regretted any measures I've taken to secure my personal happiness, but I have the entitlement to privacy and not having unwanted attention focussed onto me. Isn't that the basic rights of a human being? Sometimes I wonder...

I would not change my life for anything in the world - my scars celebrated a birthday, a year since I had my double mastectomy operation and I've had to review the effects of this step in my life. I can state, quite confidently, that it was probably the most important decision of my life and the most beneficial.

I've never looked back, not once. I feel I am at last a whole person rather than half of one or a shadow of what I wanted to be. The scars on my chest have faded and are still noticeable but I still vividly recall all the feelings leading up to the operation and the feelings well before that stage. I was diagnosed as a transsexual (as we were then known) at the age of 18. I suppose it sounds precocious in terms of years, but it was more of a confirmation of what I had been feeling all of my life.

I began hormone treatment soon after. The emotional anguish of starting treatment, (though all the effects that began, I welcomed and delighted in) but still being half-way there between sexes was immense. I can sympathise with anyone going through this. The two year waiting period was prescribed and then, knowing I would eventually have surgery, I began to prepare mentally for his changes. When I elected to have the operation I was 19, though I did not get to that stage until soon after my 20th birthday. as I said, I had no problems, no opposition and I just cannot see WHY the same procedure becomes an uphill battle for any other transgenderist.

It seems so useless for me to urge others to NOT be disheartened by the medical profession's bias. How can I say it - the radical changes to my life, I can only say it's worth anything to get there. For me, it is the ultimate licence of freedom. I am to anyone's eyes a man. No questions asked, no sly looks and sidelong glances, being written off as a "butch", a dyke or thrown into a category of guessing (I recall once two guys making bets on what sex I was, within my hearing and how that made me feel) I pass as a genetic male. I can wear whatever I like without the trussing breasts and the paranoia. I frequent the beaches, exposing my chest to the sun, to the sea, to the world and I barely rate a second glance, such is my normality. I am still hesitant about tearing my shirt off in company and to the uneducated, my scars are the result of a motor bike accident (I know, I know, very cliche!). I find myself self-conscious that I have these scars - though they have faded somewhat after a year and a suntan but what I wish to express is the freedom, the happiness as a result, that I am, finally, what I always wanted to be - a man.

Don't be discouraged, hang in there. As I said, it's worth it. I want to add too, that it's only through BWBB that I've been exposed to the difference in surgery, between the basic mastectomy and the shaping and defining of the chest tissue which I think need some examination.

I am pleased with my own reults and I have also spent time, before and after my operation, doing weight-training - nothing serious but providing some muscle there, but I'd like to have compared the options. Really, it's to find a plastic surgeon that can give you the options and cater to the requirements of the transgenderist, that's important. So, good luck. *Julian (NSW)*

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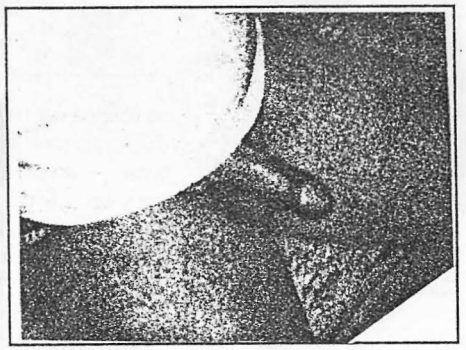
from front cover...

clearly that this is basically a very realistic dildo and must obviously have a latex outer casing. The balls do not swing free but like most dildos are solid rubber and cut in half from the back.



If you want your own info kit or wish to place an order then write to Rhonnie at

Creative Growth Enterprises
4480 Treat Blvd. Suite 227
Concord, CA 94521
USA

When ordering, state size preferred, your body weight, height, waist size and skin colour.

BOYS WILL BE BOYS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER #9 NOVEMBER 1992

INTRO

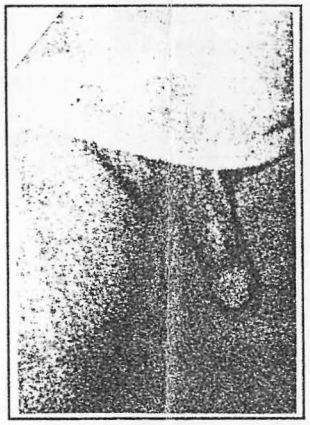
So finally, Rhonnie Reed, the guy who makes **T.R.A.M.P** (which he now calls **HERB** (Helping Every Reborn Brother), has responded and sent us some information direct. Jamie (Qld) also sent us some material from Rhonnie.

What gets me is the guy's glowing description of how wonderful the HERB is without actually saying what the damn thing is made of, how it works or its life expectancy. Even the material sent to Jamie made us none-the-wiser, but I'm glad to say that the material that arrived at the BWBB post box sheds a little light on the subject. So here goes...

Concern One: *How the hell are you able to pee through the HERB?*
Rhonnie: "The Urinary Device is made of very soft comfortable white rubber. It does NOT invade the urinary canal in any way...it meets the urinary opening, channeling the urine to the base unit where it is then transported by a soft tube to the urine canal in the back of the penis.
After the one week 'break-in' period you can wear this unit 24 hours a day, provided you remove it once a day for cleaning" A two week starter cleaning kit is included with the device.

Concern Two: *How can the HERB get an erection when initially flacid?*
Rhonnie: "The Ercetion Insert is placed in the back opening of the penis and creates a simulated erection, duration of your choice!"

Concern Three: *How do I cum when wearing the HERB for intercourse?*
Rhonnie: "It comes with a Personal Stimulator which is a small vibrator that is placed against your "hidden" penis (clitoris) for FTM stimulation during intercourse so you can experience what other guys do!" Detailed drawings included in directions when purchased.



Concern Four: *If the HERB is so realistic, then what is it made out of?*
Rhonnie: "The penis and balls of HERB are created out of latex and plastics. The sizes in penis length are S 31/2", M 4", L 5". All our products are soft to touch and look totally real, are comfortable, retain body heat and (except Herbie - the T.P) are waterproof plus are skin-toned to you."

So there you have it. An explanation for the HERB. The photo shown indeed looks quite impressive. Rhonnie also makes available an S.P HERB (Stand and Pee HERB) which is basically the same as the original but without the erection device, thus reducing the cost to US$300 as opposed to the US$500 price tag for the sex-functional HERB.

Other products available from his company, **Creative Growth Enterprises**, include the original **"Herbie"** which is basically a bulge filler cut vaguely to a penis shape and dyed to skin-tone. It's made from industrial foam and comes with a harness The prices is US$40 or US$70 for two.

His newest product is the **"Soft Sex Kit" - The T.S Penile Extension System** (where does he get these names!) He says "this extremely realistic penis with balls is totally different. The inner core feels like a normal erection, the outer 'skin' is soft just like real skin! The action created is that this posthesis 'gives' with each motion exactly like the real one!...Included in the kit is a personal stimulator for the FTM...and the harness is skin-toned to you. The 'magic' powder makes the 'skin' feel completely real, condoms and complete directions are sent with each kit." The cost of this product is US$75 plus US$4.50 shipping. What on earth is this 'magic' powder. Anyway, the photo given shows

cont. back cover...

GENDER FILMS FROM THE U.S.

This year's San Franciscan Gay and Lesbian Film Festival featured an inter-gender programme which included a number of short films concerning gender and women and we men.. Perhaps some of these films may make their way to Australia in the fringe cinema. It's interesting to note that all of these below-mentioned films are directed by women.

Billed was **"A Spy (Hester Does 'The Doors')"** - a lesbian Jesus-drag music video featuring Hester Reeve (1992 Dir Suzie Silver), **"Passing"** (1991 Dir Sara Whitely) in which a woman is transformed from her everyday self to a masculine, **"Stafford's Story"** (1992 Dir Susan Muska) in which language and image are at odds with a dizzy rendezvous at a sex club and **"Juggling Gender"** (1992 Dir Tami Gold) which is a mini doco about a lesbian with a beard and how it effects her and others people's opinion of gender.
(Source: S.F. Film Festival programme provided by Cayte Latta)

LATEST FTM NEWSLETTER

The October issue of the American **"FTM"** newsletter has arrived in my hot little hands (and in Dale's mysteriously). This issue is mainly comprised of tranny letters, in fact, there are five pages of them! It seems as though the editor, James, will be leaving the publication next year and is looking for a new editor to replace him. We wish him luck in his intention to concentrate more fully on his writing and public speaking (on gender issues). We have reprinted some information in our news section from this current issue.

From the newsletter we learned that the regular FTM get-togethers are continuing to attract a good turn-out. Their July meeting had 24 guys attend whilst the August Social was populated by 30. Meanwhile, the September Support meeting was also "very positive". Remember this is only for the California region, other groups exist elsewhere in the States. The thought of 24 men under the one roof is quite awesome for us here considering BWBB has a *national* population of around twelve!

Of interest is also several letters reprinted from Rhonnie Reed (yes, the guy who sells T.R.A.M.P) who appears very active within the FTM community. One letter in particular gives a detailed suggestion of how to set up and operate an Orientaion Board of Directors within the FTM community apparantly to prevent brothers of differing sexual persuations from feeling alienated within their own transgender scene. As he says, "The lack of education as to the diversity of our people, like any other population, has led many to fear they don't 'fit in', thereby never getting the help and support they so desperately want and need." This Board, according to Rhonnie's viewpoint, would comprise of an elected brother from each sexual subculture (ie gay, het, bi etc) who would then become available to assist new members of that particular persuasion and to make sure that his like-minded brothers were getting their needs met within the wider FTM community. Phew! Big stuff. It will be interesting to see the American response in future FTM issues to his suggestions.

And finally there is a heart-touching letter from the daughter of an FTM man who writes of her experiences in coming to terms with her 'mother's' new gender and its effect on them both. She comes across as intially confused but now educated and sensitive to her 'father's' needs and choices. It's wonderful to read feedback from the people we effect and encouraging to find that she is ultimately accepting. Several brothers, here in BWBB, with children I'm sure can relate to that gut-wrenching fear of rejection by one's own child.

CHINESE WOMAN HAS MANS TESTICLES TRANSPLANTED

In the media section of the FTM (USA) newsletter there was a curious snippet on a 'woman' in Beijing (China) who received the testicles of a thirty year old man who in return received her ovaries during operations in July of this year. This is billed as the "first direct sex swap"! The extract goes on to say that the "Doctor's constructed a false peinis for the woman from her stomach lining...(and) removed the man's penis and replaced it with a vagina made of leather". The mind boggles! Evidently for the woman, the reasoning for 'her' sex change was that it was "better for her career to be a man". Both patients are taking immunosuppressive drugs to offset any rejection of their new organs. It is intended that further operations will be necessary to enable an erection. The FTM newsletter comments upon this news item with "it doesn't seem rational to transplant organs that won't be functional and it doesn't seem as though either of the patients will have satisfactory sexual response, regardless of what the physician says." I tend to agree plus the rationale behind the sex change seems to be completely irrelevant to any transgender desires or issues.
(Source: FTM #21 October 1992. Original source: SF Examiner 23 July 1992)

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FEATURE

Dear Jasper,
I've finally moved and settled here, a very secluded beach town near Byron Bay where Brett (his lover) and I are very happy. We just celebrated 6 months together...
I really hope that you have not come up against more hassles trying to get your go ahead for surgery. I honestly can't see WHY it is you've been sentenced to wait so long. I can't understand the difference between you and I or anyone else. I do not see that my case was any more important or urgent than anyone else's yet I seemed to experience none of the concerns that have been expressed. I was not lectured or told "no", I can't state that I can feel what you feel - I haven't been placed into that position - but I can feel your indignity, believe me.

> "That one letter ties me to a gender in which I do not belong"

I have found the same sort of irrational bureaucratic load of crap when I applied for my passport. I hope to travel overseas sometime in the future. Anyone's privilege, one would think so, why is my gender classified as 'female' when to all outward appearances, I am male? For the record, I intend to have no further surgery (apart from a hysterectomy soon) I consider my hormone treatment and my double mastectomy AS my personal gender reassignment and that is my decision.

You see, I am completely satisfied and very happy with myself and because I have made this choice, the rules dictate that, unless I DO have a complete surgical gender re-assignment, I am put under the gender on my birth certificate. OK, I can appreciate that there must be certain guidelines - the fact is I really have no option - but there is nothing about me physically, and to a huge degree, emotionally/mentally, that is female. Not with a deep voice, facial and body hair, a masculine build with a rather obvious lack of breasts.

I don't wish to use BWBB correspondance as an exchange of complaints for us guys - a bitch column - but these are serious considerations. Does this mean I go through airports arousing the curiousity of customs officials? Do I get singled out because of the simple almost laughable fact there's a letter "f" in black type next to my photograph?

That one letter ties me to a gender in which I do not belong, one I have forfeited to become what I am today. The discrimmination, and I think careless absence of tforethought, have left me thinking the regulations might as well put a question mark or maybe a "t" for Transgenderist. Am paranoid? I suppose I won't really know until, if it happens, I get hauled out of customs for closer scrutiny.

I am not ashamed of being a transgenderist. I have never

continued over...