

Renaissance News



Volume 2, No. 5

P.O. Box 1263, King of Prussia, PA, 19406

May, 1988

Happy Birthday Renaissance!

The Ladies of

Renaissance



← Teri & Beth put their heads together.
Michelle & Jennifer pose for the camera →



← Therésé and her gorgeous gams.

Donna's glittering smile. →



Noell looking pensive & demure.



Angela pauses for refreshment.

← Robyn Dormer, Editor of *En Femme*, and member of Renaissance.
Photos by Angela Gardner

• The May meeting will begin our Spring/Summer schedule. Meetings start at 9:00pm •

Birthday Celebration To Host Mariette Allen

Renaissance will celebrate its first anniversary this month and will host Mariette Pathy Allen for its birthday party meeting May 21st. Ms. Allen will present a slide show of her photographs. The subject is, of course, our community.

Ms. Allen's work has been on display in several shows and will soon be published as a book.

Many of the photos are of faces

familiar to Renaissance members.

The afternoon before the meeting, Mariette will be available to take portrait photos for those who are interested. The cost is \$75 (plus film and processing fees) for a 1 hour sitting. The hour is yours to use as you wish. The location will be at our meeting site. Call ASAP for a reservation as we are time limited to five sittings.

Highlights From The April Meeting

The main program for April focused on Color Analysis. *L.M. Cozzi & Associates* (Lois, Cynthia & Jean) demonstrated the techniques of color analysis on our courageous model Crystine (I'd never show up without my makeup-Ed!). The analysis took about 90 minutes and several people expressed an interest afterwards in scheduling private sessions. Thank you ladies for a great and interesting program.

Paula Keiser was busy with her

daughter so Jackie K. took charge of the TS Rap group in her stead. She reports that the session went very well and it looks as though this group will be ongoing.

Our other guests were Mark, Joy and Bill from the *Head First Beauty Salon* in Cherry Hill. Mark, the owner, wants Renaissance members to know that we can get a 10% discount on his services, such as make-overs, nail applications and wig styling. Call 609-667-9532 for an appointment.

POST Gets Angry Backlash Over Poke At TVs

In a series of stories beginning on March 16th the NY POST blasted Mariette Allen, and others, for receiving grants from the New York State Arts Council, saying that such grants promoted transvestism and the gay lifestyle. The headlines used by the POST were such that one was lead to believe that the state of New York had given money to a TV group in order to promote its activities.

The paper singled out Ms. Allen who received a \$7200 grant to display her photographic work of the gender community. The POST printed, without permission, Mariette's work as seen in *American Photographer* magazine.

In response to the articles in the POST, the Board of Renaissance sent a letter to the Editor of the Post decrying the way in which Ms. Allen and our community were portrayed. We also sent the letter to each display advertiser in that issue of the POST.

In a conversation with ETVC's coordinator, Gloria Peters, she informed us that they have taken a

proactive role in letting the POST know what our community thinks of their reporting.

In addition to attacking our community, the POST also took after some Gay and Lesbian groups that received grants. They, too, have responded with letters and a demonstration in front of the POST offices on March 29th.

Mariette has retained counsel to pursue the POST in a copyright infringement suit over the photographs used in their articles. It will be an expensive exercise.

In a related development, Ginny Knuth, of ETVC, has been in contact with T.I.G.E.R. a Civil Rights organization for the gender community and an outgrowth of the Gender Identity Center in Denver. This group has a legal fund and is interested in supporting Ms. Allen in her suit against the POST. Anyone who would like to make a contribution to the legal fund is encouraged to do so by writing to TIGER, Legal Fund, Attention: Christine M., Box 17442, Denver, CO 80217.

Renaissance News

Staff

Senior Editor: JoAnn Roberts
National Editor: Paula Sinclair
Overseas Editor: Trudi Henry
Correspondent: Angela Gardner
Admin. Assistant: Susan P.
Copy & Layout: Creative Design Services, King of Prussia, PA.

Phone: 215-640-9449, 24 hrs.

Business Report Thru April 30th

April Attendance: 60
Paid Members: 126

Starting Balance: \$1493.22

Income:

Donations	\$98.05
Publications	\$16.00
<u>Member Dues</u>	<u>\$624.00</u>
Subtotal	\$738.05

Expenses:

Meetings	\$209.19
Newsletter	\$86.94
<u>Other</u>	<u>36.96</u>
Subtotal	\$333.09

Ending Balance \$1898.18

Coming Events:

May

21st, Renaissance Meeting
First Annu. Party
Mariette Allen
Slide Show
9:00PM Start

31st to June 6, 8th Annual
Tiffany P-town Spring
Outing.

June

8-12, 6th Annual "Be All..."
weekend, Detroit, MI
18th Renaissance Meeting
Tommi Avecolli, PGN
Used Clothing Swap

July

17th Renaissance Meeting

August

21st Renaissance Meeting

The Opinion Page

Sunshine of My Life...Heather Peerson, reprinted from the Cross-Port InnerView

I believe this article will be the most difficult one I'll ever write. I want to write about a subject that many transsexuals avoid because it is too painful to address; namely the loss of our loved one during transition. In my case, I am speaking about my wife who I am still living with and who I'll call Sunshine.

I first met sunshine in 1968, but we did not begin dating until January 1970. While I did not know the true extent of my crossdressing then, I did know that I could not, would not try to live my life without it. I felt I had already lost one girl because I had told her, but I knew the risk had to be taken. On what was our first big date, I told her about my dressing. She admitted she did not understand, but felt she could deal with it.

In February 1972, we were engaged just a week and a half before my father died. A week later, I was arrested for stealing clothes from the laundry room. Somehow we made it through all that and we were married in October of 1972. We truly loved each other then and we still do.

We had many happy times together, but for me there was always an under-riding sadness. More than once during our marriage, she remarked that I had such "sad eyes". Even I couldn't understand why. I always dressed at home whenever I wanted. What more could I need?

Rough times hit us in 1982 when we both found ourselves out of work. I believe we found that, of all our friends and

family we had, we really could only depend on ourselves. I still don't know how she did it, but she managed to keep us afloat even though we were going further and further into debt.

In January of 1985, I found myself in a deep depression. I needed to do something about my feelings and the dressing, but didn't know what. I cried as I never have as I watched the HBO Special, "What Sex Am I?" I had to do something. I had to find others and talk to others. In June, I started Cross-Port.

Through all of this, Sunshine was there helping, supporting, encouraging. Always hoping that somehow we/I would be able to find the happiness that seemed there on the surface, but was lacking deep within.

My search for myself became more intense. I began to take her for granted. I did and said things that hurt her and I didn't even know how much. I was all wrapped up in myself. But she stayed and kept hoping that I would find out who I was. Much of the joy had already gone, but she still had hope that somehow we would find it again.

Then, in November of 1987, disaster struck a final blow. I realized and admitted that I was a transsexual. I didn't want to be but I was. For me, suddenly everything made sense. All the discomfort, searching, and sadness began to lift. But in Sunshine's eyes I saw the last ray of hope give way to a melancholy that said, "At least you'll be happy." The realization that our time together is short made us look at each day as if one of us is dying.

I have asked myself why someone so kind, tender and loving has to be hurt so much in order for me to live my life as I was meant. Why should she bear the burden of my identity dilemma? Why must she lose her life (the one she expected to live) so that I can have mine? It isn't fair. No, life isn't fair. If it were, I would not have been born like this in the first place. I have not found the answers and I'm not sure I will, because I don't believe there are any.

Why must I leave? I have decisions which must be made. Staying would mean making those choices together and this one I must make alone. This new life must be right for me, not influenced by what effect it has on others because, in the end, I will always have to live with me.

It is hard to lose friends that cannot accept who you are, but to lose someone who loves you so much because it has to be is the hardest loss of all. It is easy to start to play the hurting game in the hopes of making the loss easier. If I can just hate her, I won't miss her. But I can't hate Sunshine. There is too much love in her for me.

Sunshine now has the "sad eyes" and I can hardly bear to look at them. I know I must for I must try to comfort her as she did me for so many years. So we live each day as if it were our last until the time when I can financially afford to leave. It is very much like dying, yet from this death a new creature will emerge and the real me will live for the first time. When I do, I will feel warm and alive because I was loved by Sunshine.

The Opinion Page, Too

A Time & A Place... a lesson in etiquette by Angela Gardner

Everybody knows by now that crossdressing can be fun: erotic, sensual, fun. That's great and it's one big reason why we do it. It should be enjoyed and integrated into your life. But, as the title says, there's a time and place for everything.

We have had reports from the business community serving crossdressers that are depressing to say the least. They have opened their shops to our patronage, tried to be supportive of us and our hobby, and then had things that happen that do little to help our image in the community.

To be specific; one hairdresser reported an incident involving an over-stimulated TV.[Not a Renaissance member-Ed.] This person was apparently overwhelmed by the experience of having her hair

and makeup done in a salon and decided to engage in more active, manual stimulation under cover of the cape. The hairdresser was neither excited nor amused.

This kind of behavior is immature and irresponsible. It casts a shadow on all our community. If you are going to go out in public in a feminine role, then control your passions. There are appropriate times to act sexy or trashy, like onstage in a show or in the privacy of your boudoir. When you are in the public eye, and that includes service establishments, keep it in your pantyhose.

Granted, the above is an extreme case that we heard about, but we have also heard of stores having problems with CDs trying on clothes and damaging them. Again, it is often a case of being too excited

about what you are doing and not really paying attention to what you are doing. Be considerate of these shops that open their doors to us. When trying on clothes remove jewelry that may cause snags. Be very careful not to get makeup on the garment, and if you do, offer to have it cleaned. Pay attention to how tight the clothing is. If you are having that much trouble getting into it, then chances are you're not really a size four. Get a salesperson to help you find a larger size.

When out in public, act mature, responsible and use common sense. If you do otherwise, you may be suitable to appear in the next Porkies' movie, but you certainly won't do much that's positive for the image of crossdressers. We need all the good PR we can get.

On The Road To Civilization

Recently, Paula Sinclair and Angela Gardener journeyed to Baltimore with Dr. Bill Stayton. The purpose was to address a conference of Reconstructionist Jewish Rabbis on sexuality and gender-roles. To pass the time in the car on the way, the conversation turned to the decline of civilized behavior. Various root causes were discussed such as the all too prevalent "me first" attitude. Imagine their chagrin, then, when upon their arrival at the conference they were subjected to a demonstration of most uncivilized behavior. The three of them, eager to meet their hosts for dinner and an evening of interesting conversation, bustled into the prestigious Harbor Court Hotel. The staff

was helpful and courteous. They directed the trio to the dining room where the Reconstructionists proceeded to ignore Paula and Angela while Dr. Stayton tried in vain to introduce them. Dr. Stayton informed our sisters that the Reconstructionists did not want to hear what they had to say. They would listen to an academic discussion of sexuality but, please, no examples.

This left Paula and Angela on their own for several hours while Dr. Stayton fulfilled his obligation to speak. The girls proceeded first to the hotel lounge and later to the restaurant while they waited for Bill to finish. The hotel patrons seemed not to notice anything amiss and the staff, once again,

behaved with all courtesy.

Our ladies were made to feel so at ease by the hotel people that Paula and Angela approached the night manager to compliment her on her staff and left a Renaissance business card with her.

At evening's end Dr. Stayton, Paula and Angela chatted briefly with some of the more sympathetic Reconstructionists who would have liked to hear them speak. They were happy to inform them that though they may have been victims of an uncivilized faction in their conference, they had indeed found civilization alive and well in the staff of the Harbor Court Hotel in Baltimore, Maryland. They hope to return there in the future.

News & Notes

Edited by Paula Sinclair

So you finally saved up enough and bought your heart's desires, a human hair wig. But while you know where the "hair" in your synthetic wigs came from (a hole in the ground), do you know who was wearing your new hair before? Do you want to?

According to experts in the human hair trade (yes, there is such a business, but it is not as visible as, say, the diamond trade), most of the women who sell their hair are hard up for money. Remember the short story by O. Henry entitled *The Gift of the Magi*? But selling hair, at least your own, is not a way to get rich. The real money is made by the middle men.

Contrary to popular belief, not all human hair for wigs comes from Asia. Eastern Europe, especially the nations of Poland, Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, provides a large segment of the supply even though a one major source has been cut off, so to speak. In former times, women had their hair cut off when they entered convents. But now that nuns are allowed to keep their hair, that source is no longer available.

In one expert's opinion, the best hair comes from Italy. It costs the most too. Italian hair 30 inches long can cost more than \$1,000 a pound in a market where the average price per pound ranges between \$220 and \$300. Asian hair is cheapest because it is most plentiful and also because it is coarse.

•••

We note with sadness the passing of two important people.

Divine, that most outrageous of CDs, died in his sleep in Los Angeles on March 8. Of special interest is that Divine never accepted the label of TV, but rather wanted to be thought of as a character actor who portrayed women's roles.

Also, in the same week, Joyce Dewhurst was found dead in her apartment from heart failure.

Joyce, known as "America's Foremost Crossdresser", was a

very special person to many emerging TVs/TSSs. She was well known for her NYC parties, but will be best remembered for her Pocono Fantasy weekends.

- JoAnn Roberts

•••

The Pennsylvania Superior Court recently affirmed the sanctity of women's public rest rooms when it upheld the criminal trespass conviction of a male intruder in a Philadelphia health club ladies' room. But according to a lawyer who is familiar with crossdressing issues, transvestites and pre-op transsexuals who use women's rest rooms for legitimate purposes need not worry about arrest.

The case involved Anthony White who hid in the women's rest room of the Society Hill Club. When a woman entered the room, White blocked the door, made threatening gestures and exposed himself to the woman. He was later convicted of criminal trespassing.

In appealing this conviction to the Superior Court, White's attorney argued that the rest room was not separately set aside for the exclusive use of the club's female members. But the court did not agree, and held that while they are in a rest room, women have the "legal protection to the expectation of privacy."

A local attorney who is familiar with some of the issues surrounding crossdressing said that the ruling should have no effect on crossdressers who use women's rest rooms because, he said, they are in those facilities for legitimate reasons, not to commit a crime as White was.

•••

Harlow, Philadelphia's most celebrated transsexual, will open what she calls a "sophisticated nightclub" by the summer. She recently said she will turn the shuttered Rusty Scupper in Society Hill's New Market into a "1940s supper club—very dressy, dancing and dining combined."

Harlow hopes that her new venture will have the same sort of magic of her previous watering hole at 2nd and Bank Sts. Between 1972 and 1977, Harlow's was the place to be seen. One reason for the clientele's high visibility was that "Harlow's was very dressy. I was dressed all of the time." She is certain that the same glamorous atmosphere will be present in the new club. "Women will dress when they know other women will be dressed," she said. "And when the women dress, the men will dress up."

We presume she is speaking of tuxedos for the men.

•••

In another legal matter relating to crossdressing, a California attorney faces disbarment because she took the state bar exam while impersonating her husband.

Because Morgan Lamb, 34, finished in the bottom 20 percent when he took the exam last year, his wife, Laura Salant, 31, took his place for this year's test. Two months before the exam, she had an identification picture taken with her hair slicked back, thick, mannish eyebrows penciled on her forehead and wearing men's clothes. But on the day of the exam she did away with the male drag because she was seven months pregnant. However, she still used the ID photo which identified her as her husband.

The couple's scheme was uncovered by a telephone tipster. State officials were unable to say why an obviously pregnant woman was allowed to complete the exam while posing as a man.

•••

Boy George fans in drag chased several real women from a London concert recently after the females were told "George hates women."

Anne Foti and her sister Lorna Bedford told reporters that "real females aren't welcome" at the concert. They said the angry crossdressed fans of the popular singer poured drinks on their seats and even hit one of them.

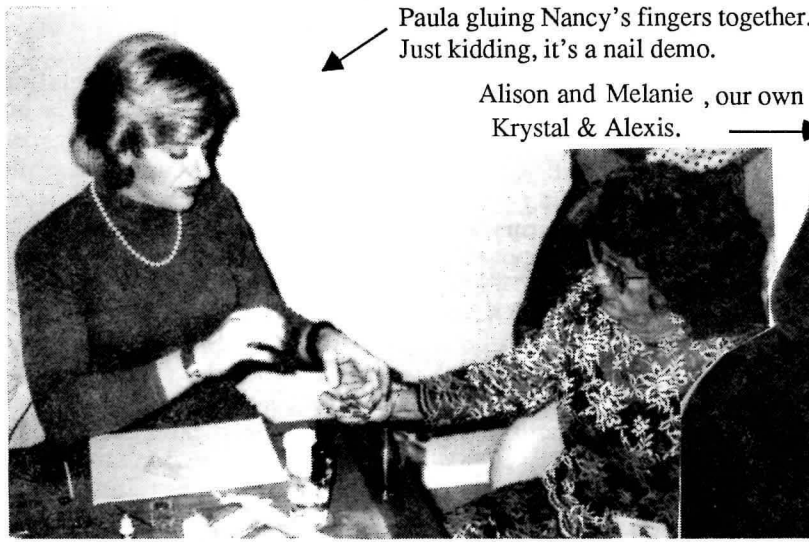
More Photos From Renaissance Meetings



← Etienne & Trudi pass the buck.



JoAnn says, "Not so close!" →



← Paula gluing Nancy's fingers together. Just kidding, it's a nail demo.

Alison and Melanie, our own Krystal & Alexis. →



Eulogy For A Role Model...Trudi Henry

I'm writing this a few days after the death of Divine, certainly one of the world's best known crossdressers. I've heard the snickers and sneers of the morning drive-time DJ's and seen the look of confusion amid the seriousness of local news anchors. I think it's time for somebody to mourn the passing of a friend.

Divine will be remembered by society at large for some outrageous scenes in films made with his friend John Waters. That's a pity. He deserves to be remembered, especially by our community, because he stood up and insisted that the world deal with him on his own terms. He

thumbed his nose at society's notion that some people are second-class citizens.

He showed us all that we can be what we want to be if we're willing to pay the price. Each step of freedom in one's life carries with it a cost in personal security. He was willing to risk all of his to be what he knew he was: an actress wrapped in the shell of a 300 pound man. He could be raunchy and outrageous, but he had talent and was finally beginning to be accepted for it.

Yes, lets all remember Sister Divine. He was a true original and, in attitude, if not deed, a role model for us all.

Renaissance News® is the publication of the Renaissance Education Association, Inc. ©1988. No material may be reproduced in any manner unless credit is given to the source.

Subscription & Associate Membership is \$12/year. Full Membership in the group is \$30/year.

Renaissance is a non-profit corporation which has the purpose of providing education about transgendered behavior.

Renaissance meets once a month, on the 3rd Saturday of the month, unless otherwise noted. Starting time is 9:00 PM in the late Spring/Summer, and 8:00 PM in the Fall/Winter. Regular meetings are held in the Valley Forge area.

For the latest information call, 215-640-9449, any time.