

1986: GAY SWIMMING SESSIONS AT VICTORIA LEISURE CENTRE

AIDS scare:
School ban on gay
swim pool

DAILY
STAR
SUNDAY

Pool ban on kids in AIDS fear

THE
Sun

AIDS scare halts swim lessons

THE  THE TIMES

Pool boycott
The Daily Telegraph

Go ahead for gay only
swimming sessions

OXFORD
MAIL

Gay only bathing approved


THE SCOTSMAN

Gay time in the pool

BELFAST TELEGRAPH

Go ahead for gay only
swimming sessions

The Bolton News

Go ahead for gay-only
swimming sessions at
Radford baths

the evening
Telegraph
PeterboroughToday.co.uk

South Wales
ECHO

Gay Plunge! Go ahead for gay-only
swimming sessions at Redford baths

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Gay days - gay only swimming sessions

THE Herald
THE VOICE OF PLYMOUTH

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Grimsby Telegraph

Gay play! Gay only sessions at baths.

Permission given for gay only sessions

EVENING Courier
THE VOICE OF HALIFAX AND CALDERDALE

Council gives go ahead for gay only swimming

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News & Star



Gays in swim

WREXHAM

Evening Leader

Gay Swimmers. Go ahead for gay-only sessions

Nuneaton
Tribune

Gay-time

Baths decision. Go ahead given for gay only sessions

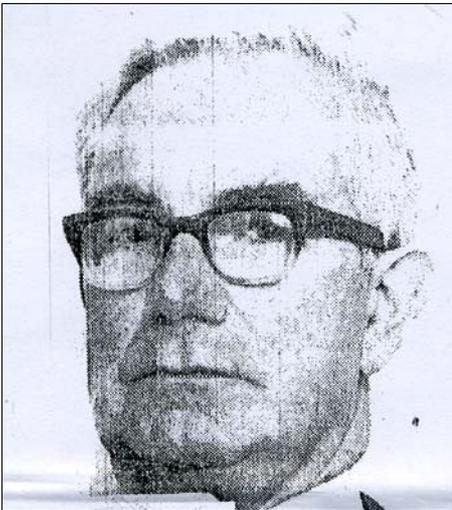
The Huddersfield Daily
Examiner

THE SHIELDS
Gazette

In the swim. Gay-only sessions at Radford Baths.

1986: GAY SWIMMING SESSIONS AT VICTORIA LEISURE CENTRE

**EVENING
POST**



Nov. 1st 1986. Labour Councillor Dennis Berkinshaw objects to proposed swimming sessions for gays.

“Sense from a voice in the wilderness”

Nov. 6th. “My fight with the loony left”. “I see the issues I face as gays, lesbians and feminists - I don’t mean ordinary ladies”.

Nov.28th. PARENTS SEEK PLEDGE ON AIDS. Gay swim row schools quit. Nottingham schools have dropped children’s swimming lessons at the Victoria leisure centre because of gay sessions there.

Nov. 29th. NOW BOYCOTT IN GAY SWIM ROW

Pool attendants at the Victoria Leisure centre are boycotting the City Council’s controversial gay swimming sessions.

I would like to take up a point made by the Council, namely “gays are everywhere”. Sadly this is true. It’s one thing knowing one or two have used the water, but I draw the line at a whole army of them.
David Shelton, Governor,
Jesse Boot Junior School.
Dec. 9th - Letters column

I find the fashionable notion that AIDS is now a heterosexual disease quite sinister and counter productive. AIDS is spreading through homosexual groups like wildfire, yet no-one has the courage to denounce homosexuality for what it really is. Namely, moral degradation of the most wicked and corrupt kind, punishable by AIDS.
R. Johnson Dec. 16th - Letters column

1986: GAY SWIMMING SESSIONS AT VICTORIA LEISURE CENTRE

The logo for the Evening Post newspaper, featuring the word "EVENING" in a smaller, spaced-out font above the word "POST" in a large, bold, sans-serif font.

If rights for gays, lesbians, non-whites etc continue to be pushed down the throats of the general public, I can see there being a bigger discrimination problem that there ever was in the past. V. Connell
Letters Nov. 7th 1986

Persecution and victimisation of gays should never be tolerated in this day and age, but there was never a scrap of evidence that it was happening anyway.
Editorial. Nov. 28th 1986

Councillor Frances Dennett said the Council had given special sessions to other groups, such as Asian women. "Can it be that the opposition believe that they are not worthy of the same consideration as other members of society?"
Article Jan. 6th 1987

Contrary to your repeated assertion, there is a mass of well-documented evidence on the victimisation and persecution of lesbians and gay men in every area of life. I enclose a basic reading list of ten books as some indication of this.
Colin Clews
Letters Dec. 18th 1986

And finally
The Daily Mail

Mail

The Nottingham experience suggest that what used to be considered a small minority still remains so. For too long we've been pushed around by a vocal minority who have convinced large numbers of opinion makers that homosexual behaviour is quite natural, under-privileged and deserves to be subsidised. It's about time these notions took a long overdue high dive. April 16th 1987.

1986: GAY SWIMMING SESSIONS AT VICTORIA LEISURE CENTRE

Of all the Nottingham LGBT related stories which made it into the newspapers, the one which got the most coverage, locally and nationally, was the decision of Nottingham City Council in 1986 to allow gay only swimming sessions.



The Council had set up lesbian and gay sub-committees where issues of concern could be discussed. It was maintained that gay men had been harassed and victimised when they had used sporting facilities in the past, so an alternative was to try gay-only sessions. Swimming was the first suggestion which was tested out.



The sessions were given the go-ahead and were begun at the John Carroll Leisure Centre in Radford. After the sessions became headline news, they were moved to the Victoria Leisure Centre .. see picture on the left.

The adverse publicity was useful in branding the Labour Council as "loony left" and was a factor in the election of the Tories shortly after. The Tories then abolished the lesbian and gay sub-committees, shortly followed by the entire equal opportunities unit. There are several lessons to be learned from this story.

The Council and the Press

Gays and lesbians should not be employed by Newark and Sherwood District Council in posts such as changing room attendants, councillors were told last week.

"I think we should discriminate against them" said Bill Bailey (Con.) during a debate on the council's equal opportunities policy."

May 31st 1985

Newark Advertiser



● Coun Bradbury

Tory opposition leader Coun. Bill Bradbury said the city's emphasis on gay issues was "counter productive". He was commenting on the council's equal opportunities policy on gays and lesbians, which, he said, was very low down on the Tory list of priorities.

Sept. 18th 1986

**EVENING
POST**

Pin-ups return to council walls.

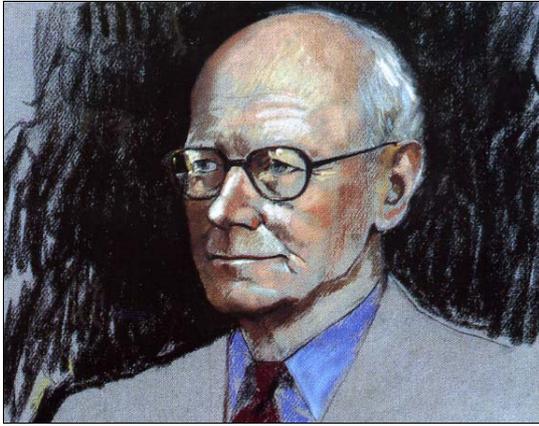
A labour ban on pin-ups in Council offices was scrapped by Conservatives who won control of Nottingham City Council at the local elections.

The Tories also overturned a ban on persistent leering or staring at females and calling women colleagues "sexy, gorgeous or lover". An Equal Opportunities Unit set up four years ago to deal with race, lesbian and homosexual minorities is also to be closed.

May 27th 1987

The Daily Telegraph

The build up to the implementation of the Wolfenden Committee's report via the 1967 Sexual Offences Act



Sir John Wolfenden



Sodomy is the cardinal sin and the greatest abomination in all the behaviour of mankind and the contemplation of this major crime being pandered to by any religious or legislative body is unthinkable.

Robbery, forgery, blackmail and harlotry are mere child's play to the frightful debasement of homosexual vice.

West Bridgford July 1st 1965.

Not always is homosexuality due to perversion and corrupt sexual contacts, but can be due to harmful religious instruction emphasising "sin" and showing God to be a vindictive deity.

Wollaton July 1st 1965

Homosexuality is certainly no affront to the Creator, and it is simply one of nature's safety valves against excessive population; at the same time being a release for the natural instincts and is no more revolting than many so-called heterosexual practices, in fact - much less so.

Grantham July 1st 1965

Apparently the bill to legalise homosexuality has the support of the Church of England. The argument has been advanced that homosexuals leave themselves open to blackmail. What a fatuous argument. The crime of murder could lend itself to exactly the same conditions, but this does not make it necessary to legalise it. I am appalled that the Church should so debase itself.

O.R.R. June 2nd 1965.

The letter from O.R.R. shows very little understanding of the situation, The Church, however, has shown great foresight in support of the Bill. These people are ill and desperately need medical treatment, and the only way to get them to come forward is to ensure that they are not prosecuted in an attempt to get medical aid.

Miss Denise Smith, Hucknall Road,
Nottingham June 10th 1965.

The build up to the implementation of the Wolfenden Committee's report via the 1967 Sexual Offences Act

With deep disgust I notice Parliament is yielding to allow discussion on the Sexual Offences Bill which seeks to legalise private homosexual conduct.

What would be understood as "private"? Could the vicarage, the garden shed, the butler's pantry be considered suitable seclusion?

The homosexual contaminates society and should be eliminated as a pest.

Nature Lover February 2nd 1966

MPs are at liberty to vote which way they choose. The debate on homosexuality was a non party issue.

As the Home Secretary said, the great majority of homosexuals are not exhibitionistic freaks, but ordinary citizens. If an MP cannot vote how he likes, it is time we shut up Parliament.

Planner February 25th 1966.

I do not think homosexuality should be made legal, even for consenting adults in private. Some commit the offence only once or twice and I should like to think that homosexuality is temporary and that sooner or later they will find themselves and become normal.

L.D. February 25th 1966



After a discreet interval we again read of this Government's intention to legalise homosexuality, to have coloured police and no death penalty.

Could anyone in their right mind still be for this administration?

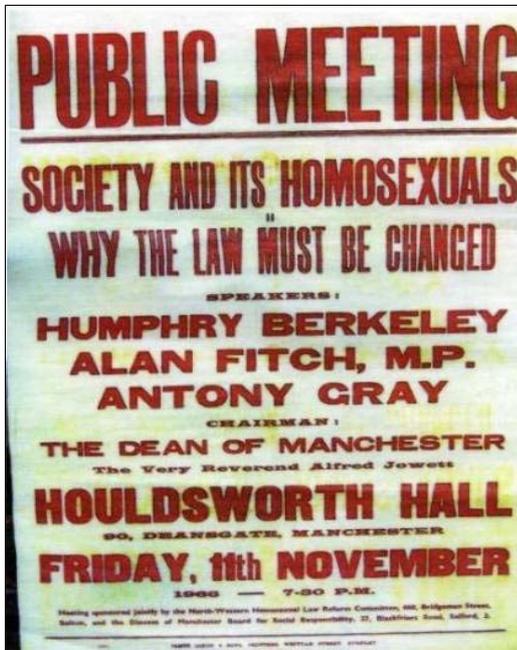
N.B. February 18th 1966

In my previous letter I was referring to the moral perverts who prostitute the sexual act in a degenerate and filthy fashion, who are the subject of the Sexual Offences Bill.

The slimy characters who loiter in public urinals to ply their vile trade are typical of the homosexual pests. The consenting male is a monstrous affront to decency and should be treated as such.

Nature Lover Feb. 25th 1966

The build up to the implementation of the Wolfenden Committee's report via the 1967 Sexual Offences Act



Must Nature Lover write such nonsense against the Sexual Offences Bill?

Until we (I am one of them) are left alone to our own desires, the practice will still be regarded as disgusting. People do not know what hell it is to be born with this disease, and it is a disease, a mental illness, which causes much anguish to resist. I beg that we are left alone to our problems.

Pam. January 3rd 1966

Mr. Harold Gurden (C. Selly Oak) said that "members should declare their interests." " it would be a strange thing in a place of 600 members if there were not some MPs in this House and yet no-one declares an interest in respect of that".

Bearded actor MP Andrew Faulds (Lab. Smethwick) shouted across: "We don't know about you, do we? It might be interesting."

July 4th 1967

Sir Cyril Osborne proposed a clause to provide for a £5000 fine or 5 years imprisonment for homosexual advertisers.

Ray Mawby MP read out an example. "Are you a gay bachelor interested in male only activities? I am forming a social club, London. Send SAE for details."

Sir Cyril said "one evil does not justify another. These very things we are discussing helped to bring about the fall of Rome." The clause was defeated.

June 23rd 1967

The opening of La Chic (1973) as seen in the Evening Post

I was amazed and disgusted to hear that £40,000 is to be spent on a club for "gay people". What on earth is happening to the world? Surely woman was made for man? The idea of men kissing and dancing together makes me sick - the same with women. In my opinion, such people ought to be put on a desert island, given picks and shovels and made to cultivate it.

I had 40 years of marriage to a good man. When he died the bottom of my world dropped out. Surely all things natural are right? To some people I may seem intolerant. Thank God I am. Rachel Creasey, Clifton.

Haven't we got enough gay people, as they call themselves, without bringing them from places like London, Birmingham, Manchester and other places? This is the last straw to a dying city and to a very unhappy citizen. Mrs M Ford. Bramcote Lane, Beeston

So Nottingham, famous for its association with William Booth, that man of God, is to achieve infamous notoriety by allowing the opening of a club for homosexuals. The first of its kind in the country!

God rained fire and brimstone upon Sodom because of its people's manifest pleasures in such malpractice. Abuses of themselves with mankind (men) are prominent in the list of those who shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven, but who are in danger of eternal damnation. Frank Hill, West Bridgford.

La Chic is not the first gay club in the country. Clubs and organisations such as the Campaign for Homosexual Equality, the Albany Trust and the Gay Liberation Front have been in existence for varying lengths of time, not only to help homosexual men and women, but to provide accurate information for the public so that there will be no need for ignorance and fear.

Mrs Creasey says thank God she is intolerant. I do not think God would wish to be thanked for intolerance. Secretary. Nottingham CHE.

So, we shall soon see the opening of the first club for homosexuals in the country. Nottingham is well named "The Queen of the Midlands". S. Cronk, Abbey Road, Bingham

The opening of La Chic (1973) as seen in the Evening Post

Whenever the subject of homosexuality arises, it is always accompanied by the cry "Think of the effect it will have on young people". Homosexuals do not go out of their way to corrupt young people - in fact, any consultation of crime statistics will verify that your son is far less likely to be molested by gay men than is your daughter by heterosexuals.

What effect will the opening of this club have on young people in Nottingham? If they are heterosexual, they will ignore it - if they are homosexual, they will go along and enjoy it. Veritas, Clifton

There are, it is true, a small number of people born with an imbalance of genes, but the vast majority of prospective members for the new club do not belong to this small minority. These people are sexual deviants and perverts who behave in this way, calling themselves bisexuals. No one seems to have considered the corrupting influence these clubs will have on young teenagers who will visit this club and become involved with these evil people who, having lost their self respect, are anxious to involve as many other as possible. Concerned Parent, Wollaton

Some letters prompted by the news of a gay club for Nottingham suggest that most people do not know what is meant by the term "homosexual". They know only the false image which that term implies.

This image projects the idea of effeminate, mincing males who spend their time chasing young boys. It puts forward the picture of hefty, masculine women who probably smoke cigars and work on building sites.

If we use Kinsey's figures, 5% of the population are exclusively homosexual, 10% mainly homosexual and over 30% have had some homosexual experiences. From this we can calculate that we should have seen between 15,000 and 100,000 people fitting those descriptions walking the streets of Nottingham. That such a sight has been denied us is because practically all homosexuals look, dress, walk, act and live like everyone else - except that they go to bed with people of the same sex. C.L. Chilwell