start in the fightback on the wider front, but we need to intensify our efforts.

May those of us who are still around on the fiftieth anniversary of the first law reform find a happier and more harmonious picture.



Gay's the Word – the gay and lesbian bookshop that has for many years been situated on London's Marchmont Street in Bloomsbury – found itself during the past year in a financial crisis.

When it went public about the way trading had been hit by the bombing of a Stagecoach double-decker bus alongside London's Tavistock Square on 7 July 2005 – among other problems – there was a strong response from those wishing to help this

important and long-established LGBT resource.

Among the cheques that had answered Gay's the Word's request for people and organisations to sponsor shelves at the shop were two in the sum of £250 from CHE.

One cheque was for the lesbian books' shelves at the shop, and the other was for the gay men's literature shelf.

<http://freespace.virgin.net/gays.theword>

Award would mark Derek Oyston's bequest to CHE

Efforts to launch a project – similar to the former Mike Rhodes Award – have proceeded at a slow pace, but with the Gay and Lesbian Humanist Association (GALHA) agreeing to join forces with CHE and administer it.

Hopefully, it will mark in 2008 the thirtieth anniversary of the launch – at the 1978 CHE Conference in Coventry – of the International Gay Association, which was later renamed the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA).

It had been hoped to announce the awards project on 30 June during the 2007 Pride celebrations in London's Trafalgar Square. However, there had been insufficient progress to launch the project, which will be named the Derek Oyston Awards in memory of CHE's most recent and generous benefactor.

ILGA's conference between 25 and 28 October in Vilnius, Lithuania, may now be the location for the launch of the award.

Gay Monitor gets financial help

Financial support for Gay Monitor – Court Watch has continued.

This is a project launched by CHE Life President Allan Horsfall and one of our Vice-Presidents, Ray Gosling (see special feature, Page 10).

They attend courts dealing with LGBT cases across Great Britain and deal by personal contact with those mainly the subject of ancient homosexual incidents.

Originally, Allan and Ray carried the financial burden of providing what is a campaigning project. Because of their expertise in this field, CHE's Executive Committee decided to meet the travel and

subsistence costs of Allan and Ray attending the court hearings.

During 2006, CHE provided £500 and has given a further £500 in financial support during 2007.

www.gaymonitor.co.uk

Rainbow Seniors Forum

A cheque for £500 has been given to the recently formed London-based group catering for elderly LGBT people, Rainbow Seniors Forum, to help fund its launch. However, although the cheque has been paid into that group's bank account, it has not been able to access its funds due to some internal problems.

The row over the City of Moscow banning a Gay Pride march during 2006 resulted in a confrontation in 'the West' with two of the Russian capital's leading citizens.

It all stems from the annual World Travel Market held in London's Excel Exhibition Centre in November 2005.

At that four-day trade exhibition, the Moscow Tourist Association held a press conference. Attending the event was CHE Executive Committee member Griffith Vaughan Williams, who asked one of Moscow's Deputy Mayors, Mr Josef Ordjonikidse, if he would be meeting the Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone. The answer was that he would – the next day.

Time marches on – and there was no 2006 Gay Pride March in Moscow.

So, at the 2006 World Travel Market – the same event, with Griff being one of the few journalists present – the scene was set for some LGBT campaigning!

At these press conferences, you have the usual line-up of Russian 'top men' – the Deputy Mayor of Moscow and also the chairman of the Moscow Committee for Tourism, plus an interpreter.

Griff asked the Deputy Mayor if he recalled the question he had asked the previous November, and if, in 2006, Mr Ordjonikidse had received an invitation to meet Mr Livingstone. The Deputy Mayor stated he had a standing invitation to meet the Mayor of London. Not satisfied with the answer, Griff asked if he had been given a specific invitation for this visit. It resulted in Mr Ordjonikidse admitting he had not. Mr Livingstone, however, was away from Britain, trying to negotiate a deal to obtain cheap fuel for London's buses.

Griff then turned to the ban on Moscow's Gay Pride March and pointed out that the 2005 and the 2006 World Travel Markets had turned the spotlight on LGBT travellers and the so-called pink economy.

The 2007 press conference – as usual – was full of 'camp followers' representing tourism projects in Russia. Griff then asked the Deputy Mayor how he could justify the ban when the exhibition was to attract LGBT visitors to all parts of the world.

Through the interpreter, Griff was told by the Deputy Mayor that he had not expected to come to the West and be questioned about such matters. When the interpreter spelt out LGBT in full in the Russian language, the reaction from those present was most marked.

There is time for a campaign to be developed for this November's World Travel Market.

Regularly, the Mayors of London, Paris, Berlin and Moscow meet; and Mr Livingstone, as well as the openly gay Mayors of Paris and Berlin, have clearly stated a dislike of the Moscow Mayor's ban

Moscow

Deputy

Mayor

challenged

on Pride

march ban

on his city's Gay Pride marches.

Now the LGBT activists must target the organisers of World Travel Market, Reed Travel Exhibitions, of Richmond-upon-Thames, Surrey.

LGBT visitors have been recognised as a source of potential business. So their rights in all cities and countries – including Moscow and Russia – must be protected, with Reed Travel Exhibitions being brought into the battle. The company should make clear that, if a city or country discriminates, there will be no stand at the World Travel Market. If a location bans a Gay Pride march, then that city is banned from the World Travel Market.

Might Warsaw and Poland be targets for the November 2007 World Travel Market?

**London Mayor
Ken Livingstone –
he and other
mayors share a
dislike of the
Moscow Mayor's
ban.**



Sad, tragic – another busy year

Gay Monitor has had yet another busy year with a steady trail of sad, tragic, awful and, in the view of my colleague Allan Horsfall and me, unnecessary police/CPS/court cases brought against male gays.

Of course, we know there is no discrimination now – gay or straight. All are equal to do whatever sex they want as long as it is consenting and over the age of sixteen (or in the case of carers eighteen), and homophobia is a crime.

So why are we in business?

Well, that's an interesting question, to which we have no sensible answer. Sex just seems to be, in our culture, an obsession. And, if the sex is 'out of line', it is to be stamped on – even if there was no sex at all.

Indeed the worst case we had last year was a man accused of being a 'paedie' in a park when he wasn't – but by the time his innocence was proven he had lost his home and his job. Nothing ever came to court. And as for compensation for the wrong done him – nil.

There is a continuance of 'historic abuse' cases. We have a vicar (now ex-vicar) coming up to face allegations that thirty years ago he had mild sexual dalliance (as we understand the charges at the moment) with a lad who was then fifteen or sixteen. These cases should simply not be brought. And with the grants of £500 from CHE – for which we give a heartfelt thank-you – we have done some research that shows in many lands of Germany, provinces of Canada and states of the USA such historical-abuse cases could not be brought.

Details of the work we've done and are doing are posted on the website www.gaymonitor.co.uk, but we need money to cover things and much more help as our own age frails us.

We attend, where we can, fraternal organisations such as FACT (Falsely Accused Carers and Teachers), HAAP (Historical Abuse Advice Panel) and SAFARI, but our links and lobbying need to be much more forceful.

We have only one MP faintly interested – Claire Curtis-Thomas, the Member for Crosby – and how many openly male gay MPs have we who are open but campaigning? None. Maybe there are a dozen silent (or unknowing) ones on this issue.

We also need to involve Stonewall. Indeed, much more is needed to finish unfinished business in a campaign that is, after all, for homosexual equality.

I am only of course sketching a *little* of what's happening. And we *know* only a little. We need a fuller, more national, survey because we hear only what dear Allan Horsfall reads of in the local papers of Lancashire, and what comes to us direct via the website. We have covered cases the last twelve months in Bristol, Newcastle and Nottingham – but that doesn't mean similar isn't happening in Winchester, Worcester and Woolwich.

One of the worst last year that reached the Crown Court (and it always goes to Crown) was in the Midlands. A minicab driver with a speech impediment and from a bad home had made a life and had regular contracts including one to take a lad of about fifteen with Tourette syndrome to a special school. The lad says one morning that he'd like to kill himself. The driver says don't, and pats his trousered thigh.

**By Ray
Gosling**



The lad, two or three years later, sees the taxi driver in the evenings in a Wetherspoon pub and taps him up for cigs, booze and an odd fiver. No sex – but there's a new stepdad in the lad's home who susses some of this and reads a lot into it and calls for the police to investigate. They do, and charges are laid. The driver immediately loses his taxi licence and the CPS procedure commences.

A year and a half later we're in a Crown Court and the taxi driver (ex-taxi-driver) has now had a stroke and we think, as we befriend him, that he's going to be a terrible witness in his own defence.

It's the morning of day one of what's booked in to be a five-day trial. The cost of these things! The CPS barrister (in from London) asks for an adjournment before the jury are even sworn in. Judge Grumpy says all right. We reconvene at noon and the CPS barrister then says he himself has now phoned the lad – who has no complaint. Same with the lad's mother and new stepdad, who didn't want it pursued either.

The CPS now intend to withdraw the case and say sorry to the defendant. Judge Grumpy looks at the CPS crossly and barks, 'Couldn't these phone calls have been made earlier?' The CPS grovel. His Honour then says to the defendant, 'You can leave the dock now – sorry about all this.' But his life is ruined.

We need more money; more work.

And we've seen the first, for us, of a new kind of 'crime' from the Internet: a MySpace/Faceparty/Facebook* type of a case where a thirteen-year-old pretends to be eighteen and desperate for sex and entraps a man in his twenties (see our website) and the man gets nicked, loses his job. No sex in this case at all – the jury agree with the defence – but the entrapped man was technically guilty of grooming and therefore goes to prison.

There is much unfinished business for any campaign for equality in such matters, but it needs money and help to monitor nationwide. It needs time and money to lobby. It needs fitter and younger people than Allan and I. It needs gays to do more than just parade their pride in their thongs in Trafalgar Square.

Put your heads together and pursue the cause for justice – for common sense, too – that was begun in the 1950s and made by CHE in the 1960s, and has not yet been won. These other organisations such as FACT and HAAP are much better funded but they don't take on the extra dimension that is involved when a male is accused of homosexual offence – and the accused will get, we reckon, a more determined police, a more determined CPS and, when put before the jury, a jury more likely to convict.

And the 'offences' we at Gay Monitor deal with we maintain should never really get to a court. Try telling that to the *Sun* – we've got to.

* For those not up to steam on these things, MySpace, Faceparty and Facebook are social networking websites, populated by people of all ages, but mainly by young people.

From the secretaries' desks . . .

Barry Cutler, CHE Secretary

Through the year, I have dealt with the usual flow of requests from students in secondary education and in colleges asking for information to help them with their school projects and course work.

Subjects enquired about include the legal situation, civil partnerships and homophobia, among others. As well as distributing CHE's own publications, we sometimes include those of other LGBT groups where appropriate, and point enquirers to groups that may be useful for them, depending on their particular lines of enquiry.

Our website has been online for a couple of years now and, though we feel sure that many people do view it, there hasn't been a great deal of feedback. The content on the

site has changed little since it was first launched, and we realise a drastic makeover is needed to make it more appealing to view and to encourage people to want to get involved with CHE.

The Executive Committee is discussing ideas on this, and welcomes any comments and suggestions from members. If you have anything that you feel might help improve the website, please do send them to me (contact details are on Page 2).

As well as the above, I've responded to email enquiries (and waded through vast amounts of spam emails, which is time-consuming!).

Keeping Executive Committee members in touch with contacts from outside CHE, and preparing and distributing paperwork in connection

with Committee meetings has also been part of the job.

George Tregaskis, Membership Secretary

Membership numbers have unfortunately barely changed since a year ago. Closer inspection reveals an interesting cross-section of the LGBT community – young, middle-aged and old – are all included.

Greater London is well represented. There is a theatrical knight, others from as far afield as Tenerife and Barcelona.

Elsewhere in England and Wales there are male and female members scattered over the whole map who have shown great loyalty to CHE over the years, and there is the occasional new member, who is always welcome.

CHE news in brief

Schools Out, but CHE not kept in the picture

A cheque for £200 to be an affiliation fee plus the £16 per head annual membership fees for the five members of CHE's Executive Committee was handed to Sue Sanders when she attended a CHE Executive Committee meeting to report on the activities of the campaigning group Schools Out.

The Executive Committee has expressed its interest in supporting Schools Out and its activities to end homophobic bullying in schools.

However, CHE has not been directly informed about Schools Out campaigning projects.

Appeal for trustees

There is a need for CHE to recruit additional Trustees so that, should there be a dissolution of CHE, the assets can be disposed of under the terms of the CHE Constitution.

The Trustees, hopefully, may not need to act for many decades. If you are interested in being considered as a Trustee, please contact CHE's Secretary, Barry Cutler.

DVDs cover the aged and homophobic bullying

DVDs have been launched on LGBT issues. Age Concern England's DVD turned Claire Summerskill's play on aged LGBT people into a watchable oral history.

In the original stage play there were a number of references to CHE. The DVD has reduced them!

The other particular DVD is on school bullying and was backed by the Greater London Authority and produced by Stonewall.

Cost of IDAHO's leaflet paid by CHE

The cost of printing an A4 coloured leaflet promoting the 2007 IDAHO Day on 17 May was met by CHE. This is the second successive year that CHE has financially supported the International Day Against Homophobia.

CHE also provided the deposit for a reception that was scheduled for 16 May at the Palace of Westminster.

However, Derek Lennard, the UK coordinator for IDAHO, failed to obtain sponsorship and it was replaced with a meeting in a Committee Room, where Griffith Vaughan Williams, a CHE Executive Committee member since 1975, spoke, along with Members of Parliament.

This meeting was sponsored by the Liberal Democrat MP Stephen Williams, who represents Bristol West.

'Captain' George quits GALHA post

George Broadhead's departure from the helm of the Gay and Lesbian Humanist Association (GALHA) was reported to a meeting of CHE's Executive Committee.

For a number of decades George and CHE have worked together on various projects. Therefore, CHE's Executive Committee has expressed best wishes for his retirement from GALHA.

But it is suspected he will keep a finger in GALHA's pie by writing letters to the press.

As the 2007 annual GALHA get-together coincides with CHE's conference, it has been decided to send an appropriate letter marking George's work to be read out before GALHA members.

Griff is CHE rep at NAPO conference

Eastbourne was the venue for the 2006 annual conference of the National Association of Probation Officers (NAPO).

Executive Committee member Griffith Vaughan Williams again represented CHE for the first day of the conference, which lasted three days during October. As is the usual procedure, he was invited to the reception hosted by the NAPO Executive and the one given by Lesbians and Gays in Probation (LAGIP).

As both take place at the same time in the conference hotel, it means Griff drifts from one to the other during the limited time. The 2007 NAPO conference takes place from 19 to 21 October in Scarborough.

Annual Report 2006–2007

CHE

Campaign for Homosexual Equality

For more information on becoming a member of
CHE, please log on to our website

www.campaignforhomosexualequality.org.uk

or

www.c-h-e.org.uk

or send a letter requesting an information pack
and application form.

See Page 2 for full contact details.