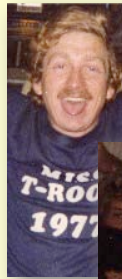


Jon's

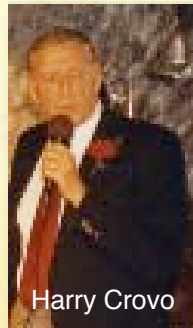


View

December 16th of this year we will mark and celebrate the 30th Anniversary of Club 1220. Over the next seven issues I will begin Jon's View with some insight and history as to what has been going on with the club during those 30 years. Click your heels twice, and join me as we begin our walk down the "Yellow Brick Road" to the "Hub" and later "Club 1220."

At this time 30 years ago my brother Steven and I were doing all we could to find a home for what we hoped would be the first gay and lesbian bar in Contra Costa County. There were places in Contra Costa County that had the reputation of being mixed, however, no one before had started a bar that was open exclusively to a gay and lesbian clientele.

When Steven and I went to my parents with the idea for a gay bar, one of my father's major concerns was not so much the police, nor the city for that matter – it was our intended market. Would gays & lesbians patronize a



Harry Crovo

club in such a small suburb and conservative town – could it support itself within his perception of a limited market? We felt it could and would.

We finally selected a location for the club over on Taylor Blvd. in Pleasant Hill. We had secured the lease, bought the liquor license and started to hire the necessary contractors to bring our dream to reality. Ah, but when word got out that we were going to open a gay nightclub, the city of Pleasant Hill quickly called and told us that they were no longer issuing permits for stand alone bars. If we were to open and operate a bar



in Pleasant Hill, we would have to serve food as well. Hon, we had no intention of becoming a food establishment – in our environment "pick up" would in no way translate to food! Undaunted however, we put our newly purchased liquor license on hold with the state and hit the road looking for a new location.

It was at that time I sat down with my father and told him we should just go to what ever city we were considering and let the city fathers know exactly what we had in mind for a night club. I can't begin to remember the countless doors that were slammed in my face when I told them our hopeful plans. Some even said, "they would do whatever it took to keep "our kind" across that bridge."



The last stop, in what I felt had become a nightmare journey of bigotry, up to this point at least, was to the Walnut Creek Police department. I met a wonderful group of professionals, who were not only competent and courteous, but they actually took the time to call both the city of Oakland and San Francisco Police Departments' to hear what problems, if any, they had experienced with these types of establishments. Needless to say, they liked what they heard and the rest is history. The relationship that developed with the Walnut Creek Police department and us is one of the main reasons why I think the club was able to not only stay open, but also survive. That open relationship continues to this day.

We made the choice NOT to place a sign out front - we did not want to attract, nor entice anyone that would not be friendly to us being there. I knew that whenever I needed to search a town or city for a gay bar or club I had no trouble founding them every time – signage or not. Even today, I hear from folks that, although they found the club, are surprised

that there is no sign designating its location. If some of these folks, most of which were not even born in 1975, could travel back to that time and experience the true feeling of what it was like to be a homosexual, I believe they would be a bit more humble. Back then, we had no idea whether we'd be safe entering such an establishment, never mind being seen by someone who just might call our employer and have us fired. It happened all too often. And, sometimes being gay and owning a bar in Contra Costa County had its own dramatic consequences – stay tuned to next month's Jon's View.

Just in case you have not heard, we are currently engaged in a huge remodeling process of the bar scheduled for the first two weeks of August. Mark your calendars as we will be closed from the 1st for one week, and we will try and complete the remaining remodel while we are open. If you have any old items or pictures from the club's past 30 years, please let Dean or myself know as we are compiling a photomontage of the past 30 years. If you by chance happen to look at the front page of our web site, you just might see yourself 20 years ago on the dance floor doing the disco or other nasty things you wouldn't want mother to see....



If you happened to miss one of the biggest events we had last month at the bar ask Eric and Chris what went on within the RED LIGHT DISTRICT. The photos will give you some idea of how big a party it was that these two guys put on. If you happen to see Eric or Chris, be sure to have them tell you when their next RED LIGHT DISTRICT party will be.



That's it for me this time - have a safe June, and please, remember not to drink and drive – we value your friendship and presence at the club. Come back and see us soon.



Jon and Champ

... and a Happy and Safe PRIDE