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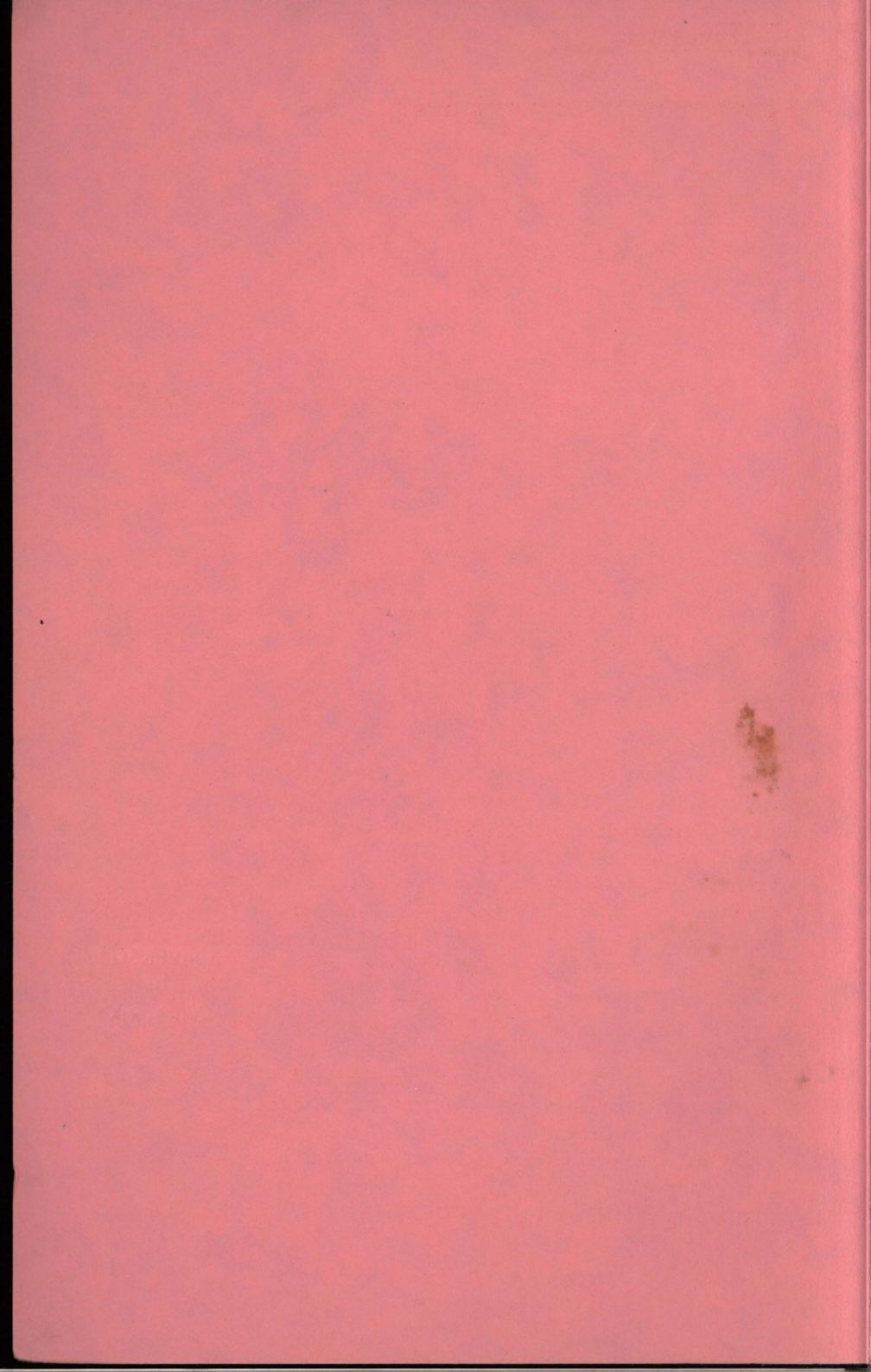
Transvestia

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The
Life
And Times
Of Virginia

Volume XVII No. 100



100 ISSUES? - SEEMS LIKE 100 YEARS!

This is the 100th issue of Transvestia spread out over the last nearly 20 years. It is a good round figure and a good time to both do a recap of those years but also to change horses since we are not in midstream. So this is the last issue of Transvestia of which I will be the editor—but more of that at the end of this story. Some of you have known me personally over the years but most of you have known me only as a name, as the editor of TVia or as someone you have read about or possibly caught on a TV show once. In retiring I thought it would be appropriate to give you a picture of my life and times and particularly of the events of the past years. In that way newcomers to these pages and those yet to discover them, may gain some insight into the problems of the last 20 years and have a better appreciation of what has been involved in bringing you this magazine 100 times in the past, organizing and running FPE, helping to organize TV groups in many foreign countries (with Fran's help much of the time), publishing three serious books on the subject, doing professional research and publishing in professional journals, lecturing to professional societies and seminars, universities and many private groups, and giving over 100 radio and TV appearances and numerous magazine and newspaper interviews both here and abroad. If you wish to take the above as blowing my own horn or sounding immodest, be my guest and do so. But I mention these things as being matters of facts and as you read, "This Is Your Life, Virginia" you will, I hope, appreciate difficulties and problems of doing these things as well as the satisfactions of victory in surmounting them. In any case you will know "Virginia" better when you are through.

But before we get into that, I want to reintroduce an old friend and collaborator, Susanna. From No. 1 to No. 61, she provided stimulating and thought provoking insights in her column, "Susanna Says." She had to discontinue it some years ago when other commitments made it too difficult. However, since this is our 100th issue, I prevailed upon Susanna to come out of retirement for "Just one more time." She graciously did so and here is her column. I wish to thank her for her contribution to this anniversary issue as well as for the penetrating ideas she has expressed. Now—hear what "Susanna Says"!

SUSANNA SAYS

One hundred years! or is it one hundred issues of *TVia*? It really seems like a century ago we started groping in the confusion of our lives for a truth and a self-definition. We followed the same pattern that modern youth seems to have found, the eternal question of "who am I"? We were desperately trying to find ourselves, to see if we could fit somehow, comfortably, in the midst of our society, and we shuddered to think that it might be an impossible task. We seem to have moved forward to a certain extent. A good number of people, many more than there were one hundred issues ago, know about us. The moral "liberation" of our times seems to have helped somewhat, too. But, we ask ourselves, have we really become liberated? Have we really become understood? Accepted?

I get the impression that our "alter egos," the GG's, played a nasty trick on all of us. They are forcing the masculine world to accept them in its midst. They are wearing the construction helmets, and buzzing through computers and tearing engines apart while hanging on to their right to wear perfume, lipstick, jewelry and any type of fashion their wonderful minds wish to adopt. And what about us, you may say? Have we walked those million miles of acceptance to do as we wish, to behave as we'd love to have our "girl-within" behave? I am afraid not. The GG's are winning their revolution. They even defy polarization. We equated skirts with GG's and pants with the masculine way of life. We hated the GG when she boldly snatched away from us our jeans and our shirts and our neckties. But we did not have the guts to retaliate by snatching away her petticoats and skirts and lipsticks. So she advanced while we stood still. We just

the new Iranian government in the streets smoking cigarettes, wearing skirts and make-up in an insatiable urge towards total freedom. Our urge is like a weak kitten's mewing inside a locked closet. We are still scared to death to be discovered.

Our transexual sisters are willing to meet the cameras, to make the headlines, but we are not quite willing to follow the example of GG's and transexuals and gays. We are still at the bottom of the acceptance totem-pole, we are still looking for our true identity, caught somehow between our "he" and our "she." The GG's are telling us that there is no such thing as a purely feminine world . . . that the world is a blend of all the masculine and all the feminine dreams and that anybody can tread those heretofore forbidden paths. They tell us that it is their "right" as human beings to explore and live as they wish. How come we do not fight for our "right" to do so? I have yet to see one TV in masculine attire wearing red nail polish. That's a no-no. And like that one, there are thousands of other no-no's that keep us enslaved in our old, ancient patterns of living. We are letting the revolution pass us by, while we timidly hope that the GG's, transexuals and gays will win their battle so that we can gather a few crumbs from their banquet. We can count with the fingers of one hand the number of TV's (with Virginia at the head of the list) who have dared a break-through in radio, television, and other organizations. The rest of us sit back silently and do nothing but wish that something, somebody, would do something for our liberation.

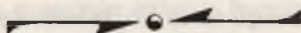
I guess I sound rather pessimistic and despondent, but I think that reality backs me up. Still, I must agree that the joys we savored through our 100 issues are a treasure to be held very, very close to our hearts. It is strange to realize how much envy there is in being a TV. Envy for that part of the GG's life that we are not allowed to invade. The "girl-within" we love so much is really a composite of all those facets of life which GG's were always allowed to indulge in, but were denied to us. Now that the GG is invading our territory and de-genderizing many masculine attributes, behaviours and trademarks, we are still left with the fact that we are not de-genderizing a multitude of elements that remain strictly the exclusive domain of the GG. And that is why we envy them. *They* are the ones who are gaining. They are enriching their sphere of action, while ours remains static, unchanged, perhaps smaller in the degree that they are degenderizing our world. Perhaps in our envy we distorted reality. We wanted the GG to remain the GG that *WE* dreamed about. We wanted the old

turned the other cheek. So she was liberating herself while we withdrew into our "envy-world" and dreamt of our girl-within always in skirts, always in the feminine frame where we wanted to keep her.

Yes, our revolution still has a long way to go, perhaps it will never materialize. As the GG degenderizes our world, there will be nothing left for our girl-within, except the envy of things as they were in a past era, rapidly fading away just as crinoline, and silks and satins seem farther and farther away from reality. And we will continue to envy the GG because she took it all, spread her wings and flew high, very high, leaving behind a pitiful band of TV's who can only dream of a GG that no longer exists. The prospects for a TV liberation are indeed gloomy, but that is no reason to give up. Perhaps with persistence, with truly feminine wiles, we might yet salvage something from this debacle, and prove that our concept of the girl-within is still the closest thing to heaven that the human mind may conceive. For the time being let us rejoice with *TVia* over 100 beautiful issues which put color, and light, and hope where there was nothing but drabness, fear and despair before.

Love,

Susanna Valenti



Thanks, Susanna. As usual you are right on target. TVs are unique in that we cannot publicly organize like women and gays to publicize our position. Neither can we expect society to come around to our point of view voluntarily.

TV liberation can only come individually when we can educate those around us to a broader concept of humanness—of wholeness—in which our way of life is understood simply as a means to that end. I've don't what I could through books and appearances in a general way. Each of you must utilize material presented in these 100 issues and the Understanding book to clear your own concepts first and then go on to parents, wives and others when this becomes necessary or desirable.

Virginia



HISTORY

*THE LIFE AND TIMES
OF VIRGINIA*

Like everyone else I was born! Right here in Los Angeles, to a father who became an eminent surgeon and to a mother who was a very capable woman in real estate, investments and other, at the time, rather un-feminine ways. Four years later a sister was born. I don't remember anything of a predisposing nature to my ultimate TV in my early childhood, I was just one of the neighborhood kids, doing my thing and getting into my share of devilment. When my dressing began is a little difficult to pinpoint. All I know was that by the age of 16 it was full blown. The way I can tell that is that in the year, 1929, we went to Europe by boat—that was before the days of transatlantic flights. There was going to be a medical convention in Europe and my father was going to it. The crossing took about eight days. Most of the passenger list was made up of doctors and their wives and families. I got very well acquainted with one of the doctor's wives and when the last night came around and they were going to have a Captain's Party which was to be a fancy dress occasion she was very insistent that I go to the party as a girl and she would fix me up. Why she decided on this I don't know because I didn't give off any evident effeminacy. I was one half of the doubles champions of the ship in deck tennis and I was always tearing around with one of the other sons who was about my age exploring every corner of the ship. Why she picked me I don't know, but I do remember two things very clearly: 1) there was nothing in the world I wanted to do more than get gorgeously fixed up as a beautiful young lady and go to that party,

but 2) there was nothing in the world that was going to make me do it. I remember both feelings clearly and they tell me that my desires were already very clearly perceived by that age and that my guilt and fear were also well mobilized.

This leads me to guess that my first interest must have come about the age of 12. But in any case by the time I was 18 I had accumulated a small wardrobe and when I could assure myself that my parents were going to be away long enough I would go out into the garage and dress there and then sneak out and walk around the block or maybe even get bold and get on the streetcar and ride about six blocks east, get off and take another one back again ... Big adventure. Then one Sunday I was home alone and decided to do my big number. I got all dressed in a dress of my mother's. I remember it well—a green velvet skirt and a blouse of very light green with appliqued green leaves on it. I didn't have a wig so I took a switch of mother's and draped it around the inside of a big broad brimmed garden hat so that bits of it stuck out in appropriate places and there I was. With shoes and purse—a perfect lady ready for an afternoon walk.

Our house was two blocks from Wilshire Boulevard, one of the city's principal streets. So I trucked out of the house and walked up to Wilshire as prim as you please—two blocks down Wilshire and then back to the house. I was like a saddle horse from a public stable—you can hardly get him to move on the way out and once you turn around you can hardly stop him from running all the way to the stable. I found that I couldn't get back to the safety of the house quick enough. I'm sure many others have experienced that.

I remember another event of those days. They were the days when rayon was all the rage. One time, operating on the principle that if some is good more is better, I remember that I wore about eight pairs of rayon panties and on top of that four or six of my mother's slips. In those days we had double decked buses like those famous in London and I walked up to Wilshire and got on one and went up top where I could get a good view. Unfortunately when the bus went around a corner the sway on the upper deck was considerably greater than down below. I found that 12 or 14 layers of rayon between me and the seat made things pretty slippery and I could hardly stay on the seat. But wearing all that lingerie at the same time made me feel sort of super-feminine because I was outdoing all the other women.

I also recall buying my first pair of heels. As Charles I went downtown to Broadway which was definitely not the highest class district. I remember going into this little shop which was down a small flight of stairs below the street. I explained to the man that my aunt had been bedridden for sometime and was just now able to get around but that she wanted a new pair of shoes and had sent me to get some for her. Of course it just so happened that her feet and mine were the same size—fortunate coincidence. I got the shoes, all right, but as I think back on it today, I feel embarrassed at the ridiculousness of the story—a woman who has been laid up for some time wants a pair of high heels yet and sends a young man to buy them. I can't imagine what the salesman thought but I think it was a good proof of what I have said many times since, namely that shopkeepers are only interested in sales and couldn't care less who is buying what and for whom.

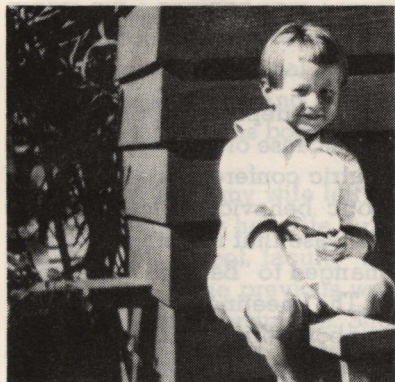
The first occasion in which I willingly appeared before others as a girl occurred in 1930. I was active in a church group and of course they had a Halloween party and I was debating what I should wear. Across the street lived a family with a boy and girl about the same ages as my sister and I so we were great friends and often in their house. When I mentioned the party, Mrs. S came up with a great idea. Why didn't I go as a girl—she would fix me up with one of her daughter's dresses. I demurred rather weakly at first but managed to agree in time. So she got me up as shown in one of the accompanying pictures. I won first prize—and why not, coming events cast their shadows a long way before them. After the party, five or six of us drove down to the beach and walked around in public. It was my first trip out with anybody who knew anything about me and naturally it was great. The next day I got dressed all over again before returning the clothes so that I could get some pictures taken of the event and this was my first picture. I was eighteen years old.

There is hardly any purpose in hiding the erotic aspects of early cross dressing and I had my share of that. Most every dressing session involved an orgasm and sometimes things came to a climax while I was on the street, the excitement was so intense. I'm sure I wasn't in any way unique in that regard. But one day an event happened. We have a May Co. department store downtown that occupies all the space from one street to the next so that one could walk around three sides of the store and window shop. I started at one end and did the whole circuit, stopping to admire the displays of lingerie, shoes, dresses and hats. In due course I arrived at the last window and it

suddenly occurred to me that with all that exciting display of beautiful feminine things which ought to have brought on an erotic explosion, no such thing had happened. That was something of a surprise to me for a bit, but on reflection I realized that I had simply been window shopping like any other woman and that it wasn't any more erotic for me than it would have been for them. It was in that moment that I first realized that there was something more to the dressing thing than just a sexual outlet, something from deep inside. I didn't have any clear understanding of what it was at that point, but it was the beginning point of the awareness of the "girl-within" philosophy. Over succeeding years this point of view came to be the cornerstone of my philosophy.

Well, like most others in this paraculture I finally got married. Again like many of the rest of you I decided that now that I was going to have a girl all my own that I wouldn't have to create one by using myself as a manikin so I wasn't going to need all those feminine clothes. Right? Familiar? Yes, it is pretty standard—I burned all my clothes the day before the wedding. The marriage went off as planned—we were married on Saturday, drove to Oakland over Sunday, found an apartment, moved in and I started a new job in a new town with a new wife in a new home. Everything went fine for about three months until Thanksgiving came and she went back to L.A. to visit with her sisters. And what happened to me—after three months of having dresses hanging behind my suits and lingerie in the drawers just below mine and cosmetics and other feminine things all around the place all the time? You guessed it, it all came surging back. I went out to a second hand store and bought or rented all the essentials because my wife was much smaller than I and I spent the weekend as my femmeself.

When she returned she commented about "who has been into my dresser drawers." Well, as you can imagine, I was scared green and mumbled something about she must have disturbed the things herself in packing for her trip. After all, I had had years of experience putting my mother's lingerie back just as I found it and was panicked by the idea that my wife could tell. This began a very intense guilt trip for me which culminated one night when some friends were over and the conversation turned in some way to homosexuality. I flushed, stammered and became very ill at ease. That really got to me because I had never had a homosexual experience yet here I was reacting exactly as though I had. It was one of the things that made



3 Years — 1915



18 Years — 1930
First Public Appearance



1939 — Street
Scene in San Francisco



1941 — Bride
In Mock Wedding

me resolve to do something about it when I found the right doctor which I did in Dr. Bowman—see below.

A year or so later I was called back to the department of the medical school where I had earned my Ph.D. Because of my position on the faculty I was able to attend the psychiatric conferences and learned a lot about mental disease and neurotic behaviour. One day they announced that they had a very unusual case that morning—a young man who had recently had his name changed to "Barbara" by a court order. Naturally my ears pricked up. The meeting was in a small medical amphitheater and I was sitting about three-fourths of the way up and about three-fourths of the way around. The doctor handling things announced that "Mr. Morris will give the psychometric details before the patient is brought in." Morris stood up at his seat to give the information. He was sitting a couple of rows in front of me and several seats closer to the center. This meant that when he began to talk everybody turned around to look at him and as I was in a straight line behind him it was as though they were looking at me. But the matter became very traumatic for me because as he talked he described the individual as coming from a Southern California college, gave his age and a lot of other details. It turned out that he had been in my own freshman class at my college though neither of us knew anything about the other one. Additionally, his personal transvestic history was almost identical with mine. It was as though this man, Morris, had reached into my head where I kept all of my secrets and then revealed them to the world. It was really traumatic. I blushed deeply and became very nervous. Then they produced the person—Barbara Wilcox—whose story was in *Secrets* magazine and a lot of other places back in 1941 or 42. At the end of that session they announced that next week they would present another transvestite. Naturally you couldn't have kept me away.

So I went to the conference and they presented a person some of you older readers may have heard of—Louise Lawrence. Well when it was over I lingered behind until I could talk with Mr. Morris and told him that it was a very interesting case that he had had that morning, etc. We chatted as we walked out to his car and then got in and talked awhile. He had a photo folder and on one of the pictures I noted Louise's address. Believe me I memorized that in about five seconds since she lived in Berkeley only about a mile and a half from me. Next was the problem of meeting her. As this was during World War II my wife was taking a night nurse's aid class so on one of her

nights out I decided that I would try for Louise. But as I was on the faculty I couldn't very well use my own name in meeting her and had to have some name that I could remember easily. My father's first name was Charles and I lived on Prince Street in Berkeley so "Charles Prince" was born that night.

So shortly after my wife left I drove over to Louise's house and was met at the door by her wife. I rather awkwardly told her that I was on the medical school faculty and that I had been present at her presentation of the previous week and would like to meet her since I was of the same persuasion. She let me in and Louise came shyly out of the back room. We had an interesting discussion as she was the first other FP that I had ever met—most of you know that feeling. So it was through Louise that I made the acquaintance of a few others in the Bay Area and eventually of one named John Thornton in Long Beach. Incidentally I also learned that Mr. Morris was one of us too, which explained why he had so much information and pictures of a number of others when I talked to him in the car. Small world and all that.

Well, now having seen two FPs presented at the psychiatric conference I figured maybe the people at Langley Porter (the psychiatric hospital attached to the University of California Medical School in San Francisco) knew something about transvestism; and maybe I could get some help from them. I had previously, over the last five years or so, gone to see four or five psychiatrists and analysts on my own and gotten a lot of unhelpful diagnoses—I had an unresolved oedipus complex because I liked to wear dresses, or my liking for high heels was a case of phallic symbolism or some other psychiatric mumbo jumbo which may have made the shrink feel better but didn't do anything for me. But maybe these people could.

As I was on the faculty, as I have said, I didn't feel safe in revealing my "secret" to any ordinary doctor and decided that I would go to the top and try to talk to Dr. Karl Bowman who was the director of Langley Porter. So I called his secretary and after much fencing around in which she tried to palm me off on some of the other shrinks, I got my appointment. Naturally I went to the session with some fear and trembling. Dr. Bowman was a power in the psychiatric world since he had twice been elected president of the American Psychiatric Association and he was director of the hospital. However, he was also a quiet, soft spoken, easy going little man and not one to

overawe you. Well, I sat down and at his invitation began to spill out the awful news, that I liked to dress up like a girl. With the exception of the other doctors mentioned above and Louise, I hadn't confessed my guilty secret to anybody and as I had started dressing about age 12 and I was now 30, that meant that I'd guarded it carefully for about 18 years. So I felt that I was telling him something pretty significant and when I got to the end he leaned back in his chair, put his feet up on the pulled out drawer of his desk, clasped his hands behind his head, stretched and yawned and then quietly said, "So what else is new? What's so unusual about that? There are tens of thousands more just like you, you're not so special. What you need to do is just learn to accept yourself as you are and enjoy it." That was something of a traumatic shock in itself since he took so calmly what I thought was so desperately important. But the message sunk in and all of you who are readers of *Transvestia* have been the ultimate beneficiaries of his statement because I did learn to accept myself and when later I began to publish the magazine I did my best to help its readers to accept themselves — refer to the inside front cover of *Transvestia*.

At the end of my year on the faculty as a research fellow the grant ran out and so did I. I returned to Southern California and got a job as a research chemist with a pharmaceutical manufacturer. My wife and I re-established our relationship with the young adult section of the church in which we had met and soon I was president of the Sunday School class and a member of the Church of Youth Board of Deacons. Prior to our marriage there had been some Halloween and New Year's Eve events to which I went dressed in some sort of feminine costume which my wife to be hadn't been too happy about, but it was a party and so it was accepted grudgingly in that spirit. However, I knew that she wouldn't take kindly to finding out that I *liked* to do it. Then Halloween came around again and I resolved to go as a half man-half woman. My sister had left a long red evening gown at my parents' home and I recovered that, went to the Salvation Army and bought a pair of high heeled black patent pumps and another pair of gold evening shoes. Then on the Thursday night before the party I decided to assemble the costume. I took my tux and tucked the right pant leg and right sleeve into the left ones. I put on the dress and then got into the half pants and half skirt and coat of the tux, this pulled the skirt up my left leg but it was a full enough skirt that it draped down over the right leg. I wore a black pump on the tux side and a gold one on the dress side and ascertained that with makeup on

the girls side and a pencilled on mustache on the boy side it would do for a costume.

So, actually having some girl stuff in the house and a justified excuse for wearing it I boldly left the dress on, wore both gold pumps and went out into the living room and lay down on the davenport. My wife looked up and said, "Go get out of those clothes; you look ridiculous." I said, "I will in a bit, I'm reading the paper." In a few more minutes she repeated her demands and I put it off figuring to enjoy wearing a dress and heels as long as possible. She kept nagging me and finally I just had had it. I sat up, swung my legs around and informed her that I would take them off when I got good and ready and that she might as well know that I liked to wear them. I further told her that since we had some engagement the following night, the party was on Saturday and we had something else to do on Sunday night that I would tell her the whole thing on Monday.

This calmed her for the moment. The party went off fine and the costume was a big success. Came Monday and I sat down and told her all. She was pretty upset but managed to make an adjustment by saying that she didn't want to see me but if things got to the point where I just had to get dressed to let her know and she would go into the back bedroom and I could have the rest of the house to myself. That wasn't one heck of a lot of space since it was one of those little four-room bungalows built like a square and divided into two bedrooms, a living room and a kitchen-dinette. She also told me that she didn't want me going around and buying things for myself and if I had to buy something she would get it for me. Which she did. Well, for the next year and a half I kept a record of when things got so tight that I just had to dress. It averaged out to once every two weeks over eighteen months.

Somewhere in this period she got pregnant and in 1944 a baby boy was born to us. I never loved her more than during the last days of the pregnancy and the first days with our new son. Although I wasn't his mother I took over a lot of motherly duties partially out of interest and partly to spare her. I made up all the formulas he drank. I put him to bed at night and I got up in the middle of the night for him. I remember that I painted some cut-out stars with phosphorescent paint and pasted them on the ceiling of his nursery in the form of the Big Dipper, Orion, Cassiopia and other constellations. Then I would tell him about them as he got older. We used to talk about "Rion" for

Orion and years later could remember some of the names of stars and constellations. We had what I thought was a happy family. I had changed employers and gotten into a commercial laboratory. After a time he got in trouble with the IRS and had to let everyone go. So I decided to go into business for myself manufacturing several products. So we moved across town and got a new house in Westwood and tried to build up the business.

One week I had to go to San Francisco on business arriving there Sunday afternoon. I called up my now friend Mr. Morris who had presented the psychometric information at the psychiatric conferences I have mentioned previously. He invited me to come out to his apartment. I had brought my femmeclothes along in a suitcase and he had directed me to a hotel where the night clerk was a gay friend of his so I got dressed in the hotel and went out to his apartment. It turned out that his girlfriend—a woman of about 40—was there with him. He was dressed at the time but after a bit he informed us that he had to get undressed and go to some meeting and he suggested that Betty (the girlfriend) and I go downtown window shopping for the evening. This we proceeded to do. We walked around the principal shopping area looking at all the women's wear windows and exclaiming over this hat and that pair of shoes and wouldn't I like that dress, etc. After that we went up to the Top of the Mark—a lounge on top of one of the tall hotels in San Francisco and had a drink. We had some fun with a couple of lonely Marines who tried to pick us up and then it was time to go home. So I took her back to the apartment and said goodbye and caught a cab back downtown to my hotel.

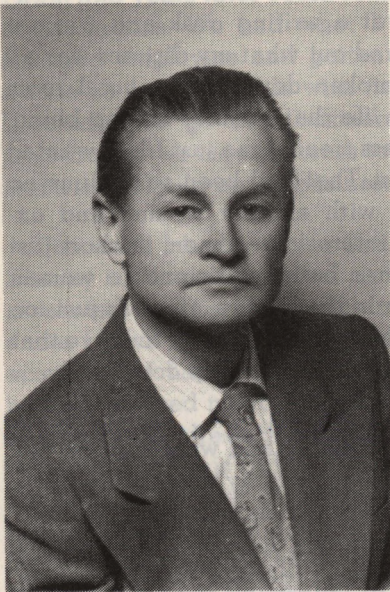
As I started to get undressed I also started to cry but not for any reason that I could think of. I got into bed and cried and cried, just racking sobs. It was very strange that I was crying my heart out and yet I didn't know why. It was about 4 a.m. before I dosed off into a fitful sleep. The next day as I travelled around town calling on prospects I carried a paperback with me to read on the buses and street cars because I found that as soon as my attention was not involved with customers or the book I began to get misty eyed again and would have broken out crying again if I didn't distract myself. And after all, 35-year-old men didn't just go about the streets crying.

I finally got through the day's work and got down to the station and aboard the night train to Los Angeles but I couldn't sleep. I read, I tossed, I read some more. Finally about 3 a.m. I put on my robe and

went to the club car and sat down at a writing desk and wrote a letter to Betty. By this time I had figured out what my distress was all about and I had to tell her. I had broken down in the hotel room because this was the first time in my life that another human being, knowing the true facts, had nevertheless treated me just like I wanted to be treated—i.e., like another woman. That had been so sublime an experience, going window shopping with another woman and exclaiming over fashions and things of interest to women, in short just *being* a woman with a woman. And then being sufficiently a woman to be the object of masculine attention in the lounge, etc. was just too much. So when I started to undress, which meant having to leave that beautiful and satisfying experience, it just broke me up completely.

I got to L.A. early in the morning of Tuesday and went right to the office. That night and the next at home I was unduly preoccupied and by Thursday my mind was made up. This experience in San Francisco made it clear to me that I was blackmailing myself in a sense by being afraid to admit to anyone what I was. I realized that the person in the world that I wanted least to know about me was my father and therefore I resolved to tell him myself to break the blackmail. On Saturday I phoned him, told him there was something important that I wanted to talk over with him, that I didn't want to do it at home and would he meet me at one of the parks. In some bewilderment he did. I got dressed at home all but the dress and shoes, put my man's overcoat over the rest and carried a bag of the other necessities and drove to an open unimproved area not too far away and completed the transformation. I then drove to the park, found my father's car parked and got out and walked to it. Naturally he was baffled and surprised and I spread it all out for him. We talked a little about it and he suggested that I see an endocrinologist friend of his and take male hormones. I said "no way" because I knew that that would only increase my beard, deepen my voice further and make my transformation to my femmeself even more difficult. Finally we parted company and for one solid year thereafter there was not one word spoken by him relating to what I'd told him. He had a big rug in his head and he swept quite a pile of things under it and that's evidently where I ended up.

Well, a few months after that my wife took my son and went to Minneapolis to visit her sisters. While she was there she went to see a psychiatrist unbeknownst to me. Her mother was working for my aunt as a companion down in Galesburg, Illinois. So I flew back to meet



Charles
1948 — 36 Years Old



1951 — Beach Belle



1951 — First Formal



"Muriel" — 1951
First Commercial Portrait

my wife at my aunt's house when she came down from Minneapolis to see her mother. We bought ourselves a new car and drove back to California. We had a nice trip and I thought things were going fine and didn't know that there was a time bomb already ticking in her head. The upshot was that a couple of months after we arrived back in L.A. I got a call at work about 10 a.m. It was my wife who informed me that she was taking my son, the family silver, her clothes, etc. and going to live with her sister. It turned out that the psychiatrist, having heard that I liked to wear women's clothes, told her that I was undoubtedly a homosexual and that she should get a divorce. So, since Gods and shrinks are always right, she took the advice and filed for divorce.

There was a lot of family trauma connected with the divorce. My family was socially prominent and the "news" that their son was a transvestite was not looked on with pleasure. So although both of my parents knew about me by this time I was given to understand that if I didn't get the situation resolved and kept out of the paper I was disowned financially and socially. Well, the upshot was that she got the divorce, about 75 percent of the assets, the house, child support, custody—the works. I could see the boy every other weekend. As those of you who have been through a divorce with children know, it was heart rending and destructive to all parties. My son resented the break-up of the home, but learned to manipulate both of us by telling each what he figured they would like to hear about the other, etc. It went from bad to worse and finally we had another court battle over permission for me to take the boy on a trip over Christmas to visit my sister and her kids. My "ex" countered with not only a protest against permission but an effort to cut visitation rights completely on the grounds that I was an unfit parent. We both lost in that I didn't get to take him on the trip but she didn't succeed in cancelling my visitation "privileges." It was quite a farce at the trial considering that the subject of masturbation came up and the psychiatrist that I had testifying for me told the court that it was normal since practically everybody does it. My "ex," her mother and their attorney were all hard-shell Baptists and this hit them pretty hard. The attorney was particularly incensed and insisted on questioning the shrink over and over again about it. I went up to him during a recess and asked him if he had ever masturbated. He harrumphed a few times and then allowed that maybe he did—"when I was a boy." I told him in the hearing of the "ex" and her mother that I was very relieved to have him admit it since if he denied it he was either a damned liar or damned abnormal. That stopped him in his tracks.

Well, in the course of this the newspapers got into the act and my name, business, profession and everything else were spread out not only for the dear citizens of L.A. to see but it got on the AP wire too. So there I was, with my "secret" of many years standing blown up and out into the world. So what to do. Do I slink away in shame from it all, or what? It happened that by this time I had met the woman who was going to be my second wife and we had been going to the Wednesday night dances down at the church where the first wife and I had met. There were still many members who had known me and the first wife for a long time. So I decided that the best thing to do when you get thrown from a horse is to get back on and ride RIGHT NOW, so we went to the dance the next night after the papers had printed my "story." That is, I faced the music, held my head up and in effect said "so what if I am a TV." I learned a lot from that, principally that expectation is worse than realization and I have counselled everyone ever since to avoid exposure if possible but be ready to face the world with dignity and self confidence if it comes because it won't be as bad as your expectation makes it. This is so much more true today than in 1950 since the world is much more tolerant than it used to be.

Christine Jorgenson's story hit the papers in 1950 and I like every other TV around read it with beating heart. Here was somebody who now could wear her dresses and other feminine things whenever she darn well pleased without having to hide and live in fear. She had it made in my opinion. It wasn't too long after that that Charlotte McCleod appeared on the scene and then Roberta Cowell and her life story was serialized in *Life* magazine. I was very envious of these people and I believe that if I had had the money at the time I would have taken the boat to Europe. In later years I was very thankful that I was broke because it gave me fifteen or so years to think about the problem and to come up with the awareness that sex and gender were not the same and that it was a gender change that I was interested in and not the ability to have sex with a male so surgery would have been a very expensive, painful and dangerous trip to take to a destination I didn't want to go to.

As I indicated just previously I had by this time met the woman who would be my second wife. She was an English girl who had arrived in this country almost penniless, since the British Government would not allow citizens to take more than \$200 out of the country with them because those were the days of austerity. So she took the first job she found advertised which happened to be that of house-

keeper to my mother. The role of "maid" in America is not too high a position, but she had been a "housekeeper" in England for a high ranking lord and in his house she managed a staff of 30 so it was a considerable job. At any rate she interviewed for mother and mother was very taken with her and she went to work for her. I was only slowly and reluctantly being lured back into the family good graces after the disowning threat and since "D" always ate with the family I saw quite a lot of her whenever I would be invited for dinner. In fact, my mother decided to play matchmaker and tried to throw us together with "why don't you kids take the car and go to a movie," etc. We did on occasion and gradually it became clear to me that this girl had fallen for me but not me for her. I had the interesting experience of having to sit on the rocks at the beach one night and explain to her that I couldn't fall for her because she just didn't have what it took to attract a red-blooded American boy like me. She had the body alright but she was English and wore tweeds, low heeled suede shoes, tortoise-shell glasses, amber beads, and kinds of frumpy dresses. The whole ensemble just didn't make it with me and I had to tell her so.

She found out about Virginia one night around New Years Eve when I was going to go to a party. I decided that I wanted to wear mother's velvet evening wrap. So I got dressed at my apartment and drove over to my parents' house. They were out at a party themselves but "D" was in the living room with my aunt who was visiting us when I tripped in and went upstairs. I got the wrap and spent some time admiring myself before the mirror. When I came downstairs she commented acidly, "I suppose you've been admiring yourself all this time!" I said, "Sure, why not?" with a happy smile and went off to the party. After that we had many talks and I explained things to her and she asked questions and time passed. Then one night about three in the morning the phone rang and I drowsily answered it. Her voice came over the wire saying, "I just had to call you and tell you that I understand!"

"You understand what?" I asked, not getting the import of her message.

"Why, why you like to dress up, I understand you now." Well that was great and we went on from there. She came to my apartment and met and talked with me when I was dressed. I began seeing her of my own volition and got her out of her tweeds, flats, tortoise shell and



1949



"Muriel's" Own Apartment — 1952



1952 — As My Future Wife First Saw Me



1953



In A Pensive Mood — 1954



1955



Virginia and Wife on the
Thames Embankment
London — 1956



Summertime — 1956

amber into heels, more flattering and softer materials for clothes, some harlequin gold rimmed glasses and costume jewelry and did the whole My Fair Lady-trip on her. She became a really beautiful woman and then I could begin to fall in love with her which I did.

One amusing incident comes to my mind. She had been telling me that I would look more of a lady if I wore a couple of chignons (coils of hair worn at the nape of the neck and which were fashionable about that time). I in turn had maintained that she ought to get her hair cut, styled and a permanent rather than the severe, pulled back style she wore from English days. At that time I lived in a rebuilt old house in which I had an upstairs back apartment reached by a long outside stairway and a short entrance hall. It was so far toward the back of the house that I could look up the backyards of all the rest of the block. Conversely when my door was open they could look right into my apartment.

On this particular night I called "D" and asked her to come over saying that I would come pick her up after work. She said no, that she had something to do and that she would come over by herself when she was through and named an appropriate time. So I went home after work, had a bite of dinner and then started to get dressed. I was all finished except for my wig which was going to be a surprise for her because I had bought the two chignons and had them fastened into the wig. I heard her coming up the stairs and hurriedly put on the wig, went to the door at the head of the stairs and turned out the hall light since with the door open anyone could look into the hall and see me. This meant that she entered the hall in the dark and we couldn't see much of each other. She came in, I closed the door and we went into the lighted living room. There we both got a surprise because I had pleased her by getting the chignons and she had pleased me by getting her hair cut and had had a permanent. She was truly a different looking girl, and that mutual act of trying to please each other was the beginning of our real love for each other.

Eventually we decided to live together because having been once burned I was, in effect, twice shy of marriage. So we got an apartment with five cats and three hamsters. All of them had the run of house and they used to eat together off of the same plates at the same time. And whenever any difference of opinion arose it was the hamster who won out. Cats and mice (rodents in general can be good friends) so we had quite a "family." "D" and I took a trip to San Fran-

cisco as two women during this period in which I was Virginia from leaving the apartment to arriving back again. We stayed in hotels in several places and naturally ate in restaurants and did the sight-seeing bit along the way. It was, as most of you will be able to imagine, a very great experience.

After about three months in the apartment it happened. I had bought two beautiful chocolate brown chemises by Vanity Fair with pleats and lace over the bodice and around the hem. One of them was a 12 and one an 18. One evening we were both wearing them with hose and heels and lounging around when "D" suddenly got serious and said that she had gotten her National Health forms from England. This is equivalent to our Social Security. She had been paying into it from over here and she put the question—"If I'm going to stay in America there doesn't seem to be any reason for continuing to pay into the fund in England. But if I am going to go back there I expect I should, what do you think?" Well, in American slang that could be translated—"Are you going to fish or cut bait, Buster." So I got the message and, dressed in my pretty lingerie, heels and makeup, I proposed to her then and there in effect, saying I think you should stay over here. She accepted. We were married in Santa Barbara a few months later and she bought me a beautiful white satin nightie for a wedding present.

In due course we began to think about having a home instead of an apartment and began scouting for a lot. We found one on a promontory overlooking a canyon in Hollywood and bought it. Access was by a quarter-mile long dirt road maintained by the fire department so it was pretty well isolated but with a nice view down over the canyon. Well, we designed the house ourselves and it became pretty unique having to fit onto a small lot and conform to the Building and Safety Departments' rules. The contractor said it couldn't be sited on the lot, we said it could and one Sunday morning with stakes, string and a sledge we went up there, laid it out, drove in the stakes and connected them by strings and then told the contractor, "It's laid out for you, now build it," and he did.

Somewhere in the 50s I had gone to a Halloween dance at our church dressed as a girl of course and I danced with various of the men. One of them was our young minister. I got away with it for some time until we got into some conversation about where he had gone to college which was in a small town in Illinois. Since my mother came

from a nearby town I could speak about that but I mistakenly referred to his college being in the wrong town. This tipped him off to the fact that there was something wrong and he figured out my disguise so he knew of my ability to dress and pass.

Sometime later there was a newspaper article about a person that I knew who was in the process of a sex change and who had been picked up by the police while dressed. There was an editorial about it and some letters sent into the newspapers. One of those who came to her support was this same minister and this told me that he was sympathetic to the whole matter. So later on I made an appointment with him, and my wife and I went to see him and I spilled out the whole story of my dressing habit. I don't recall at this time why I bothered to do this nor his response to it. I only mention this in view of what happened later.

The church maintained a campground in the mountains about 100 miles from Los Angeles and one weekend my wife, my son (by the first wife) who was staying with me for the weekend and myself decided to go camping there. We had just gotten ourselves well settled with tent, sleeping bag and all when this minister—I'll call him Lynn—drove into the adjoining space bringing his son with him. The two boys being about the same age soon hit it off and were out exploring, leaving we three adults together. After a little conversation Lynn came to the point. He had a confession that he wanted to make to me he said. At which point he proceeded to tell me that he too was a cross dresser and apologized for not admitting it the time I came to see him. So this was the beginning of a new friendship

Now let's go back to the early fifties and trace the development of the magazine, *Transvestia*. Earlier I have told how I met Louise in Berkeley and through her and by mail several other TVs, both in the Bay Area and in Southern California. Naturally, when I moved back to Southern California I looked them up. One of them was on welfare and lived in a ratty little place in Long Beach. It became kind of a mecca for all the TVs who knew about it and whenever we could get away we would all show up at Johnny's place to dress, talk and "live it up." This was a broadening experience for me because for the first time in my life I was able to be dressed and in the company of other dressed up male persons where we could just all be girls together, talking or having a bite that somebody went out for. No sex, no orgy, no parading around out in the world, but it was fulfilling in a strange



Disneyland — 1959



Picture Used For Lecture
Publicity — 1959



Weekend Wife
Trip — 1961



Two Girls Together
Virginia and Wife — 1962

way. Actually the place was tacky and not without the smells of both age and bad housekeeping. The chairs and sofa were broken down, it was small, in short it was pathetic that people who in the outside real world were ordinary guys, professional men, owners of their own businesses etc would have to gather in such a place in order to express something that was in all of them. But there was no place else to go and Johnny was a willing host though all he could furnish was the place, being on welfare.

Well, after two or three years of such "gatherings," somebody got the idea of putting out a magazine, newsletter or whatever you might have called it. It sounded like a good idea. Johnny, over the years, had managed to strike up an acquaintance with a couple of dozen other TV's around the country and they exchanged letters and pictures so there was a very small little clique that we could count as a prospective subscriber list. I invented the name *Transvestia* and I wrote the first promotional piece about it. We chipped in money to get it mimeographed and for envelopes and postage and Johnny sent it to all the contacts he had, asking for their support and \$5 as a donation.

I've long ago forgotten how much we collected and how many "subscribers" we had but Johnny and a retired lawyer who lived in the vicinity constituted themselves the staff and began to put it together. I contributed a piece called "Muriel's New Year's Eve." (I called myself Muriel in those days which was before the cigar became well known, at which point I dropped the name.) I reported on my experiences on the previous New Year's Eve in San Francisco where I had gone with a girl friend as a girl and made the rounds of several of the impersonator bars, hotels, etc. Others contributed articles, poems, etc. and the editors put it together. They managed to sustain themselves through two issues at which point it expired. For one thing, they printed it on mimeograph paper which is heavy and therefore required considerable postage; secondly, it could only be printed on one side and thirdly, it is a well known fact about lawyers that they are unable to say anything in 10 words if it is possible to expand it to 50, so Eddie poured it on and after two issues the costs of production and mailing had used up all the donation money and it fell on its face. It wasn't run remotely like a business and so it didn't survive like a business might have and as Chevalier Publications has for twenty years because I learned the lesson from Johnny and Eddie's failure.

Now another diversion because there are so many factors in one's life that you can't just tell it as one consecutive theme. Something else of interest happened which at the time was unrelated to the magazine, FPE and all that. For several years I had been in the habit of attending a one week summer camp at Catalina Island which was sponsored by the YMCA. This particular year I brought along my new wife "D" and got permission to bring my son too. It was a great vacation but that is not the reason for relating it here. There was a young couple who lived in a house at the site and acted as caretakers of the place during the winters and any time there was no camp in session. The only phone in camp was in their house and I had to use it to check up on how things were getting on with the business back in L.A. while I was away. I got to talking with the young wife and I guess she had to have someone to talk to so she began telling me about her domestic problems and I started counselling her. She had been brought up by her father and the husband had been brought up by his mother. As a result they were both a little mixed in their roles since each had a pretty fixed idea of the way the other should act since the other was in the role of the parent of upbringing. That is, she had ideas of the way a man should be because she had gotten them from her father and he had ideas of what a woman should be from his mother. Well, neither of them fitted the other's role model perfectly so there was some friction.

In trying to help them see the whole matter of gender expectations I told her about myself and she was open and understanding. But the significance of the story was that on the last day of camp when we were all leaving she and I were standing on the beach waiting for the small boats which were to take the camp group back to the mainland to arrive and load up. While standing there we got onto the subject of my transvestism and she made an interesting statement which had no significance to me at the time since I hadn't even thought of the magazine at that point. She said, and I am not making this up, "You will be the saviour of your people!" I laughed it off, we talked a few more moments, the boat arrived and I said good bye and got aboard. I have never seen her since.

Back to the story—It would have been around 1958 when I got in touch with a person known as Barbara Elin, who was a TV and who lived in Nashville, Tenn. and who was employed by a radio station there in some executive capacity. We wrote back and forth for a time and then the idea got broached that we might put out a magazine

together. The original scheme was that I would get the material together and set it up, mail it down to Bob (Barbara) in Nashville who, since he had access to an offset press would undertake to print it up and ship it back to me and I would mail it out. While these conversations were going on by mail the bottom fell out of the idea because Bob got fired from that job, so the advent of a magazine had a set back of a couple of years.

A couple of years of thinking it over and I finally decided that I would take a whirl at doing it by myself. So I made up a prospectus and mailed it to everyone that I had ever heard of with a request that they spread the word around. This included all the people on Johnny's mailing list and any other that he had made contact with since. After a time I had collected 25 subscribers at \$4.00 apiece. After holding that \$100 for a month or so in the hopes that more would turn up, I decided that I'd better get the ball rolling and give them something for their money. So I composed the first issue of *Transvestia*—using the name I had invented originally for Johnny's ill-fated venture. At that time I owned my own business and for some reason long forgotten, had confided in my secretary who was a woman about my own age and with three children. She was accepting and she typed up the manuscripts for the first two issues for me. I then found an offset printer and had a hundred copies printed up. The first issue was mailed out in January 1960. It had a couple of stories in it, which I am embarrassed to report, were the dominant woman type—this was before I learned enough about the nature of the TV phenomenon—to take a stand in favor of self responsibility and thus refused to go into the domination issue in later issues. But the magazine was well received. I have just gone back and looked over the early issues and find many letters of appreciation and encouragement in them. So it seemed there was enough support there to continue. I asked the few subscribers I had to speak about the magazine to others that they knew and urged them to contribute material to it as I had no intention of trying to write it all myself. I acquired some names from lists of other people and from very limited advertising and one way or another we grew, though slowly.

By the time we had reached No. 10 or 12, my old correspondent from Nashville, Bob turned up in Los Angeles and looked me up. We talked about the magazine, as it was, over several weeks and then he came up with the idea that since he was experienced in advertising,

mail order campaigns, etc. that he could help build Chevalier up by using some of this knowledge. The upshot was that we agreed that while I would edit and publish the magazine he would handle all the sales, advertising, etc. and for this I would give him 15 percent off the top and we started to operate on this basis.

For Christmas 1961 we brought out the first issue—and sent it to all subscribers for free—of an alternate monthly newsletter named the *Femme Mirror* (the original of our current Sorority newsletter). This publication lasted for 44 issues or about 7 years. Its first editor was Bob—Barbara and he did an excellent job on it. It was short, bright and humorous and was composed of a short editorial by me, letters from readers and answers thereto, and comments and contributions from readers. Over the years it had a succession of editors and finally expired with No. 44 because no one else was available to keep it going but myself and I just couldn't do it on top of everything else.

I also started something else about the same time and this was the Clipseet. Since a scrapbook had been part of my own life and I found that it was in a lot of others as well, I decided, that we could in effect, all share in each other's scrapbooks if we had a central clearing house for the items. People sent in clippings of what they found in newspapers and magazines and I trimmed them down (in size, not in content), organized them on large cardboard sheets and then photo reduced them to an 8½ x 17 sheet. Thus, everybody could see everything. This publication appeared 37 times about four times a year. That worked out to about nine years. During this time the interest and subscriptions that were high in the beginning, gradually lessened so that it was discontinued about four or five years ago. The reason, I am persuaded, was that fewer and fewer of today's TVs bother with scrap books. The world being more open and their opportunities for personal expression being greater, this vicarious outlet was no longer needed.

One day I got a call from my wife at the office. She had an amazing idea. It seemed that the minister (I'll call him Lynn) had to go to San Diego on business. His wife, therefore suggested to my wife that it would be interesting if I, as Virginia, were to accompany Lynn to San Diego *as his wife* and she wanted to know if I would like to do so. I was sort of knocked out by the fact that this was a job put together by two wives but on longer thought I figured why not, so I agreed to go. I

got all packed including a nice cerise colored cocktail dinner dress. We drove down in my car and registered as Mr. and Mrs. in a motel. Then, husband-like, he took the car and went off to take care of his business and I, wife-like, went downtown shopping. That was fun by itself but I also managed to pick up one of these cute little nothing cocktail hats that precisely matched my dress in color.

He finally returned "home" from the business and we got dressed for dinner, and I wore the cerise dress and the little hat. I think I was kind of cute but then I admit I was prejudiced. Anyway we went to the top of the El Cortez hotel and had a nice dinner with a lovely view of San Diego bay. We learned that there was a room lower down that had a three piece combo for dancing so we went down for an after dinner drink. Lynn eventually got brave and asked me if I'd like to dance. I said I'd try and I did, but never having danced as a girl before I stumbled all over him. Finally, I got the bright idea of closing my eyes so I wouldn't be able to see what was coming and start to lead accordingly. At that point I had one of the most significant experiences of my life because this was the first time I had ever completely relinquished control over myself to another human. I didn't have to make any decisions. He decided which direction we were going, how fast we would dance, what steps we would do and all else. The decisions were trivial, of course, but they were decisions and they affected me and what I would do but I didn't have to make them. This was significant because in our society men are trained to make decisions and determine courses of action and women are stereotypically followers of the men's decisions. Thus, as a woman I became a follower which was an entirely new experience. Now, at this late date, I recognize something else about it. Decision making is a left hemisphere function and I, being scientifically trained, am very much into the logical, reasoning, analytical left brain way of handling things and not so adept in the emotional, intuitional, holistic and synthetic aspect of human function, which is generally a product of right hemispheric operation and which is much more characteristic of the feminine side. So for a few minutes I really had a right hemisphere experience but I didn't recognize that at the time because such things hadn't been discovered yet. But the interesting thing was that when I allowed myself to get the messages from his body as to what he was going to do and to intuitively anticipate I was able to dance quite well. If we bumped into somebody that was his problem. With my eyes closed I didn't see the collision coming and thus made no effort (decisions) to avoid it. It was a very interesting experience indeed.

We are now in about the middle of 1961 in this chronicle and TVia had been in publication for 12 issues. It became evident to me that while having a magazine of their own and through it learning that they were not alone was a big step forward for TVs in learning about the nature of their behavior, how to handle it and primarily that they were not alone; it was not enough. Humans are a gregarious species and they like to be with others of their own kind, so I resolved to start some sort of a group here in Los Angeles. We had about 30 local subscribers by that time and I decided to invite them all to come together and discuss the prospects.

I arranged for a meeting room in a small Hollywood church and sent out invitations to the meeting to all local TVs that I knew. Since it was clear to me that none of them would be willing to come dressed and that coming as men they would be very self conscious and reluctant to admit anything to another guy sitting near them, I had to figure a way out of that dilemma. So I asked each member to bring a pair of hose and a pair of high heels and something for pot luck refreshments. To my pleasure, about 12 or 15 people showed up, all with a paper sack with the snacks in it and another sack with the hose and heels. After we were all settled down I introduced myself and explained my idea about a group. I further explained that I was aware of their reluctance to acknowledge to any other man that they were a TV since they had no way of knowing that he was too. So I had asked them all to admit their interest in feminine clothing not verbally, but in actuality and so now before proceeding any further we would have a short intermission in which everyone would put on his stockings and shoes. And they did so. When this little ritual was over I declared the first meeting of the Hose and Heels Club formally open. Everybody was a little nervous but that gradually wore away while we talked of various things, had our refreshments and finally got around to the point of adjourning. However, we all decided that we wanted to continue the group but that next time it should be full dress now that we knew each other and felt a little more safe and comfortable. So there was a discussion about places and times.

Finally, my minister friend Lynn, to whom I have previously referred—my "husband" on the San Diego trip suggested that if it was O.K. with his wife, he would be willing to have the next session at his house. I agreed to notify the members about this and the time and place. His wife did agree and so we announced it and in a couple of months had our first meeting in his home. It was a big old



Susanna and Virginia



Three Little Girls From School

Scenes From Casa Susanna "Convention"

1962



Susanna Gets Pushy



Herself

fashioned two story house with four bedrooms upstairs. So, since a good many came as men and had to change, I put one or two in each room and then scurried from room to room, zipping up dresses, fastening bras, combing wigs, advising on makeup and generally encouraging the participants. Many of them were extremely shy about going downstairs to face their sisters and I had to explain that this wasn't a Miss America contest and nobody had to be beautiful, only be herself. So one by one I walked the reluctant ones down the stairs and finally we were all assembled and in a few minutes everybody calmed down and became involved in conversation like they'd known the others for years. It was such a tremendous burden off of everyone's chest. Thus went the first meeting, in America I am sure and probably in the world, of a formal organization for transvestites or male women.

We then had meetings once a month after that and soon on alternate two weeks we set up discussion meetings wherein we examined various aspects of the behavior insofar as it involved not only the TV herself but also the wives and children. Everyone learned a lot, and the discussion groups were very popular. During this time Barbara was editing the *Femme Mirror* and handling mail order aspects of Chevalier Publications.

Somewhere about this time the idea of Phi Pi Epsilon or F.P.E. came into being. I had by this time consolidated my philosophy to the point where I understood that the process of growing up and becoming a boy or girl was in reality partly a process of unfolding and developing like a rose which starts as a bud with the potential to become a beautiful flower and then very gradually does so. But simultaneously it is also a process of contraction and compression and finally of suppression which amounts to burial of other potentials considered inappropriate to the sex of the individual concerned. Thus, since I recognized that *all* of the potentials are our birthright, there was reason and justice in trying to exhume and to recapture some of those buried potentials in order to become a more complete human being.

Those who by some accident had discovered cross-dressing had found a way to get at and to express some of these repressed and denied potentials. But all of them, which means about 99 percent of those who may read those words, suffered from a sense of being alone, of worrying whether they were gay or not or whether they were psychopathic because of their desires. Society programs you to think in terms of the stereotypes of masculinity and femininity. So while it

was of some help to have a magazine for such people, since it implicitly said that there were a lot of people with the same idea or a magazine could not survive; and it was nice to have a local group where feelings and opinions could be aired; it still wasn't enough. There were thousands of you "out there" somewhere who possibly had found *Transvestia*, but more likely had not, that needed both the assurance that they were not alone, not gay and not sick, but a philosophy on which to build that awareness and if possible some other people with the same interests with whom they could interface and talk things over. Thus gradually the concept of Phi Pi Epsilon or FPE for short was born. The initials in English meant Full Personality Expression. That is, a group of people who realized that their total human selves could not be expressed just within the limitations of accepted masculine parameters. And who, since it just is not feasible due to cultural patterning for a man to act or express feminine interests or behaviours while wearing men's clothing because of the guilt feelings it would engender, had found that it was possible and enjoyable to do it while wearing feminine attire. Thus they would be able to get at both sides of their total humanity. The name therefore was descriptive and appropriate.

These ideas were discussed with Barbara and with Lynn and gradually were formulated clearly. I then prepared a proposed membership application form which not only asked various questions about the applicant's life and interests, but which had a four- or five-page preamble explaining what the organization was founded for, hoped to accomplish and expected of its members. Those of you who were members of the original FPE will probably remember that form and the policies it set forth.

Well, when I had this plan roughed out I took it down to Lynn's house one night. Barbara was by that time living in a room in the house along with Lynn and his understanding wife. I remember well my standing by the fireplace and reading off the whole document to them for their comments and criticisms. When we had finished with suggested changes and improvements I recall someone saying something to the effect that such an organization and such a statement of principles would never be accepted by society and that if it got out I would be in for a very hard time. I also clearly recall my replying comment to that observation. It was to the effect of, "Yes, I recognize that my time is yet to come and that they (society and the authorities) will crucify me if they get a chance." Now just hold this little tableau in your mind for a bit while a few more months and

events pass. (This was sometime in late 1961.) It will come back into focus.

So Phi Pi Epsilon got underway. We renamed the Hose and Heels club the Alpha chapter of Phi Pi Epsilon and operated under that banner. I began to encourage special individuals of whom I had some special knowledge or relationship to try to pull together other sisters in the same locality to form chapters of their own in other cities and in a small way FPE began to spread here and there.

In February of 1962 Barbara married a girl that he had met in AA. Her name was Joyce and she was a very vivacious and attractive girl. We became good friends—she, my wife, and myself. Chevalier was, at this time, housed in a small room at the back of the building that my chemical business occupied and that was where Bob worked. After a couple of months he brought Joyce into the act to handle some of the mailing and correspondence details. She was so friendly in the way she wrote to TVs around the country that she won their hearts and more people wrote to her than to either Bob or myself.

Barbara-Bob naturally moved out of Lynn's house and he and Joyce got an apartment of their own. Things went along very nicely for and with them for some months. Then one morning about six months after she had begun to work for Chevalier she did not show up. Wondering what had happened I called her apartment and found her hysterical and raving about Bob's having beaten her up and walking out, etc. I called up my wife to meet me at her apartment and went over to see what it was all about. It appeared that Bob had fallen off the wagon, gotten drunk and violent, beaten her up for some reason and walked out. Later he came back for something and when she wouldn't let him in, he broke in a window and scared her to death again. Finally when he was in the bathroom she called the police and when he came out she told him she had done so and he ran out. Later that night they found him and hauled him off to jail.

In the meantime she was panicked and refused to stay in that apartment any longer. So my wife and I found her another apartment and the next day we moved her there. She wanted to leave the state and thus leave Chevalier, too. Obviously, under the circumstances of his behaviour I could not have Bob-Barbara back as part of the organization as I couldn't trust him any more as I was responsible for the security of all the names and addresses of my readers. Thus it

looked for a time as though I was going to lose both assistants at once. But I promised her that Bob was out for good and for all at that moment and persuaded her to continue with her work for Chevalier which she agreed to do. She also took over the editorship of the *Femme Mirror*.

Earlier in the fall we had gotten the word that a person named Susanna in New York, who had a fair sized ranch-resort in the Catskills about 150 miles north of New York City, was going to have a big TV bash in October of that year—1962. My wife and I decided to go. One of the New York readers who had come to town and had met Joyce and learned about Bob's defection, etc., and who was rather well off financially offered to pay Joyce's way also. So although we didn't go to New York together we were all together at the resort. This was a classic affair that was the first time in history that as many as 60 heterosexual males spent a whole week end together dressed as girls and women. It was unprecedented and was the forerunner although by about ten years of the later event on the Oregon coast called DREAM presided over by Marilyn of Seattle. Marilyn had been at the New York affair and doubtless it provided the inspiration for her. In turn, after DREAM had occurred about three times on the West Coast, Ariadne, Barbara, and Linda put together Fantasia Fair which has operated for the past four years in Provincetown, MA. Then several years ago a group began to meet in Biloxi, Miss. for a get-together. First put together by Alice, it is now operated by Nancy. All of the principals in all three groups are present or past members of either FPE or Tri Sigma with the exception of Ariadne who hadn't yet appeared on the scene in those days. So all such groups are kind of philosophical grandchildren of Susanna and myself. Susanna provided that actual proof that such a thing could be done and I had provided the group of leaders in various areas that would be able to put them together and at least the initial populations which would make them possible through the gathering-in effect of *Transvestia* and of FPE. But back to the first one, Susanna's, gathering at the Chevalier d'Eon Resort as she named it.

As the resort was 150 miles up in the Catskills, a lot of cars were required to transport everyone there. But once arrived it was one of the most fascinating experiences any of us that were there have ever had. Susanna was a gracious hostess for the whole affair and her wife Marie was a "mother" to all of us. Additionally several of Marie's family were present to help with meals, etc. The resort consisted of a

main old ranch house with bedrooms of various sizes tucked away here and there, upstairs and down; a big sort of a barn across the road which had been fixed up as a kind of night club with a little bar at one side and a "stage" in the middle with an old piano for music. There were several other small cottages close by which also housed parts of the crowd. We had the pleasure of having Dr. Beigel, an eminent psychotherapist from New York, and Dr. Wardell Pomeroy, who was part of the original Kensey team, spend the weekend with us. One of them afterward commented with some degree of surprise that it was "the most asexual weekend I have ever spent." This only served to indicate the state of the psychiatric "art" (not a science in spite of the medical background) of the time (1962) which assumed that any male who would get into lingerie and dresses could only be doing it for sexual purposes and inasmuch as there were about 60 of us there there ought to have been a lot of assignations going on behind every bush. Naturally, as we all know, that isn't the purpose nor the satisfaction of dressing and so it didn't go on and led to that comment.

What did go on was continuous excitement, hilarity and fun from sunrise till almost sunrise again though we did have to get a few hours sleep. I will never forget the experience of climbing out of bed and, in my nightie, slippers, and robe, going into the bathroom to find six or seven other "girls" in nighties, slips or panties and bras with faces all lathered up and all shaving away those ungirlish whiskers. *That* was hilarious. But everyone was in the spirit of it and it was a big laugh all around. And I might comment at this point that the ability to laugh at the whole phenomenon of cross dressing is one of the saving graces of the behaviour. In one sense it is utterly ridiculous and thus laughable. At the other end it is pathetic that the genuine, honest and sincere need and desire to experience that otherwise buried other side of yourself has to be expressed only with considerable caution and with great concern for secrecy and security except under very special times and conditions. It is one of the greatest sources of pleasure in my current life that I have managed to escape from all those limitations.

But back to the event. After everyone got dressed and made up suitable for public appearance we gradually appeared a few at a time for breakfast which was whipped up by Marie and her helpers. It was delicious and filling and started us off for a long and full day. We sat and talked with each other and with the non-TV members of

Marie's family and some friends of hers. We walked in small groups out into the meadows or down the road; in short, we did what visitors at any resort would do, plus taking innumerable pictures of each other in innumerable poses and places. I learned later that Polaroid stock went up three points the following week.

In the evening after dinner we all retired upstairs to put on our rhinestones, gold or silver slippers and evening dresses for the special nightclub entertainment and party. Some of the girls had devoted some of their daytime hours to rehearsing skits, songs or whatever to add to the joy of the occasion that evening. I can't remember any of them now, 17 years later, but I certainly remember how well they were received and how much fun we all had just being ourselves. I should have mentioned that in addition to my wife and Joyce, there were about 15 other GGs (genetic girls to you) among us and they had a fabulous time too since they not only enjoyed the entertainment but were the envy of all the TV girls too. Indeed the whole experience was memorable.

At this "convention" I introduced the idea of the Foundation for Personality Expression. You will note that the initials are the same—FPE—I explained to the group that having a Foundation would give us some more prestige and position and make any research we did carry more weight. Since it took some financing to get it going I asked any that felt equal to helping with the effort to make what contributions they felt appropriate. Gloria, an old friend, came through with \$200 and subsequently others pitched in too. Although the Foundation has never been cancelled or disbanded, it was never able to really do much as a unit in itself, most of what it might have done being done by me personally but often using the Foundation name. So it did contribute in that sense. It sounded much better to say that a piece of research was supported by the Foundation or that FPE was an arm of the Foundation, etc. so it served its purpose.

At the time I consulted my attorney about the process of setting up the corporation. Bob (Barbara) went with me as it was during the time he was still working for me. This fact took on some significance a few months later.

Several months after we returned from New York Bob brought suit against Joyce to have their marriage annulled, alleging that she had never been legally divorced from her previous husband. He got very

nasty about it and tried to involve me with the claim that I had never given him his full share of his "ownership" in Chevalier Publications and implied that I had conspired with Joyce to deny him access to company records and monies due him, etc., etc. It was all very dirty pool since it named me by my legal name and my legal business and got me into the official records and also forced me to go to court and face the music. Of course I had been through that exposure business once before with my first wife so I was a little hardened to it, but in this case he even went so far as to name my father in the pleadings claiming that he was a part owner of Chevalier.

The facts were entirely contrary in that he was never an "owner" or a "partner" in Chevalier but rather an employee working first for a percentage of the income and later for a flat salary, a fact that could have easily been established in court by some of his own records, wherein he had noted down certain moneys paid to him as first "commission" and later as salary. His statement implied sexual improprieties between Joyce and myself because we had "taken at least one trip to New York together." He referred to the trip to the convention mentioned just above. The fact that she left two weeks before I did and came back two days before I did and that I went to five other cities between New York and Los Angeles was carefully obscured in the complaint. All of the allegations could easily have been proven false if the matter had ever come to trial but what do you know, Bob didn't show up for the deposition. So we went to court to ask for a dismissal. However, it is customary in such cases to give the absent party one more chance, but in this case he is *ordered* by the judge to appear on a given date. Once again he failed to show even to the consternation of his attorney. So again we go back to court and ask for dismissal on grounds of failure to appear, but before my attorney can enter that motion, Bob's attorney steps up and tells the judge that he had decided that he had mistaken his remedy and would withdraw the complaint. Among other things they had asked the court to appoint a receiver to take over and handle the affairs of Chevalier. The attorney told the court that he had decided that a receiver couldn't really run a magazine successfully and he would have to find a different remedy. The case was then dismissed.

Now all during this fiasco Bob was living again at Lynn's house and so Lynn was in on the whole thing and doubtless helped plan it. It would have been very nice for Bob if his ploy had worked and he

had again had access to the mailing list of Chevalier as he had threatened to start up his own competing magazine and the mailing list would have given him a running start at the same time he would have destroyed Chevalier. He had not taken the mailing list when he could have while he was employed by me because we were on good terms at the time and I didn't fire him, he quit—a statement he made in front of three witnesses. But after the beating of his wife and the jailing he got for it he resolved to "get" her and because I had refused to bail him out fearing that he would only take up drinking again and make further trouble for both Joyce and myself; he decided to ring me in on the act at the same time, by filing a charge of conspiracy between Joyce and myself to deprive him of his rights. Yet he not only resigned of his own free will but asked me to see that Joyce was taken care of and could she stay on with me in Chevalier. Lynn would have benefitted too had the mailing list been delivered to Bob because he was into "life readings", reincarnation and all that, and a list of people to whom the reincarnation approach might have been appealing would have provided him with considerable benefit too. I do not have any proof of that in the form of conversation or documents, but the fact that the two connived in various ways to "get" me makes me reasonably sure that that was part of the plan.

Although this is all 15 years behind us, it might be interesting to the old timers to know that I had foreseen the possibility of an attempt to obtain the list so that the day of the court appearances when the receiver might have been appointed if the judge had agreed, I arranged to have the mailing lists "stolen" by a trusted friend who entered the office and took the lists when I was not present so that I could honestly say I didn't know when they disappeared or where they were. I also xeroxed all the cards so that I would retain an auxiliary record regardless of what happened. I had no intention of letting the lists get out of my control and into anyone else's hands, whatever the cost to me. I have put the security of my readers names at the top of my list for 20 years and have never given or sold anyone's name to any other person or group.

Bob's activities didn't stop with his suit against me. When that was dismissed he came up with another approach—or maybe it was in the middle of the other suit. He went to the State Bar Association and filed a complaint against my attorney on the grounds that since Bob was an employee of Chevalier at the time we went to the attorney to set up the Foundation and had, when that was taken care of, asked the attorney a few legal questions of a personal nature that therefore, he

(the attorney) was guilty of a conflict of interest. This, of course, didn't set well with the attorney because it put him in a bad light with the Bar Association. They called a hearing and my wife and I and the attorney showed up, but . . . you guessed it, Bob did not and the complaint was dismissed.

Now hark back to two items I mentioned earlier . . . 1) the prediction by the girl on the beach at Catalina that "you will be the saviour of your people" and my comment at Lynn's house the night the FPE prospectus was discussed in which I said that "my time is not yet" and "they will crucify me." Now don't get the idea that I in any way equate myself to Jesus by her use of the word "saviour" and my using "crucify". But there is nevertheless an interesting parallel, I think that I can more properly qualify as a "saviour" of the TV than anyone else who has appeared though I think that word is too strong. Nevertheless, I have been longer and more intensely in the forefront of our "movement" than anyone else and as this story unfolds you will learn of other activities that contribute to that position. Also you will see why the word "crucify" was not an improper term because my "time" did come and "they", meaning authorities did attempt to crucify me, but the reason I bring this up at this time in the story is that Jesus had his Judas—a friend who betrayed him. I went Jesus one better as I had two Judases who betrayed me. Two formerly trusted friends who had been in on the origination and planning of the whole Hose and Heels-Phi Pi Epsilon thing and who, when it suited their personal needs and fulfilled their own ego trips, turned on me and the whole movement by attacking me personally, and in the process, threatening the downfall of the whole structure, since if I fell it all fell with me there being no one else to carry it on. But it was a warning to me to get used to such turn arounds from friend to foe, as the same thing was to happen several more times in the course of the years. It is also a lesson to those who read these pages that today's friends often become tomorrow's enemies.

During the period prior to the lawsuit the meetings of the Alpha chapter of FPE were removed from Lynn's house because he suddenly decided to charge the group for the use of the house for the meetings and for other reasons. He, in turn, made a point of inviting some of the local group that he remained friends with plus some others that they brought along and thus held several parties for this other group which, intended or not, set up a rival organization. Naturally, relations deteriorated steadily. Since Bob/Barbara was a part of this and

since he had made correspondence acquaintance with others across the country while he was working for Chevalier, he saw to it that word was spread around the country claiming that I was using the funds paid to Phi Pi Epsilon for personal purposes and that I was really coining money out of Chevalier. The word was that I made \$30,000 a year net. NET, mind you, and this in 1962 only three years after the magazine started. That was funny in one way because I never made that amount *gross* in that year or any other year even up to the present. But the technique of the Big Lie worked for Hitler and, of course, it will work for anyone else that uses it cleverly and Bob did, so lots of people were disenchanted with me and with FPE because of this.

I got tired of trying to explain the real truth especially when I didn't know who I should be explaining it to, so the other solution was to eliminate the whole matter which I did by asking Fran of Wisconsin, whom I had met at the New York convention and liked immediately, to become Secretary-Treasurer of FPE. As soon as she accepted I closed the bank account here and shipped the whole amount to her so that in the future I didn't have anything to do with the FPE funds until Fran had to discontinue some 10 years later.

As things got busier for FPE we appointed a number of trusted girls in various areas around the country to be Councilors for their area and at that time I asked Fran if she would become Executive Secretary of FPE which she fortunately agreed to. She, therefore, "ran" the organization for 10 years or so being responsible for setting up chapters, handling most of the correspondence and in conjunction with myself approving prospects for membership. She also initiated the Theta chapter in the Madison area and after publishing a small newsletter for that group branched out with the *Femme Forum* which was the national newsletter for Phi Pi Epsilon just as the *Femme Mirror* is for Tri Sigma today.

As Fran was the effective executive officer of the organization during those years, she deserves great credit because she also had a real place in the development of the movement since FPE was the first national organization for heterosexual cross dressers to come into existence. There were, therefore, three pioneers in the field, Susanna in New York with her Casa Susanna in the Catskills and her apartment in New York where she counselled many a worried TV. She also for a number of years wrote a column called "Susanna Says"

in *Transvestia*. In the middle west in Madison, Wisconsin, Fran held together the strings of the whole organization and of its chapters and published a newsletter for members. In Los Angeles was myself with *Transvestia*, other books of fact and fiction, and also giving lectures and making radio and TV appearances over the years to help bring some awareness to the greater public about the nature of our behavior pattern. How that came about is the next part of this saga. It is difficult to handle things entirely chronologically because a lot of developments went on side by side and so there is some overlap. So I will leave the story of FPE to ride for several years while I take up other matters.

What I am now about to tell has been known to a limited number of friends and readers but not to the general readership of *TVia* nor to the members of FPE. The reason it was not related in detail at the time was that I was afraid that it would frighten people away from me, from Chevalier, FPE and their own escape from the closet. It is always difficult to explain all the details of an incident like what I am about to deal with, because you can't take that much space and in any case it sounds too much like protesting too much when you try to explain. But, by this time it does not much matter and as it is an important part of the era both for me and for what it brought about and indirectly for many of you, I will set it forth here as briefly as possible yet as completely, as I can.

I can't rightly remember the year this occurred but I think it was sometime in 1962. In any case a friend of mine had become acquainted with a certain person back east in some way that I don't remember. He was a TV and she was an apparently very understanding woman and they wrote long letters back and forth and got very intimate with each other. He had to move away and gave me her name saying that I might like to write and continue the correspondence. Since she had urged him to be very open and intimate and not beat around the bush, I presumed that that went for me too. So I wrote her a letter explaining how I came to "inherit" the correspondence and that I too was a TV etc. Well, I got a little carried away I guess, but I let my was a TV etc. Well, I got a little carried away I guess, but I let my fantasy run and related how she and I might behave if we were together. I am sure most all of you have had similar fantasies—two "women" making love together. So I went through this fantasy in the letter. It really wasn't much—certainly not for these days—it would have been a Sunday School picnic compared to what you can read

and see everywhere today, but this was in the early 60s and things weren't so liberal then, by a long ways.

Well, I never got a reply to the letter. I thought I must have hurt her feelings or shocked her or something, though that hardly seemed likely considering the way she and my friend had written each other. But in due course I forgot all about it. One late afternoon, over a year later, I got a call from my wife at the office telling me that there were two Postal Inspectors there at the house who wanted to talk to me. So I spoke to one of them and told him they could hang around as I was about ready to leave the office.

I got home, found him and talked to him briefly and then asked him if, since it was now dinner time and my wife and son were at home, I could come down to the Hollywood post office after dinner and answer whatever they wanted to know and they agreed. So I ate dinner and then went down there taking along an educational scrap book I had assembled which presented the whole field of cross dressing in all its aspects. I got there and they were pretty nice about everything. They showed me a letter and asked if I had written it and I saw that it was the letter I had written to this "woman" over a year ago. It turned out that she was no lady but rather a man who held himself out to be a woman. It appeared that he was in some sort of trouble with the post office on other grounds and, as they do in such cases, they put a "cover" on his mail. That means that they noted the names and/or return addresses of all mail coming to him. By this tactic they can pyramid from one suspect to a number of others, who in turn, lead them still further. Of course, all police types operate on the theory that anyone who corresponds with a suspicious person is of necessity suspicious himself. So into this little "cover" drops my letter. They got it and held it for a year before doing anything about it.

Well, I couldn't deny that I wrote it but I told him that it was not only the only letter I ever wrote to that person, but it was the only letter of that frank nature that I ever wrote to anyone. He then showed me the name and address of the person who wrote the Gilbert stories (of which *Tales from a Pink Mirror* is one). I acknowledged that I knew him and had written to him several times in regard to the maga-

zine, etc. but nothing in anyway off color. They asked me many questions about cross dressing and I told them and illustrated it with my scrap book material. So about 10 o'clock they called it off, thanked me for coming down and I thought all was cool and went home. But, the next afternoon at the office, I got a call from one of the inspectors again and he said that there were a couple of matters they had overlooked the night before and would I please come by the Hollywood station that afternoon. So I did. You have all seen spy movies where the Nazi interrogator alternately offers a cigarette and cup of coffee to the man he is questioning and then slaps him or beats him or gets tough in some other way. Well, the night before was the good guy scene, as I found out on this second occasion. This time they got tough and accused me of all sorts of things, among which was being a homosexual and dealing in obscene material, etc. They told me that they wanted the post office box closed and the magazine discontinued. I was flabbergasted because what had that to do with the supposedly obscene letter? I asked who his boss was and that I wanted to appeal the matter. He said he was the final authority but if I wanted to make a statement to do so and to get it to him in three days.

I went home and spent several days composing a three or four page, single spaced, typed letter going into the whole field and the significance of the magazine and everything else, and mailed it to him. Nothing happened for about a month and I thought the whole matter was over. Then early one afternoon, this same inspector and a police officer appeared at my company office (I was president of my own manufacturing concern). I let them into my office and they gave me to understand that they wanted me to come downtown with them. I protested that I had business matters to attend to that afternoon but that I'd come down in the morning. No dice! It was now, period! I asked if I could then go out into the plant and give the people some instructions as to what to do while I was gone. They said "no", and just to be sure that I didn't try anything funny, they sat me down in a chair and handcuffed me to it. They then proceeded to take every drawer out of my desk and turn it upside down on the floor and generally ransacked the place. When I protested, they said they had the right to make a search of any premises where they arrested someone. That was the first statement I had that I was under arrest and when I tried to find out what for, they said I'd find out downtown. So I hung my coat over my manacled hands and left the office.

We went down to the Federal Building and all the way along they let me understand that they regarded me as a homosexual. This was an era when the post office department thought it was going to stamp out homosexuality in America and they were doing all sorts of things to various people. I had already had letters from readers in various parts of the country relating how postal inspectors had harassed them, seized copies of mine and other literature and in one case all of one person's femme clothes which were in the back of his car trunk. So, it was evident that they were clamping down all over. Well, I got my fabled one phone call and got hold of my attorney's office. So one of his people would be present at the arraignment about 4 p.m. that afternoon and it was now about 2 p.m. They put me in a fair sized conference room with bars on one side and a locked door on the other. There was a conference table in the middle and a couple of chairs and nothing else. So I climbed on the table, stretched out on my back and went to sleep to pass the time. Eventually, the arraignment was held, bail set and my attorney had brought a bondsman who put up the bail; and then he drove me back to the office where I gave him a check for the bail.

Well, my wife and I went down to see the Assistant District Attorney several times but he said there was little he could do because once the post office department turned a case over to them, they had to prosecute. So, eventually it came to trial and I pleaded guilty not only because I *did* send the letter but because to have pleaded not guilty would have meant a prolonged trial and the possibility of publicity which would have proved very embarrassing to my father who was rather prominent in professional circles in the city at the time. So, when the hearing came up the judge asked the D.A. what were the circumstances of the case and he mentioned the letter briefly and then went into a harangue about the magazine and how we had to put a stop to such things and that an example had to be made, etc., etc. and he wanted the magazine discontinued and the post office box closed.

The judge then turned to me and asked how did I respond to that. I replied that while I did write the letter in question it was the only one I had ever written of that sort and that I did so thinking the recipient was a woman, but more importantly I didn't see what that had to do with the magazine which had never contained anything off color, prurient, sexy, obscene or whatever and moreover it had saved a

number of marriages and prevented several suicides and that I had the letters to prove it and I didn't see why it should be discontinued. He turned back to the DA and said what did he have to say to that and he in effect played the same record over again. Then back to me and I again protested the idea of closing the box and stopping the magazine. The judge then sentenced me—ready for this?—to three years in the Federal Penitentiary and five years of probation and said nothing about either the box or the magazine. He had to sentence me since I had plead guilty.

Well, I was glad enough that he hadn't interfered with the magazine but I was absolutely aghast at the prospect of the five years of probation because that meant that you couldn't break ANY laws for five years or they can lay the original sentence on you—three years in the pen. In those days there was an anti-masquerade law in Los Angeles. Thus, if I was out dressed and got picked up I could spend the next three years in the pen if the judge so decided. It's one thing to be in the closet and wanting to get out but it's a lot different to be used to being out of it as I had been since I was 18 and then to be crammed back into it. I was fit to be tied. My attorney saved the day by suggesting that I give lectures about the subject which I could do while dressed and that he would fix it up with his own Kiwanis Club if I wanted to do it. I was petrified at the idea of standing up before a bunch of men while dressed as a woman and telling them all about it, but on the other hand, it was the only apparent solution to the probation problem so I agreed.

I wrestled with the problem of what to say for several weeks and finally got a speech written that enabled me to build up an explanation for the phenomenon before I had to name it and admit to it. It went over pretty well. There were a couple of visitors there from other Kiwanis clubs and they asked me if I could speak to their clubs. So, I was off to the races. One thing led to another. I got into a program reporting sheet and good "grades" which led to a lot of other invitations. I didn't get paid for 90 percent of them but I did get out. I came to realize that in the 20 or so minutes they gave me to speak, I could not begin to go into the subject completely so I put together the pamphlet titled, "Introduction to Transvestism" which reappears as the first six or eight pages of the "Transvestite and His Wife" book.

My strategy was soon worked out. When someone called me to speak I would agree and asked them to write me a letter inviting me to speak AS Virginia and dressed as a woman. This letter I would always carry with me when I went out and I was, therefore, either always just going to the lecture or returning home from it; and one way or another I could go shopping or whatever I wanted to do. But one thing I did everytime, was to go to the police department of whatever city I was in and ask to see the chief, assistant chief or captain of the vice squad. When I got to them, I showed them the letter by way of explaining my appearance and gave them a brain washing on the subject and I finished off by giving them some of the pamphlets for their officers. So, although a limited number of people were in the audience, whether at the Service Club or the police station, I hoped that the pamphlets would be read by others and thus spread the information further afield.

It was from these appearances before men's clubs (I only did one women's service club. It was a great success but there aren't many of them) that I learned one lesson; namely, that people go by what they see not by what they know. This was brought home to me particularly by one man in one of the clubs. When I finished speaking, he stood up and said he had a question. I said, "Go ahead." And he said, "Well, ah, that is, ah you said you'd been married?" "Yes." "And, ah, ah, you had a son?" "Yes." "Well, ah, what I want—well, I mean, ah, I don't underst—I mean, ah, ah, ah, well, Who had the baby, you or your wife?" I'd already told him I was a male, been married and had a son but he could only see a woman talking and since women have the babies it became the main problem to find out which woman was the mother. It was good for a laugh but it taught me a lesson. If you can make them see the right thing, they'll act and think accordingly in spite of what they may know about you.

Now back to the aftermath of the trial. One of our readers was an attorney and worried that the spreading postal investigations might get to him. He wrote to a friend of his, another attorney who had at one time been Solicitor General for the post office department. That gentleman wrote back to him and also to me and among other things said that it was unheard of to prosecute on a first offense, as they had prosecuted me on the basis of a single letter. And the more I thought of the DA's remarks the more I was convinced that they had just used

the letter as a means of getting me into court on the magazine and post office box issue. As I said, this was in the era when they were after the gays and they assumed that I (and all of us) were gay. So, one day I went to the Federal Building and up to the office of the judge who had heard the case. I was talking to his secretary when he came in. She told him I would like to speak with him for a few minutes and he said to come in. I went into his office and sat down and he wanted to know what he could do for me. I reminded him of the case and of the sentence he had handed down and then I reminded him of the DA's comments entirely directed at the magazine and post office box and barely mentioning the letter which was the nominal subject of the trial. He recalled that. Then I showed him the letter from the Solicitor General and told him I felt that the whole matter of the letter which they had had possession of for a whole year was merely a mechanism for getting at the magazine. We discussed a few other issues and finally he said, "have your attorney file a petition for dismissal of probation." I did so and five months after he had given me the sentence I was free of the probation. The post office was defeated in their attempt to prevent *Transvestia* being published and circulated.

Later that year I was to go to New York and decided to go down to Washington, too. I took a number of testimonial letters from readers about how much the magazine had helped them, a bunch of letters telling how they had been treated by postal inspectors and some scientific material about the subject by Dr. Benjamin and others. I went to the Post Office building. Outside it, I called the former postal attorney and told him what I was about to do. He was not very happy about the idea and made me feel that if I ever went into that building I might not get out again. That was sort of frightening, I thought, but this was the United States—and not the Soviet Union, so I went in and went to the office of the Chief Inspector, Mr. Montegue. I told him what I was doing there and he told me that Mr. Callahan of the mailability section was the one to talk to and called him in. He took me into his office and I brain washed him for an hour and a half about the whole field of *TVism* and the fact that we weren't gay and that his inspectors had overstepped their bounds on a whole lot of occasions and showed him the letters saying so. He was polite, understanding and cooperative. After that visit, I heard no more complaints from around the country of inspectors giving *TVs* a hard time. So I think I was able to change the thinking of the whole post office department and their handling of our kind of people.

Well, that whole trial, sentence, probation thing, etc. was a wonderful example of the old saying that, "It is an ill wind that blows no good" meaning one that doesn't blow *some* good. Because in this case if it hadn't been for that probation I would never have had motivation for starting the talks to clubs which in turn was responsible for my getting into the field of television interview shows, radio talk shows and lectures to medical schools, colleges, groups of students and other areas wherein I was able over the years to do my bit about spreading the word through society. Others are doing some of this work now in various ways, but I can safely say that I was the first one to get up before hundreds in service clubs and millions (on radio and TV) dressed as a lady, admitting to being a male and then explaining what it was all about. I am satisfied that I contributed my bit to the gradual opening up of social attitudes concerning sex, gender and their various manifestations. It is because I feel that I have made my contributions, that I feel entitled to retire from the active fray at this point and let some of the rest of you carry the battle forward.

But, on with the story. After Joyce's problems with Bob were cleared up—and I might say that after not appearing at the court hearings with me, he disappeared and has never been heard from again—she continued to work with Chevalier and to edit the *Femme Mirror*. After some months she married another member of our group who was, of course, also a *TV*. Then six or eight months after that they separated and she got an apartment of her own. She continued to type for me and I lent her an electric typewriter to do it in her apartment. She no longer handled the day to day mailings and I had taken back these duties myself. But, one day I had called her and asked about picking up some typing that I had to have on a certain day and made an appointment to pick it up about 2 p.m. the next afternoon. I went to her apartment but could not raise anyone. Since she knew that I was coming at that time, I had the feeling that something wasn't quite right, so I went to the apartment manager and explained and got her to bring her key and to open the apartment for me. She did so and I went in and at first couldn't find Joyce but then I pushed open the bathroom door and found her dead on the floor. That was a gruesome sight that took me several years to get out of my mind. Naturally, I had to call her husband and the police, coroner and all the rest. She had my typewriter there and so I promptly took it to my car because

otherwise it would be locked up for weeks while the authorities did their thing.

The coroner' verdict was accidental death. Although she had had a bad cold and had stayed in bed several days and had taken some sleeping tablets, there were still a number of them in the bottle and there was not enough in her blood to warrant a suicide theory. They felt that she had just enough to be dopey, went to the bathroom, probably fainted and fell, hitting her head on the tile and just never came out of it. But it was a great loss because she was a true friend to lots of TVs who used to write her regularly.

By 1963 *Transvestia* was well established—sufficiently so that competition appeared. There was one fly by night publication published somewhere in upstate New York that lasted all of one issue and was never heard of again. But there also appeared another more worthwhile and enduring effort titled *Turnabout* edited by an FP whose femme name was Sioban Fredricks. It was quite a respectable effort, well put together and readable. In issues one and two the editor was kind enough to put, on the very last page, an ad for *Transvestia* with a short sentence acknowledging it as the pioneer publication in the field and suggesting that the well read FP might do well to subscribe to both journals. The first issues were "straight" as far as I and my efforts were concerned. I don't even remember whether I was mentioned at all but if I was, it was not unfavorable.

But by *Turnabout* issue No. 3 in 1964, things had changed. I had been through all the hassle just described with Bob/Barbara Elin, the court case, the difficulties with Lynn, etc. and these had been enlarged, elaborated out of all proportion and spread far and wide across the country. Of course, New York was the other fountain head of FP activity, so anything about Virginia Prince, the "upstart," "dictator," "megalomaniac," "neurotic" (take your choice) from the west coast, was grist for the New York mills. The person known to some of you as Darrel Raynor, was also D. Rhodes, and Quiven Enright and probably several other pseudonyms and who eventually wrote "A Year Among the girls" in 1966, was the associate editor and a force behind the anti-Virginia movement. He had come to Los Angeles (as related in "A Year Among ...") and met me and



With Dr. Benjamin
1972



With Dr. Walter Alvarez
1967



My First Television Show in WBI-Boston — 1968
Bob Kennedy, Interviewer
Dr. Wollman — Psychiatrist And Friend
Virginia Giving A Plug



WPEN — Philadelphia



WCIU — Chicago

Radio Appearances



Barbara and then had returned a couple of years later after the New York convention where he had gotten to know a lot of TVs across the country and had been here just at the height of the big schism, so he had a lot of juicy, though one sided, scandal to peddle in New York. As a result, starting with No. 3 of *Turnabout*, there were all kinds of insults, direct criticisms, a number of untruths, and snide remarks about me, and everything I did or stood for. A couple of years later Siobhan admitted to a mutual friend that she had started *Turnabout* to "get at" Virginia but that it had been successful enough that it looked as though it could stand on its own. It did . . . for seven or eight issues and then died out. It had a reincarnation a couple of years later for two or more issues and then vanished completely.

It was too bad that a magazine had to spend so much of its energy and space deriding another magazine and its editor. Siobhan was a professional writer and put together a very intellectual magazine. Perhaps that was one reason for its lack of success—it was really rather snobbishly intellectual and didn't give the FP reader what she was looking for most of the time. Siobhan has apparently learned that lesson well as she has for the last decade more or less poured out quite a volume of TV-type stories most of which are not the type I would have printed in *TVia*. Not that they were pornographic or vulgar but just that they dealt too strongly in domination, bondage, punishment and involuntary *TVing*.

Competition is, they say, the life of trade. Had we had two magazines all these years that were friendly competitors, both dedicated not only to entertaining the FP, but to helping her understand herself, it could only have been beneficial. Too bad she had to descend to shooting barbed arrows at me in every issue after No. 2. I still have a letter in my files from the same Siobhan Fredricks, though signed in his masculine name, thanking me for "saving his life" by bringing some understanding and sanity to the whole phenomenon of cross dressing. There is an old saying that the best way to lose a friend is to save him from drowning. Seems that's the case here. *Turnabout* including incarnations lasted for, I think it was, 10 issues, and this is *TVias* Centenary issue. So much for catching flies with sugar rather than vinegar.

But something occurred in 1964 and that illustrates what could have been accomplished if *Turnabout* and *Transvestia* had been on

the same wave length because we did cooperate on one thing. Late in 1964 one of our members had been arrested in New York for being in feminine clothing on the street, under an ancient 19th century law prohibiting "disguise." It had been passed to prohibit the farmers of the area from dressing as Indians and attacking the landlords' agents. But like many of our laws it was never taken from the books and thus lay there for years as a handy weapon when some enterprising policeman or D.A. wanted to use it. Our friend, John M., was sentenced to seven days in the workhouse and the sentence suspended. That wasn't too bad in itself, but it was on his record and, as a result of the publicity, he was forced into early retirement from a company he had worked for for years and had had one of the best performance records of all employees in his category.

He was willing to appeal the case if he could be helped financially, so Siobhan issued an appeal to her mailing list and informed me of that fact and I did likewise. We raised over \$1400 from 200 contributors to pay the costs of an appeal first to the N.Y. Court of Appeals and then to the U.S. Supreme Court. Unfortunately the latter did not accept the case for adjudication and so no judgment was rendered. It was unfortunate since, if it had, the conviction would have undoubtedly been overturned, but more importantly, a precedent would have been set in the highest court in the land about the rights of an individual to wear what he or she pleased as long as it didn't affront public decency. It may well have been that the court perceived that to render that decision would have opened a can of worms the likes of which had never been opened before and thus refused to take the case. Better to sacrifice one lamb than to expose the whole flock to the disease of individual rights and freedom. Gracious me! Think what could result from that!!

During the years of 1963-64 I had conducted a questionnaire survey of TVs with questions covering all aspects of their early history, dressing practices, psychological and sociological background, etc. I had received back perhaps 375 questionnaires when I was approached by a graduate student in sociology named Buckner, who wanted to get some information for his master's thesis about the TV subculture. I made a deal with him to allow him to use the results of my survey as part of his Masters thesis in exchange for codifying the responses and reducing them to computer cards with a print out of the results. This he did and he also published a paper on the results without indicating clearly where the results came from. Subsequently

his results came to the attention of Dr. Benjamin who was then preparing his *Transexual Phenomenon* book and he used these results in the opening chapters of his book and credited them to Buckner whereas the work was actually mine. It was not his fault, though as he had no way of knowing. But those of you who have read his book found a series of small tables relating to various aspects of transvestic behaviour. These were mine. Subsequently I received more questionnaires and submitted them to the same computer analysis so that I finally had 504 replies.

In 1964 the American Psychiatric Association was holding its convention in Honolulu and I asked one of my psychiatric friends what he thought about my reading a paper based on the information in the questionnaire. He replied with some amazement, "Why that would be like a paranoid schizophrenic reading a paper on paranoid schizophrenia!" That led me to a definition of one type of psychiatrist—a person who thinks that he can tell more about what is going on inside a room by standing out in the garden looking in through the window, than he could by opening the door and going in. In any case I decided to take my chances and submitted the paper and it was accepted, so I was in.

I packed up my paper and my things and took off for Honolulu—the furthest I had ever been from home dressed. I remember clearly my feelings when, after being shown to my room by the bell boy and paying him a tip he went out and closed the door. I went out on to the balcony overlooking Waikiki Beach. I looked down from the 8th floor and quietly began to cry. To think that I had finally made it to Hawaii and more amazing that I had made it as Virginia. It was too much and I had a good cry.

The convention itself had sessions in Oahu, Kauai, Maui and Hawaii both in Kona and Hilo. My paper was scheduled for the Oahu session and so I had only made reservations in Honolulu. I took the usual tourist trips around the city, to Pearl Harbor, etc. with other members of the convention and their wives. Then, came the day of my paper. It was very well accepted and several of my friends from San Francisco and Los Angeles were in the audience. I asked them afterward how they thought the convention would accept me personally now that I had revealed myself and did they think it would be "safe" to continue around to the other islands with them. They said, why



Virginia Cried Here
Hawaii — 1965



My Little Home With Friend
1966



Madam Editor At Work
1966



Costume Ball
1966

not? and I said O.K. I went to the lady in the lobby who was coordinating all the transportation and hotels and asked about being added for the rest of the tour. She only had one space in the blocked hotel bookings and that would be with a German lady psychiatrist. That was a little more than I had bargained for so I told her I wanted single accommodations and I would look into one of the regular tour agencies. I went across the street, gave them the airline and hotel schedules of the convention and asked her to book me for airline and hotel reservations as near as she could to what the convention was going to do. I came back in two hours and she had me either on the same plane and in the same hotels or on another flight and a nearby hotel at each of the cities. So, off I went and had a great time. I had dinner with various doctors as their guest and talked with a lot more on the buses and sitting around the lobby and gave all of them a lot of info about TVs that they never had before.

One amusing event took place on Maui. I borrowed a snorkel and face plate and went out along the point at the Sheraton Maui looking at the fishes and coral. Later, a girl came out carrying a piece of pipe and went down to break off pieces of coral. When she came up I volunteered to hold the pieces for her if she would get some for me. Since I had to use one hand to hold on to the rocks to keep from being mashed against them by the tide, I tucked the coral inside the trunks of my two piece bathing suit. She broke off quite a bit so I had quite a "belly full" when I started to swim ashore—on my back because I had a hunk in both hands too. When I got to the beach, I walked up on the shore to where my psychiatrist friend was sunning himself. He looked up at me standing over him with all these protrusions sticking out of my abdomen and with some consternation said, "For heaven's sake, fix yourself," thinking that it was my genitals that were making all the bulges. I said, "not to worry, I'm just pregnant with a porcupine" and proceeded to disgorge all the pieces of coral and allowed my tummy to return to its normal state.

On Hawaii the group was taken through an orchid farm and all the ladies were given orchids with instructions to wear them behind their left ear if they were married and behind the right ear if they were available (maybe it was the other way around, I don't remember) but I put mine right in the middle. When asked why I wore it there, I told them it was the only place left since I was neither married nor available. They all laughed. Finally, it was all over and we flew home

but I had seen a lot of four of the islands and had had a marvelous time.

The next year (1966) I decided that I would return to Hawaii again to stay at the Cocoa Palms Hotel which I had seen a bit of the year before but didn't stay at. I had resolved to see if I could live in the same place for a week seeing the same waiters, clerks and maids without being read. The first night I found an invitation under my door to attend a cocktail party given by the hotel manager. I couldn't figure why I would be singled out for such an honor but I went anyway. She met all of us and asked questions about ourselves and our work. I told her that I had come over to the islands for some peace so that I could write up a family history. Shortly thereafter, an interesting young man came in and after talking to him she brought him over to me and introduced us saying that I was a writer, too. We got to talking and discovered that he actually lived on top of the same hill in Hollywood that I lived at the foot of. So, I had to be a little coy about things. Anyway, we arranged to have dinner together the following day and during that dinner we decided to take a hike together the following day to some falls that were up the canyon always. I had bought a muu muu and I wore that and, of course, my wig. I put sunscreen on my face and arms but failed to allow for the crescent of skin below my shoulder length hair and the oval neck of the muu muu. The hike was westward in the AM so the sun beat on my back all the way up and as a result I got a dilly of a burn in that area.

I got acquainted with another woman who taught school nearby and when I told her I would like to take my wig to a shop to get it cleaned and set she offered to let me ride into the little town of Lihue with her which I did, and left the wig to be cleaned and set. The damp air makes keeping a hairdo somewhat precarious but I had taken the precaution of having two wigs of identical color and style so that one could be set and I'd still be the same girl while it was being done.

I proved that I could make it at the Cocoa Palms so I took a bus out to the far end of the island to Hanalei Plantation and stayed there a couple of nights but there weren't many people so it was dull. I came back and went around the south end of the island to Poipu Beach and stayed in a hotel there for several days. There was a nice swimming beach which I used and I made the acquaintance of another young woman and we decided to rent bicycles and take a trip up the coast

which we did. So all of this proved to me that I could pass under repeated scrutiny and in different places which was the reason for the trip.

In 1966 a book appeared, entitled *A Year Among the Girls* by Darrell Raynor whom I have mentioned before as being very active in the now defunct magazine *Turnabout*. It was an interesting chronicle of his adventures in the TV world and much of it, especially in the beginning, is factually correct—his meeting with my wife and myself at our house, the "convention" at Casa Susanna, which I have described, and in other matters. However, at the end, in reporting my difficulties with Barbara and Lynn, it was not only wrong by errors of both omission and commission concerning these matters, but also prejudicially overblown in which he described me as "being hysterically emotional" and going through what "looked very much like a nervous breakdown." I laugh at it now because I am and always have been about as far from either of these conditions as you can get. But, I was very much upset at the time for fear that it would give people a very bad picture of me as an unreliable sick individual and thus turn them away from me, and I couldn't be of much help to them if they did so. Interestingly enough, I have received a large number of letters over the years from people who had first heard of me through the book. So, maybe I owe Raynor a vote of thanks after all. Incidentally, we are on good terms with each other by this point and I have visited him at his motel in Los Angeles and saw him in New York when I was there in the fall of '78.

My second marriage had gone sour late in 1964 because my wife became paranoid and began to accuse me of all manner of things that I had never done and of events which never happened. Early in 1965 she walked out of the house and in due course, started a divorce action against me. Although prior to our marriage and in view of having been burned once in a marriage, I asked her to sign a promise that if the marriage failed, she would not try to use the TV against me and several other conditions. This, she willingly did, but when she got to the point of a divorce, such promises were forgotten and one Thursday afternoon I bought the *Los Angeles Herald* and there was my picture big as life. It had been cut from a picture of the two of us together so it couldn't be claimed that some newspaper reporter had stolen or unearthed it. So much for promises not to drag TV into the open. There was the whole story—name, rank and serial number. Together with what I was, what I had published, that I gave lectures

as a woman, owned a complete woman's wardrobe, etc. etc., all of the gruesome and juicy details appeared. I was pretty upset of course, but having been through it before and survived, having faced a court, having lectured to 50 or 60 men's groups by this time, my guilt, shame, fear and all the other emotions that you all associate with exposure were somewhat dampened. After all, the "world" knew I was a TV so what were a couple of hundred thousand more readers of the *Herald*. The hurt and the embarrassment were to my parents more than to me.

Among other things, she accused me of stealing and hiding community property money from her and she got the court to appoint an accountant to go over my records. When I went to see him, he literally had a pile of papers 18 inches high on his desk provided by her. She later admitted to spending over \$500 on xerox copies of every piece of paper that she could lay her hands on. I had continued to live on in the house for a couple of months after she walked out but she had her keys so everyday after I had gone to work, she would come in to take care of the house and garden and our five cats. She made a point of going through my home office with a fine comb and copied everything.

It really was quite a jig saw puzzle going back over and through all one's bank statements, investments, large purchases, etc. for a period of five years and accounting for all sums over \$100. Think you could do it? Neither did I, but it became something of a game after a while and I spent about a week in the account's office comparing, correlating and accounting for incomes and outgoes. The final outcome of his report to the court said that far from sequestering or mishandling community funds, that there was a well-thought out and long standing policy of investment in both of our names. So that didn't do her any good but it took a lot of my time and of course, I had to pay the accountant.

However, her biggest accomplishment was, alleging that Chevalier made piles of money—she knew the claims going around back east about how much I made—she got the court to appoint a receiver for Chevalier. He was only interested in getting the money, not the publications, mailing lists or anything else; so he made me sign an order to the post office that all mail addressed to Chevalier Publications should be set aside for one of his employees to pick up. So I did, and they did, and he did, and the end result was that once a

week I went to his office, and with one of his girls, I opened the envelopes, took out the money and gave it to her. Then I took the letters, orders, etc. back home and filed them. This quickly became a problem because although I could mail out merchandise from stock on hand, I couldn't very well pay for having new issues printed while all the money to do with this was being held by the receiver. So I thought for a while and got clever.

I talked to the post office superintendent and pointed out that the order was for mail addressed to Chevalier and that anything coming to the box addressed to Charles or Virginia Prince was personal mail and not subject to the order. He agreed so I promptly printed up a little statement of the situation and mailed it to all subscribers asking them to mail their orders in under my personal name. Most of them did and thus I survived or I should say Chevalier and *Transvestia* survived. As it was I ran up a debt of over \$3000 with the printer before I was able to accumulate enough to reduce it. When it was all over, there was, after a year, about \$13,000 in the receiver's hands; \$2,500 of which he named as his fee, and the final divorce settlement awarded \$10,000 in cash to here, which came from impounds. But I was finally free, after an extremely hectic and frustrating year. It is hard enough to prove that somebody else actually DID something, but to prove that you yourself did NOT do something is something else again and that was what I was up against. Even my friendly psychiatrist, whom I had persuaded to see her before all this began and to whom she continued going during the year, finally had to admit that she was "disturbed." I think that if he hadn't liked her and me and it had been just any patient he would have been willing to announce that she was paranoid. But I guess he thought that his making it official would give me a weapon against her. But what else can you call it when someone imagines a lot of things happening to her and against her that never really did happen. The whole year made a wreck out of me.

That general condition permeated my work and I began to get on less well with my partner in the business. We had operated it together for 20 years but things just accumulated, and finally, after the divorce was out of the way by about six months, I had had it. There was only room for one president of the corporation so let's one buy the other out. He had, it turned out later, already had overtures from another company in the same field, to buy the company once they got

me out of the way. My TV interests were general knowledge in the field by this time and they didn't want any weird old TVs in their company. So he had had a motive for buying me out rather than vice versa and we finally made an agreement and he did so. Now I was retired, not wealthy by any stretch of the imagination but at least able to survive on my own. I had managed to retain some of the mutual fund shares in the divorce settlement and of course, I had the money he paid me for the business. So, I bought a home of my own, which had only one neighbor behind a high hedge, and moved everything into it feeling that now I could come and go and do as I wanted. The divorce was final in May of 1966 and the business relationship terminated in December of 1966. It was a busy year and one which didn't permit of any foreign travel.

But 1967 was another year. I had met a dressmaker here in Los Angeles and we became pretty good friends. The fair in Montreal was coming up that year and we decided to do it together. But, I had already decided that in the following year (1968) I wanted to go to Alaska and return via the Inside Passage by boat. Thus, I decided to use the trip to Montreal as a sort of trial by fire. I flew to Detroit first and met with the Detroit group of FPE. Then I got on a boat called the South American and started for Montreal down the lake and through the Welland canal and down the St. Lawrence to Montreal. The thing about a boat trip is that either you have to make it, lock yourself in your stateroom or jump overboard, there are no other choices. I wanted to prove to myself again that I could live with the same people, eat with the same people, and walk the decks with the same people for three days, and come out unrevealed and friends at our destination. I did and it was great for my self confidence.

In Montreal I met my lady friend and we went out to a house that we had arranged to stay in during our stay. Together we did the fair and really enjoyed ourselves. After the fair, I went to Rochester, New York and did a couple of TV shows, then to Boston to do the same and finally, to New York to spend the weekend with Susanna at the Casa Susanna. Although it was now several years after the "big bash" and there were only 15 or so people there, it was still a great experience and change. After doing a show in New York, I went on to Chicago for the Chi chapter of FPE and then to Minneapolis where I spoke to the medical school group that was running the 25 test surgeries for transsexuality—a program that they have since terminated. While I was in Minneapolis I had the interesting experience of having dinner



On Deck Down the
St. Lawrence



Trip to Montreal Fair — 1967

In Front of the
Russian Building at the Fair

with my first wife and her sister—just us three women together. I had the satisfaction of being told that I made an attractive lady and we had an interesting evening. It took 20 years for such an acknowledgment but I got it.

It was something of an irony that shortly after having my second marriage go down the tubes, that in 1967, I should have a revised version of *The Transvestite and His Wife* published. It had been written first in 1962 as a sort of pamphlet type book. However, there were things in it that various wives disagreed with and other areas of omission which had become apparent to me. As a result, I rewrote the book. I was able to make arrangements with a publisher who did his own distribution by mail order. It got a lot of new subscribers for Chevalier and happily it did its job in a lot of marriages. I wish I could say that all wives were converted by reading it but unfortunately, I can't. Some refused to read it at all, others read it and then complained that it was "biased." That is kind of dumb since they already knew their feelings—why should I present their side to them. One gets a feeling that women who take this point of view really don't want to change their mind and were afraid that the logic of the book might be too much for them and they might have to change their mind.

Although the printing eventually sold out, it didn't sell at the rate the publisher would have liked and he, therefore, didn't wish to reprint it. So he returned the plates to me. I have reprinted it twice since then. It has done its job however, and has helped a lot of families adjust to the behavior and for that I am very pleased.

1968 was a year with several significant events. Early in the year I attended a nude encounter session. Yes, you read it right—NUDE. I had known the psychologist who pioneered nude therapy for some years but one night he gave a talk at a Unitarian group I happened to be attending. The more I thought about it, the more I thought that this would be an ultimate experience for me. I had thought that after talking to dozens of men's service clubs; I had worked my way out from under guilt. But events, like the guy who wanted to know whether my wife or I had the baby, led me to think that I really hadn't proved anything as long as they only had my word for it that I was a male. So I decided that if I could maintain my "selfness" as a woman when I was nude and my maleness was obvious to the eye rather than the ear,

I could really say that I had finally wiped out guilt, so I signed up for the session. I wrote this up in some detail in *TVia* No. 52 but it was really a turning point in my life—traumatic because I had the longest crying jag in my life but nevertheless, I found that I WAS Virginia regardless of what my anatomy said. And more than that the others present treated me according to my own evaluation of myself and not in terms of my visible anatomy. This was before I had my own hair and before I had any effects from hormones. It may have been even before I started them, I don't remember for sure. At the end, when we were all sitting around dressed again and having a little recap of the experience for each of us, I remember breaking out in tears agains as I said, "You have no idea what it is like to have to wait 40 years, 40 years to find a group of people who will accept you for what you want to be, not just on the basis of what you are." You see, this group of people had accepted and treated me like a woman even though we were all nude and my maleness was perfectly evident. I had worn a wig when I arrived so that they first saw me in a feminine hairdo as well as clothing but when we went in to the pool, I had to remove it and all I could do was to come some of the side hairs out on my cheeks in a sort of old fashioned "spit curl." I did, however, help them by wearing an hibiscus flower in my hair.

So I hope you can see what a terrific impact this experience had on my self identity. If others could accept my womanhood, when they could also see my maleness, why should I have any difficulty accepting it myself. And if I could, why should I feel guilty about it? So the experience had finally put an end to the long years of guilt that we have all experienced. From that day on, my self identity was between my ears, not between my legs where, unfortunately, it remains for most people including most TVs.

Now up to this point in the story I have used the abbreviation TV for transvestite. I was the one who developed this term in the first place, way back in the early fifties when I first met others of my own kind and had to have a way of talking about the subject in the presence of other unknowing people, without giving things away. However, it is time to say something about the word transvestite and the abbreviation TV. Originally, as most of you know, the word was invented by Hirschfeld, the German sexologist, to refer specifically to heterosexual cross dressers and it was used in this way from the time he invented it early in this century up until the late fifties and early

sixties. Thus I was comfortable with the abbreviation TV. But little by little, newspaper reporters, to begin with, and other authors later, began to use the word not as a medical term for a type of people, but in its English translation, namely as cross dressers. Thus, someone reporting on a police raid on a homosexual party would say that "police found and arrested 12 transvestites—" Well, you know and I certainly knew, that in the period of say 1955 to 1960, you couldn't have found 12 of our kind of people in one room at one time anywhere in the world. We were lucky if three or four of us got acquainted and met together. We never got that many at one time even at Johnny's place in Long Beach. Although he knew that many in this area, they never congregated at one time.

Obviously, therefore, the police had picked up 12 gay males who were "camping" it up in "drag." But little by little the word was used more and more simply to refer to cross dressing regardless of who was doing it and why they were doing it. Now it certainly isn't up to me—nor up to you—to put down a member of some other minority for doing his "thing" for his own reasons even if what he does is the same thing you and I do for our own reasons. Yet, as long as society continues to persecute and condemn homosexuality, in whatever form, I am not happy and I don't think those reading this piece are either, in being tarred with the same brush. Moreover, as I came across some of the blossoming pornography in the early sixties and found the abbreviation TV being used in ads, in captions to sexual action pictures and as self designations by drag queens I found myself very upset at finding "my" abbreviation being used by others of entirely different persuasions. When I say "my," I'm not referring to it in the sense of my initiating the term but that it was a term that had previously described me and , by extension, you. Thus, I felt impelled to find some term that would exclusively refer to our kind of people and not everyone who put on a dress for whatever reason.

I coined the term "FemmePersonator" just like that with a capital "P" in the middle of the word to mean an individual who "personates," that is, gives life to his feminine self. Later I developed the term "Femmiphile" meaning "lover of the feminine," a word which describes our motivation, not just what we do, i.e., cross dress—transvest. The abbreviation of both of these words is "FP" and this I shall use from here on. Unfortunately, it has not been publicized as much as it needs to be though I have used it in a number of professional papers and at professional meetings but it takes a lot to break down



The Hat That Won



Ball Gown 1967



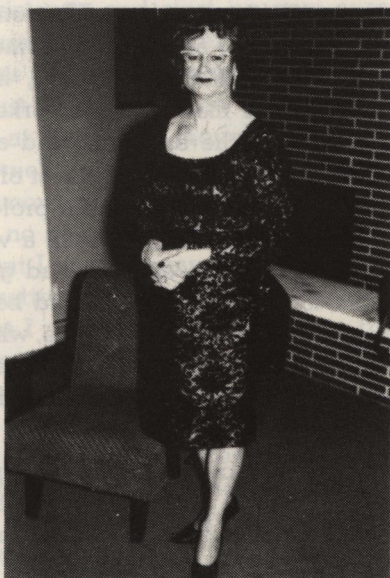
Alaska Trip
1966



At A Party — 1963



1964



1967

both the habit of the word transvestite and the prejudice in the shrink fraternity to name things after behaviors, i.e., exhibitionists, fetishists, sadists, masochists, etc. The last two are named after people whose behavior became so well known that it became the name of the behavior. To name things after the reason why people do things is foreign to their nature most of the time. Of course, when the first sorority was founded it was named PHI PI EPSILON in Greek which was FPE in English and Foundation for Personality Expression was chosen because it too had the initial "FP." So we are all femmiphiles and our "condition," if you will, is "Femmiphilia"—words which I would much rather have applied to me because they describe *me* rather than to be lumped together under the heading "transvestite" and "TV" with all the other types who by current usage are also included therein. When I see some of the slick porno magazines presently on the stands and see the pictures, stories and ads using those terms it makes me want to turn and run and put as much distance between myself and such people as I can. I don't want to be part of that bag and I suspect great numbers of those who read these words, don't either. Enough of this. Let's get on with the story of Virginia the "FP."

1968 was significant for other reasons. Early in the year I had arranged for one of my FP friends—whom older readers among you will remember as Mary—to come to work for me at Chevalier to take the burden of the recording, filling and mailing orders off of my hands. As a man he had worked for one of the big aircraft manufacturers in the area and had a responsible job and a good set up with them, but he, like the rest of us, wanted to live as a woman. To do so he would have to have a profession or way of making a living as a woman. His father had been a watchmaker and he had learned that craft too which was what had gotten him into some of the precision work for which he was fitted both by training and temperament. But the field he wanted to go into, which was electrolysis, was also precise and painstaking. Moreover, it was a profession that had more women in it than men so it seemed ideal for his purposes.

There was, of course, only one problem, one we all face—money. He would have to go to school to learn the technique and this would not only require tuition money but "he" couldn't be earning a living while "she" was in school. So I suggested that he take the bull by the horns (and tear them off and become a cow) and start to live full time as Mary, go to school that way and, that by working for Chevalier she

could be earning some money too. I couldn't afford to pay her a great deal, but it would help to hold things together while she learned her new profession. She agreed and so "Mary" became a part of Chevalier. That was in January or February of 1968. I had bought a new house as mentioned earlier which was selected for its location and situation to give me privacy and so Mary came to work there. She had had electrolysis herself and I was in the process of having it done.

When she was through with school, I introduced her to the woman who was doing me and who had more business than she could take care of and had tried several other electrologists who hadn't worked out. She and Mary hit it off and Mary began to work with her. A couple of years ago this lady had to retire from the business for health reasons and so now Mary has her own business and is doing very well.

But as I have already related I was now divorced and I had sold my business and now I had the example in front of me—Mary—as someone who could make the switch to full time living. One of the longest and most useful trips I took to give lectures, attend conventions, visit police departments, appear on TV shows (FP on TV?) and to visit FPE groups in existence and start up new ones, occurred in May 1978. When I returned from it after six weeks as Virginia, I had to revert to Charles for several days to visit an attorney's office to collect on a Trust Deed that was owed to me. When that was finished, I sat down at home and thought to myself, "I've been Virginia for the last six weeks, and I've been Charles for the last few days, who will I be tomorrow?" You don't need three guesses, do you? I realized that with no business responsibilities any more and no domestic ones either, that I could be my own person. So, I figured that since I had learned pretty much all I needed to know about being a man in this world, that I might just as well devote the rest of my life to exploring the other side of my own humanity. That decided, I called a friend in the beauty business and went and had my own hair permanented. That was in June of 1968 and I have lived as Virginia ever since—11 years. I can still remember the thrill of walking in the wind and feeling my own hair blowing in it. Winds blow wigs too, but you don't feel it in your scalp. But, it was a real deep thrill to know what I no longer had to wear a wig, that I was really real. That with the nude encounter experience a little earlier were what made 1968 eventful—my "birth" as a full time woman.

To get all these details in chronological order I have had to go back and read my past Virgin Views editorials in past issues—a most fascinating experience incidentally, to now, as a reader, see how concepts and events developed. It is much like reading someone else's biography. I observed that the half way point of this magazine—issues 50, 51 and 52 reported on just about the high point of a lot of my efforts for the cause—visits to the New York, Boston, Cleveland and Massachusetts state police departments, attending and speaking out at the American Psychiatric Association Convention, giving the Allen Burke show in New York which was the best interview I ever had and which was syndicated all over the country, visiting about 18 cities and meeting with FPs in all of them and FPE groups in a dozen of them, all important efforts.

It is not that it has all been downhill since then, because it certainly hasn't been, but that year was the one in which the most happened, for me, for the whole sub-culture and for the impact I could have on the outside world for the benefit of all of us. It's just an interesting note that it was all reported in those mid point issues, half way between No. 1 and this one, No. 100.

Well, after establishing myself officially as Virginia in June of 1968, I decided to take a trip to Alaska that fall which I did with a stop over in Seattle to visit with the FPE group there. It was all very interesting but there were a couple of highlights to the trip. The first one occurred in Nome, Alaska, where it turned out there were not enough single rooms in the little hotel. So I had gotten my key without knowing this, gone to my room and was getting cleaned up for dinner when there was a knock on the door and one of the other women on the trip whom I had sat with on a couple of bus trips and plane flights came into the room. She explained that due to the shortage she was assigned in with me. That was something of an unexpected surprise but I had no recourse but to make it as normal as possible. Thank heaven I was wearing my own hair by this time since taking off my wig to go to bed would have been disastrous. But, I stood by the dresser and put my hair up for the night just as she did and everything was "Cool"—Particularly in Nome, Alaska. The trip also involved going to Fairbanks and by bus to Whitehorse for three days. Would you believe I got elected song leader and had to stand in the front of the bus and lead the gang in songs—me and my lyric soprano????

We had a train trip from Whitehorse to Skagway and then boarded



Dutch Girl
Holland



Come Back To
Sorrento



Aboard a Gondala



Pigeons of San Marco

Venice
European Trip 1969

the boat for the trip to Vancouver via the inland passage. I had planned this particularly as a further test of my ability to make it on a boat because I had the following year in mind already. Anyway, the memorable thing about that trip down the passage was that they had a hat-making contest and everyone had to be put something together and wear it to dinner. I festooned my cardboard frame with bits of gold jewelry for the gold of Alaska, green for the forests, a bit of birch bark that I had brought back and some other stuff. We had to stand in front of the group for the judging and I had composed a little piece whereby I said I was an Alaskan Eskimo princess named "Lily" of the "Dashe" tribe or something like that. Anyway, the audience liked it and so I won first prize over all the other ladies. A victory for me in more ways than one as you will agree.

1969 started out as just another year but I had had a yen to go to Europe and in talking about it I interested one of the local FPs into going along—he as a man and me as a woman of course. The year before when I was in Washington, D.C. I had visited the passport department and worked out an "AKA" which means "also known as" passport. It was hardly what I wanted since it listed both my legal "born" name and Virginia Bruce—the name I adopted as my public, non-FP name. And the picture I had to have for it was sort of non-discript uni-gender. But I had the passport and that was what counted. But as usual whenever I had a trip in prospect I arranged a lot of other things on the way to New York and from New York on the way back. So it was San Francisco, Salt Lake City, Minneapolis, Madison, Chicago (where I did the famous KUP show in WMAQ) and finally on to New York. My friend Dick flew in and we teamed up in the boarding lounge of KLM at JFK. Our first stop was Amsterdam where we were met by the City by City Tour people who were to take care of us in each city we went to.

He took us through customs and on to our hotel. I was a little nervous at what might happen when a man and a woman with passports in two different names wanted a twin bedded room. But nothing happened either in Amsterdam, which I learned later was a pretty open and easy going city, or anywhere else in Europe, either. I don't suppose it would raise many eyebrows today in this country, either, but this was 10 years ago and the Europeans are just more accepting than we are of these kinds of things.

I am not going to burden you with the details of all events in all cities but we met FP friends in many of them who showed us around their cities. From Amsterdam to Paris and acquaintance with a French group dedicated to helping FPs and TSs. Went to the Carousel which was loud and crowded but our friend knew many of the girls and they came over to our table and autographed a couple of programs. I was flattered to learn that several of them were surprised to learn that I was an FP having taken me for a GG—good for a girl's self image. From Paris to Switzerland, Zurich, Lucerne and a bus trip through the Alps. Then by air over the Alps to Rome and side trip to Naples, Pompeii, Sorento and countryside. By the famous Rapido train to Florence and its famous art treasures. Then another train to Venice, its canals, Piazza San Marco, Rialto bridge, cathedrals and all the rest. Then it was off to Vienna, the land of Strauss, and we took an excursion to the Vienna Woods with a singing bus driver yet. A beautiful city after Paris, Rome and other Italian cities because it was more open with wide streets well laid out and lots of parks, etc. One of my favorite European cities. After a couple of days there, by air to Stockholm and met at the airport by Annette who was the leader of the Swedish division of FPE of North Europe.

I'll have to back up a bit at this point to mention that in various ways knowledge of *Transvestia* and what was going on in the FP world in the U.S. found its way abroad. Thus we ended up with first subscribers and then international members of FPE in a number of countries but notably Sweden, Denmark and England which is why we had included them on our itinerary. Annette in Sweden and Erna in Denmark had been instrumental after joining FPE themselves in pulling together others of their country sisters and forming what was in the beginning Swedish and Danish chapters of FPE and then in due course, since all national groups want to feel that they belong to themselves so to speak and not as associate members of an American organization, they set up what they called Phi Pi Epsilon of Europe and took in not only Swedish and Danish members, but Norwegians and Finnish sisters in the Swedish group and Dutch and German members in the Danish group.

So when we landed in Stockholm it was the beginning of a week of



Being Greeted at Airport By Annette, FPE leader in Stockholm



With Erna — FPE Leader In Denmark and Jane From Sweden In Copenhagen



Just Us Girls



Press Conference — Stockholm

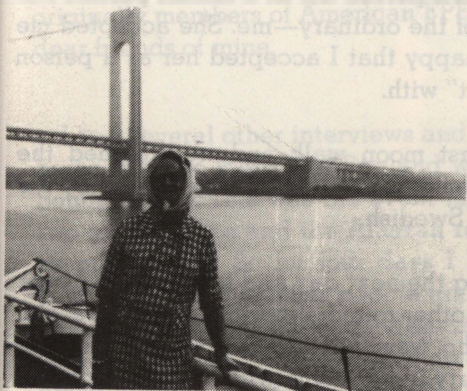
Sweden — 1969



Borrowed Baby in Sweden



Tower of London



Arriving in N.Y. On SS France



Back At Home

festivities. They had a press conference scheduled for me which resulted in stories about our kind of people and about the Scandinavian FPE groups in the two big Swedish dailies and in the largest Danish paper which had sent up a reporter for just that purpose. I was overwhelmed but I did my best and it went off well. We had an audience of maybe 60 people. There were parties, trips, meetings and explorations all week. Among these was an opportunity to meet a young Norwegian woman who was very accepting of the whole scene. Surprised as I am to be writing this today I had only known her about 40 minutes when we were in the kitchen smooching. The next night we had a party, Gerd was there and after it a number of our people were invited to a night club largely patronized by the gay set but we were invited by the proprietor because he was on good terms with the FP set, too. It was so noisy and crowded that the two of us went outside and we were standing there on the sidewalk talking, with our arms around each other and occasionally kissing. When some of the queens came out of the place with their dates and saw we two girls necking under the street light it was a little too much. At least it proved my contention that FPs were straight.

At the end of the week we set off for southern Sweden by car. I had persuaded Gerd to go with us so we had a lot of time to talk and visit. We stayed overnight at the home of one of the FPs and his wife, a wonderful couple and at Dick's suggestion they gave Gerd and I a room together with twin beds side by side. We went to sleep holding hands—we were both real beat with all the doings. In my case it wasn't a sexual relationship to begin with. We just hit it off because each of us accepted the other as a person not as a sexual partner nor as someone who was little out of the ordinary—me. She accepted me as I was and she was equally happy that I accepted her as a person and not as somebody to "make it" with.

This was the night of the first moon walk and we watched the replay of it when we got up in the morning. It was only marred by the fact that all commentary was in Swedish.

We continued on to Helsinborg the next day and took the ferry over to Denmark. There we began another round of parties, interviews, etc. with the Danish girls. Erna, who was the original organizer of the Danish branch of FPE, had a party in her home with her very wonderful and understanding parents. It was a real international group with two Americans, two Germans, two Swedish, and the rest Danish.

Communication was tricky but we made out and had a wonderful time. Dick left two days before I did to go to Scotland to look up some relatives and I joined him there in due course. We met a couple of Scots FPs at the hotel and then left next morning for Leicester to meet with Pamela who was a member of FPE and who had been the initiator of putting together the British FP group which became known as the Beaumont Society after our friend the Chevalier d'Eon de Beaumont—our patron saint as it were.

Then down to London where I attended the first international Gender Identity Conference. Although I was not accepted on the program since they wanted to limit speakers to the professionals, there developed some spare time because one of the speakers became ill. I asked for the time and got it and had my say after all. It went over so well that I got invitations to dinner from four of the doctors present. I also got on BBC-TV and on the commercial station ITV. Later in the week I read a paper at the International Social Psychiatry Convention. This led to a request for an interview by a reporter for the *London Observer*, which I gave. When it was printed, it resulted in 40 or 50 letters from British FPs which were turned over to the Beaumont people and became the principal nucleus for that society. Before this it had about 18 members in the whole country so I was not only responsible for pulling the first few together as members of the American FPE but finding a whole bunch of other sisters to help them get rolling. Shortly after this they became not a chapter of our American FPE but a national organization in their own right and simply affiliated with FPE-USA. But the first three presidents were all originally members of American FPE—Alga, Sylvia and Alice, and all dear friends of mine.

I had several other interviews and meetings but eventually the time came to leave merry old England which I did on the SS France from Southampton. This was the event for which the boat trip to Montreal two years before and the Alaskan return boat trip had been planned as preparation. So for four days I had breakfast, lunch and dinner with the same five other people and got along fine. At lunch the last day talk turned to what we were all going to do after we landed. I said I had about 10 TV shows to do and they all wanted to know what about. Lunch was about over at that point so I told them I'd tell them all about it at dinner. I did so that evening telling them in a funny way because there was a man sitting on both sides of me and I

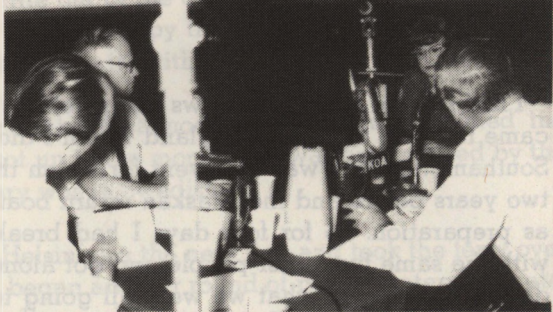


Two Appearances on the
KUP show
WBKB In Chicago

With Dr. Gebhard of Kinsey
Institute (left) and KUP (right)



WBBM — Chicago



KOA — Denver

Radio and Television Appearances

started off by saying "all the people on this side of the table are males." They didn't understand at first and thought I was trying to be funny but when the laughing stopped I explained how it was true and went on to tell them about the TV shows I had scheduled on the way home. They asked about a dozen questions and the subject was finished. Later that evening I spoke to one of the women in the lounge and commented on the small number of questions. Her reply was, "You have been a woman to us all week, Virginia, and you still are," and that was that. It only went to show what I have so often said, if you can accept yourself other people can accept you, too.

I had a really full month before I got back to L.A. I did television or radio shows in New York, Hartford, Boston, Atlanta, Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, New Orleans, Houston and Denver. In the middle of that I gave a seminar to the staff of the Masters and Johnson group in St. Louis. At this late date reading the summary at the end of my editorial report on this trip in *TVia* #59, I can't believe that I did it. It said, "I was gone 90 days (about 30 of it in simple European sightseeing), traveled about 24,000 miles, visited 37 cities in eight countries by means of 25 plane flights on 17 different airlines, plus eight trains and one ship. I gave 14 television interviews, nine radio shows, six newspaper interviews, three magazine interviews and took part in three seminars, read one professional paper, met with 17 different TV groups and saw 180 different individual TVs. It's tiring even to read about it. Has anyone else ever even approached that amount of effort for the TV cause even over a cumulative period of a couple of years instead of being crammed into about 60 days? I said earlier that I was not going to be shy and retiring about myself and I'm not. I am free to say that I think that is a hell of a lot of effort on the part of one person for one cause in so short a time—about 60 days. I'm proud of that and let my detractors come up with anything even remotely comparable to it.

Another interesting thing happened during 1969. While I was away on that three-month trip around Europe and the U.S., Chevalier was managed by Mary, whom I have mentioned earlier. Mary, like many another FP, was enamoured with the idea of surgery and we had discussed and argued the point many times prior to my going to Europe. Always she had the same plaint, one used over and over again by those opting for surgery . . . "But, Virginia, you just don't understand, just living this way I won't be real." I gave her all the simple, logical arguments against surgery—over and above the pain,

danger and expense—the simple fact that it wouldn't do anything for her, that there wasn't anything she could do *after* the surgery that she couldn't do already since she was living full time. And always I got that, "I wouldn't be real" reply.

Well, I went away and left her in charge of Chevalier. She is a very conscientious person and she said to herself, "This is Virginia's business so I have to run it the way Virginia would." Well, "running" Chevalier was and is much more than just recording payments and filling orders, there is a lot of counselling, advice and general question answering to be done, too. So naturally some of the letters she got were from people who were also talking about surgery. True to her intent she tried to give them the advice that I would have if I'd been there. She knew what I'd say because I'd said it to her often enough, so out of her brain into her fingers went my advice. But unbeknownst to her at the time was the fact that on the way through her brain from her memory to her fingers it went through her consciousness and in the process she became convinced of the correctness of what I'd been saying to her for some months. By the time I returned from Europe, she wouldn't have had surgery if it were free.

This illustrates something to all of us. If you are honest, watch yourself objectively next time you are in an argument about something. You won't pay too much attention really to what your opponent is saying because you will be marshalling your own thoughts for the next thing YOU will say. Thus there is a degree of courtesy extended to let the other fellow have his say, but the *really important* observations are about to be made by you. Right? Thus we are so defensive against other ideas on the one hand and so anxious to project our own on the other fellow, that what he says is never really weighed for its true worth. Mary was defensive everytime I talked with her and she already had the ultimate weapon ready to use—"you don't understand, I wouldn't be real"; thus she never really thought much about what I was saying because she already had her mind made up that I didn't understand and, since I didn't, what could I say that would be significant. But when I was no longer present and thus no longer in an adversary relationship, her conscious mind could consider my arguments as they went through on the way to her fingers as advice to someone else. This was a perfect example of something I heard a psychiatrist say at a meeting some years before but which I *and you*, whoever you are, tend to constantly forget . . . "you cannot change the mind of a person about a subject in which they have a large

emotional investment by simply presenting him (or her) with new, logical information." So *I* couldn't change Mary's mind, but she did change her own, using my information when she didn't have to defend herself. Would that this situation could be applied to hundreds of others—some of whom are doubtless reading these words right now—so that they would be able to evaluate the surgery more objectively and not entirely subjectively.

Well, all that was 1969. 1970 for most of the year was pretty much like other years except for my Pacific Circle trip. In the late summer I took off from LAX one midnight and landed in Tahiti about 4 a.m. the next morning. I was part of a tour group. I had never met any of my traveling companions before (or so I thought). I was paired up with another woman. On that first night—or rather morning because we were all so bushed that we went to bed about 6:30 a.m. immediately after arriving at the hotel. I made a point of taking only my pajama bottoms and going into the bathroom to undress. Then I came out in the pants and a September morn gesture of one arm crossed over my chest as though covering my breasts but making sure that they were both visible. When my roommate looked up and saw me—and them—that settled things for her. With those two protuberances above I couldn't have any below, so we were sisters. We stayed together 42 nights on that trip—and about 60 more on two subsequent trips—and to this day she supposes I am a female. Well, I am in spirit, but I don't hold the ultimate membership card.

But I got my greatest shock of the whole trip the next afternoon. We had all been taken to an open area near the beach after being driven around the town of Papeete and dropped off with instructions as to how to get to the city market, etc. We were supposed to meet back there at 4:30 p.m. to return to the hotel. I did my sightseeing and got back to the meeting point about 4 o'clock. One of the men on the trip was already there. We talked a few minutes and suddenly he said, "I know you, you're Charles Prince!" I nearly died on the spot. Here I was 7,000 miles from home and on the first day somebody reads me. I thought the jig was up. But naturally I denied it and feigned a combination of innocence and annoyance that he should take me, a woman, for being a man. It didn't work. He went on to say, "Yes, you gave a lecture at so and so's house in Lomita, you're a TV." Well, he had me, I had given that lecture, so I came clean and admitted who and what I was but begged him to keep it to himself or he would spoil



Fiji — 1970



Monkey See Monkey Do



With Two Human Friends



Some Animal Friends

Bali 1970



Australia — Virginia And Friend



Bathing Beauty?



Home At Last



Oh Dear — Japan

1970

the whole trip for me. He said not to worry. He was a psychologist and regarded himself as being very avant gard as he wore a headband and gave the "V" sign to ever kid on the trip. This was in 1970, remember, when the hippies were everywhere, not only in the U.S., but everywhere else. We found them in New Zealand, Australia, Japan and way points and he had a great time. Well the result was that he never gave me away and in fact he and my roommate and I became kind of a little click of semi-weirdos. I use that term because many of those on the trip were very conservative and square and the three of us were so adventurous and "with it" that to the rest we seemed pretty far out.

From Tahiti we went to Fiji and found it interesting that a skirt is standard men's clothing there—the policemen, soldiers, and most everyone else wore them. I thought it was kind of novel so I went to a men's store and bought myself a "sulu" as they call them. They are about one yard wide and about two yards long and wrap around with a belt that passes through an opening and fastens. The nice thing about them is that they have regular hip pockets. So later in the trip in Bangkok and Hong Kong where it was very hot I didn't have to carry a purse. Money, a lipstick and comb in the pockets, and I was gone. Only had to carry my camera.

Next we took in New Zealand where I met a couple of sisters and finally to Melbourne, Australia. There I gave a seminar to a group of psychiatrists and encouraged one of my readers to initiate a newsletter and beginnings of a TV group. The Seahorse had been selected by me 10 years before as an appropriate symbol for FPs since it is the male that takes over the care of the eggs, carrying them in a pouch on his abdomen and watching over them till they become independent. So they decided to call the Australian group the Seahorse Club and it is still going strong. The founders of Seahorse were again FPE members. In Sydney I was met by a couple of other readers and members of the initial Sydney group which eventually became the principal nucleus of Seahorse since it is the largest city in the country.

Next stop was Bali, a beautiful country. I couldn't resist the temptation of being photographed next to a sign saying that menstruating women should not enter the temple. Naturally I went in anyway. Next was Bangkok—land of the *King and I*, pagodas, Thai silk and jewelry, etc. Finally to Hong Kong and then to Japan. We did some of the

country first and then went to Osaka where the World's Fair was in progress. It was the Fair which had gotten me onto this trip in the first place because three years before in Montreal at that Fair I had seen an announcement of the 1970 Fair being in Japan and resolved to go there.

I should have mentioned when talking about the Montreal Fair that someone, before I went to it, suggested that as a publisher I might get a press pass. I had written for it, got it and thus gotten into many buildings that I wouldn't have seen otherwise. So the first day at the Osaka Fair I remembered this and left my roommate sitting on a bench while I went over to the press building which was some distance away. I went in and told them that I was the editor of Chevalier Publications in the States and that I and one of my "reporters" were at the Fair and would like a press card. They gave me some forms to fill out and asked a few questions which I fielded dextrously enough and they gave me the pass which had to be countersigned by the Chief of the American staff at the U.S. building. So I went back, picked up my roommate and took her to the back entrance of the U.S. building to wait while I got the guard to take me in to the Chief's office, which he did. In there I had a nice visit, talked a bit, and he signed the pass. He said, "I suppose you would like to see the U.S. building." I said certainly, but that my assistant was waiting at the back entrance. He picked up the phone and called the guard and told him to bring her in, which he did. The Chief then took us both out into the body of the building and up to the line and "inserted" us in it. The line extended three blocks outside of the building but we started at the top as it were. That pass enabled us to get into the "VIP" entrance to every building in the Fair and thus in the three days we were there we saw everything worth seeing while others members of our group had to wait in long lines at the popular buildings like the U.S., Russian, French, British, etc.

My roommate had much earlier on the trip found me to be a somewhat unfathomable mystery woman because I was very active, inquisitive and knowledgeable beyond what would be expected of a 57-year-old lady. But this business at the Fair really capped it. She couldn't figure out what kind of drag (oops, I mean pull) I had to be able to get that card. Naturally I couldn't tell her about what Chevalier published but made up some story about how a friend back in the States had furnished me with the necessary ID to get the press

card. Anyway, it worked out much to her advantage being with me as we saw much more of the Fair than anyone else in the group.

In Tokyo my adventuresomeness again came to the fore when I shepherded her across town and back by subway. None of the stations had English names but with a map showing them you could follow progress by the appearance of the names even if you couldn't read them. So since I am a bug on subways I had to "do" the Tokyo system.

Back home by way of Hawaii where I gave a TV program and met a professor from the University of Hawaii who had been asked on the program for "professional balance." We did the program and then went out to a park and talked about it for a couple of hours. He became a good friend. Thus ended the significant events of 1970.

In June, 1971, before my next trip, I went to court and had my name legally changed. It was a very simple matter. My attorney, who had done this before, arranged to have it occur in Pasadena, a city on the outskirts of Los Angeles where cases didn't attract much attention. Had it been done in L.A. there would have been some snoopy reporter around who might think it was an interesting story on account of my father. But in Pasadena—nothing. Case was called, the judge asked me why I wanted it changed, and since I was already living as Virginia and went to court that way, I said it was inconvenient having to sign legal papers, have a driver's license and other red tape in a man's name. He said, "You don't plan to use the new name for any illegal or immoral purposes, do you?" I said no and he said, "Petition granted."

That very same afternoon, armed with a photostat of the court order I went down to see the head of the L.A. Passport Office whom I knew from having gotten the "aka" passport through her several years previously. I shoved the old passport, the name change order and \$10 at her and said, "Now give me a passport in my own legal name." She agreed and in about 10 days it came. It was a big help on this trip to the socialist countries because an aka passport would have attracted somebody's attention for sure and trouble would have ensued. Moreover, it is customary for the tour director to collect and carry all the tour groups' passports so that he (or she) can handle them all at once at hotels and airports. On the Pacific trip the year before I had to act



With Lucy Of Belgium
In Paris



On Parapet of Hrodkany Castle
Overlooking Budapest



Plaza Fountain
In East Berlin



Stradling An Issue
The "O" Meridian
at Greenwich
England

Central European Trip — 1971

distrustful and not give it to the group leader but always go myself to the airport or hotel desk so that the leader would not notice the man's name attached and asked awkward questions. So everything would go smoothly next time.

As the result of the appearance of a very inadequate book on the *Art of Female Impersonation* by Pudgy Roberts I decided to write one that would really cover the needs of our kind of people. Pudgy is a gay queen and a stage impersonator and while his book gave some suggestions for stage appearance it was practically useless as a guide for straight FPs. So I sat down and wrote the *How to be a Woman Though Male* book which many of you know. I was, and am, pleased with it. It has been reprinted twice and although there are a few items now outdated—for instance hardly anyone wears hats or gloves anymore except in the winter's cold—by and large it is still the only book on the subject that really covers street wear, public behaviour and deportment. If I do say so it is a must for anyone intending to "go public." I wrote it from my own experiences of the previous 40 years and had it checked over by two wives.

1971 in the summer found me in Europe again, visiting my Scandinavian friends in Sweden. I flew from there to Copenhagen and changed planes for a flight to Warsaw in a Russian-built, Polish Airlines plane in which, like in old railway cars, half of the passengers sat facing backward. I was going to Warsaw to meet a tour group which had already done Leningrad and Moscow. I didn't want to go to them that time because I was going to save them to do as part of bigger Russian adventure which I did in 1975. Anyway, I arrived in Warsaw and was met and taken to the hotel. It was about noon and the tour wasn't due in till about 10 that evening, so I set off to explore the "old town" by myself. It was hard to believe that here I was, as Virginia yet, behind the Iron Curtain and wandering around by myself. I didn't know a word of Polish either.

After I had walked through the principal part of the old town and admired the way it had been rebuilt exactly as it was before the Nazis came—they did it by consulting paintings of various parts of the cities which were in various galleries all over Europe—I wandered a little further. I was standing at a street corner consulting my little map trying to figure out where I was, when a man came up and asked if he could help—In English. I explained I knew one street but which was the other, I couldn't find a sign. He explained where I was,

and went on to talk about some of the Nazi atrocities and we got into quite a conversation. He said he was a retired member of the Warsaw Central Committee. He asked me if I would have tea with him as we were having a very interesting conversation. I said yes, expecting to go to some little coffee shop-like place. We walked down the street a couple of blocks, turned into a building and went upstairs. We arrived not at a tea room but at his apartment on the fourth floor to have "tea." I hadn't bargained for that, but I couldn't gracefully get out of it. It was a barren little apartment, but he made some tea on a hot plate and then came over and sat with me on the old beat up sofa.

We talked about various things and then in trying to emphasize a point he said, "Yes, but Virginia . . ." and put his hand on my knee. I'm enough of a woman (and a man) to know what that could lead to so I turned around side ways with one knee up on the couch and my purse in between. Nothing happened but I thought this was really a far out situation to be in—me an FP, dressed, in a strange man's apartment on the fourth floor of a residence building in a foreign country and a Communist one besides. If anything did happen I would lose either way so I played it very cool and cautious yet friendly because he was a very interesting person. Eventually I indicated that I had to get back to the hotel before dark but he said he'd walk me back. At which point he wanted to give me a present. It was a series of little paper cutouts that the Polish women make in various designs. He had it framed behind glass and I told him that I could never carry that home because the glass would break so he took it out of the frame and gave it to me. It wasn't much but it was a gesture of friendship. So I accepted it but with some reluctance knowing that when a man gives something to a woman there is usually a price attached to it. I told him, "Okay, I'll take it and I thank you for it, but, as we Americans say, 'Don't get any ideas.'" So he walked me home, the tour group came in later, the trip continued, and his gift hangs on my guest room wall today.

I met the group and we went through Poland, to Bucharest, Sofia, Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia, Budapest and East and West Berlin. It was all very interesting and I learned to look at things through my own eyes and not through the preconceptions placed in our minds by American anti-Communist propaganda. We are just as guilty of perpetuating misunderstandings and ignorance about them as they do about us.

We we arrived in West Berlin I had a little cold which in a couple of days developed into laryngitis. When I flew up to Copenhagen one of the girls in the Danish group was a doctor so she gave me an antibiotic prescription but it didn't help much. One night in the hotel I got a coughing fit and it was coupled with some sort of a spasm of the larynx so that I would cough out all the air in my lungs and then could not open my throat to breathe any back in. Finally on one particularly bad bout of coughing I really thought I'd had it. I knew that I couldn't stay conscious too long with no air and was fumbling in my purse for a small pocket knife that I always carried and went to the little washstand and mirror planning to insert the knife in my trachea to open an airway. At the last moment I got the idea that if I could swallow some water maybe that would release the spasm and I could breathe. I did and it did and I gasped in some air. It was really frightening. Next morning I went to the pharmacy and bought a four-ounce bottle which I filled with water and carried with me all the time.

I attended the second international Erickson conference on Transsexuality in northern Denmark and had a few minutes to speak in spite of the terrible laryngitis. Then over to London for about a week lugging my little water bottle about on the subway and finally back home. I went to see a throat doctor who swabbed, sprayed and gave me pills for two weeks with only moderate success. It felt like every cough just tickled some reflex area which started another cough. I told the doctor and he looked more closely and said that finally the medication had reduced the swelling and inflammation enough so that he could see that I was indeed right, there were polyps—small growths—on the vocal cords. So that night I went in the hospital and next day had surgery to remove them.

He told me that such things are not uncommon among lecturers, singers and others who use their voices a lot. Heavens knows I have never been known for keeping silent and have often lectured for three or four hours in a row so it was not surprising I got them. However, the surgery didn't do any good for my "lilting soprano" voice so ever since when people can't see me for visual information like over the phone, I'll give my name as Virginia and they will say "yes sir."

Early in 1972, Fran, who had been the Executive Secretary of FPE for the previous six or eight years, found it necessary due to the press of her own family and life requirements to drop out of that activity. It

was just taking too much time. That put it back on me. I had the choice then of just discontinuing it or figuring out some way whereby I could keep it going though on a lesser scale since I just couldn't possibly devote the time Fran had contributed on top of the needs of Chevalier Pubs and many other personal activities.

Having just returned from Europe and seen how well our affiliated societies in Denmark, Sweden and particularly England were doing, it would have just been humiliating to have the parent organization in a big country like the U.S. die off. So I conceived the idea of a Directory of members so that they could communicate with each other and still have a sense of security. This also enabled me to manage it alone though I couldn't do all the personal contacting and arranging that Fran had done.

In 1972 I gave talks to the American Library Association convention in Las Vegas, to the Washington University Department of Psychiatry in St. Louis, and took part in a seminar at the Institute for Sex Research in Bloomington, Indiana, trying to spread more information about us where it would do the most good. Naturally there were a few radio and TV shows thrown in.

1973 was an eventful year as you will probably remember. It was eventful for me in several ways. I had gotten interested in radio controlled gliders from seeing a bunch of them being flown near San Diego one weekend. So I bought one second-hand and started to learn to fly it. In the process of looking for one I had met a fellow who told me about flying large gliders and I decided that I would look into that since the brother of a girl friend had just gotten a brand new type in from Czechoslovakia. So one day I was out at Hemet about 80 miles east of L.A. at the glider field looking for her but found that her brother was there. I introduced myself and after sitting around in the shade awhile he said, "Well, guess I'll take a flight, want to come along, Virginia?"

Since, on such short notice, I couldn't think of any reasons why I should say no, I said yes and we went out and got into his new glider, got towed up several thousand feet, disconnected and were on our own like a big bird. We came down and he asked if I wanted to go again to which I enthusiastically replied yes and we did. Those two flights were enough, I was hooked. I then came out and began to

take lessons on weekends. I thought I should be learning power flight, too, so for several months it was power one weekend 40 miles N.W. of L.A. and the next week glider instruction 100 miles east of L.A. My power instructor told me that I should go to ground school which I did for about four meetings. I then suddenly realized that there was more to learn on the ground than there was in the air and more over what would I do with a power license if I got it? I wasn't able to buy a plane and if I wanted to go somewhere I'd go by commercial airline, so why a pilot's license? Additionally, I now had enough hours in both kinds of flying to realize that powered flight was pretty much like driving a car in the air. You always had that motor out in front of you doing the work and all you had to do was steer and remember a lot of rules of the road and mechanical matters like carburetor heat, etc. In a glider, on the other hand, there is no motor and thus it becomes a personal contest and challenge between you and the atmosphere to see if you can get up and stay up, contend with sink, and enjoy lift, etc.

So I told my power instructor my decision and said goodbye to him, forgot about ground school and power license and concentrated on the glider. I therefore got my private glider license—as a woman—in 1973, and at the age of 60. It is interesting to note in making up the Tri Sigma Directory how many FPs list flying as one of their interests. Most are power pilots, of course, but there are some glider pilots amongst us, too.

In the late summer of that year I again went to Europe and to Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia for the third International Erickson Symposium on Transsexuality. To this group I presented the results of some research that I had done with Dr. Bentler of the Psychology Department at UCLA. We had sent out questionnaires through doctors to be sent to their operated transsexual patients to be filled in anonymously and returned. We got back 42. On the basis of their own statements we could divide the group into 15 self-ascribed pre-surgical homosexuals, 14 heterosexuals (a transvestic group) and 13 of what we called asexuals simply because they didn't really fit into either of the other two groups. We made the interesting finding—which bore out my expectations expressed so many times in *TVia*—that the homosexual groups had a much greater score on all questions relating to sex and low on gender questions such as, "Is the opportunity to dress and live as a woman more important to you than the opportunity to have sex with a male?" The hetero group was high on gender and

low on sex. This was reported in detail in *TVia* #79. It is one of the most significant pieces of research in the field but has received no attention.

From Yugoslavia I flew to Stuttgart, Germany, to pick up a small Mercedes that I had ordered in Hollywood. The psychology professor that I mentioned having met in Hawaii a couple of years before had been at the conference and I persuaded him to come with me to get the car so we could have three or four days of driving around Austria which we did and had a fascinating time. He went home from Salzburg and I took off *by myself* to drive to Vienna. On the way I visited Berchtesgaden and Hitler's "Eagles nest" on the top of one of the mountains—a very beautiful place for a very ugly human being.

But from there I started out over the Gross Glockener pass, one of the highest and most difficult alpine passes and down to Zell Am Zee because there they have a gliding school. I got there too late on a rainy afternoon and so I had to stay at little "Zimmer und Fruestuck (room and breakfast) house nearby and slept over. Next morning I didn't have too much time and it was too early to get one of the tow planes going so I got an instructor to take me up in a German powered glider. It was fortunate that I had taken some power instruction because I was able to fly it off the ground and then when we got up 3 or 4,000 feet the instructor (in German) told me to turn the switch and pull and turn a lever which feathered the prop and there we were gliding. That place has to be the most beautiful in the world for gliding as it is at the confluence of four typical alpine, glaciated valleys coming in from the four points of the compass. Absolutely breathtaking from the air. We took two flights and that was why I had hurried to complete my instruction and get my license before leaving the U.S. as I knew of this place and wanted to go there and fly.

After the flight I continued on my drive to Vienna. Staying each night in one of the bed and breakfast places, I got a chance to oil up my very inadequate German and the hausfrau was always interested in hearing about America. In due course I arrived in Vienna and found my hotel. Next day I drove the car across town to the Mercedes dealer and arranged to store it with him while I took my Middle East tour. The following day it was out to the airport to meet the tour group which was flying in from New York. I boarded the plane to discover that the group leader was the same Swiss man who had led the Central European tour two years before so we got along fine. As this



Lady Glider Pilot



Lady Tourist in Egypt



Hitler's "Eagles Nest"
Above Berchdesgaden,
Germany



Straightening Up The
Eiffel Tower, Paris

European Trip 1973

tour has been described in detail in *TVias 80* and *81*, I'll skip the details here except to say that we did Lebanon, Damascus, Egypt—including a trip down the Nile by boat where I was once again billeted in a small cabin with another lady.

From Cairo we went to Amman, Jordan, and by car to Petra and Aquaba on the Red Sea where I went swimming but didn't get red (or read). Back to Amman and across the Jordan River at the Allenby Bridge where we were put through the most complete search by the Israelis that I've ever been through. They dumped our suitcases upside down on the table and then took them to be X-rayed for false bottoms and on their return we repacked them in front of the watchful eyes of the customs men. I don't blame them considering all the terrorist acts they have had to put up with. We had been in Jerusalem only two days when word came of the fighting in the Sinai and the Golan Heights and the 1973 war was on. We had some trouble getting to Haifa and then to Tel Aviv because all buses and trucks were commandeered to take troops to the front. Although sympathetic to the Israelis, especially after having been to all the Arabic countries, there was little Betty and I could do to help besides giving blood so we alone of our whole tour group got a taxi and went to the hospital to donate it. The technicians were young girls of about 17 and the guards and orderlies were boys even younger. Everybody worked in those critical days.

Eventually our tour leader inveigled El Italia which, with El Al, the Israeli airline, was the only line operating, to take us to Rome from which the next day we flew to Istanbul and continued our tour through Turkey and then Greece and home, by way of my favorite city—London and the Beaumont Society Dinner. Finally back to the U.S. and the well-remembered oil embargo. As I write this in April 1979 it seems something like a replay even though Egypt and Israel have signed the peace agreement.

In 1974 I made several trips giving lectures at medical schools, and radio and TV shows at various places around the country, seeing members of FPE in all the cities where there were chapters and with individuals in the rest. Got in a lot of good licks with the professionals and the general public on these excursions and made my contribution to the greater level of tolerance of individual behaviours that we see around us today. The country is much easier to be an FP

in today than it was in the earlier years and I'm proud to feel that I had a hand in making it that way.

I did take a short foreign trip in 1974 which was a two-week excursion to Mexico visiting a number of different places and ending up in Acapulco. It was a tour group but my partner-roommate was the same woman with whom I had shared accommodations on the Circle Pacific tour in 1970. We got on fairly well but it turned out that she was pretty much at odds with her own mother so that when I would make some suggestion out of consideration for her, like "don't you think you ought to take your sweater, it's getting kind of chilly tonight," she would bristle and get annoyed. I found out later that I was seen as carrying out the mother role by such comments and so she began to have the same feelings toward me as toward her mother. But once I found out what bugged her I stopped doing it and things smoothed out again. But it was an interesting aspect of my womanhood that I came on as too mothering.

But I didn't disappoint her any in my unusualness. She got altitude sickness in Mexico City and I was still going strong enough to climb the pyramid at the temple of the Sun at Teotihuacan about 30 miles outside of Mexico City. Then when we got to Acapulco I insisted on taking the parachute ride. They have a parachute attached to a speedboat out in the ocean. You stand on the beach strapped in and the boat takes off. You rise like a kite and sail along over the beach as the boat goes up the coast and back again. Since I had already earned my glider pilot's license this was of the same order and quite interesting. But as I was the only woman in our group to be so daring it was more of the same—androgeny that people can't quite understand. But then by this time I was ME and I did what I wanted to do whether it fell within the parameters of normal feminine behaviour or not. There was no point of getting out of the limitations of masculinity to adopt the limitations of femininity. That would just be trading prisons but to get out into the fields outside of either prison where you can be happy in "doing your own thing"—that is the real meaning of being a transgenderist. It is also one of the things that those who go in for surgery don't appreciate beforehand and can never enjoy afterward since they *have* switched prisons by equating what's between their ears with what's between their legs. So you change the latter you change the former and thus just close one cell door only to open up another and enter it. I think I have the best of both worlds.

1974 also saw me departing from an established policy regarding my editorials in *Transvestia*. Up to issue #82 I had always devoted the Virgin Views column either to an essay on some aspect of cross dressing or to a report on one of my trips. But the world didn't look too good in 1974—and it looks ever worse today, so I devoted my column in #82 to the problems of economic survival and pointed to the desirability of having some silver and gold in your investments in order to hedge against inflation. In this article I discussed all the various ways one could invest and the pros and cons of each. Nothing I said then has changed but the situations, inflation, national debt, balance of payments, astronomical oil prices and a bleak economic future has, if anything, gotten worse. Those of you with any concern about investments and inflation hedging could do yourself a favor by getting that issue if you don't have it or re-reading it if you do.

In #83 I continued the series on survival and wrote about food and having some vacuum packed survival foods at hand. That situation hasn't developed as rapidly as was feared at that time, but there remain the same international problems of too many people, too little food and too expensive energy. I wrote about this because I had gotten interested in the field myself. One of my friends who had gotten me interested in the first place opened up a store to sell such items. I got the idea that I could help him out and all my other friends, too, by making up a list of names and addresses for him which I did. I also prepared a letter to go along with it signed by my legal name of Virginia Bruce which all the people who know nothing of my FP background know me by. I simply expressed my own interest in the subject and thought that they would find it of interest too so I had given their name and address to the store to send out mailing pieces to. This letter accompanied his literature.

Well, on this list I put the names of my doctor friends, my attorney, real estate broker, insurance agent, professional acquaintances and most everybody I knew, including the names of all the members of the L.A. chapter of FPE. I gave their legal names and addresses and *nothing else*, so there was absolutely no information regarding their FP activities. All of them got mail all the time under their own name for all kinds of purposes so one coming from a food store should have made no difference. But did it ever!

At the next meeting of the Alpha chapter of FPE, the founding chapter of the organization here in Los Angeles, I was going to

elaborate somewhat on the letter that I had had sent along with the literature and explain in more detail why I thought it was important and answer questions, etc. Well, I never had a chance. As soon as discussion began that evening, one of the members, Sandy by name, got up and lambasted me good and proper much to my amazement. She was then joined by Joan, a member whom I would have thought would have had a little more consideration, since I had helped her out of a very touchy security situation that she had gotten herself into. But the two of them just took turns carrying on about my writing that letter and giving their names and addresses to the store. I could hardly get a word in edgewise. When I finally insisted on the floor to reply, I explained that no harm had been done to anyone, that their security had not been breached in the slightest and that I had not violated my own self-imposed rules of security, since I was dealing with them as men under their real name with no reference to TVing at all. I said that I had no idea that they would be so virulent about it, but since they were and since it had already been done, there was little I could do but apologize which I tried to do. But as soon as I was quiet they took off again. During all this the rest of the members present didn't let out one peep either to defend me or even to just say, "alright, let's get on to other things—we've hashed this out enough." They literally didn't say anything. A few minutes more of this and I had finally had it. I turned to Mary who was sitting besides me—the one who had worked with me on Chevalier—and said, "For two cents I'd simply up and resign from this group since they seem to be of one mind and that is anti-Virginia." She said, "If you do I'll be right behind you." I again tried to clear up the matter, but no dice. So I did just what I had said I'd do. I got up and on the spot tendered my resignation from the Alpha chapter of FPE — the group which I had founded and on which I had built all the rest of FPE.

I did so because it suddenly became crystal clear to me that nothing I could say was going to change Sandy and Joan's minds and that the silence of all the rest meant some degree of acquiescence on their part. I said to myself, "How could I come back to the next meeting of this group and pretend that these people were still my friends? How could I ever be on the same terms with them that I had been for a long time? Obviously I couldn't so I would be better off to leave them, which I did. This story was never referred to in *TVia* because, being unable to explain the details, I was afraid it would frighten off some of those in other areas who would not realize the circumstances and think that FPE was coming apart at the seams. It

wasn't and it didn't. But I relate it now not only because it is a part of this history but because I would like to say that nothing in the 20 years that I have been working in this field has hurt me so deeply. Here were a bunch of people that I had rescued from various stages of the locked room, given them some understanding, a lot of new friends, a sense of belonging, had counselled several of them on personal problems, helped others out of difficulties, yet they could turn on me in an instant over a really insignificant matter that had not threatened any of them. Matter of fact, I talked with a couple of them subsequently and they admitted that having received the mailing didn't upset them in the least. But one of them, one of my oldest friends in the group, indicated to me a year or so later that he had known what was going to happen before it did but that if he had said anything he would only have been putting his own head in the noose. So much for long standing friendship, loyalty both to friend and to principles, etc., and a sense of fairness to someone who had done a lot for each of them. When the chips were down they were more concerned about themselves. I don't suppose I should be surprised; FPs are just ordinary people except for their FPia and certainly loyalty, integrity and trust are violated daily by lots of ordinary people. I guess I just expected more from my sisters—but live and learn.

I will be so bold as to say that it is fortunate for the rest of those who have been my readers of *TVia* and members of FPE and now Tri Sigma that I have and have always had a strong sense of loyalty, integrity and honesty and for sticking up for what is right even against considerable odds. Had I had not felt this way, you would not be reading the 100th issue of this magazine because I would have pulled in my horns long ago after lawsuits by former friends, prosecution by the Post Office Department and various other tribulations along the way. I have a very human urge to go into great detail about this incident because even though it was four years ago it still hurts today to find that people you liked, helped, trusted and counted as friends could treat you as they did. However, I will resist the temptation since most of you who will read this are miles away and wouldn't be interested anyway.

But the further end to this story is that although I had resigned from the chapter, that had no effect on FPE nationally. This group continued to be members of FPE for the next year and then one

meeting held a vote and decided to disaffiliate with the parent organization and did so. I carried on the national organization until 1976 when Tri Sigma was organized. Although this gets us a little out of the chronological development of things it seems appropriate to go into the development of Tri Sigma at this point.

Early in 1976 I was contacted by Carol Beecroft who had several years earlier set up her own local organization which she had named "Mamselle." Although it had a well functioning local group she was not in a position to enlarge it onto the national scene because other than advertising she had no way to find new people. So she came to me with the proposition that we should merge Mamselle and FPE. At first I took a negative view because I couldn't see what advantage such a merger could provide to FPE. However, we kept on with talks and eventually it began to be evident that the members of both organizations and both of the leaders would be able to benefit from the merger. Members of Mamselle would become part of a larger organization, national in scope, FPE members would benefit by having an additional leader at the top who could handle some of the chapter organization problems that it had not been possible for me to handle ever since Fran had had to discontinue her efforts. Carol, in turn, would have a large organization to expend her talents on instead of just a small local group, and I would have someone else to share the effort with. So we decided to merge the two organizations. Since it was a merger, we couldn't go on with the same name of either organization and thus was born "The Society for the Second Self—SSS or Tri Sigma for short. We went into "business" in June of 1976.

As older members of FPE will remember, we required the purchase and reading of *five* issues of *TVia* to qualify for membership. This was not, as many of my detractors maintained, just a rip off way of selling the magazine. It was a carefully planned part of the security effort. Some years before I had placed an ad in a Canadian paper which I thought had been cleverly worded since it was aimed at "Men with a yen for the feminine." It brought in a good many orders for an issue of *TVia*. But about nine months later I went through the record cards to send reminders to those who had not ordered for some time so that I could eliminate dead cards from the file. I was surprised to note how many cards there were which only showed that one issue had been ordered. I thought I knew the FPs of those days pretty well. There was practically nothing other than *TVia* available and most FPs were so

hungry for something on the subject that if they did find something they would want more. But, here were all these people who had bought once and not a second time. How could that be? I finally figured out that the wording of that ad attracted a bunch of gay queens who bought the magazine once. But finding nothing in it that appealed to their way of life, they in effect said, "Why should I buy that rag again, it doesn't have anything in it that does anything for me." So, I reasoned, if I made prospects buy five issues to join FPE I could be pretty sure that they were regular FPs since they wouldn't find anything in *TVia* that dealt with homosexuality, bondage, humiliation, punishment, fetishism and similar persuasions if that was where they were coming from. Such people would never live past the second issue so it was an effective screen and it worked for a number of years in spite of those who saw it only as a money making scam.

But by 1976 when Tri Sigma was formed, the world had changed quite a bit and everybody was more tolerant, security wasn't quite the problem it used to be, though still important. Therefore, we lightened up the requirement to three issues of *TVia* or ... The "or" was the book "Understanding Cross Dressing" first published in 1976. This book was written to serve three purposes: 1) to educate the FPs about the nature of their behavior, 2) to educate interested non-FPs such as wives, parents, professionals or just interested people, and 3) to act as a screen for membership in Tri Sigma, since it makes very clear the nature of the FP phenomenon and the nature of the organization for FPs. I'm pleased to say that I have had lots of compliments on the difference it has made in the lives of lots of readers and wives. It has been reprinted since its first printing and that printing is about half gone. It is the only book written dealing solely and fully with the whole behavior pattern so important to all of us. Of course, there are still those who complain of it being a rip off to require buying a book to qualify for membership in an organization. But if they can dream up a better way of separating the wheat from the chaff, we'll be glad to adopt it for Tri Sigma. But apart from that debate, Tri Sigma has remained very functional and has grown yearly. It is the largest such organization in the country dedicated to what we have come to refer to as "uncomplicated" (by other patterns) heterosexual cross dressers.

But back to the chronology. 1975 was a significant year for me. I wrote a book that had nothing to do with Femmiphilia. It is a kind of a combination science fiction women's lib social commentary. I only

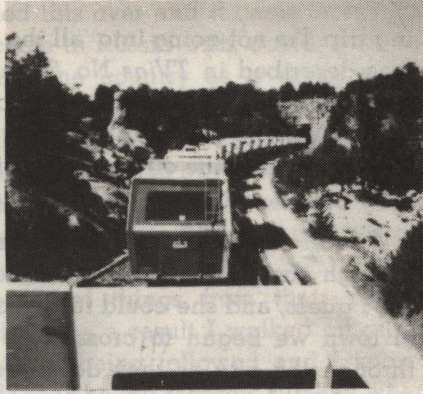
mention the book for two reasons, to indicate that I can and will write about other things than cross dressing and because of an amusing incident that occurred in trying to sell it. I had arranged to take a round the whole world trip and thus went to New York to fly to Europe. While I was there, I contacted a friend about finding an agent to handle the book. She gave me the name of a man in Princeton, New Jersey. I called him and arranged to go down to see him. A friend drove me down and we made the connection. The interesting part of this story is that before we talked about the book, he wanted to do a "Reading" on me which involved holding my hand, and tuning in on my "vibes" I guess. Anyway, he "saw" me taking a trip (my friend had probably mentioned this to him) and he went on about it, and then said, "I see you only getting half way." I asked what this meant, where half way was and what would happen. He couldn't see that, he said, but something would happen when I was only half way around. Remember that fact for a while. I'll come back to it.

Since London is my favorite city, I planned to spend a week there which I did, giving a couple of seminars to two hospital staffs, made a tape for medical distribution and getting on the news on one station. My friends in Stockholm finding that I was going to be going from London to Helsinki, invited me to stop off in Stockholm to be guest at a big party one of the girls was throwing. So I rerouted myself there for an overnight stop. The party was great but a custom in Sweden is that if you want a drink you have to catch someone's eye and then you both drink a toast. Now that is great. If, a) you are thirsty and b) you are used to drinking. I don't drink much, but I was a visitor and so naturally I was looking around the room at people and what was going on and as an honored guest a lot of eyes were catching mine, and each time I had to acknowledge the recognition with a swallow or two. It got so that I had to keep looking at my plate in order to avoid more such toasts as it was getting to me. But as usual, the Swedes are very friendly, tolerant and interesting and it was a special night.

Next day I was off to Helsinki where I was scheduled to join my former roommate of the Circle Pacific and the Mexico trip of previous years. She flew directly to Helsinki while I had left a week or so earlier to spend the time in London and Stockholm. We met up all right, spent the night in the hotel and took off the next morning for Leningrad. That was the beginning of an eye opening and mind blow-



Atop The Pyramid Of The Sun
Teotihuacan, Mexico



Piggybacking Through
Mexico By Sportscoach

1974



At Dream '74



Beauty Shop Picture —
62 Years Old
(Charles would look much older)

ing trip. I'm not going into all the details here because the whole trip was described in *TVias* No. 87 and 88. But for those who may not have read those issues and because it really was an important contribution to my trip, I want to mention something that happened on the way into the city from the airport.

We were met, as all foreigners are, by an Intourist guide who got us through customs and into a taxi for the trip. She was a girl of about 20, I guess, and she could talk good enough English. On the outskirts of town we began to cross some of the numerous canals that run through the city as they do in Venice, Italy. On one of them there were a number of fair-sized fiber glass boats with outboard motors on them. I commented that I supposed that they would belong to the party big wigs or central committee members or such. She said no that they belonged to ordinary people. I, of course, couldn't believe that because I was after all, well read in *TIME* magazine, the Los Angeles Times and well indoctrinated with the "truth" about the USSR as dispensed by American propoganda sources. So, of course, I didn't believe her statement and argued it with her a bit. It couldn't be, according to all that I had read, and heard that the poor ordinary citizens of that country could afford such expensive luxuries as boats and outboards. Didn't everybody in America know that the Russians were short of all sorts of things from food to computers? So naturally the guide had been well briefed by her superiors in the proper party line to tell the visiting foreigners in order to give them the right impression of the country, at least that was what I decided, and gave up the argument because she wouldn't admit that the boats really didn't belong to the ordinary people.

Well, two days later after a morning's sightseeing, I went for a walk of my own. What, no KGB agents following me all about? That's what we are told. But I went to the large department store in the middle of town. In walking up their aisles with sections like three-sided rooms on both sides of the aisles selling about everything you could imagine, I suddenly came to one of these areas filled with boats like I'd seen on the canals and the section next door was full of outboards! Well it was obvious that if the ordinary people were not to be allowed or able to afford such things, it would only create a lot of public resentment to put them on display like that, and the fact that they were right there in the store, was pretty good proof that the guide had been right and I was wrong.

That night, lying in bed, I mulled this over and it came to me that the preconceived ideas that I'd come to Russia with, could, if I hung on to them, blind me from seeing the country as it really was. I decided that I could continue the trip, diligently searching for verification and vindication of what American propaganda had told me about the country or I could empty my head of all the pre-fabricated and usually false information and just open my eyes and record what I saw, not what I was supposed to expect. I did that and learned a great deal that lots of the others on the trip never saw because they already "knew" about a whole lot of things from their pre-trip indoctrination of one sort or another. As a result I walked off on my own in every city we visited without being followed and I know I wasn't followed because I went places like the Moscow subway where it would have been physically impossible to be followed. I talked to people when they could speak English and they talked freely and easily and not as though they expected to be questioned afterward by the KGB, as we were often told. On several occasions the first questions came from them when they recognized me as being an American. Everywhere people seemed to be adequately clothed, fed, entertained and happy. The world would be so much happier and a heck of a lot safer if both the Soviet and American people could stop being suspicious of each other's motives and see each other just as interesting people, speaking a different language and having different social customs. Think what strides both countries could make if they didn't have to dedicate so much of their national efforts and finances to military matters.

Well, my roommate and I "did" Leningrad, Moscow and Kiev by ourselves and then caught the Aeroflot plane for Yerevan. There, we joined up with the tour group which had spent the previous week touring Turkey which I had done in 1973 and didn't want to repeat. That was why we did the European Russian cities by ourselves. But now with the tour, we went through the transcaucasian countries and down into Iran. I am glad now that I had a chance to see Iran and Afghanistan while they were still "seeable." But after a couple of days in Teheran, we caught a plane for Abadan and from there to Kuwait. Two interesting things happened in Kuwait. The first one was that I was proposed to by a Kuwaiti sheik. I'm not the worst looking woman in the world but I can't take too much credit for my feminine charms because I think he was very anxious to marry an American woman so that he could get into America. Why he was so interested I don't know, but he laid it on thick about how his uncle was the oil



Lenin's Tomb — Red Square
Moscow

In Russia

The SS Aurora — Leningrad



Arriving Yokohama Harbor
On Russian Ship



Mongolian Airliner
in Gobi Desert

Around The World Trip — 1975



Waikiki — Hawaii
1975



Colorado River Run
1976



With Ariadne Kane
At Fantasia Fair — 1977



With My Companion
"Princess" — 1978

minister, etc., etc. He begged me to come with him in his car and let him show me his home and the city. Was he kidding? No he wasn't but there was no way I was going to go outside the door of the Kuwait Hilton with any Arab by myself. I might never have come back. Still it was kind of a kick getting proposed to. I told him that I already had a husband in America and that I didn't think he would appreciate it very much if I came back with an Arabian for a souvenir.

The other interesting thing happened without my knowing about it at first. One day we took a small Arabian boat called a Dhow across part of the Persian gulf to see an island with some archaeological ruins built by Alexander the Great. On the way over and back I had had an interesting discussion about the Israeli-Palestinian question with the guides. It wasn't an argument at all, just an exchange of views and some questions asked. No problem as far as I was concerned but apparently he was a police informer and he high tailed it to the Kuwaiti police to report on this American woman. I just went back to the hotel. The next morning at the airport our tour leader looked kind of beat and I commented humorously as to whether he had missed most of his sleep the night before. He replied that he had missed a lot of it and all on account of me. Since I'd been asleep all night, I didn't understand. He explained that he had spent several hours with the Kuwaiti police and the Tourist agency trying to get me out of trouble—all on account of my conversation of the day before. It seemed that the Kuwaitis were so up tight about the whole question that they won't even print the word Israeli in their newspapers. Anyway, he was successful but later in the plane, looking at the flight maps, I noted that Kuwait was within about 12 degrees of being exactly half way around the world. I thought back to my friend in Princeton and his prediction. I don't believe in such things but it was an interesting coincidence. But in any case, the prediction didn't stick and I went on through Southern Iran over to Afghanistan, back into the Soviet Union at Tashkent, then to Samarkand, Bukhara, Alma Ata, Novosibirsk, Irkutsk with a side trip into Outer Mongolia and the Gobi Desert.

My roommate and I had been at some odds ever since the second day in Leningrad. I never did quite find out what bugged her but she got annoyed at all the questions I asked the Intourist guide. We had some days of relative friendliness and others when she wouldn't say good morning or good night and nothing in between. In Afghanistan

she got so sick that she fainted on the little bus we were on and I had to nurse her all day but that didn't improve her disposition any. Things came to a head one night in Ulan Bator, the capital of Mongolia. In the hotel room I had rinsed out a few things and hung them over one of the open windows to dry and had arranged the window so that any breeze that might sneak in (it was a warm night) would blow on me because she didn't like drafts at night. Then I went in to take a shower and get into my pajamas. When I came out, she had taken my clothes down and closed the window and was back in bed. I said that I refused to sleep in a closed room on a hot night and turned and reopened the windows. I had my back to her, doing it and didn't hear her get out of bed. Suddenly she jumped me, pushing me down on the bed and in the process tore the right shoulder strap of my pajamas, exposing my breast. This didn't surprise her of course. Remember she was the one to whom I had made a point of showing them in Tahiti five years before. But the attack activated some defense reflexes more appropriate to Charles than to Virginia and I twisted around, grabbed her wrist and bent it over in what is a very controlling hold since any struggle gives the holder a chance to bend the wrist further in a very painful way. So even though she was a women's physical education teacher and about half my age, she found herself helpless, much to her surprise. Needless to say we agreed to leave the window open that night before I released her. I quickly concluded that Outer Mongolia was really not the place for Virginia's true sex to be revealed so I didn't want the struggle to get any more personal or it might have been. Naturally, that was the end of any relationship with her even though we had to continue as roommates back in Irkutsk, Khabarovsk, on the train to Nahodka and the boat to Yokohama. But I had made arrangements to pay the single difference once we got to Japan and had a peaceful week thereafter.

I came back by way of Guam, Truk, Ponape, Hawaii and home. It was truly a round the world trip giving me a lot perspective about a lot of other people and places and especially about the people of the USSR. Both the country and the people were very interesting and friendly and I enjoyed it. I didn't find so much wrong with the country as I had been led to believe and was particularly impressed by the fact that there is NO LITTER in the cities and it is safe for a woman to be out alone in the middle of the night. While there are always some people who live outside the law in any country, there are very few in Russia. It is a crime to be unemployed, can you believe it? And while



"ALL OF ME—VIRGINIA, 1979"

alcoholism is a real problem, violent crimes and thefts are nowhere near what they are in this country. I didn't become a communist but I did have the opportunity to see the country and its people and its operation with my own eyes instead of through the pages of American newspapers and magazines which after all have a vested interest in our system and are therefore not likely to be very complimentary about anything Russian. It is too bad that more Americans don't go to Russia and vice versa, it might go a long way toward wearing down the mutual suspicion and distrust.

I suffered some rather bad financial losses while I was gone on this trip so that the next couple of years had to be devoted to recouping which, with the help of silver coin investments, I was able to do, so I didn't go anywhere of importance in 1976. There was one trip by motor home down to Chihuahua, Mexico where 26 of us put our motor homes on flat cars and then the train took four days going over the mountains of Mexico and down to Las Mochoes on the Pacific side. I had invited the lady who had been my roommate on the steamer trip down the Nile in 1973, to come out to El Paso and meet me and join me on the trip which she did. We got on fine even in the crowded conditions of a motor home which became our hotel during the whole trip from El Paso through Mexico and back to Nogales, Arizona.

On this trip I really began to find out what Androgeny was. For example, I took my boss's chair and tied it down on the roof of the coach and while the train was buzzing along I went up and sat in it for a terrific view. Naturally, no other woman did so. But I was the only woman driving her own coach too. Many of the others could drive theirs, of course, but all had husbands along to do it. Also on occasion when I got the urge to visit somebody several coaches ahead or behind I would just jump from one coach to another while the train was going. After all I could easily jump three feet so what difference did it make whether the cars were moving or not, they stayed just three feet apart. Again, of course, no woman on the trip would do that (and very few men, to be truthful) so from these two behaviors you can imagine that Virginia was the subject of some conversation for being so "active," "daring," (they probably meant foolish), "adventurous," etc. What they really thought might have been unfeminine. So I made what I call "boy points" among people by these actions. I did them just because I was motivated to do them, not to make any impact on other people.

But when we got to Las Moches we had a potluck dinner. I have a special kind of Hawaiian-like dish that I make and I did it on this trip. It is very tasty and everybody likes it, so this time the women were very complimentary and all wanted to know the recipe, etc. This was making what might be called "girl points." And when you are capable of making both boy and girl points you are expressing Androgeny. Of course, I prefer to turn the word around and say that I am "Gynandrous" since to me the feminine is more important than the masculine, so it should come first. So I have continued to realize that Charles is alive and well in my head and everything that he knew, experienced and was able to do I am still able to draw on. But, additionally, everything that I have learned, experienced or done as Virginia is available to me too. So no longer do I feel that having moved to this side of the street I must be just the stereotypical feminine woman. Rather, I now take the position that anything I can do or express, and want to do or express, I will do or express—within reason, of course. If the rest of the world thinks that something I do or express is not really appropriate for a woman my age—then that's their problem. I refuse to make it mine. Life is short and it's getting shorter and I must live for me—as long as I don't hurt others in some way in the process. In short, I have not jumped out of the masculine frying pan into the feminine fire, but rather onto the stove top where I can do my own thing whichever it is.

1977 saw me on another local adventure. UCLA had an extension trip down the Colorado River and I decided to take it. So for five days we rafted down through the Grand Canyon sleeping at night on sandbars, swimming in the river and generally going back to nature. It took a little ingenuity dressing in the morning and taking care of nature's calls but it worked out. When we got back to Kingman, Arizona on the railroad, they set up two motel rooms—one for the men and one for the women. When I got in that room and took a look in the mirror I couldn't believe it. Dressed in rumpled and dirty slacks and an old white shirt of Charles (to prevent sunburn since I burn very easily) no makeup and my hair just a bunch of strings because of dousing by river water fights, rain, etc. I was indeed a mess. Why I wasn't "read" under those circumstances I'll never know, but I think it proved what the lady on the SS France had said on that trip, "We've known you as a woman for a week and you are still a woman to us." I started the trip with them with a proper womanly appearance and as everybody got messier and messier so did I, but it didn't change their original perception. There is a lesson there for everybody.

I had another interesting experience last year. You will remember my telling you earlier about my experience at the nude encounter weekend. Well, the same psychologist is still giving them, but now can give them in Los Angeles since the law, that more than three people could not be nude in each other's presence at one time and place, has been repealed. That was a stupid law to begin with. So when I got an invitation in the mail from him one day, I decided to attend. My motive was to see how I could stand up to being nude when I had both male organs and breasts visible. We started the session by having each one get up and tell about their reasons for coming, their expectations, etc. Then the person would strip and sit down and the next one would carry on. Well, it took so long that when there were still three of us left, the psychologist said, "Why don't the other three of you strip and then we'll get on with the next phase." But I stood up and said, "Wait, I want my turn." So I told them that I had attended one of these some years before but that my life had changed and I wanted to see how I would deal with it now. While saying that, I took off my blouse and my bra and there I was with a perfectly good pair of female-type, B-cup breasts. I went on talking and took off my slacks and then my panties and there I was, the famous half man-half woman. It kind of shook them up for the moment but then we went on to the next one, etc. During the rest of the session, and in the pool later, they treated me like all the other women. After the session was over the next day we went around the group, which was now dressed again and we all did a recap on each other. When they got to me, several made some comment about me which I've now forgotten but my friend the psychologist was the most outspoken. He said, "When you came to that first session 10 years ago, you were simply a male TV but now you are so much a woman that I wish you'd get rid of those "jewels" (penis and testicles) because they bug me." I was greatly amused that he, of all people, should have said that. The rest of the people just took me for what I took myself—as a person who happened to have penis, testicles and breasts at the same time but who preferred to live as a woman. It was an interesting experience.

This year, too, I began to get interested in the left and right hemispheres of the brain and their implications for many things, but among them the feminine aspect of ourselves. I wrote a *Virgin View* editorial for *TVia* (in No. 90) about it which brought several favorable comments from readers who are psychologists themselves. This remains one of my main areas of interest and one that I expect to

write some articles about once I am free of the responsibilities of *TVia*.

Last year, which was 1978, I continued my river rafting experience by flying up to Lewiston—by way of Boise where I gave several seminars and interviews—to take off down the Snake River through Hell's Canyon by raft and kayak. It was something going over the rapids in a one man (woman) kayak and one time five of us just put on life jackets and went over a rapids as swimmers. *That* was exciting and a little panicky trying to get ashore from the middle of the river. This year, 1979, I am going to do it again—and will have by the time you read this—only this time it's going to be the Rogue River in Oregon. The Colorado and Snake flow through dry and desertous type country even though mountainous. But, the Rogue is a "pine and mountain" type of river and I look forward to that.

Also, in the fall of 1978, I took off for London—non-stop from Los Angeles, one of the longest non-stops, which got me into London about 7 a.m. tired but glad to be there. The reason for the trip was to attend the 10th Annual Banquet of the Beaumont Society—the British FP society that I helped get started way back in 1969. The night before, a Friday, they had a reception in one of the West End hotels which was a very nice occasion and gave me a chance to see and chat with Sonya of Yugoslavia whom I had first met in Dubrovnik in 1973, and with Lucy of Belgium who had shown me around Paris that same year, also a lot of the British girls whom I remembered from previous trips. The following night the banquet was held in the new Kensington Town Hall—a beautiful new structure with large carpeted reception areas, dining room and dance floor. And there were 170 lovely ladies there but only about 25 of them were GGs. This was a really great affair, one that any American FP would have been thrilled to be a part of. After these two affairs and the preceding week in London, I flew to Boston and took the short cross-bay flight to Provincetown to attend Fantasia Fair. I had also been there in 1977 and this time wasn't much different but still a lot of fun. For me, the pleasure was getting to see and talk to lots of sisters who had previously been only names on the mailing list of Chevalier and Tri Sigma.

At the end of the year I went on a trip to see the Galapagos Islands and parts of Ecuador and Peru. This was over the Christmas season and I must say it was a relief to get away from all the cards and com-

mercialism. I went by myself and had a very successful trip though it would have been better if I had known Spanish. It was another adventure under my belt (girdle). I shared a cabin with the young wife of one of the German teachers aboard and she and I hit it off well. There were only 13 passengers on the converted yacht and so we were quite a family for a week.

Thus we come eventually to this very year 1979. It will be an important year for me. As indicated above, I'm going to take the Rogue River raft trip in June. In September I'm going to take a tour of South Africa and the animal preserves of Kenya. On the way to Africa, there will be two days in Rio. When the tour is done, there will be about a week or 10 days before the 1979 Fantasia Fair gets under way in Provincetown so I am going to repeat my trip of last year and go to London from Africa but I may also take a couple of days from London and go up to Copenhagen to say hello to my Danish friends—and probably goodbye, because I'm not likely to be going their way again for a long time. But it will be a goodbye of another sort too. This issue is by way of a goodbye to all the rest of you, too, as I am about to tell you.

I have been involved with cross dressing most of my life as the previous story has told you, but I have been intensely involved with it not only in my own life but with the lives of literally thousands of others. In the last 20 years, during which the 100 issues of *Transvestia* have been published, I have written three books on this subject, lectured to medical schools, universities, service clubs and other groups, appeared on TV and radio shows, done research on the subject and presented it to professional societies, published in both professional and lay magazines and talked to numberless individuals who were not FPs themselves, about the subject. In all this time I have striven to learn about myself and about you, the other FPs. Being scientifically trained and an intelligent person and having the motivation to do so, I have, I feel, dealt with the whole subject of cross dressing more deeply, more thoroughly and more usefully than anyone else in this country or elsewhere.

I have tried to share my insights into the subject with the readers of *TVia* through Virgin Views columns, and in all the public presentations I have made I have always attempted to present our life style in a clear and positive way. I have developed a philosophy about it (set

forth in Understanding Cross Dressing) which makes far better sense than the musings of psychologists and psychiatrists because it has become clear to me over the years that this is not a phenomenon that is really a part of their field to begin with. It is a sociological problem and should be understood and dealt with on that level and by sociologists. It only becomes a psychological matter if the individual becomes so guilt-ridden about it that his efficiency as a human being is jeopardized. I know this to be true because on many occasions after talking to a worried FP for a couple of hours he will say, "I've learned more from you in the last two hours and for free than I got out of my psychiatrist in six months (and a lot of bread)." That is not said as a pat on the back but simply because having "been there" and having a motive to figure out what it was all about I have been able to develop insights and points of view which do not occur to the professions—yet they get paid for it. Though I have put in thousands of hours of personal and written counselling over these years, I have never accepted payment for it.

I feel that all of the public efforts mentioned above have contributed their bit to making society a little more open to our position. Fifteen or 20 transexuals have written books and dozens of them, starting with Christine, have been on a great number of radio and TV shows and the subject of innumerable magazine and newspaper articles proselytizing for their cause. And while the homophile community has organized Gay Liberation and has had parades, elections, candidates, publicity, trials and all sorts of other events making their cause known, heterosexual cross dressing for the last 20 years has had literally only one speaker for it, namely me. It is true that a few articles here and there and newspaper interviews in a few of the larger cities have been given by others, but up until the last three years when the Outreach Foundation and its director, Ariadne Kane (also Maitress D of Fantasia Fair) began to hold seminars in a few colleges in New England, no one but me was making any public noise about the subject. Femmiphilia remains the least understood of these three behaviors as far as the public is concerned. It is to be hoped that new voices will be raised within our sub-culture, who will attempt to carry on with the attempt to enlighten the world about us.

Now, all of that is just by way of telling you that I think I have "paid my way" and done my part for the "cause." I have had the satisfaction of touching the lives of several thousand of my sisters for their betterment and I am proud of that. But there comes a time in

everyone's life when enough is not only enough but when that person must move on to other interests and to live his or her life for personal satisfaction rather than continuing to devote so much of it to a single cause and to its devotees. I am not saying, "I have had it," but I am saying that the time has come for me to retire from so much devotion to this area. I have several other areas that I am interested in and to which I feel I can make a contribution. I have several books in my head that are struggling to get written. There are many places in this world that I want to see. But most of all, I want to escape from those two terrible words, "should" and "ought".

Literally, for years now, I have not been able to lie down on a Sunday afternoon to read a book just because I wanted to or to goof off in various ways. When I would start to do so I would think, "Damn it, I 'should' be editing those stories, or I 'ought' to be catching up on that correspondence" or doing this or that task having to do with Chevalier and its publications or Tri Sigma. There has been so much to do that the responsibilities that I set for myself in this field were literally stealing my life away from me. So the day has come, the arrangements have been made and I am retiring as the active Editor and publisher of *TVia*. Carol Beecroft, my co-founder and leader of Tri Sigma, who has been handling the retail sales of Chevalier materials for the last year, is going to take over the rest of the company.

I have made a contract with her covering the terms and conditions of doing so, among which, she agrees to maintain *TVia* at the same high level that I have kept it in the past. Its general policies will not change or if circumstances should appear to require change, then I will have to approve it. She is a responsible person, as members of Tri Sigma area aware, and you should be able to feel just as comfortable with her as you have with me (maybe more so, who knows). She will continue to need and expect your support not only financially, in remaining as customers, but in supplying the material that has made the magazine possible for the last 20 years for the enjoyment of all. I hope you will give her that support. So I terminate my editorship with this, my 100th issue of *Transvestia*, and starting with number 101, Carol will be responsible for it and other aspects of Chevalier Publications. While I will continue to maintain my Post Office box—it is my personal address anyway—all matters dealing with Chevalier will be forwarded to Carol so you might as well send them to her

directly. The address is Chevalier Publications, Box 194, Tulare, CA 93275.

I will naturally not lose interest in this field in which I have labored so long, nor will I forget the special friends I have in it around the country and the world, but I will retire from the public eye in order to live my own life as a woman in society. I will from time to time come up with some new ideas in the field and when I do you will get another Virgin Views column but I will no longer be under the pressure of a deadline which I "ought", "should," and "must" meet. So with that I say "farewell." I know that I have helped a lot of you and that you have learned from my efforts. Many of you have been kind enough to express your appreciation. But it hasn't been a one way street. In trying to help you, my readers, I have learned and grown myself. I am now a whole person, completely self accepting and at ease and successful in my relationships with others. I want to enjoy that condition in the future with freedom to do what I want when I want to do it. So my best hopes and good wishes to all of you, may you, too, find the acceptance and the internal peace that we all need, and with that I say farewell.

Dear Readers:

As you may notice, this is written on page #120. TVia is usually 96 pages long. This issue also has 24 pages of pictures against the usual 12 to 14 and pictures are more expensive both to prepare and to print (they require special plates) than textual material. Finally, 120 pages being about one-third larger than usual are about one-third heavier with a corresponding increase in postage.

The point of this is: If you feel that this particular issue was worth something more than the usual issues and would like to assist me a little bit with the extra costs involved, it would be greatly appreciated. Even #99 was about 20% more expensive than previously due to great increases in the price of paper and printing costs. That is behind me, but with that same increase added on to a one-third larger issue the cost of this issue is going to be much higher than planned for in your regular \$6 price and the 15% postal surcharge.

If you do want to make a small donation for this please send it directly to me even though you subscribed through Carol in Tulare because through this issue I am the one financially responsible. Send it to Virginia Prince, Box 36091, Los Angeles, CA 90036 and thanks a lot.

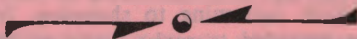
ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT

This issue already being 120 pages long, simply did not have space for our advertisers so they are brought to your attention this way. They can all be of great help to you so look them all over. I know all of these people personally and I can recommend them all. I hope you will patronize them all.

I have been to Fantasia Fair twice and will be there again this year, hope I will meet you there. It is a great opportunity to get out of the closets and into the world. Write for details of time and cost.

Lee Brewster in N. Y., April Adams in Phila. and Uba in Hollywood all run stores catering to cross dressers. Visit them in person or write them. All are understanding and helpful.

Regal Opticians have helped a great many of our readers to obtain attractive feminine glasses both in person and by mail. Elliot understands our needs and can give you what you need. Mention TVia to him. He is my friend and filled my needs lots of times.



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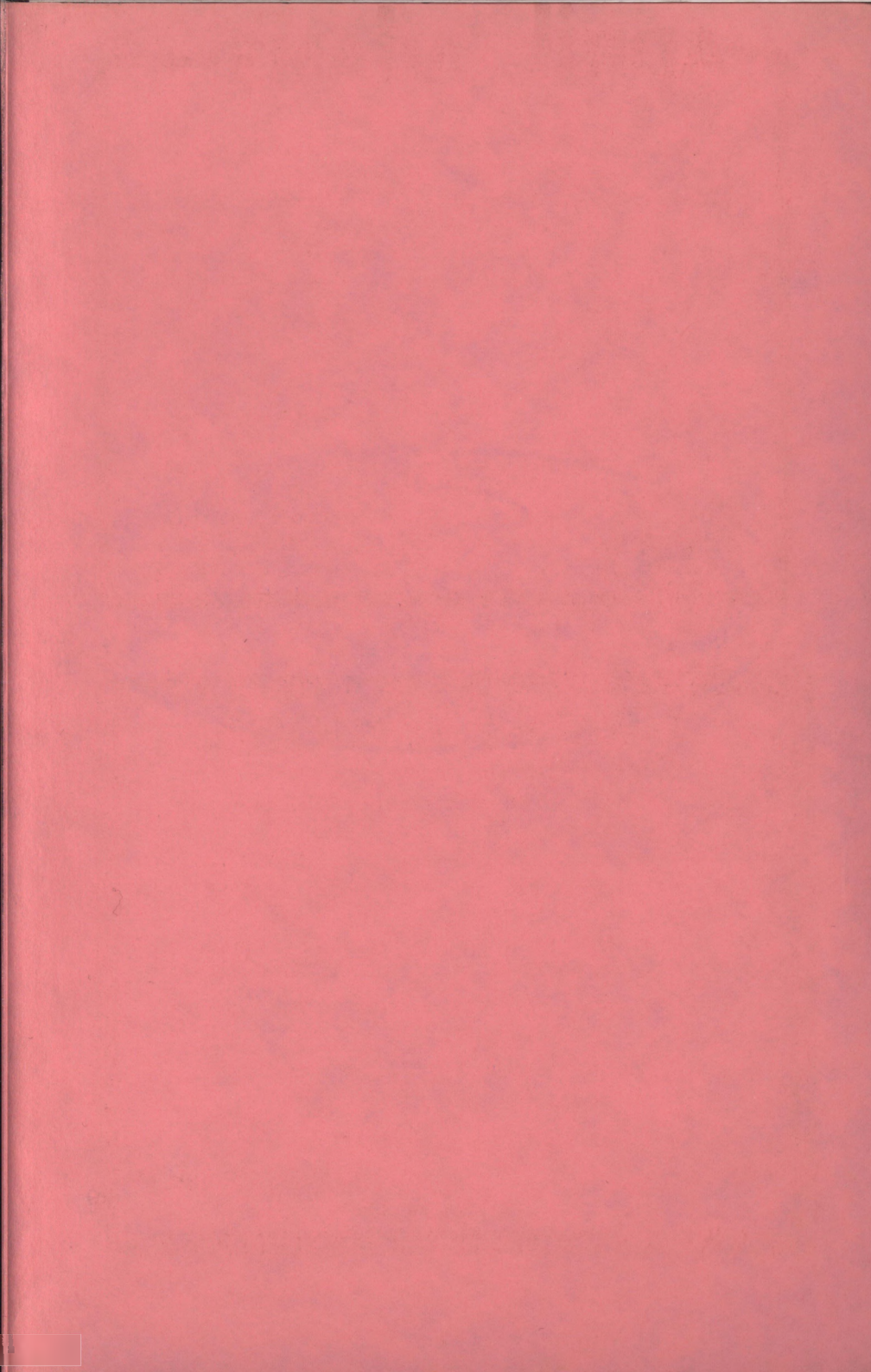
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