

The Best of GAY 50¢

Selections From 1970-71

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Tuesday Bloody Tuesday Suffolk Police Jump Gays

BY NICHOLAS MARTINO

On Tuesday December 14, 1971, a group of 25 gay activists from the Long Island Gay Activist Alliance and the New York Gay Activist Alliance gathered at 11:30 A.M. outside the Administration Building at Hauppauge.

They had come to present affidavits of some 40 witnesses of a raid on the local gay bar, the Corral. The affidavits detailed the behavior of two undercover cops, Lewis Gentles and Peter Geoghegan, who had spearheaded the raid that night. The two policemen, not wearing uniforms, were reported by the eyewitnesses to have drunk excessively, groped the male patrons, kissed them, insisted on dancing with them. Three men had been arrested during the raid. These affidavits to be presented this day were to indicate that the charges against the bar patrons were fabrications.

The delegation from the group, headed by New York GAA President-elect Rich Wandel and L.I. GAA President Doe Hansen, went into the building and upstairs towards Aspland's office.

They were allowed into a room outside the District Attorney's office. The leaders handed over the affidavits and asked for a receipt. Their request was refused. They asked again. Suddenly 15 men, wearing guns but no uniforms or badges, charged into the office from an anteroom. They surrounded the group, blocking the exit and proceeded to beat up the members of the group. Coats were pulled up over the demonstrators' heads. Wandel's glasses were ripped off. Paul Martin was beaten till blood flowed from his nose and mouth. One member has a

cut mouth. A girl injured in the ribs had fainted. An ACLU observer (American Civil Liberties Union) Gregory Schmidt was pushed down the stairs, his camera grabbed. Two other ACLU observers observed the beatings.

The injured activists partly fled, were partly driven from the building. Three people were arrested: Cora Perotta, Charles Burch and Sylvia Rivera. They were handcuffed and taken to the station house a few yards away.

Their comrades regrouped and formed a picket line outside the station house.

The group was informed that in a few hours there would be an arraignment for the 3 arrested activists at a nearby building. A lawyer, a woman, had come and begun to handle the legal moves towards release of the prisoners.

Rich Wandel suggested the group move to another government building where the County Legislature was in progress. They sat down, fumpy and hip wilted-beat, an odd contrast to the legislators' bankers' grey. Presiding Officer John V.N. Klein (County Executive-Elect) immediately interrupted the business at hand to announce that the meeting was indeed public and that as soon as the item being discussed was dispensed with, anyone from the audience who wished to speak would be allowed the use of the mike.

In about five minutes he made good his promise. Rich Wandel strode to the podium. He explained that originally there had been no intention of entering the meeting but that events in Aspland's office, which he briefly described, made this move necessary.

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Bloody Tuesday

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cash, Charlie Burch \$500 or \$100 cash.

There were 6 people at the Smithtown Hospital emergency room. Vickie of Long Island Gay Activists Alliance with a tendon injured in a leg. Charles and Paul thought they had broken noses. Carol, a transvestite, thought she had a fractured leg. And there was a Long Island woman with possible broken ribs and a punctured lung. I had been kicked in the crotch and had 2 stitches in my lip.

SYLVIA RIVERA'S STORY

(Note: Sylvia Rivera is a male transvestite, a member of GAA and one of the founders of STAR, the Street Transvestites Action Revolutionaries.)

"I was stripped three times. The others who were jailed were only stripped once. I asked why they kept stripping me. They said it was regulations. They wanted to put me in a cell with 6 inmates. I said no, that homosexuals could be segregated, but they forced me, they roughed me up, they twisted my arm. Finally they threw me into the cell. The 6 men asked what I was there for. I told them. They didn't bother me."

