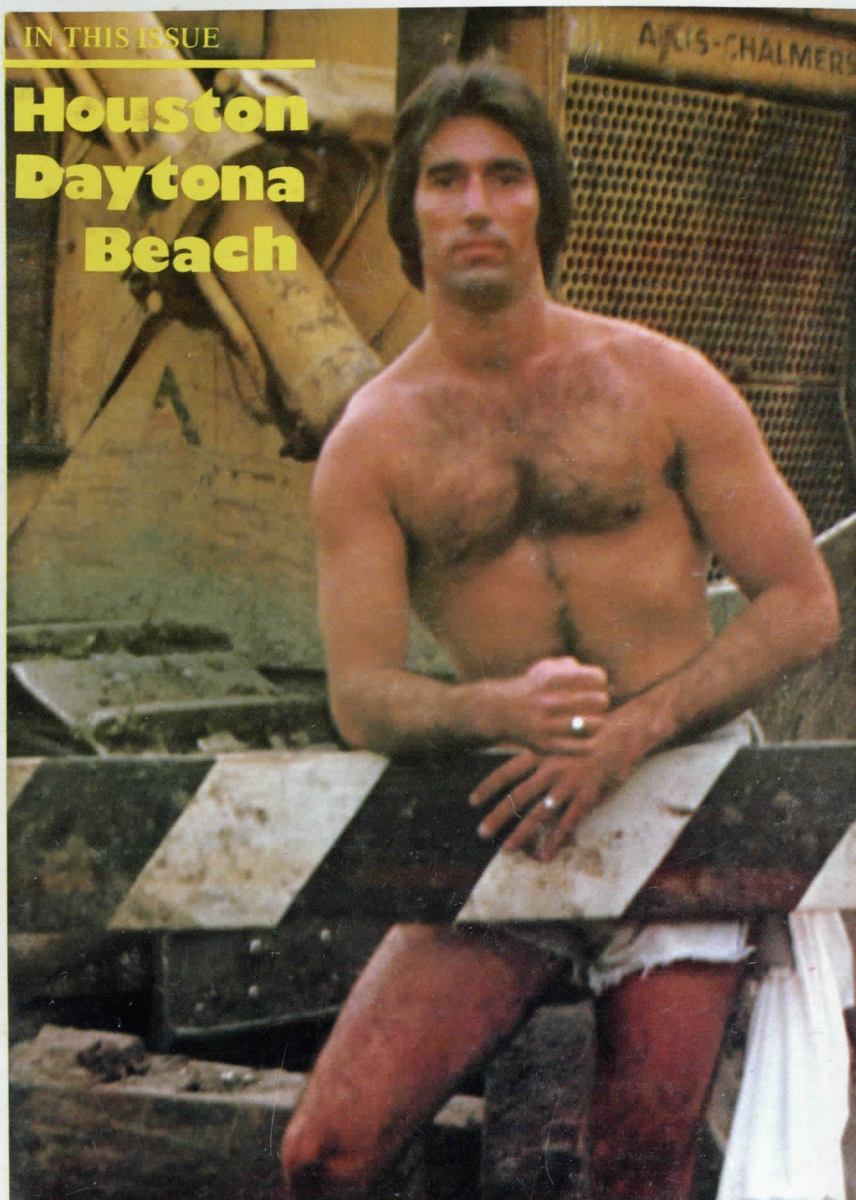


CRUISE

THE GUIDE TO GAY ENTERTAINMENT IN THE SOUTH

IN THIS ISSUE

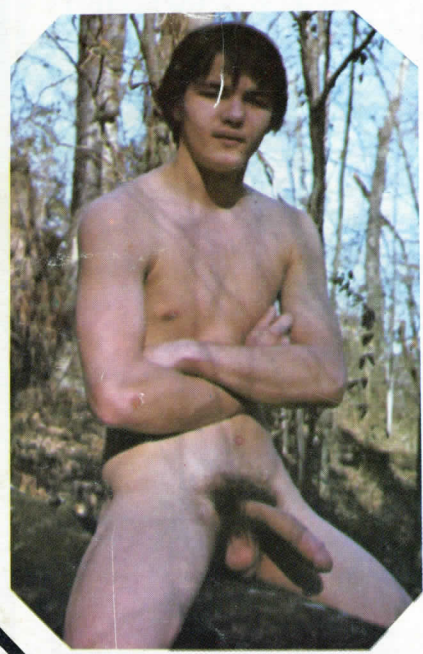
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OUR COVER: For
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More about Steve on
Page 47.

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CRUISE

THE GUIDE

TO GAY ENTERTAINMENT
IN THE SOUTH

VOLUME 2, NO. 5
APRIL, 1977

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HOUSTON



ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY BOB SWINDEN

What is it about Houston that makes it the kind of town where you go to spend a weekend and end up staying a month?

If I had to put my finger on any one aspect of the city and its gay community, I would have to say it is the warm and welcome, "howdy, po'dner" attitude of its citizens, gay and straight.

AROUND TOWN

A few interesting sights you might see in Houston. Above, the backyard at Levi's is a busy place on Saturday afternoon. Opposite page, Top Left, Fifties Night at the Old Plantation. Top Right, the computerized light show in the disco at The Depository II. Center Right, Tiffany and Company, the cast at The Depository. They are, left to right, Kandi Delight, Donna Day, Tiffany Jones, and Eartha Kitt. Lower Right, the Happy Stump in the backyard at The Silver Bullet. Lower left, Jerry, Assistant Manager at Levi's.

The fastest growing major city in the U. S. today. Houston has an economy based largely on oil and chemicals. It is the world's petroleum refining capital with over 3 million barrels being refined daily. It is the nation's leading manufacturer and distributor of petroleum equipment and has the nation's greatest concentration of chemical/petrochemical industries (40% of all basic petrochemical products in the United States come from Houston). The port of Houston, connected to the Gulf by the 50 mile inland waterway called the Ship Channel, is the nation's third largest. The Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center is the home of the U. S. Space program. The Texas Medical Center, with 28 institutions on a 200 acre site, is the home of our nation's leading heart surgeons and much advanced medical research.

This churning volcano of activity continues to draw new people into

it at the rate of 6,000 a month. They come from the rural hinterlands surrounding it or from the nation's other large cities. They come and stay because they like the warm climate, the free lifestyle and the friendly atmosphere of this big country town.

Houston's gays are representative of the city as a whole. Everybody is working for the Chamber of Commerce, telling you about all the good things that their city has to offer, being friendly, and doing their best to make you feel at home. Gay organizations here work together and not against each other.

Houston has approximately 20 gay bars, two baths and almost 20 gay bookstores and film galleries. Like Atlanta, Miami and most other large cities, there is a certain amount of turnover. Therefore for the latest word on what's happening you'll want to pick up one of the local gay publications when you arrive. There are three, *The Montrose Star*, *This Week in Texas*, and *The South-west Courier*. They are free and available in most of the bars and bookstores.

Like Atlanta and Miami and unlike New Orleans, you'll need a car to get around. But most gay activity is concentrated in and around the Montrose area, just southwest of downtown. Westheimer Road is main street for this area which is often referred to as homo heights. As you can see from our map on page 13, there is a heavy concentration of places around the intersection of Westheimer and Montrose. You may want to start at Mary's, an old stand-by always popular with locals and out-of-towners. They open at 7 AM (all clubs must quit selling liquor at 2 AM but a few stay open after hours), so you may find action there any time of the day. On Sundays the afternoons at Mary's have become tradition. This is the definitive leather bar and watering hole for



The Average Dyke Band performing at Mary's

the local motorcycle clubs, but every body here is not a bike boy.

Nearby you'll find The Silver Bullet, one of Houston's newest gay spots. It is a western and levi bar also with a happy stump (see picture, page 8) and a tree house in the back yard. A third popular western style bar is Levi's at 2400 Brazos. Their back yard Bunk House is soon to become the Maple Ranch Wear Store (featuring Levi and Western Goods, of course) and the Saturday afternoon beer bust from 3 till 6 is the most popular time here.

If you like the big bars, Houston has two at present. On one end of Montrose is the Old Plantation, a wild, swinging dance bar equipped with Sensurround, that incredible sound system used in Earthquake and Midway. The entrance is like an antebellum stage set, and the decor includes a kind of street-of-shops, country style.

On the other end of gay town, you'll find the Depository II, a ballroom with an Egyptian decor. They have just installed a new innovative com-

puterized light show and the effect is hypnotic. Both of the big bars have shows on Sunday nights. The cast at the Depository is headed by Tiffany Jones, the Texas Tornado, and includes Kandi Delight, Donna Day and Eartha Kitt. At the Old Plantation the cast includes Jennifer George, Jessica Landa, Ernestine and Carmilita.

Between the big two, you'll find The Midnight Sun, Houston's newest and most modern disco bar. Though it's small, it's friendly and intimate, and has caught on well because of the extremely attentive waiters and bartenders. Plans call for enlarging it soon.

The Midnight Sun, along with Sally's is one of those spots that is popular at 7 AM. They feature special drink prices at that time of the morning for those who want a bloodymary or a screwdriver on the way to work, or before turning in (if they happen to be on the night shift).

For disco-dining you might want to try Uncle Charlie's, but be forewarned that this is a very lively place where you can plan on spending at least two hours getting a mediocre lunch in a nostalgic disco atmosphere. Other gay eating places include Two Greek Brothers, Judes,



Typhoon Tessie's at 109 Tuam is Houston's newest gay bar. It opened in March and features memorabilia on two floors, a cozy fireplace, and an antique cash register from the oldest drug store in Houston.

the Mug and Auntie Mame's. Zorba's and The Hobbit Hole are popular with gays but also serve straight clientele.

Other bars you might want to investigate include the Inside-Outside for real cowboys, and The Locker, a

STUDZ
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rough'n'ready leather bar which is home of the Texas Riders, American Leathermen, and Tejas Motorcycle Clubs. Just Marion's and Lynn's is a popular women's bar.

When the bars close at 2 AM every morning the action picks up at the baths and bookstores. At the moment, The Club Houston is the only bath there. A member of the Club Bath Chain, this is a fine facility with specials throughout the week. A new bath, the Midtowne Spa is scheduled to open within a few weeks.

Houston has almost twenty gay bookstores. The Houston version of After Dark at 3400 Travis is very similar to their original in Atlanta. Adultz at 714 West Alabama and Studz at 1132 West Alabama are also very good. There were some raids on several stores on Friday, February 25th in an effort by the local law enforcement officials to force the stores

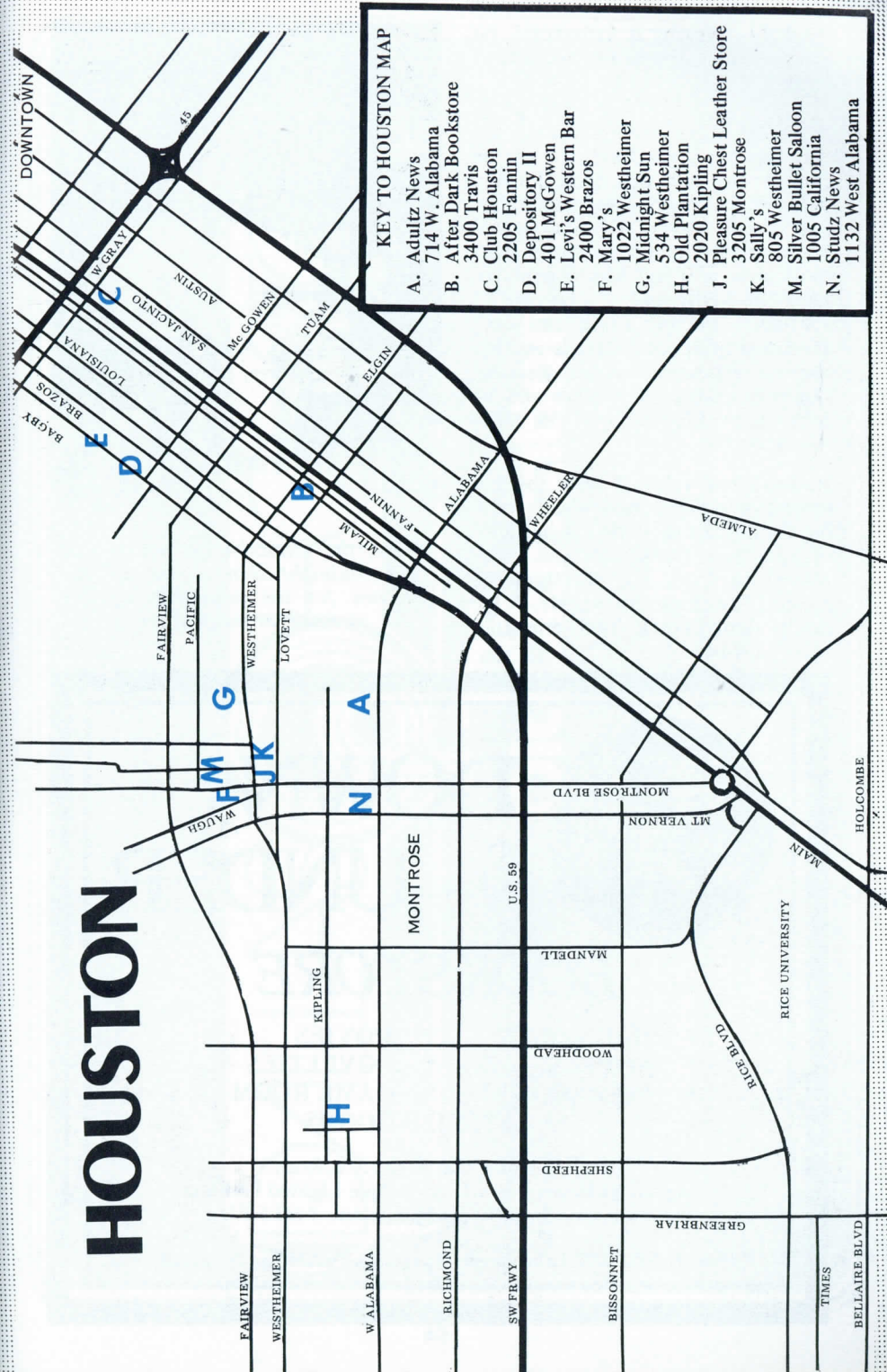
to stop selling gay or straight films and books that depict explicit sex acts. No action was taken against any customers in the stores. Local store owners are taking a strong stand against repression and censorship and petitions are being circulated protesting these arrests.

There are many things to do in Houston besides going to the bars. The Cabaret Theatre at the Shamrock Hilton is open 7 nights a week presenting 8 performances weekly. The Montrose Activities Center production of "El Grande de Coca Cola" opened March 25th at the Buffalo Underground Theatre and will run until April 10th. The Houston Ballet and the Houston Grand Opera are among the finest in the country.

For sightseeing you will want to visit the Astrodome, the world's first domed, air-conditioned sports stadium. Tours are conducted there daily and sports events are scheduled

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AND MARY'S TWO**

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HOUSTON**



regularly. Nearby is Astroworld, 60 acres of rides, live shows and attractions.

Some 20 miles east of town is the San Jacinto State Park. It was on this site in 1836 that Sam Houston defeated Santa Anna and won independence for Texas. The San Jacinto Memorial Monument, a stone shaft more than 570 feet high commemorates the battle and is a favorite of tourists. Further south and east, the Johnson Space Center is another tourist attraction worth seeing. Galveston, with its beaches and its own night life, is only 50 miles southeast.

Houston has a lot to offer the gay tourist or a gay person who is looking for a place to settle. It has a lot of fine bars, bookstores and other places for gays, but we think its greatest asset is its people. We don't think you'll find friendlier folks anywhere.



Gary, the attractive bar manager at The Midnight Sun is one of the reasons for the popularity of this small, intimate disco



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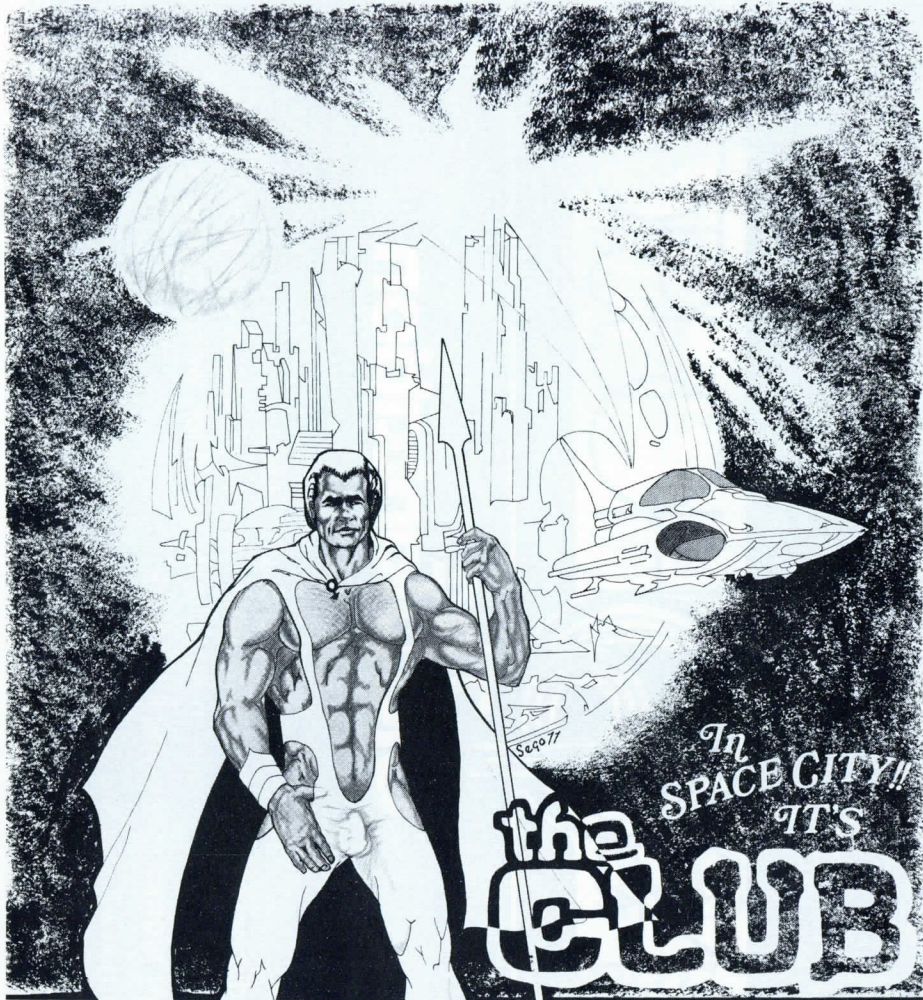
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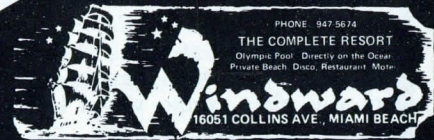
CRUISING AROUND



POOPdeck RESTAURANT



THE CODPA



BY ROD HORNY

On a recent visit to South Florida, I took the opportunity to visit a lot of the older, more popular places, and check out some of the new ones.

I stayed at The Marlin Beach Hotel in Ft. Lauderdale and as usual, found plenty of action here. The Marlin has remodeled approximately 35 of their rooms, and I stayed in one of these, 411, a big corner room with balcony's on both the east (ocean), and north sides. Those balconies are great for cruising the beach or the street. For those who wish to economize, they still have the standard (read unremodeled, not facing the ocean) rooms.

Downstairs, The Lower Deck has also been remodeled. While they told me it wasn't any larger than before, it certainly gave that impression. The dance floor is larger and they now have four bars there. The one on the north side of the room is situated such that you can converse in a normal tone of voice while still

hearing the music. My favorite bar was the one with the windows behind it which look into the swimming pool. While other places come and go in popularity, The Lower Deck at the Marlin continues to draw a good crowd, usually a combination of locals and out-of-towners.

Upstairs, The Poop Deck Restaurant serves some of the best food in Ft. Lauderdale. Their dinner menus contains items from 22 countries including beef Teryaki from Japan, Roast Duck Montmorency from Italy, Chateaubriand from France, Steak Geneve from Switzerland plus many others. While the fine food here is one of the reasons it is popular, the quality of the service (and the beauty of those doing the serving) adds a lot to the meal. And if you happen to be sitting by the windows, the passing panorama of beautiful people is probably the cruisiest in the country.

Next door, The Lauderdale Beach Hotel is now open as a gay resort (it is owned by the Blueboy people)