

# **LGBT History Project of the LGBT Center of Central PA**

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## **Documents Online**

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SEPTEMBER

1981

### OCTOBER MEETING

October 4 is the next meeting of the Switchboard. It will be at 7 PM, at Bill O.'s, 73 Autumn Lane, Enola (near the Summerdale Junction). The program will be several guest speakers discussing "Women's concerns". The minority of women on the Switchboard in 1981 makes the meeting an important one for all of us. Presently we have only one lesbian active with the Switchboard to refer to for answers that might arise from some women callers.

The T-shirt drawing is also scheduled for this evening. The Gay National Lobby has offered the board a WE WON'T GO LIKE FROGS t-shirt and we are raffling it off. Be sure you have your coupons and money to Colin before October 4.

"I'd love to kiss ya, but I just washed my hair."  
-- Bette Davis  
(her favorite film line)

## GAY BY BIRTHRIGHT

A series of programs entitled "Gay by Birthright" were aired by WKBO Radio in Harrisburg, the week of Sept. 14. Basically the rep't pointed to the fact that being gay is a natural sexual preference and that an estimated 10% of the population is born with a dominant homo-sexuality.

Studies revealed that the popular theory of a dominant mother and weak father causing homosexuality "did not check out". As many heterosexuals as homosexuals came from that type/family environment.

The Kinsey rep't recently released, revealed the misconceptions held concerning homosexuality for centuries. It believes homosexuality to be a biological condition. The study recognized that some homosexuals are unhappy with their sexuality and desire children as well as a longing to belong in the mainstream of society. However, when confronted with the prospect of changing sexual preference, the rep't supports the biological theory with greater evidence.

For those unhappy "homosexuals", 3 ingredients were necessary to attempt psycho-therapy:

1. sufficiently young
2. strongly motivated to change
3. some evidence of bi-sexuality or attraction to the opposite sex.

Even having these 3 conditions psychologists report only a 30 - 50% chance of success in altering sexuality.

Controversy has just begun over the Kinsey rep't. Religious doctrine holds homosexuality to be "unnatural" and crusade against the findings of the rep't. An estimated 21 million Americans are homosexual. And in light of of prejudice practised against them in this society, there is much evidence to support the findings of the Kinsey study. It is not a choice--it is a gift.

Hopefully the rep't will assist gay people to respect their sexuality and the heterosexual to respect it as well.



Beauty is truth, truth beauty,  
that is all/ye know on earth  
and all ye need to know.  
-- John Keats





# editor's Comment

It has always been embarrassing for me to succeed at things, To be the 'winner'. But I have to say that I do like it! I have been writing this column on page 2 since January and in Harrisburg's first Mr. Buns contest, I was contestant #2. But when the contest was over I wasn't a runner-up anymore. Number 1! Success. And with that success I find that the people around me must deal with it. And their faces reveal it all. Some are embarrassed; some are thrilled; some can't stand it. But the messages are delivered loud and clear.

All ready controversy has arisen. "A co-director of the Switchboard is what? Mr. Buns! Well!" I thought that mentality died with the Victorian Age. Apparently not.

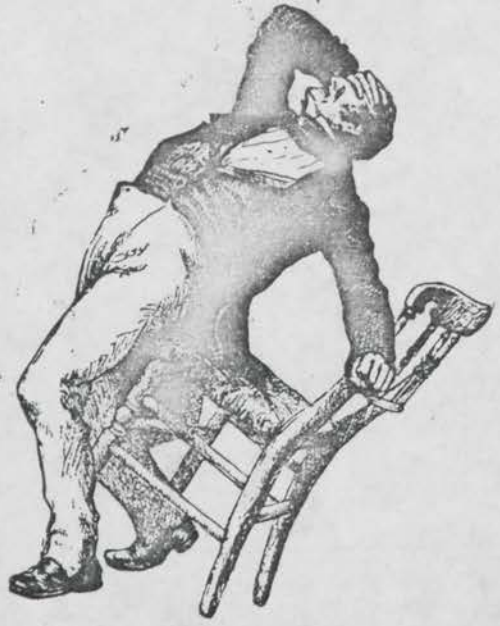
"Life is for living." I endorse that statement to its fullest. Negative comments about my success in this contest are like "water off a duck's back" because I am happy that I won.

Negative comments are designed to intimidate and get people to sit in a rocking chair. I used to go there obediently -- to be a "nice guy". I like being Mr. Buns 1000% more.

I began jogging in the late sixties. It wasn't very popular then and I felt very self-conscious doing it. But I had a high blood sugar to burn and so it was run or suffer. It just wasn't practical to be yelling at people: "The reason I'm doing this is that I have a high blood sugar. Really. I'm not crazy!"

So began my adventure into the realm of being "different". I chose to run and then chose many seemingly unpopular or unusual ways of expressing myself. But each one has given me a better appreciation for life and the living.

So, you have a Mr. Buns on your hands; sometimes embarrassed at that "success", but happy to be him. I want you to share my joy. Some of you have made me feel grand. And I love you. To anyone who wishes to throw cold water on me, remember "water off a duck's back". Life ... is for living! And I intend to live it with zest.



## 1000%

The staff of Switchboard '81 is simply dynamite! Every summer the coverage of the Switchboard suffers and we bemoan the balmy breezes and long sunny days for the failure.

This summer is another story. Of a possible sixty-six nights of service, Switchboard '81 covered 64! That's a 97% record! Again, in July and Aug. bar information led the type/calls in categories.

And now the list looks like this: (Gee, you're terrific, Sw'bd '81)

1st	Aug.	21 of 21	100.0	209
2nd	July	22 of 23	95.6	168*
3rd	June	21 of 22	95.5	232
4th	Feb.	18 of 20	90.0	182
5th	Mar.	19 of 22	86.4	176
6th	Apr.	18 of 22	81.8	158
7th	May	17 of 21	80.9	207
8th	Jan.	17 of 23	73.9	164
totals:			153 of 174	88.4

\*unverified total.

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There is no tyrant like custom, and no freedom where its edicts are not resisted.

- Christian Bovee



# KILLING DEPRESSION

Dr. Robt. J. Wicks, is a psychologist who is on the faculty of Neumann College and who also has a private practice in Center City Philadelphia. He describes his celebrated depression.

"If I'm in the pits and nothing is working, I don't sit and do nothing. I try to enjoy my depression. I rant and rave and try to be dramatic. I may say something like 'Oh, this is the worst thing that ever happened to me'-- even if what happened was fairly trivial.

"I'll tease myself, too. I'll say: 'This is not going to bother me, bother me, bother me...' Sometimes, Wicks said, he will carry on a conversation with himself:

"Should I really be bothered by this?"

"No."

"Am I going to be bothered by this?"

"Yes, for about three days."

If these coping devices don't work, Wicks said that he surrenders to what is ailing him, and "I go through a mourning process. I play up my down feelings. I get in touch with it. I can't try to cope with it; I let it go. I tell my self-intellect that I'll save it for later when I'm feeling better. If a friend dies, I don't try to feel great right away. No, feel good

I don't feel good about it. For any loss this applies -- job, friendship, book contract, whatever.

The problem with which many of us wrestle, he said, is "the narrow American dream of onward and upward. We're always supposed to go in one direction, and that's crazy. Sometimes we have to take a couple of steps backward...and then this can chase us forward in a different direction."

Wicks said that he looks to friends for support--and he tells them "how horrendous it is. I love to talk about it. I don't want empathy; I want sympathy. I tell them in advance **that I'm** going to do this.

They know they're not here to give me solutions. I can talk about my loss, and they'll think I'm okay--

no matter what.

"I mourn and look for support. I sit and do nothing -- instead of looking for answers. But as I start to come out of it, I try to find my compulsive side and take action to correct the situation. I force myself ... to get active. If I lost a job, I say

I'll file for 20 more, knowing I'll get rejection or no response, but I'm happy just putting stuff in the mail.

"I get rolling, and I ask myself: 'How is this an opportunity to move in a new direction?' I've been forced by the fates to take a new look at life."

"With every end there is a beginning ... whether we like it or not. My feeling is that we're stuck with it-- whatever it is. Our liking it or not changes nothing."



As a therapist, he not infrequently encounters people who wallow in the pits far longer than is healthy, people who tend to have "a depressive style of dealing with the world. They are angry at themselves and life ... and they're trying to get what they don't have" -- self-love and self-confidence. In the short run their crabbing gets some sympathy from friends, Wicks said, but in the long run it pushes people away.

In therapy, he said, these people often tend to dwell on things; "they've been cheated on. And they have been cheated. That's a fact. I tell them that I'd be willing to sign an affidavit that they deserved more and that they got ripped off. But that's the way it was. They have a choice: "They can hold onto their bitterness and snivel through life--or they can let go and really enjoy life."

"What's the payoff for perpetual sniveling?"

"The belief that if they show how much they've been deprived, somebody magically will come some day



and make everything right. But if they don't snivel, they give up their right to this reward. They can't get it through their heads that they'll never collect. The reality is that they have been cheated. But the reality also is that they're not going to collect."

The wallowers, Wicks said, don't really believe that they'll get the reward, "but they can't take a chance. It's like buying a lottery ticket. They know they won't win, but it's the only way they'll ever become rich."

They are, Wicks said, "waiting for caviar instead of eating and enjoying their half loaf of bread. The tragedy is that if a special person or event touches their lives, they don't have any appreciation.

"I wish they would enjoy what they have while they have it, including themselves. They ARE lovable ... if only they would let people love them."

by Darrell Sifford from the Phila. Inquire.

## SWITCHBOARD ELECTIONS

According to the S'board Constitution, a nominating committee shall be appointed in September to select candidates for each of six (6) Switchboard posts for election in December. The committee has met and selected thoughtful candidates, but by no means closed the nominations. You may have been missed for a position you feel qualified for or another member may have been missed that you feel would be a good candidate. To remedy this, open nominations will be received at the Switchboard office until the December elections. You need not reveal your identity. Just call, make your nomination and pending the candidates acceptance, their name will be placed on the official ballot.

The committee has selected the following nominees. Only John B. and Sue have declined nominations thus far:

Co-directors (2): Chuck M.  
Ray M.  
Secretary: Steve D.  
Treasurer: Tom B.  
Publicist: Bill O.  
Data Compiler: nominations pending  
candidates acceptance

## CO-DIRECTOR / MR. BUNS

There were 23 men who applied for the title of Mr. Buns 1981. Eighteen of them actually vied for the title. And when the 18 had presented their wares to the judges from five local bars, it was our Co-director, Colin, left standing with the prize.

Mr. Buns 1981 wore red; a basketball jersey, well worn red-trimmed wool socks and a red jock strap. Backstage were the five finalists: #2 (Colin) #8, #12, #17 and #23. Two runner-ups were announced: #17 and #23. Colin stood to prepare to dress and go home as the winner was announced. Number 2! Off came the basketball jersey and the crowd got a real look at Mr. Buns 1981.

The La Rose Rouge and the Pennsmen sponsored the contest, the first in Harrisburg. A trophy and cash prize of \$50. was awarded the winner.

"What will you do with the \$50.?"

The winner's mother is putting a badly needed furnace in her house and siding to plummet those heating bills. That costs lots of \$\$\$\$, so he gave her the \$50 with thanks for the winning posterior.

"She still has trouble with my being gay, wishing there was a "way out". But I keep telling her how happy I am. Now I'm honest about my sexuality and found the freedom to be me", said the former #2.

After the contest one man put it well:

"Well. Colin. I didn't recognize you with your cloths on,"

Buns for days!

## 1981 FLEA MKTs. NETS \$125.<sup>38</sup>

The first two flea mkts. of 1981 netted the Switchboard an impressive \$98.38. On August 2, two members took the leftovers to Harrisburg Drive-in's flea mkt. and collected \$10.. The last flea mkt. of the year netted approximatly \$17, bringing the years total to \$125.38 in our junk sales.

To all of you who made the drives successful, our thanks at GSH. Thanks to you we're staying alive!



## ROBIN TYLER, OCT. 6

"I'm not gay! I'm lesbian & festive", says the delightful comedian, Robin Tyler, who visits Harrisburg, October 6. The performance/benefit begins at 8 PM at the Metron, 400 So. Cameron St., Harrisburg. Tickets are \$5 in advance; \$6 at the door and benefits Dignity/Cent. Pa..

Advance sales are available from any member of Dignity/Cent. Pa. or by writing: Dignity/Cent. Pa.

Box 297

Harrisburg, Pa. 17108

Advance sales through the mail will be acknowledged through postcards and the tickets will be picked up at the door the night of the performance. If you haven't taken care of your seats -- do it today. Time is running out!

## RABBIT-NOVEMBER 14

November 14, is "That Rabbit's in Love". Another exciting evening of entertainment sponsored by the Gay Switchboard of Harrisburg. The program is the familiar yet bygone Uncle Remus tales of the cleverest rabbit ever to live. The tales are delightful and some new surprises are promised for the November performance.

If you missed it in April, please don't do that again! You'll be glad that you came and laughed at life for awhile. Sit back -- and enjoy a rabbit that'll tickle your brain.

Tickets are \$2 in advance; \$3 at the door. They will go on sale October 4. Write the Switchboard or see a volunteer for yours: GSH, Box 872, Hsbg. Pa. 17108 For the life-line in Hsbg.. Do it.



## SEPTEMBER TRAINING

Switchboard '81 has witnessed 21 new volunteers in three previous training sessions in 1981. Of those 21, 13 completed training and went on to work the phones. Of those 13, 12 are presently active volunteers.

Now in September, 6 volunteers are working toward the same goals. If the 6 complete their training, we will have 18 new volunteers in 1981. And the new volunteers have been tremendous. Their vitality is unequalled in the history of the board as far as coverage is concerned. Perhaps those earliest days may still be the 'record', it just feels so good in these latter days to see such great things happening.

In January 6 of 11 volunteers completed training; March was 2 of 3 and May had 5 of 7. Thirteen is plenty of reason to smile.

There may be one more training session in November, if interest is high enough. So, if you missed September and you want to volunteer, write to GSH and express that interest for yet another training session. Then there's sure to be one.

## IS MY DOG GAY, ANN?

Dear Ann Landers,

I own a splendid golden retriever that can be mighty mean if provoked by another dog, but he is extremely gentle with people.

Champ has one trait that worries me. Whereas most dogs wag their tails back and forth, this animal wags his tail in a circle. I recently read that dogs with aberrant tail-wagging habits are apt to be gay. I know you have access to the best scientific minds in the country. Please check and let me know if Champ might be so inclined. JPM

Dear JPM,

I decided not to bother any of those fine scientific minds with this one since the answer couldn't possibly matter to anyone except another dog.