Print Media

HIV Ireland

National HIV and AIDS Archives

#NationalHIVArchives

6th to 10th May 1987
LIZ GIVES A RING FOR

ELIZABETH Taylor has donated a gold and diamond ring to raise money for Britain's AIDS victims. The ring will be auctioned by the Aids Crisis Trust to help build a hostel in London for sufferers of the killer disease. Miss Taylor handed over the ring—which has the letter E in diam-

GENEROUS: Liz

monds on it—to ACT organiser Marguerite Littman last week. "I was delighted," said Mrs Littman. "It was a very generous gesture."

Mrs Littman is a member of Mirror Publisher Robert Maxwell's National Aids Trust committee.
POP MAN’S FEAR

RADIO disc jockey Paul Gambaccini spoke yesterday of his fear of the disease AIDS.

The 35-year-old BBC broadcaster, who described himself as “predominantly but not exclusively homosexual,” said: “After visiting New York in 1983 I told a friend, ‘I have seen the future, and it’s name is death.’ I said it coming.

“I have a friend who has died of AIDS and I know others.”
Maxwell launches fight against killer disease

£50m WAR ON AIDS

A £50 MILLION fund-raising campaign to fight AIDS was launched yesterday.

The Government-backed National AIDS Trust, which hopes to raise the cash in two years, has already received £500,000 from the Government and £150,000 from Mirror Publisher Robert Maxwell’s charitable foundation.

Mr Maxwell, who is spearheading the fund-raising efforts, pledged to double his donation if the Government doubled its own.

Urging the public to support the campaign he said: “AIDS is a national emergency, a scourge which has to be tackled without panic.”

“We must help the country to help itself. Together we must defeat this dreadful disease.”

“Our target is a large sum but I’m confident we’ll raise it. We need nothing less.”

“Give generously. One day it could be your life or one of your family’s lives that you are saving.”

The Trust will co-ordinate all voluntary bodies giving help, information, and raising money to fight AIDS.

Concern

It will be run by two main committees. The first, chaired by Sir Austin Mack, will provide advice and information and distribute funds.

The second, chaired by Mr Maxwell, will be responsible for raising the money.

Mr Maxwell added that the public was deeply concerned about AIDS.

He said even those who may have brought the disease upon themselves were entitled to help.

“If we do not help them, how can we call ourselves civilised?” he said.

Helping launch the campaign in London Social Services Secretary Norman Fowler, said:

“The response to AIDS should not be, and has not been, a matter primarily for the Government.”

“The response of the voluntary sector has always been an essential element.”

By JILL PALMER

However, there needs to be effective co-ordination.

“The NAT will be an independent charitable trust, but the Government is giving £500,000 for administration and providing the Accommodation.”

Last night voluntary bodies helping AIDS victims welcomed the launching of the Trust.

There are 100,000 cases of AIDS worldwide although only 41,000 have been officially reported. An estimated five to ten million people are carrying the virus.
Coming face to face with the Aids scare

NOW that the Government has finally launched its Aids campaign — isn't it a hoot — one can only assume we all know everything about it.

The easy mistake to make, though, is to assume you personally are immune. If you don't belong to one of the high-risk groups, you might feel you could relax a bit and go back to old habits.

But take a look at this week's copy of The Face for the best Aids advertisement to date — and the scariest.

When you open the front page, you're confronted by a piece of card with a 6-inch square of metal foil on it, which acts just like a mirror.

As you see yourself reflected, you catch sight of the slogan: Now you know what a typical Aids carrier looks like.

We're all at risk. If you don't want to die of ignorance, follow the British campaign.
IRISH Aids sufferers and carriers of the Aids virus are to be featured on a special series of programmes to be broadcast by RTE next week.

Starting on Monday, the station is to screen a total of six programmes which will deal with the medical and moral issues raised by the Aids problem in Ireland.

An Aids sufferer based in New York and an Irish person with the disease are among those to be featured on Borderline, which goes out next Thursday night (May 14) at 11 p.m.

The programme will deal specifically with the experiences of young people in Ireland. There will be an invited audience of 30 people and a live phone-in to the studio.

A filmed interview with an Aids sufferer, and a studio panel featuring representatives of the relevant interest groups, including an Irish sufferer will also be included.

The Today Tonight team will present a two-part programme on Tuesday and Wednesday at 9.30 p.m., focusing on the spread of the Aids virus in Ireland.

According to RTE, the programme will deal with what has been perceived as central to the Irish situation — the high risk group of intravenous drug addicts as well as the other major groups at risk: homosexuals, haemophiliacs and children born to HIV-positive mothers.

By CLAIRE GRADY

The problem of taking tests for the disease, the prevention of Aids and the threat to Irish heterosexuals posed by Aids will also be discussed by a range of experts including Dr. Fiona McLoughlin, national Aids co-ordinator, and Dr. Anthony Finching, of St. Mary's Hospital.

"AIDS: The Moral Dimension" is an hour-long programme in the form of a panel discussion, which will go out at 5 p.m. on Thursday. A moral theologian, an active worker with Aids sufferers, a doctor and a hospice representative will examine how the Christian religion is affected by the Aids crisis and the moral issues involved.

The "Aids Week" opens on Monday at 10.30 p.m. with a repeat on the special "Zero" programme on Aids which deals with the disease in scientific and medical terms.

And it closes on Friday night with Gay Byrne devoting a "major part" of the "Late Late Show" to discussion on Aids.

According to a spokesperson for the station, the idea of the special series of programmes is to enable the problem of Aids to be addressed in a factual manner which "will enable the medical and moral issues to be discussed."
AIDS trust launched

The National AIDS Trust was launched to co-ordinate Britain's voluntary effort to fight the illness. Mirror Group Newspapers chairman Robert Maxwell will lead a bid to raise £50m in two years and former Glaxo chief Sir Austin Riddle will head a team co-ordinating voluntary work and allocating funds. Page 8
Maxwell to chair AIDS trust

A GOVERNMENT-BACKED trust was launched yesterday in the battle against AIDS. The Mirror Group Newspapers chairman, Mr Robert Maxwell, will head the trust which plans to raise £50 million in two years.

Launching the National AIDS Trust, which will co-ordinate the work done on AIDS by voluntary organisations, the Social Services Secretary, Mr Norman Fowler, said: "The response to AIDS should not be a matter primarily for the Government."

Mr Maxwell has promised to give at least £50,000 to the trust from the Maxwell Charitable Foundation and Mr Fowler said the Government would also give £500,000 to get the trust started. Mr Maxwell told reporters the trust would go for double the amount of money raised by the sale of the Winold jewels, the proceeds of which had been donated to the Pasteur Institute in Paris for research into AIDS and other incurable diseases.

He said 100,000 people worldwide had AIDS, although only 41,000 cases had been reported. An estimated five to 10 million people were carrying the AIDS virus.

Mr Maxwell said that by 1991, the estimate was that one million people would have AIDS and between 50 and 100 million people would be infected.

A gold ring belonging to the actress, Elizabeth Taylor, is to be sold at a Christie's auction, on June 1st to help AIDS victims. The ring has the initial "E" in diamonds, and was given by the British-born actress after a telephone call for help from Mrs Marguerite Lippman, founder of a new charity to help AIDS victims, AIDS Crisis Trust. — (PA).

● In Washington President Reagan has approved the establishment of a national commission to further AIDS research and study how to prevent the further spread of the disease. — (AFP).
Minister defends AIDS campaign

There has been some selective, inaccurate and misleading reporting of the Government's public information campaign about AIDS, the Minister of State at the Department of Health, Mr. Terry Leyden, said yesterday.

Speaking at a meeting of the National Co-ordinating Committee on Drug Abuse, of which he has been appointed chairman, Mr. Leyden said that some reports had said that the campaign neglected two of the high-risk groups, gay men and intravenous drug abusers. This was not the case, as the campaign covered "in explicit terms" the danger of homosexual intercourse and the sharing of needles by drug abusers.

Mr. Leyden said that drug pushing was "one of the most heinous of crimes and one which should attract the stiffest of penalties." The drug problem could be contained with the gradual implementation of a good plan of action, but it was the individual's decision not to experiment with illicit drugs that counted the most.

Treatment and crime statistics indicated that the incidence of heroin abuse had peaked in 1983 and had levelled off since. But it was still at an unacceptably high level, and the problem could not be eliminated overnight. There were no easy solutions.
My lost friends, 
by DJ Gambo

BBC jockey Paul Gambo wrote in the Daily Express yesterday of his friends killed by Aids. The 35-year-old broadcaster, who said he was "feeling sad but not depressed" wrote: "I have lost dear friends and I am aware of the way some people see those who have died of Aids and those who are ill. It is part of the process of coming to terms with the idea that people are ill and, if they die, they have a right to die."

"Many of my friends were from the same generation as me and I have lost friends who have been in touch with me. I have seen the grief of some friends and the joy of others. It is a time of change and we must all make the best of the situation."
£50m whip-round for war against Aids

Snap up a photo date with Lord Snowdon

by CHRIS MIBILL

A CAMPAIGN to raise £50 million for Aids victims was launched yesterday.

And it was revealed that Lord Snowdon is to charge £500 for photo sessions to help the war against the disease.

The £250,000 appeal is to be launched by new charity, the National AIDS Trust, headed by former Health Secretary Norman Fowler, who launched the appeal.

But the rally that raising the cash will be held in the next six weeks.

Mr Fowler said: "Many people and organisations have said they would like to make a contribution to help fight Aids and those who have money should go.

"All the evidence suggests there is a need to help these and people who want to get."
Today
6th May 1987

‘Heroin is lesser of two evils’

by PAULINE WALLIN

Doctors should be allowed to prescribe heroin for drug addicts, two health chiefs told yesterday at a conference. The move was recommended complete withdrawal of the drug from the market, but the policy should be reviewed, according to Dr Philip Green, chairman of the government’s Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs, and Dr Henry Yarolima, chief medical officer of the Home Office. The government has already been considering a pilot scheme to review the use of heroin in the treatment of drug addiction. The scheme is supervised by Dr John Marks.

Advisory Council plans to study health departments to assess any work’s impact. TV journalist, Working on Drugs, which examines the anti-drugs campaign, was shown to government ministers and private health officials.

Advice
Elton’s friend demands Aids tests for stars

WHILE allegations and denials of sex sessions with teenage rent boys fly around the less salubrious sections of the press, pop mogul Billy Gaffe is taking no chances with artists appearing on his own Riva record label.

He is demanding Aids tests to make sure that singers and musicians on his books are suitably pure.

It must all have seemed rather ironic to the artists after they’d read a national newspaper’s lurid reports of homosexual parties involving Gaffe and his close friend Elton John at the Riva boss’s country mansion. The pair have reacted angrily to the intrusion into their personal lives, and Elton — backed by Gaffe — is suing the newspaper concerned.

But Billy obviously doesn’t extend his insistence on privacy to those who work for him. Even his friend Elton’s backing singer, Shirley Lewis, was ordered to take an Aids antibody test — which proved negative.

Gaffe’s spokesman Bill Stonebridge confirms that the tests — now written into contracts — are company policy. “After all, when you invest £200,000 in a budding star’s career, you have to make sure your investment is safe,” he is at pains to explain. “The world of pop is a risky one,” says the deeply-concerned chap. “The temptations in the way of young artists could put them at risk. Insurance companies are beginning to insist on tests and it will become standard practice.”

Which should interest the man who made Riva’s fortune — that well-known sexual puritan, Rod Stewart. Not to mention such models of chastity as The Roaring Boys and Limahl, who have all graced the label.
Doctors stumble on Aids breakthrough

The biggest breakthrough in the fight against Aids in the last three years has been made by accident at Dr Tony Pinching's laboratories at St Mary's Hospital in Paddington.

His researchers have stumbled on a genetic factor which explains why some people, who are repeatedly exposed to the virus, remain uninfected while others develop full-blown Aids. It suggests some people may be naturally immune to Aids.

The clue is a substance called group specific component (Gc), a protein which is found in the blood. There are three common tools - Gc1, Gc2 and the protein is inherited from an individual's parents. There is Gc1fast, Gc2slow and Gc2.

"It's a very important breakthrough," said Dr Lesley-Ann Eales, an immunologist on the research team. "We think that Gc1fast helps HIV bond onto the white blood cells, which enables the virus to multiply and attack the immune system."

Immunity

"Gc2 seems not to do this and people with Gc2 are less likely to be infected even though they are coming into contact with HIV time and time again. The team studied samples of blood from people with Aids, PGL, HIV infection and a group of uninfected partners of people with Aids. "Having Gc2 appears to give a person some immunity," said Dr Eales. "But so far there hasn't been much research in this area and we have just stumbled on a very important step."

Cash

Dr Eales and her colleagues plan to test larger samples of blood from the States to learn more about the way in which HIV bonds with the help of Gc1fast and why it doesn't with Gc2.

But the speed of Dr Pinching's research depends very much on the injection of Government cash and future funding.

The tests

- Samples of blood from 63 people with Aids show that more than half, 53 per cent, have Gc1fast.
- Another test on a group of 10 partners of people with Aids who are negative - and have been repeatedly exposed to the virus - showed that 53 per cent have Gc2.
- Only 18 per cent of the general population has Gc1fast and 29 per cent has Gc2.

A further article on this research will be published in next week's Capital Gay.
Transfusion AIDS kills politician

THE AIDS epidemic has reached into the ranks of the U.S. Congress claiming the life of Rep. Stewart B. McKinney (56), a Connecticut Republican whose doctor said that he apparently contracted the disease from the many blood transfusions he received during heart surgery.

Dr. Cesar Caceres said in a statement issued by the congressman's office that McKinney, a father of five in his 37th year of marriage, had "died of pneumocystis pneumonia, a bacterial infection brought on by acquired immune deficiency syndrome."

Dr. Caceres said that he believed that McKinney was infected while undergoing multiple bypass heart surgery in 1979. "This was during the window period between 1978 and the spring of 1985 when no testing of blood bank donors for HTLV-III (virus) was done," the doctor continued. "In recently reviewing his medical charts, I found that when he first came to see me in 1980 and 1981, there was evidence of increased globulin (blood levels important in antibody production)."
RTE’s full focus on threat of AIDS

A lot of people are not going to like it and will simply not watch it. The pay will be that they probably will not let their children watch it either.

One of the key players of the week will be John Mullins, a man who understands, better than most, the danger that the disease poses. With a dedication in psychology.

TALKING TO SUFFERERS

among his achievements, John is introducing a special "Borderline" programme aimed at young adults. The programme is part of a wider strategy to educate young people about AIDS. It is set to be a eye-opener for many young people who are not aware of the risks involved.

The programme will focus on the psychological and emotional aspects of the disease, including its impact on families and communities. It will offer guidance on how to prevent the spread of AIDS and help those who are living with the disease.

The programme will be broadcast on Thursday and will be the first of its kind in Ireland. It is hoped that the programme will raise awareness and encourage people to take steps to protect themselves.

Late Late to tackle problem

This programme will be the first of its kind on Irish television and it is hoped that it will be the start of a wider conversation about the issue of AIDS.

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The AIDS crisis

As RTE begins a major five-night campaign on AIDS tomorrow night, John McEntee meets a young Dubliner with the killer virus and hears how he struggles to give his life meaning.

Living Under A Sentence Of Death

People worried about the new disease called AIDS. But one of Part's sudden partners passed a death sentence. He knew which one.

"I have felt the influence of the disease and I know what it is like."

Death sentence

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"I have felt the influence of the disease and I know what it is like."
The 'mystery' of homosexual men

Ivor Browne

THE "SISSY BOY SYNDROME" AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF HOMOSEXUALITY

By Richard Green, MD
Yale University Press, £30 (UK)

boys", saying that other children call them "sissy". These boys would be preferred to be girls. They like to dress in girls' or women's clothes. They preferred 'Barbie' dolls to trucks. Their playmates were girls. When they played "mummy and daddy" games they were "mummy", and they avoided rough and tumble play and sports. By contrast the second group of boys was conventionally masculine. They were content being boys, dressed in boys' clothes, preferred truck play, played with boys role-played as "daddy" and enjoyed rough and tumble play and sports.

MATURE

The only firm conclusion the author reaches is that "feminine" boys are far more likely to mature into homosexual or bisexual men than are most boys. Two-thirds of the 66 males in the original "female boys" group have been interviewed in adolescence or young adulthood. Three-quarter...
SIR — The Queen of Romance, Barbara Cartland, is in no doubt that AIDS is a punishment from the almighty for immorality and downright perversion (26 April). Barbara Cartland is not the first person to make this observation, nor, I suspect, will she be the last. The buck has been passed right to the top. Forget the green monkeys and the conspiracy theories, the AIDS virus arrived on a bolt of lightning from the heavens.

We should be grateful to have latterday prophets like Barbara Cartland to keep us abreast of the latest in Godly punishments. I wonder has she any inside information on, for example, the Spanish Flu of 1918-19 which claimed the lives of 20 million people worldwide? I think not. Barbara may be a hard-headed business woman, but I doubt if that enables her to pick through the catalogue of disease and death that has afflicted mankind through the centuries and single out several diseases as punishments from God.

AIDS is not the only terminal disease floating around. Cancer may have been displaced from the title of Public Enemy No 1 but it is still killing people, of all ages, left, right and centre.

Even if definitive cures are found for all the gruesome, terminal diseases afflicting mankind, death will come in other guises. We are fighting a constant battle to prolong life and it is an uphill battle with no summit in sight; as soon as one enemy is defeated another appears. As novelist John Irving once wrote, "death is horrible, final and frequently premature" and it comes to everyone sooner or later, even the Queen of Romance.

It is ludicrous to single out one of the Grim Reaper's guises as a punishment from God.

Maura Banbury, Fennelly, Tonafora, Dunmanway, Co Cork.
AIDS: SUPPORT SYSTEMS

A little help from a Buddy

Buddies help AIDS patients through their darkest moments.

PHILIPPA BRAIDWOOD looks at the people who willingly take on grief.

Tom's potential talent as a PWA was spotted by his local Buddy co-ordinator, who approached him with a job. His Buddy was a successful Buddy and involved in the initiative the PWA who was new to the scene, tells the tale.

'Peter has left me with the impression of an inner kind of beauty,' he was a great man. On my first visit he said he didn't want to talk about AIDS, so we never did. We talked about his life. He'd been very successful in his work. He didn't tell you that. It was full of silver and paintings.'

Peter lived alone and his family were abroad. So Tom spent a lot of time just keeping him company. He also did practical jobs, like cleaning the flat. Towards the end, he watched Peter go through a lot of suffering. Tom can barely bear to talk about it. He was deeply affected. He looked ghastly. He would get terrible eczema. Each visit took so much out of his fragile body, and they went on for hours and hours and hours.'

'Tom spent weeks at Peter's bedside and was with him the day he died.'

When Tom went to see him on the road, he was lying stretched out on the sofa in the flat. 'If these Buddies are actually not role models, then they may die a long time ago.

One morning it was almost like a kind of person it would be a sure bet to see go to see who you had AIDS.

He was Wilson (not his real name), a middle-aged man who had been in the military, and he was depressed and had been tried for murder. He had to travel, but tried over again to kill himself. The real thing, in principle: to me.'

'Look, he's dead.' He was being treated for AIDS.

'Seeing this, I thought of the AIDS epidemic and how they are being treated and have no friends and nothing.'

Peter never knew of Tom's connection. He didn't want to know about Tom's past, he made it clear when Tom tried to tell him. Tom has been friends with a man for 10 years. Before that, he was a graphic artist. He found him both stimulating and challenging. Working with PWAs, he says, is like the real thing. September, September, Lionel has Buddies. Men, two of whom have died. (Buddies have one PWA at a time usually, then at least a month off after the death.) Lionel is now Buddying two people because he has plenty of time. They are Tim, a student; and Patrick, 29, who is unemployed.

Lionel is accepted as a Buddy by Tim's flatmates. 'They rejected Tim's first Buddy,' he says. Apparently he arrived in bulldozers, very campy, says Lionel. Tim gave him up, and went a year before asking for a new Buddy—a year in which he was attempted suicide after being outcasted at college, beaten up and targeted with urine and burning rubbish. This left him feeling lonely and withdrawn. Last week he and Lionel went to the theatre. 'Tim enjoyed it. He liked having Lionel around, too, because he feels he needs the pick-up.'

The word 'Buddy' comes from a Greek root meaning 'to talk to someone in the middle of the night.'

'He knows me, so he can say, 'Tim, you're being silly.'

Lionel's other PWA is Patrick, who is from an Irish Catholic family. Patrick relates very well to Lionel. Lionel says Pat hasn't hit him yet. Patrick rowed in. He was being Buddied by Lionel because he likes him and they like each other and partly because it's nice to know someone's going to catch you when the bottom falls out of your world.'

Mary Billingham (not her real name), 65, is one of 35 women Buddies in London. Mary brought up her four children alone after her husband, a psychiatrist, committed suicide 22 years ago. Two years ago, after her mother's death, she felt she wanted to help others come to terms with death. She did a bereavement counselling course, contacted the organisation which runs the Budding scheme. 'I thought that as a woman, a mother and a grandmother, I might be able to help someone unable to talk to their own family.'

Mary is now successfully Buddying a man in his forties.

'Tim has a job, a good social life and several friends. I'm just someone he can sit down and have a cup of tea with. It goes along very easily.'

A word-winning fiction writer and independent arts reviewer, Adam Mars-Jones, 32, is a Buddy. His new book, 'The Darkest Proof,' is written in Edmond White, is a collection of short stories on and around themes inspired by AIDS (Faber & Faber, out on 6 July). Adam says he became a Buddy because he's gay, and Aids was an imposing part of his culture and he felt the need to face it head on. 'In order to deny its metaphors.'

Adam, tall and confident in denim and leather, has Buddied four and a half years. 'The first was a 40-year-old manic-depressive artist. 'On my first visit I had fears and physical jitters,' says Adam. 'Ali got from him was sweetness and attentiveness. He was an intelligent man, so I thought in my way that you would try to cut away in a social relationship. I didn't expect him to die, you have to inhabit your PWA's hope.'

'My second was a kept man who sort of ran an antique shop and lived in his lover's shadow. My relationship with the lover was the crucial one. The lover took a pride in the way he surrounded him and I had to be careful not to upset him.'

The Buddy scheme, run by the Terrence Higgins Trust, is largely in the London area, with a few in the provinces. When someone's life is in peril, if you're sufficiently impressed on their wavelength, you can help to restore their identity by reminding them who they are. It was a pleasure to talk about opera while waiting for prescriptions.

My fourth was a doctor's house when he was in a medical mode but couldn't adopt the tone of voice the sick man wanted.

The "buds" Buddy relationship was one with a pathological liaux who owed something to having Aids. It was beyond my skills to cope with the stronger element of fantasising there, so I withdrew. Adam deals with Aids by confronting it. In his work, he tries to make others confront their prejudices. 'AIDS,' one of the more serious stories in his new book, warns the word. 'If you avoid the word, you avoid the reactions.' It also challenges ideas about what Aids are thought to be. The PWA in 'Buddies' says: 'Buddy is a name that is used for gay men.'

'If you see one, you're the word. The word probably gives accurate details to... I just wish to you, I was a cloud and I was leaving for him to pass over the mountain. Then we carry on, and I'm sure he feels better for it.'

The Buddy scheme of the Terrence Higgins Trust is operated in the United Kingdom, and it is only in London. Anyone is eligible to be a Buddy. The word must mean something to the person; the Trust probably gives accurate details to the person. But it doesn't mean anything to anyone.