

# WHO



*India. And beneath the uniform, a young woman longing to get out*

Judy. "For the first time I realised I wasn't alone, that other people had the same feelings as I had.

"When the opportunity for an early retirement from the Army came, I leaped at the chance.

"With Mary's encouragement I enrolled in an art course to develop my interest in sculpture. Soon I discovered a method of moulding plastic, which I patented; and then went

into business to market it.

"The birth of our third child made me determined to quell my secret feelings, but all the same my double life continued.

"I used to keep boxes full of women's clothes stored away. Whenever I had the opportunity I would go up to London and I take a room in

a hotel somewhere.

"At lunchtime I would change into women's clothes and go out on the town as a woman. Next morning I would leave the hotel as a man.

"Finally I decided I could no longer continue living as a man."

Why did she wait so long?

"I felt my first responsibility was to my family and I wanted to make sure I could leave them financially secure. It was also important that my children should be old enough to understand. I had to wait for the right time.

## Claim

"I sold my company to provide for them and then left. I'd never told my wife I was a transexual and I didn't tell her my plans when I went. I thought it was the best way.

"So many transexuals tell their partners in the hope that they will be able to help, but all it does is create unnecessary agony for them both."

Ex-wife Mary is now happily remarried. "My family have accepted me," Judy says. "The two girls have accepted it wonderfully. We don't have any problems at all now."

Her son, a doctor, found it very difficult at first. But Judy's elder daughter, who lives in America, sees her at

least once a year. And the younger one has insisted that Judy is present at her wedding.

Judy has had six grandchildren since the operations, and they all live on the other side of the Atlantic. They call her Aunt Judy.

Now, the 63-year-old grandmother is trying to get the Department of Health and Social Security to cough up her state pension. But she's been refused. They insist that as her birth certificate records her as a man, she can't claim it until she's 65.

Her battle for a pension is backed by the National Council for Civil Liberties.

Meanwhile the Army, without being asked, offered to pay her army pension in her new name. She has even attended regimental reunions as a woman—and been welcomed.

But the first year of Judy's life after the operations was difficult.

"I had my Army pension, but that wasn't much. I looked for jobs, but found none. I lived on my wits. Luckily, a doctor who knew all about my problems very kindly commissioned me to

do some sculpture for him."

But she gradually settled into a new business, and life in Windsor, Berkshire. Several years passed.

Then she decided that perhaps it wasn't fair for her to keep silent, that she could help others in her position. SHAFT was born.

"What I want to get over to the public is that being transexual isn't something you do for fun. People are driven to have the operation, which is the only cure. Nobody wants to be like this, but they can't prevent it.

## Blind

Judy explains SHAFT is there mainly to provide a sympathetic ear.

"The most important thing for a transexual is to be able to speak to somebody who understands. Without that, the isolation can be crippling.

"Nobody who isn't a transexual can possibly understand. They shouldn't be hounded any more than people who are blind.

"At least sighted people can close their eyes and get an idea what being blind must be like. There is no way to imagine what being a transexual is like."

*"I still love these old swing records"*



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