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TO THE FRUSTRATION OF MANY A BIRDWATCHER:
THE RISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF NATURISM IN GREAT BRITAIN

by

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Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of Master of Arts in History

At Providence College

2018

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my main advisor Dr. Mathew Dowling and for his patience and willingness to be flexible during this thesis process. His willingness to give me extended time on this research has allowed me to realize it to its fullest potential and I am eternally grateful for that. I know this thesis process has been somewhat unconventional and I could not imagine it with any other supervisor. I would also like to extend deepest thanks to Dr. Jennifer Illuzi for her recommendations which led to a stronger final paper. I would also like to extend a great appreciation for Paul LeValley and the other volunteer staff at the American Nudist Research Library, Cypress Cove, Florida. Some volunteers were willing to stay later than official closing hours to give me more time on research for which I am very grateful. This project would not have been able to be completed without the access to the resources in your collection and I am eternally indebted to your tireless work digitizing hundreds of magazines. I would also like to thank the following members of British Naturism: Nick Caunt, John Gelder, Sheryn, Pat, and Amanda each of whom was willing to chat with me on British Naturism's website offering advice, assistance and help should I need it. I would also like to thank the whole British Naturism community who were very welcoming and invested in my research. In addition, I would like to thank Br. Patrick Carey and Dr. Michael O'Connor of the PACT program for their support through this process.

Many thanks also go to: my parents David and Marie Santos for their constant support even through my most stressful days, my friend Nikki Long for accompanying me on my research trip to Cypress Cove which I know took courage, my roommates Meaghan Donahue and Kiersten Odenthal who totally understood my stress and were constantly offering support and laughs to help get me through the chaos of earning a masters and teaching full time. I would also like to thank

the following nurses at Newport Hospital: Sarah, Alison, Casey, and Sue for their care and support while I worked on this thesis in the hospital and finally I would like to thank all my other friends who I was only rarely able to see during this process and their understanding and support. I promise to make it up to all of you and make more time for all of you in the future!

INTRODUCTION: IT'S ONLY NATURAL

In 1952 *Health and Efficiency* magazine released an article entitled “B.S.B.A Aims & Objectives” in which the fledgling British Naturism organization, the British Sunbathing Association (BSBA) examined itself and its ideas. In the article, the BSBA established that their aims and objectives were very similar to what was laid down in the policies of *Health and Efficiency* magazine which had been a fully naturist publication since 1925.¹ The policy which was printed in every issue of the magazine is as follows:

We Believe sunlight is the greatest factor in promoting and retaining Radiant Health and will do much to improve National Health. We believe that complete exposure of the body to the sun under particular circumstances and with respect to propriety is essential for the full benefits to be gained. We desire to inculcate in persons ashamed of their bodies a will to improve and perfect them by sun and exercise, indoors, and outdoors. We believe it is to be our duty to urge Authorities everywhere to provide facilities for sunbathing for the nation. We believe in illustrating the beauty of the human body in a straightforward way to encourage others to follow these examples. We in no way advise or approve any violations or any laws specifically forbidding the practice of complete sunbathing.²

This policy is a fitting place to begin when examining the history of the movement in Britain as it references the reasons for why it exists, the goals of the movement to educate the general public and to ensure it does so without offending anybody or breaking any laws.

Very likely, to the average individual, the concepts of a British citizen and laying out naked in the sun getting a tan don't quite seem to mix. When imagining Britain, warm days and lounging

¹ Nina Jane Morris, “Feeling Nature: Naturism, Camping, Environment, and the Body in Britain, 1920 – 1960” (PhD diss., University of Hull, 2003), 188.

² Ernest Stanley, “B.S.B.A Aims & Objectives” *Health and Efficiency*, January 1952, vol. 21 no. 1, 17-18.

in the sun don't come to mind, it is often seen as cold with overcast and rainy weather. A common stereotype of Britain is one of a prudish society very rigid in its traditions, high class and fancy if not a bit snobbish. This is engrained in culture through the icon of Ms. Grundy who is first referenced in Thomas Morton's 1798 play *Speed the Plough*. In this play, one character, Dame Ashfield is concerned about what her neighbor, Mrs. Grundy, will think of each development that occurs. Though she never appeared on stage, she has come to represent the rigid responsibility of British culture, especially in which free expression was impeded by excessive purity.³ Many people associate Britain with a prudish Victorian culture which hinders sexuality and the idea of nudity is out of the question. This stereotype for Victorianism is also in many ways incorrect. In fact, Queen Victoria was an enthusiastic supporter of nude art herself, frequently exchanging nude paintings with Prince Albert.⁴ There was a clear counterculture of sexuality in Victorian culture with public constraint and private license.⁵ The naked human body has always had a unique place in human history, being at the center of a series of contradictions and paradoxes. According to Ruth Barcan in her book *Nudity: A Cultural Anatomy*, "despite the knowingness and even cynicism of much contemporary consumer culture, a glimpse of flesh, indeed, even the *mention* of nudity, still can, in the right contexts, incite a smile, a nervous giggle, even outrage."⁶ In his essay "Between Clothing and Nudity", Mario Perniola detailed that there have been two major factors behind the ambiguity of nudity in the west; the Judaic and Greek traditions. The Judaic tradition

³ "Mrs. Grundy: Fictional Character," Encyclopedia Britannica, accessed January 5, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Mrs-Grundy>.

⁴ Chris Kent, "Nude Bodies: The Controversial Aesthetics of Exposure," *Victorian Review* 42 no. 1 (Spring 2016): 2.

⁵ Morse Peckham, "Victorian Counterculture," Keynote Address, The Victorian Counterculture from University of South Florida, Tampa, FL, February 27 – March 2, 1974.

⁶ Ruth Barcan, *Nudity: A Cultural Anatomy*. (Oxford, UK: Berg, 2004.) 2.

saw divinity as clothed or veiled and nakedness as a loss of their connection with God. It was the state of slaves and prostitutes. The Greek tradition saw nudity as the ideal form of humanity as seen in their athletic practices and works of art. These traditions have interwoven over time in Europe and the United States leading to nudity taking an ambiguous state of being both metaphorical and a physical state. Nudity has been made more complex over time given European interaction with various indigenous groups, each of which had their own ideas towards the naked body. Over time, the meanings and values towards nudity have become more complex given increased globalization and immigration with each culture carrying its own views towards nakedness. The modern liberalization of consumer culture also contributes to the many different meanings which nudity can have.⁷

The naked human body has a unique place in British culture even in the present day. In 2015 while on the Graham Norton Show, actress Jessica Chastain commented on a show which she stumbled across while during her stay in London. The show was about embarrassing bodies in Britain, and the episode which she happened to view was about penises. During the discussion, other guest Bill Bailey responded that “it’s a very British thing I think, it is where we have been very embarrassed about our bodies but we’d like to tell people about it.”⁸ This comment by Bailey carries with it the common stereotype that British people would not be comfortable with their nudity. Yet despite this idea of being uncomfortable with their bodies, British Naturism, an organization based on lounging naked in the sun with other people, has flourished. In 2014, British Naturism celebrated its 50th Anniversary of existence establishing its long history when it in reality dates much further back than the modern organization’s inception in 1965 when it was known as

⁷ Barcan, *Nudity: A Cultural Anatomy*, 7.

⁸ The Graham Norton Show, “Jessica Chastain Shocked By Penis Problems – The Graham Norton Show,” YouTube Video, 1:56, September 30, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n8OwOZvs4s4>.

the Central Council of British Naturism (CCBN). In October 2018, British Naturism proudly reported that it had had its largest membership in fifteen years boasting a membership of about 8,900 people.⁹

Given a confusing web surrounding the meaning of nudity, and the publicly constrained culture of Britain with the every watchful and judging Mrs. Grundy, it may seem a surprise that an organization such as British Naturism, which seeks to spread the idea of non-sexual, platonic, social nudity would come to exist. It was these conceptions of British culture and curiosity over how such an organization could come to be which started the ideas behind this thesis. The questions which came to mind were: Who were the pioneers of British naturism and what struggles did they face? Did British Naturism develop as an organization as a result of any changing social norms and ideas in larger society, or was it its own anomaly? This thesis will seek to answer these questions as well as provide an account of the development of British Naturism as the official organization it is known as today.

This thesis is divided into three sections with a series of sub-divisions in each one. One important distinction to identify before continuing is the use of the words, nudism and naturism. Both terms have been used interchangeably to describe the movement. In more recent years, their official definitions have changed. The Miriam Webster dictionary defines nudism as “the practice of going nude especially in sexually mixed groups and during periods of time spent at specially secluded places.”¹⁰ According to the British Naturism website, naturism is “the practice of going

⁹ Coran Elliot, “UK’s Official Naturist Group Sees Boost in Membership for First Time in 15 Years,” *The Telegraph*, accessed December 20, 2018, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/10/13/uks-official-naturist-group-sees-boost-membership-first-time/>.

¹⁰ “Nudism,” Miriam Webster, accessed December 25, 2018, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/nudism#other-words>.

without clothes – whether that is just occasionally at a beach or in your garden, or as a more general part of everyday life. Naturism is healthy, sensible – who wants to wear clothes when the weather is hot – and great fun!”¹¹ This definition is more in tune with that of nudism; however, the terminology becomes more complex with the official definition of naturism as given by the International Naturist Foundation (INF). According to the INF, naturism is “a way of life in harmony with nature characterized by the practice of communal nudity with the intention of encouraging self-respect, respect for others and for the environment.”¹² Over the course of this thesis the term “nudist” will be used to discuss the history of the movement until 1961. Following 1961, British Naturism would choose naturism as the official term for the movement and it will largely be used in the second half of the thesis keeping the definition which the organization gives on its webpage in mind. The first section of this thesis, entitled “Preparing to Undress”, examines the origins of nudism as a movement, social changes occurring in the world regarding health and physical culture, as well as the early pioneers of British Naturism. Nudism would begin as a health movement in the early 1900s in Germany where it would grow, develop largely through the works of men such as Heinrich Pudor, Paul Zimmerman, and Hans Surén. The movement would spread through books written by these German pioneers along with books written by tourists, such as the American couple Frances and Mason Merrill. The nudist movement would grow during a period in which nationalist movements in Germany sought to make stronger men so as to strengthen the nation. Similar ideas regarding health and physical fitness would grow in Britain as well. The ideas from Germany would inspire early nudists in Britain to begin forming small clubs which were

¹¹ “What is Naturism?” British Naturism, accessed September 9, 2018, <https://www.bn.org.uk/aboutnaturism/>.

¹² “What is Naturism?” International Naturist Federation, accessed September 9, 2018, <http://www.inf-fni.org/>.

incredibly secretive. Due to their intense secrecy, primary sources are hard to come by regarding their early movements and some elements of the early history of nudism in Britain are unclear. Despite this challenge, a narrative accepted by the modern movement has been established as part of the organization's history.

The second part of this thesis analyzes the growth and emergence of organized nudism in Britain. It will examine early nudist groups which printed publications and began making headlines in British culture. It will examine how the organization grew over a period of time from the early 1930s until the late 1970s and early 1980s. This period would see many groups come and go from the organization's history before finally forming an official national group in the BSBA. The BSBA would be at the forefront of the movement for British nudism's history until 1953 when the group became divided and a second organization known as the Federation of British Sun Clubs (FBSC) was formed. These two organizations would maintain an uneasy relationship for the next ten years until 1964 when they rejoined as the Central Council of British Naturism (CCBN).

The third and final part of the thesis examines problems which the organization faced over a long period of time. These are problems which were present from the beginnings of organized nudist movements in the early 1930s and continued throughout the history of its development. As such, I felt it was better suited to address each of these problems separately and in their own section so as not to draw away from the narrative of the development of groups like the BSBA and FBSC. These problems each played a role in how the various organizations worked to become accepted in British culture and as such they are important to examine along with the development of the specific groups. These problems included the balance of men and women in nudist camps, the photography in nudist magazines, enticing youth to join, as well as spreading from secretive camps and onto the beaches of Britain. Some of these problems have yet to be solved, while others were

battles hard won, each one playing a key role in the development and perceptions of organized nudism. The conclusion of this paper will briefly examine how the problems discussed in part three have manifested in the modern movement and where British Naturism stands to this day.

Though naturism is still very much a marginalized social movement, its unique history offers a commentary on the role of the human body in society and the struggle to view the naked form outside the realms of sex. In recent years movements such as Free the Nipple and an increase in body positivity have drawn more attention to the human body and what is commonly accepted in society. Celebrities, bloggers, and Instagram stars profess a love for the body regardless of social standards which they are being compared to. This can even be seen in popular culture such as in Amy Schumer's film, *I Feel Pretty*. They send messages of self-love, trying to teach that self-love is more important than society's opinions. Despite these professions of learning to love their bodies, most images in media still represent a specific image of beauty. For women, this is embodied in models for fashion industries such as *Victoria's Secret* which display advertisements of incredibly skinny women. For men, one has to look no further in popular culture than films like those produced by Marvel and DC Comics which depict their male heroes as incredibly muscular. This issue over the perception and representation of the human body and what is considered healthy is a debate which naturism has been engaged in since its inception. Over the course of its history in Britain and around the world, Naturism will struggle with depicting beautiful women in its pages while also professing that the naked human body is beautiful, regardless of whether or not the individual is overweight, extremely thin, or fit. It has only been within the past ten years that British Naturism's publications have matched this creed by printing images of "regular" people. While the modern-day movement of body positivity is gaining traction and feels new, naturism as a movement is one which has dealt with the questions of the naked human body and

ideals of beauty and health since the turn of the twentieth century. When examining the issue of the human body's role through the history of naturism, it is clear that there is nothing new surrounding body positive movements. The history of naturism, including its history in Britain is a roadmap of how body positive movements have grown and adapted over time. Whether it be through struggling with society's norms and values surrounding nakedness, or differences in ideology and practice of the organization to better increase its function and outreach. Ultimately this thesis argues that British Naturism as an organized movement has over time struggled to attain acceptance in Britain's society and was largely unsuccessful until the later twenty first century due to internal conflicts and an inability to act upon opportunities for growth.

PART I: PREPARING TO UNDRRESS

A Clergyman Takes a Bath and a Brit gets Naked in India

Organized nudism doesn't begin in England until the 1920s but there are examples of social nakedness and nudity in England. In the 1730s a Quaker by the name of Benjamin Beale noticed wealthy bathers were being carried in sedan chairs by their servants to bathe in the sea. Beale invented what became known as the "bathing machine" which allowed rich bathers to enter the sea in privacy (Appendix A). The "bathing machine" was a room to disrobe in privacy on wheels which was drawn into the water by horses. The occupant could undress and bathe in privacy without anyone knowing.¹³ Despite the development of the "bathing machine" many British citizens still bathed naked. This was not characteristic of all bathers, however. Writer Victor Hugo and his lover discovered mixed nude bathing on Guernsey island in the late 1880s.¹⁴ Naked bathing was commonly characteristic in Britain until about the 1830s when many began wearing bathing slips or bathing drawers. By this time the "bathing machine" had become more popular across England and bathers could find them lined up along the sands of beaches ready for use. Bathing costumes at the time were constantly changing and becoming more elaborate. These costumes

¹³ Cec Cinder, *The Nudist Idea.*, (Riverside, CA: The Ultraviolet Press, 1998), 439 – 440.

¹⁴ Adam Clapham & Robin Constable. *As Nature Intended: A Pictorial History of the Nudists.* (Los Angeles: Elysium Growth Press), 1982, 33.

were often required by public decency laws to cover bathers from neck to knee to ensure the modesty of the person.¹⁵ Early costumes were loose fitting gowns made of canvas to which many frills and bows were added (Appendix B). The “bathing machines” would come in incredibly useful for women who had a great deal of layers to take off before getting into their bathing costumes. Writers of the period detail that some of the most popular beaches to be visited were Margate and Ramsgate due to their accessibility by railroad. Some accounts of the bathers detail that women would throw themselves into the waves again and again in their costumes. In some cases, women would lay in black dresses on the beach with nothing underneath allowing the waves to wash over them in some cases lifting their entire costume over their heads, demonstrating that there was still some lack of embarrassment over the naked body.¹⁶ By 1837 when Queen Victoria had ascended to the throne, it was required by law that bathing costumes reach from neck to knee.

Bathing costumes did not catch on right away and there were some who when they were introduced did not like them at all. Some men would continue bathing naked, and as demonstrated above, women would wear bathing costumes that when hit by waves would leave little of what was underneath to the imagination.¹⁷ One individual, Robert Francis Kilvert, a clergyman provides detailed accounts of bathers during the Victorian era and their practices on the beaches. In his entry on Monday, August 1871, Kilvert details “girls with shoes, stockings, and drawers off wading in the tide, holding up their clothes nearly to their waists and naked from the waist downwards.”¹⁸ This scene demonstrates that while bathing costumes were worn, people would often work around

¹⁵ Denys Rendell, “Beach Naturism; An Idea Whose Time has Come,” *British Naturism*, no. 82 (Winter 1984), 13.

¹⁶ Ron Taverner “The Demise of the Bathing Costume,” *British Naturism*, no. 83 (Summer 1985), 28.

¹⁷ Cinder, 440.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 332.

them and nakedness would still be present on the beaches. Kilvert himself was an advocate of naked bathing as he describes in September of 1872 the sense of jubilation that an individual can receive by bathing naked in the ocean. He details that there “was a delicious feeling of freedom in stripping in the open air and running down naked to the sea, where the waves were curling white with foam and the red morning sunshine glowing upon the naked limbs of the bathers.”¹⁹ In this passage Kilvert uses similar language that will be found in nudist literature in the decades to come giving a sense of freedom to the idea of naked bathing. Kilvert was not one for using bathing suits as his first experience is one in which “the rough waves striped them off and tore them down round my ankles. Whole thus fettered I was seized and flung down by a heavy sea which retreating suddenly left me lying naked on the sharp shingle from which I rose streaming with blood.”²⁰ While this account is by no means exemplary of all bathers using swim trunks for the first time, based on his description of nude bathing in the previous entry, he is clearly not one to enjoy their use. As Kilvert demonstrates, not everyone used bathing costumes, but they soon became a staple of bathing culture with the occasional exceptions here and there. Being allowed to bathe naked on the beaches of Britain would become a major conflict for organized naturism in the next century. Though nude bathing was quite commonplace, the beach was the only place where one could see men and women naked together in a setting that wasn’t sexual. There were no clubs or places people went for the sole purpose of going naked. As mentioned previously, nudism as it is known today begins in Germany, but perhaps the earliest example of a nudist colony in existence can be found in British India.

¹⁹ Cinder, 332.

²⁰ Ibid, 333.

The first known nudist colony was established in 1891 by a Charles Edward Gordon Crawford. Much of what is known about this early settlement comes from letters between Crawford and Edward Carpenter who was a well-known writer of social subjects who had rejected Victorian conventions.²¹ Carpenter is perhaps best known for his free verse poem *Towards Democracy* which he published in 1883. This poem embodied his socialist concepts of societal reform which focused more on a return to rural life and less on political revolution.²² Carpenter would have been particularly attracted to Crawford's proposal as he is often referred to as "the gay godfather of the British left."²³ He was a vegetarian known for campaigning against air pollution and was known for living openly with a male partner. Many of the concepts he embraced have become cornerstones of alternative culture such as reverence to the earth, sexuality, and the body. It was Carpenter's utopian socialist ideals of a return to nature that would influence early naturist pioneer ideology towards dreaming of a nude utopia. Early naturists were not socialists in the political sense, but more so in a move away from the industrial world.²⁴ The most radical early nudist philosophers recommended a complete destruction of all social propriety in the search for a new future. The world which they foresaw would be united in a common brotherhood based on a re-establishment with nature; thereby making the world safer fairer, and more beautiful.²⁵ Crawford was the son of a Reverend Charles John Crawford D.D. who was most known for being

²¹ Edward, "A History of Naturism," British Naturism, accessed June 1, 2018, <https://www.bn.org.uk/news/information/about-naturism/history-of-naturism/a-history-of-naturism-r27/?pagecommentundefined=4>.

²² Cinder, 162.

²³ Philip Carr-Ghomm, *A Brief History of Nakedness* (London: Reaktion Books LTD, 2010) 153.

²⁴ Ibid, 153 – 154.

²⁵ Annebella Pollen, "Naked Utopia: how England's first nudists imagined the future," The Conversation, accessed April 17, 2019, <http://theconversation.com/naked-utopia-how-englands-first-nudists-imagined-the-future-94454>.

the author of a pamphlet entitled “Against the Marriage of a Widower with his Deceased Wife’s Sister”. In his early twenties, Charles Edward Gordon Crawford signed a bond of appointment to work for the Indian Civil Service. After four years of service, in 1876 Crawford was assigned to Nasik, which lay northeast of Bombay. Crawford married a young Scottish woman named Alice Luscombe Mackensie with whom he had a son, Osbert Guy Stanhope Crawford who would grow up to be a well-known archeologist and author. In November of 1889, Crawford made the acquaintance of two brothers, Kellogg and Andrew Calderwood. The Calderwoods were sons of an American Presbyterian missionary who had been working in India for about twenty-five years.²⁶ It is unknown how the topic of nakedness came up in conversations between the three individuals, but the idea was formed to create the Fellowship of the Naked Trust (FNT).

On August 18, 1891, Crawford sends his first letter to Carpenter in which he details the rules of his organization. He felt that Carpenter would be sympathetic to his ideas given his writings in books such as *England’s Idea* and *Civilization* in which Carpenter had expressed the restrictiveness of clothing as well as the benefits of going barefoot and naked dancing. His letter asks Carpenter to spread word of his organization to any interested individuals, but to also keep his name a secret as it would not bode well for him if he was associated with such views.²⁷ Crawford worked as a District and Sessions Judge and was concerned by how his colleagues would react to knowledge of him and his association with such an organization. This desire for secrecy will be characteristic of the actions of Britain’s pioneer nudists, to the point where later groups will create code names for their members. The motto for FNT read “Vincat Natura” meaning “Let Nature Win” the words of which were found on club badges as well as the initials for the club. The

²⁶ Cinder, 372 – 373.

²⁷ Cinder, 374 – 375.

rules for FNT required that all participants be naked during meetings, the only exceptions being rings, eyeglasses, and false teeth. Though they were few, any women admitted into the movement had to wear their hair down and were not allowed to wear rouge or powder. At the meetings participants were encouraged to be plainspoken when it came to what would be considered taboo subjects such as sexuality. Discussions concerning political and sectarian topics were strictly off limits. Members who committed acts of indecency could face suspension or even expulsion from the group. Indecent actions included wearing clothes, any gesture of personal contact with a member of the opposite sex, indecent assault at or following a meeting even with consent and consenting to the indecent assault.²⁸ In order to become a member of FNT, a new potential candidate had to be vouched for by two existing members. This process was much simpler than those that would develop in the history of organized naturism but was similar in the sense that a prospective candidate had to know someone who was already involved. The FNT even required members to greet each other with elaborate handshakes as well in which “members...should if of the same sex grasp right hands so that thumb of each presses into back of other perceptively, or if of different sex, woman’s right hand should be held in two hands of man.”²⁹

Crawford writes a second letter to Carpenter on October 25, 1891, in which he expresses that the views and objectives of the FNT were best expressed in a Statement of Motives which he added to the rules. These motives read as follows:

Physical, because given a suitable temperature, it is good for the body to be exposed to the air, and because no costume that has ever been invented is equal in comfort to perfect nakedness.

²⁸ Edward, “A History of Naturism,”.

²⁹ Cinder, 375.

Moral, because the false shame of our own bodies and morbid curiosity as to those of the opposite sex which result from always wearing clothes, are the chief sources of impurity.

Aesthetic, because the human body is God's noblest work, and it is good for everyone to gaze on such beauty freely.³⁰

The religious influence of Crawford's upbringing can be seen in his ideas surrounding the aesthetics of the body. These ideas and objectives are ones which are common with modern naturism to this very day, so much so that one could likely copy and paste them into a current naturist publication and no one would bat an eye. For Crawford, the ideal society was a "state of society in which clothes would be worn or not as convenient without reference to conventionalities which at present rule the roost."³¹ Crawford's dream of a naked world in which people could go naked wherever they choose is another example of nudist thought which is present in later nudist writings.

The club continued its existence into 1892-3 during which time Crawford suggested that women make an organization of their own. The members of the FNT had only encountered one woman who seemed interested in their activities but was afraid to participate due to how it would be perceived by the outside world. The last correspondence between Crawford and Edwards was dated June 1892 in which Crawford details his intentions to marry again though he had not yet informed is prospecting bride of FNT. By 1893, Crawford had returned to England and Andrew Calderwood had left India to continue work in British Columbia. With the three founders of FNT distributed around the globe, its future did not seem bright. Crawford married Florence Ethel Willis in August of 1892 and died two years later in May of 1894.³² With the death of Crawford, and no

³⁰ Cinder, 376.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Edward, "A History of Naturism".

record of the Calderwoods, FNT fades from historical records having been a short-lived experiment in social nakedness. Though FNT did not last long, many of its ideals, rules, and objectives can be found repeated in later nudist writings. Despite this clear mark of influence on the movement as a whole, the originator and main influence on the development of organized British nudism was German.

German Influences

Exercise, health, and physical fitness classes have been a major element of German culture since the early 1800s. When Napoleon invaded Prussia in 1806 and occupied Berlin, the city would become a hub of national resistance to the French. In 1811 Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, known as the father of calisthenics, would take groups of young German men to exercise in the park, taking them through jumping and running exercises. Jahn's reasons for running his exercise classes in public parks was two-fold. The first was to give necessary exercise to factory workers who worked in heated and cramped environments. Also, the French had established a ban on military training in Prussia so another strategy was needed in order to prepare the youth physically for liberation.³³ By 1909, the German Youth Movement had begun amongst Berlin schoolboys in a suburb of the city. While in the beginning it was an excuse for middle class boys to roam the countryside without adult supervision, the older members of the group began to see it as a quest to find the genuine self in nature. They believed that the male Eros, referring to the Greek god of sensual love and desire who was often depicted as male, could be the nucleus of a new nation. The leaders of the movement were inspired and drawn to the harsh physical toughness of the natural world around them which helped to shape its ideals of manliness and physical beauty. For this movement, the ideals of

³³ Clapham and Constable, *As Nature Intended*, 6.

manliness were for men to maintain self-control, control of the body for sports and being chivalrous towards women without sacrificing their own sexuality. German youth saw their bodies as a temple of manliness which needed to be maintained and kept in fit and prime condition. The German Youth Movements would pit their values against what they say as artificial bourgeois life. The youth were especially challenging to the middle class because they were considered the elite of the generation. They viewed themselves not as corrupt, but healthy and sought to reorder their lives within the nation. These youth movements would become a threat to middle class values, especially when nudism and the cult of the sun begins to develop.³⁴

Nudism would not gain a foothold in Germany until the 1890s. Until the nineteenth century the bronzed human body was not seen to be the ideal healthy body and exposure to the sun was not believed to be good for a person's health. The sun became accepted as nature's great healer and was even cited as a cure for tuberculosis. Nudism developed in Germany alongside what was known as a "life-reform" movement in which society and men were regenerated through practices of vegetarianism, nature-healing, land-reform, anti-alcoholism, and a push for garden cities. One of the ways in which the early nudist movement would spread word about its ideals and beliefs was through printed magazines and nude photography. Photography had recently become popular and was becoming a staple of pornographic industries. Early nudist groups, and movements to this day had to defend that their nude pictures were different from those meant to entice a sexual response.³⁵ In the discussion with nudity and photography, the questions over the meanings of nakedness are important factors. For early nudists in Germany, nudity was a state of holy mystery

³⁴ George L. Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality: Middle-Class Morality and Sexual Norms in Modern Europe* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 45 – 47.

³⁵ *Ibid*, 50.

whereas an undressed body was the subject of photography. The context is important when nudity is present. Most of the nude pictures depicted in nudist publications were of women in beautiful natural surroundings in order to emphasize the naturalness of her beauty and nakedness. One solution to the problem at the time was to print these nude pictures on a glossier type of paper which could be considered more artistic and prevent lustful reactions.³⁶ In order to distance itself from ideas of pornography of sex, one of the founding fathers of nudism, Heidrich Pudor is credited with inventing the term *Nacktkultur* (nude culture) in 1908. For Pudor, women did not cause lustful thoughts in men; rather, it was a society bent on veiling the human body from view which allowed for sexual appetites to grow. Pudor also believed that the covering of the human body was not beneficial towards the continued existence of the human race as it hid any faults of the body from view. Health and nationalism were so closely linked that nudism was a way for men and women to see each other naked and determine if the other person was a physically fit candidate with whom they could produce strong healthy children to make the nation stronger.³⁷

Most early nudists were limited to practice in the privacy of their own home as it was not acceptable to walk naked in public. This would change however with the opening of Freilichtpark by Paul Zimmerman in 1903, the world's first nudist resort. Zimmerman was born near Leipzig in 1878 and after leaving school he began work in his father's factory, which he hated. He left his job there and began traveling to France, Italy, and Greece seeking a place where nudity could be practiced openly. However, due to religious influences of the Catholic Church and Greek Orthodox Church, this was impossible and he returned to Germany where he purchased a secluded section of woodland and created Freilichtpark, meaning Free Light Park. Word of this haven for nudists

³⁶ Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, 51.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 54.

soon spread, and visitors from all over the world came to see the park for themselves. One of the first written accounts of Freilichtpark comes from the pages of a book by the American couple Frances and Mason Merrill in 1930.³⁸ Their book, *Among the Nudists* is among one of the best-known early nudist writings in which they detail their personal journey exploring nudism, mostly in Germany and France. The Merrills spend much of their book at Freilichtpark giving unique glimpses into early movement ideals. One of the first shocks by the American couple is not the nakedness of the people at the camp, but the vegetarian meals which they expressed they would have to endure for the duration of their stay.³⁹

While in the park, the Merrills ask what possible motivations people in Germany could have for becoming nudists. The motivations as given were to improve the health of themselves and children, love of nature and exercising without clothes, disappearance of class distinction, and affordability in the post-World War I world. Most young Germans could not afford the traditional amusements to pursue in town and found they could enjoy hiking and camping in nudist camps.⁴⁰ They also identified that every individual has a curiosity towards sex and the nudist environment allows for this curiosity to be satisfied in a healthy way allowing the child to grow with a healthier attitude towards sex and nudity.⁴¹ While at the park, Francis and Mason Merrill would take part in many group exercise classes in the sun. The Merrills participated in a variety of exercises from running and jumping to using medicine balls and other tools.⁴² These health exercises were a key

³⁸ Clapham and Constable, *As Nature Intended*, 14.

³⁹ Frances and Mason Merrill, *Among the Nudists* (London: Noel Douglas, 1931), 19-20.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 53 – 54.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, 55.

⁴² *Ibid*, 73 – 81.

part of German nudism as the movement was focused on health. The Merrills' book was widely popular amongst early nudist groups and could be found advertised in the first issue of the British nudist magazine the *Sun Bathing Review*.⁴³ Though their book was influential, one of the more popular books which served as an inspiration to British nudists was Hans Surén's *Man and Sunlight*.

Surén's book became a best seller in England following its endorsement by the Dean of St. Paul's who defended its illustrations and nude pictures.⁴⁴ Major Hans Surén (Appendix C) had been the chief of the German Army School for physical fitness before being dismissed for introducing naked exercises and gymnastics amongst the troops. Upon being dismissed, he set about writing his book to share his feelings regarding the benefits of sunlight and naked exercise with the rest of the world.⁴⁵ Surén himself was likely influenced by another well-known name in German nudism; Adolf Koch. Koch worked as gymnastics teacher for school children in Berlin. After noticing their poor physical state with ragged clothes, poor posture and malnutrition, he began organizing naked gymnastics classes in the open air. Koch was charged with intention of corrupting minors and was forced to resign from working with schools. The resulting trial made him quite famous and resulting in his creating the Congress of Nudity and Education in November 1929. It was during this time whilst Koch was establishing his school that Surén was asked to leave the military.⁴⁶

⁴³ "Among the Nudists," *Sun Bathing Review*, Spring 1933, vol. 1 no. 1, 27.

⁴⁴ Clapham and Constable, *As Nature Intended*, 37.

⁴⁵ Clapham and Constable, *As Nature Intended*, 28 – 29.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 26, 28.

Surén was incredibly enthusiastic about his ideas regarding sunlight and its benefits for humanity. He opens his book with an ecstatic greeting for his readers saying:

Greetings to you, you who are sun-lovers! You bear ardent longings in your hearts! Longings after warm sunshine, blue skies, light and nature; after victorious strength, spiritual loftiness, and childlike faith. Painfully do you endure the lash drudgery and the disfavor of the times. Exultingly do you rejoice when the smallest beam of light gilds the altar of your longings. Out of passion for sunshine springs the noble shrine of loftiest idealism. Hail to you, you who loves sunshine and light, avidly, openly, fervently!⁴⁷

It is easy to see how the term sun-worshipper could be used to describe early nudists given Surén's extremely enthusiastic language and tone which his book opens with. Surén's book is significant because it is emblematic of the cross-cultural fertilization that was occurring between Germany and Britain. Originally published in 1924, Surén's book would be published in Britain by 1928. As mentioned previously, British naturism is largely picked up following British experience with the German movement. Surén was not the first to publish about nudism and the benefits of being naked in the sun, but he was certainly one of the more popular writers on the topic in the late 1920s. Surén's motivations for writing the book centered around his desire to call to attention the most important facts concerning national existence and development which he believed were negatively impacted by the decay in the strength of the individual. Nature and exercising out in the sun were the source of strength which the German people needed. Surén believed that this decay in the strength of the individual would lead to national decline and death. A major cause of this decline was the growth of urban cities and the environment which they created.⁴⁸ For Surén, the city was a place not suitable for humans to grow in, stating that "what we see and endure around is no fit

⁴⁷ Hans Surén, *Man and Sunlight*, 67th ed., trans. David Arthur Jones (Slough: The Sollux Publishing Co., 1928), 1.

⁴⁸ Nina J. Morriss, "Naked in Nature: Naturism, Nature, and the Senses in Early 20th Century Britain," *Cultural Geographies* 16, (2009): 286.

heritage for man. Like slaves they totter under the heavy fetters of drudgery for their daily bread, far from sunlight, far from Nature in the dungeons of the town.”⁴⁹ The solution to this problem was to get back to nature and into the sun. He describes in his book that the climate of Germany “is very well suited to make the body resistant and the health like steel.”⁵⁰ For Surén, the German people should take every opportunity to enjoy being outside and naked in nature with the sun and air on their skin. He recants in his book the exercises he would run through with German soldiers when he was in charge of their physical training. One of the exercises which he details was running naked in cold weather explaining that

We often ran naked in rain and drenched storm as well. The sensation of virile primitive manhood becomes even stronger if one achieves the will and the fortitude to expose one’s body naked to storm and wild weather. An unspeakable feeling of well-being and unimagined joy of living animate the body in rain and strong wind.⁵¹

He believed that colds and seasonal illnesses were due largely to a poor upbringing in life away from sun and exercise. A body that was strengthened and hardened by the weather was needed in order to save civilization from the suffocation of the towns. Surén’s work has been viewed by some as being pioneering in the healing power of sunlight as most European countries did not look towards its healing benefits closely until the late 1920s.⁵² Not only was he a pioneer in this regard, but his ideas regarding sun bathing and the benefits of physical exercise naked outdoors heavily influence early organizations in England and their goals in establishing groups. The health craze which had begun in Germany with the youth movement and the development of *Nacktkulture* as one of many responses soon spread to the rest of the world. Britain saw the various health

⁴⁹ Surén, *Man and Sunlight*, 2.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 14.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, 104.

⁵² Morris, “Naked in Nature”, 104 – 105.

movements spreading in Germany and they too soon realized that their nation needed a national health movement to improve the health of its citizens.

British Supermen: More Flabby; Less Solid

The 1907 edition of *Health and Efficiency* released a poem written by Yorick Gradeley which perfectly encapsulated the British health movement which swept the nation in the 1930s.

In fact, it was reprinted in 1936 for this very reason:

Sons of the League! Ye who are pledged to fight
 For Britain's Manhood. Ye are champions all.
 Let us strive to be
 The very flower of Britain's chivalry;
 The valiant knights errant of Health and Strength.
 Let us be heroes in that holy war
 Against the treacherous foes whose venom'd shafts,
 A Nation, through that Nation's Manhood strike.
 Strength is the crowning glory of the Man.
 The Nation's crowning glory is her Men.⁵³

The idea of the man as the living symbol of the nation was a concept that did not fully take root in England until after the first World War. Prior to the war, physical culture only began developing in the later years of Queen Victoria's reign. Physical culture classes began to develop with elite popular schools giving way to a culture which sought to release a wide range of consumer products aimed at improving physical health.⁵⁴ The recovery of the body movements in England in the

⁵³ Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, "Building a British Superman: Physical Culture in Interwar Britain," *Journal of Contemporary History* 41, no. 4 (2006): 609-610.

⁵⁴ Paul R. Deslandes, "The Male Body, Beauty and Aesthetic in Modern British Culture," *History Compass* 8/10, (2010): 1193.

beginning were less focused on attempts to renew the nation as in Germany. The movement was more focused on influencing elites and literary sensibilities. Manliness was not symbolic of the nation but rather part of an individual's literary individuality. It was not until the late nineteenth century that nudity and nudist movements would become a part of back to health movements.⁵⁵ Physical fitness and the ideals of manhood were spearheaded by body builders such as Eugene Sandow who was known as the 'perfect man'.⁵⁶ Health problems in England such as obesity conflicted with the Greek ideals of masculine beauty. Sandow and others stood as a living symbol of what men should achieve. He was the living embodiment of Greek sculptures come to life who successfully blended the use of modern technology and traditional aesthetics to build the modern superman.⁵⁷ Nudist magazines such as *The Naturist* ran ads in their magazines with images of men like Sandow entitled "Be a Superman" (Appendix D) demonstrating what the ideals of male physical masculinity should be.⁵⁸ *Health and Efficiency* also released images of sculpted naked men, one of which was captioned "the perfect man".⁵⁹

The body was a matter of national significance during the war effort and a symbol of personal masculine identity.⁶⁰ Following the war and the poor health of the men who came as recruits for the army, fitness movements came to new urgency. A fear of the degeneration of the population was associated with the poverty of the nation, an unhealthy diet, and largely stationary

⁵⁵ Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, 62.

⁵⁶ Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, "The Culture of the Abdomen: Obesity and Reducing in Britain, circa 1900 – 1939," *Journal of British Studies* 44, (April 2005): 263.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ "Be a Superman," *The Naturist*, March 1938, vol. 1 no. 4.

⁵⁹ "Perfect Manhood Image," *Health and Efficiency*, March 1943, vol. 13 no. 3, 60.

⁶⁰ Deslandes, "'The Male Body, Beauty and Aesthetic'" 1201.

life.⁶¹⁶² A new physical culture movement would develop as an opportunity to not only improve the physical status of the nation but also reconstruct the weakened men of the war. This was given an increased urgency especially because only 36% of applicants attained a grade of A1 making them fit for service, while 31% received a C3 for being unfit for combat.⁶³ In response to this issue, a letter was written to *The Times* in which F.J. Willis the Chairman of the Organizing Congress expressed that the nation recognized the sorry state of soldiers in the war and the need to change physical fitness and diet, water supplies and housing conditions.⁶⁴ It is during this post-war health craze that in 1931 *Health and Efficiency* magazine officially became a nudist magazine following a brief stint as a far-right political publication reflecting the popularity of health movements.⁶⁵ British culture began taking a more focused shift towards placing more emphasis on sport and concerns for the health of the nation. One of the early landmarks in this being the establishment of a highly successful exercise class created by a Sunderland teacher following their visit to Denmark and Sweden in 1929.

A key advancement in the process of the increased focus on physical health and recreation came in June of 1934 when the National Playing Fields Association met to discuss these topics and how they could be better addressed within the nation. During the 1930s, England created three physical education centers at Carnegie College in 1933, Loughborough in 1936, and Goldsmiths

⁶¹ Bargielowska, "The Culture of the Abdomen", 246.

⁶² Ibid, 257.

⁶³ Bargielowska, "Building a British Superman," 601.

⁶⁴ F.J. Willis, "Welfare in Work Industry," *The Times*, October 12, 1934, 10.

⁶⁵ Bargielowska, "Building a British Superman," 605.

in London in 1937.⁶⁶ Naturist magazines such as *Sunbathing Review* would print articles and letters which carried similar sentiments regarding the lack of nature in the lives of the workforce whose lives were constricted indoors in stuffy factories. A letter by an agricultural student argued that “we all desire to see a ‘fitter Britain’...Naturism – a return to a less artificial life, which includes Nudism – could achieve this object.”⁶⁷ As will be seen, however, Naturism would find it extremely difficult to establish itself as a legitimate response to physical culture movements. As has already been established, physical culture was an important aspect of culture in other European countries such as Germany, which during the 1930s was completely reorganized under the Third Reich to better reflect its ideals. In 1937, *The Times* released an article entitled “Methods in Continental Countries” in which they established that countries such as Germany and Italy have firmly established programs for their youth which are far superior to that of England.⁶⁸ They further assert that:

In many European countries, physical education plays a much more important part than it does in Great Britain....it is realized in these countries that a modern state cannot afford to allow its citizens to degenerate physically. This accounts for the astonishing spectacle of mass physical training displays which are common in such cities as Berlin and Rome.⁶⁹

In order to emulate a similar sentiment towards physical education and inspire the British people to practice healthier living, a National Fitness Campaign was launched in the 1930s.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Daphné Bolz, “Reversing the Influence: Anglo-German Relations and British Fitness Policies in the 1930s,” *Sport in History* 34, no. 4 (2014): 570 – 571.

⁶⁷ “Our Letter on File,” *Sun Bathing Review*, Autumn 1938 vol. 6, no. 23, 93.

⁶⁸ “Methods in Continental Countries,” *The Times*, February 12, 1937, 15.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 15.

⁷⁰ Bolz, “Reversing the Influence,” 584.

In 1936, Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain addressed the National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations speaking on a variety of topics including physical health. He asserted in his speech that “before we can consider ourselves a really healthy nation we shall have to raise the general standard of physical fitness and development.”⁷¹ Not long after *The Times* published Mr. Chamberlain’s speech, Alfred L. Sachs, who had assisted with recruitment during the war, wrote a response in which he asserted the importance of Mr. Chamberlain’s call to action in physical fitness. He attested that when he worked for the motor transport mobilization camp he was able to pass 988 of every 1,000 candidates as A1, a remarkable number. He attests this success due to fact that the men who submitted themselves as recruits were chauffeurs in their everyday lives and as such maintained a better physical health than other professions. However, when he worked at Headquarters the numbers of candidates passed were incredibly low. When working in the dock district he was asked to find 100 fit marines for service, and after three days he was only able to find three men who could meet the standards. He accredited that one of the greatest benefits to physical health in the nation was the Boy and Girl Scout associations which provided physical fitness training for Britain’s youth.⁷² In the same year, the British Medical Association released a highly influential report on Physical Education which argued that an educated body was a balanced body and that education should provide for a balance of physical, mental, and spirituality in its goals and aims.⁷³ The National Fitness campaign however was different from organizations such as the Boy Scouts as it was geared towards the general adult population where in the past most initiatives were focused on physical education for the youth. This National Fitness Campaign was

⁷¹ “The Nation’s Health,” *The Times*, October 3, 1936, 7.

⁷² Alfred L. Sachs, “Active Participation in Sport,” *The Times*, October 13, 1936, 12.

⁷³ Charlotte Macdonald, “Body and Self: learning to be modern in 1920s – 1930s Britain,” *Women’s History Review* 22, no. 2, (2013) 271.

also a response to the growing threat from Nazi Germany and their rapid growth.⁷⁴ The National Fitness Campaign would officially launch in October of 1937 with banners which displayed the slogan ‘Fitness Wins!’ An article in *The Times* which advertised the start of the campaign reported that it would seek to provide more facilities for public use in physical recreation which would be developed further depending on the needs of various regions in England.⁷⁵ The official legislation for this campaign was known as the Physical Training and Recreation Act of 1937 which among other items provided grants to regional facilities and the funding for instructor training.⁷⁶ Over the course of this campaign, several events would be hosted including the Festival of Youth (1937), the Festival of Sport and Physical Recreation (1938) and the Women’s Fair and Exhibition (1938).⁷⁷ In addition to The National Fitness Campaign, a Women’s League of Health and Beauty was established running over two thousand weekly exercise classes for women into the late 1930s. They viewed women as “natural race uilders” and focused on exercises for the abdominal and pelvic areas so as to produce a slim and beautiful body.⁷⁸ One of the many major health problems which grew and developed in England was that of obesity amongst middle-aged citizens between their mid-thirties and mid-forties. The status of the middle aged had changed from the nineteenth century from one of attaining a sign of status to one of being complacent and self-indulgent. The typical sufferer of this was the middle-aged man who was depicted in popular magazines such as *Sandow’s* as someone who was physically active in youth but had abandoned these activities due

⁷⁴ Bargielowska, “Building a British Superman,” 596, 606.

⁷⁵ “National Fitness Campaign,” *The Times*, September 7, 1937, 10.

⁷⁶ Bargielowska, “The Culture of the Abdomen”, 251.

⁷⁷ Bolz, “Reversing the Influence,” 584.

⁷⁸ Bargielowska, “The Culture of the Abdomen”, 255.

to the demands of work and marriage.⁷⁹ The goals of a healthy slim body which sought to escape the problems of obesity amongst British citizens that no longer exercised was also a concern amongst various nudist groups. One of the more popular nudist publications during the 1930s Maurice Parmelee's *Nudism in the Modern Life*, argued that nudism was the perfect cure for the problem of obesity in Britain. According to Parmelee:

This unwieldy mass of flesh, sometimes containing folds and creases, and shaking jellylike with the motion of the body, is one of the most unpleasant sights in gymnosophic circles. Here its ugliness is not concealed by clothing, so that Gymnosophy is the most effective measure for eliminating this monstrous distortion by spreading an ideal of human beauty and shaming those who fall short of it.⁸⁰

For Parmelee, the solution to the obesity problem in Britain was through naked exercise which would cause others to see how ugly their obese naked bodies were which would motivate them to exercise and change so as to be more healthy and slim individuals. Parmelee mentions in this passage that Gymnosophy was the solution to this obesity problem. Gymnosophy was a new philosophy which developed in the 1930s which sought to emulate German *Nacktkultur* and was largely supported by Maurice Parmelee in his book. It was a philosophical idea which sought to regain what mankind had lost through civilization.⁸¹ Parmelee, as well as other nudist groups, argued that naked exercise allowed for better selection of a healthy mate so as to produce healthy children. An article published in the *Sun Bathing Review* in 1933 argued that nudism was a major benefit to eugenics because possible sexual partners can be seen, and not covered up in makeup and fabrics hiding any scars or deformities their bodies might have.⁸² This presentation of nudism

⁷⁹ Bargielowska, "The Culture of the Abdomen", 257.

⁸⁰ Maurice Parmelee, *Nudism in Modern Life: The New Gymnosophy* (New York: Knopf, 1931), Kindle Edition, Chap. 10.

⁸¹ Morris, 177.

⁸² W. Hope Jones, "Eugenics and Sunbathing".

as a cure for obesity and a motivator for healthy exercise was not always achieved in the ideal pattern which Parmelee expressed in his book. He refers in his text to ‘nationalistic, militaristic, and racial’ misuses of naturism. While he did see naturism as a means to curing obesity, he did not believe in the clubs that only accepted members that were attractive and well-proportioned.⁸³

England did not escape from this idea of racism in some early nudist camps when he states:

...the notion is prevalent that the nordic blond type is much better adapted for gymnosophy than the Mediterranean brunette type. When the persons sharing this notion gained control, the promulgated an edict that representatives of the South European races would not be admitted to membership. It is almost superfluous to add that these race bigots are bitterly antisemitic and would under no circumstances admit a Jew.⁸⁴

Parmelee is clearly against these racist sentiments in this passage from his text. Rejecting new members on the basis of race is certainly not characteristic reflective of all early nudist groups in England, but with the ideal of the perfect human body, the rejection of those who did not fit that mold was a problem in some small pockets. It was through the publications of articles such as the one in *Sun Bathing Review*, and arguments for the health benefits of nudism such as in Parmelee’s book, that nudism sought to establish itself as a form of physical recreation which had numerous health benefits for a more physically fit and healthy British nation. While physical appearance was one avenue in which nudism could assist, nudist publications would lean towards defending the full exposure of the body to the sun as one of the greatest and most beneficial aspects of practicing nudism. This idea is especially important for the modern-day British Naturism organization as the benefits of the sun on the naked body is one of the major points on which it seeks to entice new members in the organization. A major difference however between the nudism which Parmelee

⁸³ Paul Ableman, *Anatomy of Nakedness* (London: Orbis Publishing, 1982), 93.

⁸⁴ Parmelee, Chap. 15.

was advertising and the modern organization being that there isn't an emphasis placed on having the ideal human body. Rather the emphasis is on a lifestyle in which the human body is exposed to the benefits of the sun and the individual is proud of the body they have. By proclaiming naturism as a health movement, the hope was for further acceptance in larger society and a recognition of their legitimacy.

Sun and Air: Nature's Ultimate Cure?

With a new focus on physical energy during the 1930s, there also developed new health fads such as heliotherapy, the belief in the healing power of the sun. This new health craze as it would be referred to was also a major influence on naturism and its ideals. This period of revival in the healing power of the sun was referred to as a 'Solar Revolution', the healing powers of the sun now taking the place of the moon as the celestial body of healing. Beginning in the 1920s, the image of bronze and tanned skin came to be more favored than the pale skin often associated with elite social classes. Tanned skin had been associated with field labor and peasantry outdoor work in the pre-World War I world. It was not until companies such as Coco Chanel began to promote skimpier sporting outfits which exposed more skin to the sun that tan skin was considered fashionable. Tanned skin came to be a symbol of the ability to travel to exotic locations for those who were wealthy and could afford it.⁸⁵ In May of 1928, *The Times* ran a special issue with several articles and advertisements garnered towards promoting the benefits of sunbathing for the skin. They informed the general population on how the skin absorbed the sun's rays as well as the benefits the sun has especially on curing rickets. A medical correspondent for the newspaper commented that because when the skin absorbs the sun's light it creates vitamin D leads to the

⁸⁵ Morris, "Feeling Nature," 50 – 51.

secretion of a substance called cod-liver oil which is sold to treat individuals with rickets. So those suffering from rickets can benefit from sunbathing to as to be cured of rickets.⁸⁶ The newspaper also advertised the benefits of getting access to sunlight just by being outside enjoying drives in the sun, playing in fields outside, and sleeping with windows open to allow fresh air. This was especially prescribed to city dwellers. They admonished practices of wearing too many layers of clothing and over-heating homes not allowing the body to harden itself and adapt to colder weather. A new age of sun and air was being heralded into Britain.⁸⁷

In addition to spending more time outside and in the open air for health benefits, technology was being developed to enjoy the benefits of the sun from home. Among the first of these was home ultra-violet ray glass known as ‘Vita Glass’. This glass would replace traditional window glass to allow the UV rays to enter the home, whereas other forms of window glass had prevented them from entering the home.⁸⁸ Advertisements for Vita Glass emphasized the health benefits of attaining sunlight and vitamin D right in the home. They also bore slogans which displayed the phrase “health through your windows” (Appendix E).⁸⁹ *The Times* also advertised machines which allowed the user to take sun baths using ‘artificial sunlight’. These were especially advertised for city dwellers who had so much smoke and pollution in the air that the sun’s rays could not effectively come through to be of major benefit. These advertisements would discuss the use and benefits of a wide variety of machines each with their own unique characteristics and benefits. They also included instructions for how to get the most benefit from these lamps and how long an

⁸⁶ “Effects of Sun-Bathing,” *The Times*, May 22, 1928, 13.

⁸⁷ Dr. Leonard Hill, “Ultraviolet Radiation and Its Measurement,” *The Times*, May 22, 1928, 15.

⁸⁸ Morris, “Feeling Nature,” 53.

⁸⁹ “‘Vita Glass’”, *The Times*, May 22, 1928, 38.

individual should expose areas of their body to the rays of light given off by the machines.⁹⁰ Naturist publications also supported the use of these home ultra-violet ray machines reporting that after successful use, an individual will feel “refreshed and strengthened, their skin once more acting and glowing” (Appendix F).⁹¹ In concurrence with articles published in *The Times*, the publications of *Sun Bathing Review* also asserted that intense heat from the machines should only be applied to diseased areas of skin. It was believed that common diseases such as Lumbago, sciatica, and muscular rheumatism could all be cured using these artificial light machines.⁹² There was also an increase in home sunbathing machines to attain tanned skin, not so much for its health benefits but more so for the social status with which tanned skin was connected. *The Times* reported that “the lovely tan, which artifice simulates for some even in the winter months, has become an end in itself rather than the outward sign of health.”⁹³ The newspaper also reported the various health risks present such as burned skin and heat stroke due to laying out in the sun for long period of time. While the article is not very positive in support of sunbathing and emphasis on laying out in the sun, it does demonstrate the popularity which the “laborious cult” as the article refers to it as, is growing in popularity. This sun craze which permeated English culture was also found in popular culture through George Formby’s “Sunbathing in the Park” which poked fun at getting tan commenting on other people in the park grilling steaks on his chest as well as birds in

⁹⁰ “Artificial Sunlight Apparatus,” *The Times*, May 22, 1928, 18.

⁹¹ Medicus, “Sunlight in Winter: Sunlamps an Invaluable Winter Tonic,” *Sun Bathing Review* Winter 1936, vol. 3 no. 12, 130.

⁹² *Ibid*, 131.

⁹³ “Sunburn,” *The Times*, June 8, 1939, 17.

the trees leaving greeting cards on him while sunbathing in the park.⁹⁴ Perhaps a more comical song which was created due to the sun craze was Gracie Field's 'What can you give a nudist for his birthday?' in which she lists how she can't buy any clothes for a nudist because they can't wear any.⁹⁵

Naturist magazines such as *Sunbathing Review* would begin in the 1930s promoting not only a means to attain better physical health along with the national movement, but also the health benefits which sunbathing allows, including the benefits of sunbathing machines as detailed previously. In the policies of their first issue, the magazine asserted that their mission was for people to be able to sunbathe in their private gardens and elsewhere and not be viewed as crazy individuals but rather a normal people taking part in a normal past time. What is interesting to note here is that the magazine does not yet promote full nudity stating that "we have nothing against complete nudity for those families who prefer it...but we do not propose to advocate for complete nudity as a necessity for perfect physical and mental health."⁹⁶ Despite this clarification in their policy, the pages of this magazine contained pictures of sunbathers exercising both in reduced clothing and completely nude. The magazine recognizes the growing number of nudists, but in its early years, it was not an advocate for completely nude sun bathing. The magazine is contradictory in stating this as numerous articles appeared in early issues which advocated for the benefits of naked sunbathing. The first issue of the magazine also detailed the important practices and health

⁹⁴ *Sunbathing in the Park*, George Formby, DECCA, sound recording, 2 min. 58 sec. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ck-C4IkGbbg&list=PLxjizzBh-_hvHvGqYeR1DpKHWL7jwrbdy&index=6&t=0s, accessed 12/28/18.

⁹⁵ *What can you get a nudist for his birthday?* – *Classic Comedy Records*, vol. 3, Gracie Fields, sound recording, 3 min. 8 sec. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=prnG71EFuKM&list=PLxjizzBh-_hvHvGqYeR1DpKHWL7jwrbdy&index=4, accessed 12/28/18.

⁹⁶ "Policy of the 'Sun Bathing Review'," *Sun Bathing Review* Spring 1933, vol. 1 no. 1, 34.

benefits of sunbathing. It expressed similar concerns to the ‘Sunburn’ article in *The Times* emphasizing that it was not necessary to spend more than two to three hours sunbathing, any more time can lead to headaches, nausea, irritability and fatigue. Despite these concerns, the article affirms that the sun is good for body and soul. Remarking that “it induces gaiety, liveliness, and a sense of well-being.”⁹⁷ Medically, the author of the article, details the benefits of sunlight against tuberculosis and even claims that children with more exposure to sunlight have greater intelligence than those who are not.⁹⁸

Though it claimed not to completely support naked sunbathing, *Sunbathing Review* did release articles which advocated for naked sun bathing and the additional benefits which come along with sunbathing without a stitch of clothing. Dr. Winifred de Kok detailed seeing nude sunbathers in parts of Europe, specifically along the Danube river. Dr. Winifred advocates for carefully practiced nude sunbathing so as to give the body a full and healthy tan and to ensure the skin will not be burned when exposed to the sun for long periods of time. They propose a strategy of slow exposure for adults and children, advocating that exposure of the skin to the sun and air is extremely beneficial to keeping the skin healthy.⁹⁹ Further proponents of sunbathing in the nude would emphasize that the skin was an organ that needed to be taken care of and allowed to breathe with access to the air. President of the New Health Society Sir. W. Arbuthnot Lane believed that people needed to make their body accustomed to being exposed to the air so that the body could breathe through all of its pores, not just its lungs. He also asserted that nude sunbathing is an

⁹⁷ Sir Henry Gauvain, M.D., “Sun, Air, and Sea Bathing in Health and Disease” *Sunbathing Review* Spring 1933, vol. 1 no. 1, 7.

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 8.

⁹⁹ Dr. Winifred de Kok, “Some Thoughts on Sun Bathing,” *Sun Bathing Review* Autumn 1938, vol. 6 no. 23, 76 – 77.

activity which can be carried out in a social setting and the only hinderance to this practice was negative public opinion.¹⁰⁰ Reverend Robert Irons was one such individual who held a negative view of nudism, referring to the cult as “lewdism” and a “disease” which should be stopped.¹⁰¹

Despite the apparent negative public opinions present regarding sunbathing both in slips and in the nude, many doctors and medical organizations would be used as a basis of support for sunbathing in the open air. Nude air bathing as a form of health activity owes much of its ability to grow and develop in England due to the desires of medical professionals to find cures for diseases. In Germany naked air bathing had been used to help children with vitamin deficiencies as well as an influenza outbreak in 1918-1919. As would be mimicked by England, these early practices did not call for complete nudity but rather the use of shorts or sun-bathing slips which equate to modern day bikinis in coverage. Sporting grounds as well as clubs and facilities for nude air bathing did begin to appear in German cities in the early 1900s which allowed for mixed nude sun bathing. The closest England would come to this practice was through the work of George Lansbury who created The Serpentine Hyde Park. Hyde Park did allow some restricted nude bathing for children which was carefully regulated but did not allow mixed nude bathing for adults.¹⁰² While the sun craze that gripped society mostly centered on individuals laying out in the sun simply to tan, naturists promoted sunbathing mixed with physical exercise. In a doctor’s response to sunbathing and naturist groups, he asserted that “from the beginning this health movement has made air bathing a feature of its activities and wisely so. The sun roasting of the

¹⁰⁰ Sir W. Arbuthnot Lane, “Sun and Air,” *Sun Bathing Review* Autumn 1933, vol. 1 no. 3, 9.

¹⁰¹ “Vicar Attacks Nudism Cult,” *The Sunday Times*, September 13, 1936, 24.

¹⁰² Morris, “Feeling Nature,” 150 – 152.

lido-lounger is a useless, sometimes harmful thing.”¹⁰³ This particular doctor also asserted that heliotherapy should be treated more as an art rather than a science due to the struggle in measuring the beneficial impacts of both body and mind which participants exhibit after they sunbathe. This assertion seems to suggest that in some ways sunbathing can be considered to be beneficial for mental health, being freed from town dwellings and “set loose to run in the Elysium fields.”¹⁰⁴ The ideas of the mental benefits of sunbathing and being out in the sun were supported by Dr. W.R.G Atkins who commented on the topic of Daylight in Relation to Climate. Dr. Atkins asserted the mental benefits and importance of sunbathing for the general public. He also believed that skin which had not been exposed to sun baths would struggle to assist with regulating heat in the body when faced with colder weather. The *British Medical Journal* printed a lecture by Dr. Leonard Williams; it was good press for nudist proponents of sun baths as he affirmed its benefits for the whole populace and not just those who practiced in slips or in the nude.¹⁰⁵

One of the more famous names in the medical field for treatment of diseases such as tuberculosis was the Swiss physician August Rollier who had been experimenting with the health benefits of sunbathing since 1903.¹⁰⁶ Dr. Rollier had a grand total of 36 clinics in Leysin, Switzerland where he treated almost 1,000 patients.¹⁰⁷ The patients in his clinics were believed to be cured by light on the skin and exposure of the whole body to its benefits. He did not believe in overfeeding his patients and prohibited meat and alcohol. In all of his work, sunlight was believed

¹⁰³ Reginald Hodder, “A Doctor’s Impressions,” *Sun Bathing Review* Spring 1933, vol. 1 no. 1, 26.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 26.

¹⁰⁵ “Review of the News,” *Sun Bathing Review* Autumn 1938, vol. 6 no. 23, 97.

¹⁰⁶ Morris, “Feeling Nature,” 153 – 154.

¹⁰⁷ “Dr. A Rollier: The Apostle of Light and Air,” *Sun Bathing Review* Spring 1933, vol. 1 no. 1, 32.

to be the key therapeutic element. Dr. Rollier, along with other sun doctors, sought to use the sun and air baths as a cure for forms of tuberculosis. Tuberculosis was one of the deadliest ailments during the inter-war period for which there was no proper treatment, which is reflected in Britain's mortality rates from the period.¹⁰⁸ While heliotherapy was reported as being successful in healing surgical tuberculosis and tuberculosis of the skin, it was not useful against tuberculosis of the lungs. There were small successes cited in by some Scottish physicians in 1928, but largely it was not the cure all for the disease which was still deadly. Sunlight therapy and air baths were however reported as being beneficial when used in treatments against rickets, healing wounds, sores, and influenza.¹⁰⁹ One of the many responses to trying to treat tuberculosis through open air baths lead to the creation of open-air schools which sought to provide students with a return to natural life which had largely been lost in the restrictions of modern life which made people weak. At the peak of their popularity, there were about one hundred and fifty-five open air schools servicing between 16,000 and 16,500 students.¹¹⁰ These schools were positively received in England, many expressing the possibility that these schools would be multiplied almost indefinitely. Cautions were expressed about the proper exposure of students to the elements to ensure they were benefiting from the treatment and not spending too much time in the sun and that their body temperature stayed at a proper temperature. They were also cited as rewarding in both body and mind with potential for great success in their future.¹¹¹ One such school, St. Christopher's School, Letchworth, promoted a belief that "healthy physical life is a natural and necessary corollary of a

¹⁰⁸ Morris, "Feeling Nature," 156 – 157.

¹⁰⁹ "Heliotherapy," *The Times*, May 22, 1928, 12.

¹¹⁰ Morris, "Feeling Nature," 160 – 161.

¹¹¹ "Schools in the Open Air," *The Times*, May 22, 1928, 14.

health emotional and mental life.”¹¹² The students at the school bicycled to their classes, cooked their own food and participated in physical training in the school gymnasium. The classes were co-ed with a varied school uniform which allowed students to wear as much or as little as they desired on a given day. The only times students were separated was for naked swimming and sun bathing which they only do because of public opinions surrounding nakedness.¹¹³ This public opinion against mixed nude bathing would be the most significant roadblock in the way of early pioneer nudist groups. These groups would largely be successful in forming because of German health movements developing in the inter-war period, British health movements emphasizing the need to improve the body, and the sun craze which came across Britain in the early 1920s and into the 1930s. It was this perfect storm of events which allowed the pioneers of organized nudism to establish a foothold in Britain’s landscape.

Pioneers of British Naturism

At the same time that the sun craze and British physical culture movements were taking the nation by storm, British nudist groups will begin to form linking their beliefs to these new health movements so as to establish the legitimacy in their practices. The philosophies of nudism would begin to show in England in 1921 with a series of articles published in a magazine entitled *The New Statesman*. These publications were written under the pen-name Lens and promoted the value of exposure of the whole body to sun and air.¹¹⁴ There is some debate surrounding where he got inspiration for his ideas, some citing that he visited Rollier in Switzerland observing his

¹¹² H. Lyn Harris, “Open Air Life at St. Christopher’s School, Letchworth,” *Sun Bathing Review* Autumn 1938, vol. 6 no. 23, 84.

¹¹³ *Ibid*, 84-85.

¹¹⁴ Clapham and Constable, *As Nature Intended*, 33.

medical practices using sun and air baths to treat tuberculosis.¹¹⁵ Others suggest he was inspired by a visit to Freilichtpark in 1912.¹¹⁶ Wherever he attained his inspiration, his writing played a key role in inspiring early nudist thought in England. Nudism's history in England is marked by many small organizations all appearing within a few years of each other, some of which marked by extreme secrecy with members bearing code names to hide their identities.

The first of these organizations would be created by H.C. Booth, a proponent of nudism since 1913 when he would write letters to the health periodical *Physical Culture* detailing his ideas towards the benefits of social nudity. In 1919 Booth traveled to Germany where he established contact with various German nudist group leaders including Paul Zimmerman at Freilichtpark.¹¹⁷ In 1921, the magazine *Health and Efficiency* printed an article entitled 'Purity not Prudery' which garnered a great deal of interest asking for letter responses from all those who would be interested in forming a group which believed in the ideals of social nudity and physical exercise.¹¹⁸ The July 1922 issue of *Health and Efficiency* ran an article entitled 'Nude Life Culture' which was signed by an Elan Vital, which was a pseudonym for H. Dion Byngham, someone who had been in touch with Booth and shared his beliefs. The responses to his article as well as those printed by Booth lead to the creation of the English Gymnosophical Society, England's first official nudist group which made itself public in August 1923. This fledgling group would meet in secrecy in London at various locations in the city. At one of the meetings, Booth invited a Captain H.C. Vincent who would become a controversial figure in British Naturism's history. At the meeting he expressed

¹¹⁵ Morris, "Feeling Nature," 153.

¹¹⁶ Clapham and Constable, *As Nature Intended*, 33.

¹¹⁷ Cinder, 413-413.

¹¹⁸ Clapham and Constable, *As Nature Intended*, 33.

volatile opinions regarding the movement and its publicity. He believed the movement should carry out drastic measures like those carried out by suffragettes and in this way break down public resistance. It is far more likely that had this course of action been taken, the movement would have been suppressed beyond its ability to repair itself and come back.¹¹⁹ This early group consisted of at least twelve members and was mostly male with only three or four female members being part of the group from the beginning. This higher number of male participants is one which would plague the movement in Britain for decades to come. It was determined early on in the existence of the English Gymnosophical Society to restrict the group to being one which spread news and propaganda for the movement as opposed to trying to acquire land to go about naked on. The hope was that by acting as a front-organization they would be able to inspire others to go off on their own and form clubs. In 1924 the group changed its name to The New Gymnosophical Society with new aims and objectives including the privacy of membership lists, secrecy of the location of nudist grounds, as well as strict policies for screening new members. There was a major concern amongst some members that they would be charged with conspiracy to commit acts of indecency, so it was deemed essential to remain as secretive as possible.¹²⁰

In the same year that The English Gymnosophical Society became The New Gymnosophical Society, two more nudist groups were formed by a regular attendee by the name of Dr. Saleeby and Captain Vincent. In May of 1924, Dr. Saleeby was convinced that organized nudism needed to grow and develop and held a meeting which was well attended to discuss the matter. It was here that he created his own nudist organization known as the Sunshine League. The reasoning behind the name was to try and link the group to the *Nacktkulture* movement in Germany

¹¹⁹ Clapham and Constable, *As Nature Intended*, 34.

¹²⁰ Cinder, 416-417.

with an emphasis on sunshine and the health that naked sun bathing can provide. The hope was that more potential individuals would be interested with the newly chosen name. The new organization released a journal entitled *Sunlight* which was edited by the distinguished Sir. Arbuthnot Lane.¹²¹ Born in 1856, Sir Arbuthnot Lane was a renowned surgeon whose pioneer work had a great influence on bone surgery. He was known for his extraordinary dexterity as well as his ability to inspire a love of surgery to his students. Arbuthnot Lane was responsible for the introduction of the no-touch technique for bone surgery as well as developing a metallic internal splint.¹²² Sir. Arbuthnot Lane would instruct the readers of the *Sunlight* magazine on various rules of health, one of which was to expose the skin to fresh air and sunlight as much as possible. While Dr. Saleeby was forming his organization, Captain Vincent was forming one of his own in June of that year. On June 19, *The Daily Express* newspaper posted the following advert for his club which stated: “THE SUN RAY CLUB – FORMAL NOTICE OF FORMATION – THE SUN RAY CLUB is being formed for the purpose of popularizing Sun Bathing, a healthy and enjoyable recreation.”¹²³ Though Vincent was known for his somewhat militaristic views he was able to attract members to his club, the Sun Ray Club. Over the course of its existence, the club would have no formal grounds of its own, though it would occasionally use the grounds at Spielplatz, one of the oldest and most famous British nudist camp sites. In 1925 *The People* magazine reported that Vincent, who was referring to himself as The Emancipator, was planning a procession of about 200 naked men and women in Hyde Park. The result of which was a series of convictions for

¹²¹ Cinder, 417.

¹²² Arthur Rocyn Jones, “Sir William Arbuthnot Lane.” *The Bone and Joint Journal* 34-B, no. 3 (1952): 478, 482, Accessed January 16, 2019.

¹²³ Cinder, 418.

Vincent due to soliciting donations and using insulting words amongst other things.¹²⁴ In 1927 Vincent would be charged under the Parks Regulations Act 1872 due to exposing his upper chest in Hyde Park. The magistrate at the time stated that “decent people – not prudish – would be shocked to see a man sprawling on the grass ostentatiously in the way the prisoner sprawled.”¹²⁵ Despite his run-ins with the law, he would continue his involvement with nudist groups into the early 1930s.

While Dr. Saleeby and Captain Vincent were off forming their own organization, a group of nudists from the New Gymnosophical Society began to establish the first nudist club near Wickford in Essex in the late summer of 1923. The club became known as the Moonella Group after the owner of the grounds, it was also known as The Camp. The actual identity of Moonella is unknown, though some nudist researches have made guesses as to her identity. The main group or participants was made up of about a dozen individuals, seven of whom considered themselves the founding members. Each of these members went by unique code names so as to mask his or her identity. While the identity of Moonella still remains a mystery, the seven founding members have been identified. The “aristocracy” of founding members consisted of Chong and Lorelli (aka Mark Harold Sorensen and his wife Helen Morley Sorensen, Zex (Rex Welbye), Flang or fflang (Harold Clare Booth), Gart Moonella/Thwang (Roland Berrill), and Tob (Mr. LB).¹²⁶ The leader of these founding members was Harold Clare Booth under whose leadership the group became extremely secretive to a fault. Among the rules laid out in their resolutions that members of the organization should not be made known outside of the group, lest they fall to serious

¹²⁴ Michael Farrar, “A Naturist Pioneer, or a Mixed Blessing,” *British Naturism* Summer 2000, no. 144, 18.

¹²⁵ Ibid, 18.

¹²⁶ Edward, “A History of Naturism”.

embarrassment or social loss.¹²⁷ Members of the Moonella group were also not allowed to take photographs or sketches without the express permission of the subject, a rule which is found in nudist camps to this day. In order to ensure the secrecy of the location of the camp, members were not allowed to mention its location to anyone outside of the group.¹²⁸ A major difference between the Moonella group and modern day British sun clubs is that the Committee in Moonella had all power and control, no new members could be added without the express permission of the Committee.¹²⁹ In addition, members of the Moonella group Committee were to refer to each other as The Noble Flang or the Gracious Moonella in their letters to each other. When members were allowed to join the group, the only articles of clothing allowed were sandals and headbands of bright colors, jewelry was not encouraged. Members also could not complement each other on their physical appearance and beauty.¹³⁰ New members were allowed a grace period to get over their embarrassment, but they did ultimately have to undress and if they refused to do so after the grace period they were asked to leave.¹³¹ In 1925 the members of the Moonella group had to find a new location to practice as a new building built adjacent to their current location made it impossible. They were unable to find a location to practice until 1927 at the nudist came Fouracres, also known as 'The Camp'.¹³² To this day there is still mystery surrounding the true identity of

¹²⁷ Edward, "A History of British Naturism"; Cinder, *The Nudist Idea*, 420.

¹²⁸ Michael Farrar, "Chong, Flang, and Moonella," *British Naturism* Summer 1987, no. 92, 23.

¹²⁹ Cinder, *The Nudist Idea*, 421.

¹³⁰ Farrar, "Chong, Flang, and Moonella," 23.

¹³¹ Cinder, *The Nudist Idea*, 421.

¹³² Farrar, "Chong, Flang, and Moonella," 23.

some members of the Moonella Group following the loss of the membership book in 1974 when Mark Sorensen died.¹³³

The new meeting place, known as ‘The Camp’ in its early years is considered the very first nudist camp in British nudist history. The site was discovered in 1927 and letters were sent asking members of the New Gymnosophical Society to assist in purchasing it. One lesser known member, known as “The Major” responded and agreed to purchase the land on the condition that four other members of the group agreed to lease the land at six percent of the purchase price, an offer which was taken up immediately. On May 16, 1927 the camp was officially opened, becoming the first official nudist camp in Britain with H.C. Booth as its leader. Funds to assist with paying the rent of the land were accrued through a membership fee payed by members and visitors. An advisory committee was formed in the event that the group ran into problems with the law. This would not be needed as law officials didn’t mind their being there, so long as they kept their activities private and hidden from the public.¹³⁴ The club was renamed ‘Four Acres’ in 1931 and was still known to be secretive like the Moonella Group which had come before, many of whom made up founding members of The Club.¹³⁵ ‘Four Acres’ was advertised in publications such as the *Sun Bathing Review* which stated that “Entry into such a club is rather more difficult and conditions of membership rather more severe.”¹³⁶ Though the magazine does not detail further as to what these conditions were, it goes on to describe that the club “makes nudism a central feature of its activities, not in the spirit of a cult, but in the belief that it is the expression of a deep underlying

¹³³ Edward, “A History of British Naturism”.

¹³⁴ Cinder, 429, 432.

¹³⁵ Clapham and Constable, *As Nature Intended*, 37.

¹³⁶ “The Sun Societies,” *Sun Bathing Review* Spring 1935, vol. 3 no. 9, 34.

trend of social change stretching out towards a valuable liberation of the human spirit.”¹³⁷ This adherence to nudist spirit would lead the creators of ‘Four Acres’ to be considered purists amongst the nudist community as they favored complete nudity at their clubs. ‘Four-Acres’ would not survive past World War II, but in its place a new club called ‘Fiveacres’ would emerge and exist into the 1960s.¹³⁸

By 1927 there were still only a small number of nudist groups in England, but the movement would continue to grow and develop with the formation of a new group, the Sun Bathing Society. It was founded by N.F. Barford who had been an attendee to lectures hosted by the New Gymnosophy Society. Barford was to create one of the first divides in philosophy amongst nudist groups by suggesting that members be allowed to exercise in slips and brassieres in an effort to make it more appealing to the general public.¹³⁹ Barford would use the ‘Sun Lodge’ in Upper Norwood, South London, as his headquarters where “the sun and air bathers frisked and jerked and exercised their way along the strenuous road to health...all, of course, decently attired in the scanty bathing wear by now tolerated and even approved.”¹⁴⁰ Though there was dispute in the nudist community with Barford’s choice to not require nudity, Barford was finding success in the public where purists were not. His society became so popular that he acquired the use of land in Selsdon, on the outskirts of Croydon. This land, which officially became a nudist camp in 1931, was known as the Yew Tree Camp; the major difference with the ‘Sun Lodge’ here however was

¹³⁷ “Four Acres,” *Sun Bathing Review* Spring 1935, vol. 3 no. 9, 35.

¹³⁸ Cinder, 433.

¹³⁹ Ibid, 35.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

that nude bathing was made welcome.¹⁴¹ Because of Barford's choice to not permit nude bathing, later in the history of the movement his organization would not be referred to as true nudism, but still considered a step in the right direction.¹⁴² To further promote the interests of the nudist movement Barford would begin to print the *Sun Bathing Review* magazine in 1933 which included a wide range of articles addressing issues regarding the movement, listings of various sun clubs, as well as letters from contributors.

The end of the 1920s and early 1930s would prove to be crucial years for the spread and development of British naturism. It was in these years that influential clubs and organizations were formed, and an incident at Welsh Harp would launch British naturists into the public eye. The summer of 1928 saw major heat waves in England causing many people to take to the beaches to escape the heat. It was also within this year that Hans Surén's *Man and Sunlight* was published in Britain which as has already been discussed was quite popular and influential among the population. In addition to the publication of Surén's book, other influential books such as Maurice Parmelee's *Nudism in Modern Life* and Reverend John Langdon-Davies' *The Future of Nakedness*. Parmelee's book was quite well known in many countries. Not only was it seized in the United States for its images, it was also seized and burned by the Nazis. Davies' book was a tongue-in-cheek romp detailing a government that banned clothes for the benefit of public morality and health.¹⁴³ In addition to more books being published and released discussing naturism, Barford took the opportunity to set up a sunbathing stall at the Health Exhibition in the Horticultural Hall Westminster. At the event, he handed out pamphlets which argued the health benefits of

¹⁴¹ Morris, *Feeling Nature*, 149.

¹⁴² Rod Marten, "Twenty Years On," *Sun Bathing Review* Autumn 1952, vol. 20 no. 79, 53.

¹⁴³ Clapham and Constable, *As Nature Intended*, 37 – 39.

sunbathing, citing its use to cure the sick; he argued that if it's used to cure the sick, it must also be good for those in good health. The event was visited by hundreds of guests who viewed the event favorably. It was discussed in the *Daily Express* which with its wide readership spread the word of nudism and sunbathing groups even further. Building on the wave of good publicity, the summer of 1929 would witness a major turning point in the movement's history launching it into what is considered by some to be a golden age of existence.¹⁴⁴

In the summer of 1929, Welsh Harp Reservoir in a suburb of London was being used by unemployed young men of Britain as a place where they could camp, swim, and lay out in the sun. They were allowed to do so by the owner of the land who was sympathetic to their plight due to the Depression in Britain which had begun that same year. As these young men could not afford bathing suits, they would bathe in the nude. By the following summer, 1930, word had spread of the practice of nude bathing at Welsh Harp and soon nudists began to visit and use the site. In late June 1930, with more nudists appearing at the shores of Welsh Harp and news spreading of their being there, hostile spectators began to make their way to the area.¹⁴⁵ The nudists had placed signs warning of their sunbathing activities, but many Londoners would walk that way on summer afternoons, and therefore, their activities were not private or shielded as most clubs and groups had operated in the past. Saturday, June 28, found a group of about forty nudists sunbathing, twelve of whom were women. A mob of onlookers soon appeared jeering and taunting the nudists, which soon led to blows with sun-bathers being struck and beaten though no serious injuries were suffered. The main reason that onlookers seemed to take offense was that children were present. Most of the individuals who were sunbathing were members of the Sun Ray Club and New Life

¹⁴⁴ Clapham and Constable, *As Nature Intended*, 39, 41.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 42.

Societies.¹⁴⁶ The next day nudists returned, this time with a police presence. Before the crowd charged, screams and taunts of ‘Even cannibals wear loin cloths,’ and “Disgraceful conduct before children,” were heard to be called from the crowd. Most of the sunbathers in Vincent’s group were men, but women were amongst the sunbathers. They were urged to keep their clothes on for their safety. Not all women did so, two decided to not give way to the crowd and met their jeers with a defiant “to the pure, all things are pure” which was met with outrage. A battle soon emerged between the crowd of three hundred men and women and about fifty sunbathers. Captain Vincent, who at this time was head of the Sun Ray Club began dressing and urged his fellow nudists to do the same, but as they were doing so, they were charged by the crowd and many of the clothes were scattered by the crowd.¹⁴⁷ The reason this event is such a turning point for British naturists is because their ill treatment at the hands of the crowd lead the greater public to view them more favorably. Police officers would argue that they were on private property who could only be observed by trespassers. From these events, the Sun Ray Club and New Health Society would fully come into its own, changing its name not long after to the National Sun and Air Association which would become a leading organization in the 1930’s. The events at Welsh Harp would inspire many others to go out and start their own nudist clubs across Britain, one of which is considered today to among Britain’s most famous nudist camps.¹⁴⁸

Before Barford’s ‘Yew Tree Club’ nudist camp would be formed, another camp would be created in 1927, one of the most famous in the history of British Naturism. This camp, which came to be known as Spielplatz was created by the couple Charles and Dorothy Macaski. For Charles

¹⁴⁶ “Sun Bathers Assaulted,” *The Sunday Times*, June 29, 1930, 18.

¹⁴⁷ “Sun Bath “Riot” at Lake Side,” *The Daily Express*, June 30, 1930, 11.

¹⁴⁸ Clapham and Constable, *As Nature Intended*, 45.

and Dorothy, Spielplatz would be referred to as the realization of a private dream, and a corner of the world which they could call their own. The camp was started when Charles saw an advertisement in a London newspaper by a German professor who expressed that himself and some close friends were renting land near Bricket Wood to practice naturism. The following Saturday, Charles and his wife visited 'Four Acres' and from that day on knew they wanted this life for themselves and their families. They set about finding a suitable piece of land on which they could start their own naturist camp and found it in Cowley's Wood. The Macaskies were by no means wealthy individuals, in fact, all of their income came from a small radio and bicycle shop which they owned. When looking back, Iseult Richardson, one of Charles and Dorothy's daughters admires the courage of her parents' next step. The Macaskies decided to sell their business and use the funds to purchase the twelve acres of land, arriving to their new home with a tent, some pots and pans, and tools which they saved from the business. In their first few weeks they set about clearing parts of the land, and with the help of an engineer friend dug a well that would be the main source of water for the camp for the next two years and would continue to be used into the 1980s. To make money in the first few years, the family would work as art models in London two or three days a week. By 1929, Charles had erected a small one room chalet which would serve as their home and would grow and develop into a seven-room bungalow which became the family home until 1952. In the summer of 1930, not long after the events of Welsh Harp, inquiries came in from individuals who were interested in renting camp sites or build small cabins for holiday use. This was well received, and it would offer an opportunity for more funds to come in to the family. The years between 1930 and 1939 were considered the most crucial for the development of the camp as it was in these years that an artisan well was dug and a ten-foot weather vane was built, all with the goal of adding a swimming pool to the grounds in mind which was completed in 1934.

The Macaskies knew that if they wanted to expand, they would need to adapt and grow to attract more visitors. In 1933 the official name of the camp was decided upon as Spielplatz, meaning ‘Playplace’ in German (Appendix G).¹⁴⁹

As Spielplatz grew and developed through the 1930s, largely due to the publicity of Welsh Harp, a new nudist organization The National Sun and Air Association was formed in April of 1931. The organization had existed as the Sun Ray Club and New Health Society in September of 1930, but the name was changed in April of the following year. The club’s membership was made up largely of middle class and professional individuals largely due to Welsh Harp’s publicity. In 1933 a supplement of the organization stated that their purpose was to be:

an Association which has for its object the promotion of the practice of complete nudity in common by both sexes, in the belief that this practice is both morally and physically healthy and can be of no small assistance in helping mankind to escape from the evil effects of modern mechanization...It is merely a recognition of the fact that the herding together of masses of the population in towns, offices and factories needs to be offset by greater opportunities for the enjoyment of light and fresh air in the country, to which is coupled the belief that the benefits of sun and air can only be repeated to the full in a state of nakedness.¹⁵⁰

The goals and ideas of this landmark nudist group reflects the larger goals of British society to emphasize an escape from the enclosed spaces of the industrial towns and back to nature. By the end of the 1930s, there would be an increase in paid holidays which allowed young people to leave the towns and explore the countryside. With more free time on the hands of British citizens, more time could be spent with fitness training and recreation in the countryside. This was also impacted by large amounts of unemployment in the 1930s meaning much of these activities occurred as a forced idleness. By the mid-1930s walking and rambling through the country side had caught

¹⁴⁹ Iseult Richardson, “The Spielplatz Story,” *British Naturism* Winter 1980, no. 66, 3.

¹⁵⁰ “Supplement of the National Sun and Air Association,” *Sun Bathing Review* Spring 1933, vol. 1 no. 1, 28.

Britain's imagination and lead to the formation of The Rambler's Association in 1935. Increased media attention for activities such as hiking and cycling also attracted more and more citizens to these activities.¹⁵¹ With more and more people heading out into the country side, it is highly likely that some members of these communities would find their way to naturist groups which had been sprouting up in the country since Welsh Harp. The naturist communities would continue to grow and develop with the increased popularity of the movement and more people seeking to escape the industrial towns and get back to nature. By 1935, *Sun Bathing Review* ran articles on the various sun societies available, providing information on at least eight different clubs, not including Spielplatz. Even these clubs are not representative of all clubs available at the time as not all groups advertised in the magazine. The early naturist movement and its pioneers in Britain envisioned a movement which would lead to a healthier nation which was very much aligned with eugenic thoughts. Early pioneers believed that if the naked body was exposed then people would be more likely to exercise so that they could exhibit their most physically fit form. Much like naturists today naturism's early pioneers still had to tackle society's less than positive view of them and their practices due to the taboo of nakedness.

Though naturists sought to make their thoughts and ideas known through various books, groups like the Moonella Group were shrouded in so much secrecy that it was very difficult for any new members to join or even be aware of the movement growing in Britain. It is this fear and secrecy which will continue to hinder the growth of the movement throughout its history and prevent it from becoming a mainstream health phenomenon, despite a desire to do so as expressed in its publications. Naturism in Britain and its pioneers also demonstrate one of the many reactions to an overindustrialized world which was present in many industrialized nations at the time such

¹⁵¹ Morris, *Feeling Nature*, 56, 58.

as France and Germany. Naturism and its goal to be united in nature by being naked in the sun was one of many avenues taken to become closer with nature and escape industrialization. It is a response often overlooked in comparison to others such as hiking and camping. The naturists themselves however were not themselves political socialists. Most middle class British citizens feared industrial competition from America and Germany and included in this was a fear of the expansive influence of socialism and poverty.¹⁵² As has been demonstrated in this section, naturists were viewed by the larger public both as something amusing to make fun of, as well as an appalling prospect. Given that naturism was seen as eccentric, it was up to its followers to maintain a rational line and attempt to counteract the idea of it being a cult. Though it was not political in its socialism, nudism was associated with ideas such as teetotalism, vegetarianism, and socialism. A nudist supporter at the time, George C. Foster, was known for writing articles such as “Nudism is Not a Cult” and “Nudism and the Common Man” in which he argued that nudism did not need fanatics or cranks as some of its early pioneers were perceived to be. Rather, it needed Mr. Everyman and his wife, people with normal city jobs and proper people. Other supporters of nudism in the 1930’s argued nudism had a ideological affinity with the political Left. One such supporter, Alec Craig argued that the “critical mind, free from the shackles of superstition, tradition, ignorance and convention” which nudists applied to their clothing problem was on which could be applied to solving problems in social and political life.¹⁵³ This naked utopia was very much an impossible dream and by the 1930’s this dream was tarnished by the political shifts in Germany which demonstrated that nakedness along would be unable to bring a new pacifist,

¹⁵² Morris, *Feeling Nature*, 13.

¹⁵³ Annabella Pollen, “Utopian Bodies And Anti-fashion Futures: The Dress Theories and Practices of English Interwar Nudists,” *Utopian Studies* 28, no. 3 (2017): 462 – 463.

egalitarian, and democratic world.¹⁵⁴ While Germany played a major role in inspiring naturism in Britain, it is important to distinguish that naturism was not uniquely German. Especially given the fact that the first nudist group was the FNT in British India. The German body culture was one that was accessible to a wide spectrum of political ideals and therefore cannot be attributed to a single or dominant set of ideals, events, or individuals. In 1933 when Adolf Hitler gained power, he initially placed a blanket ban on nudism. Despite this banning, naturism in Germany was incorporated into the National Socialist *Verband für Leibesübung*.¹⁵⁵ In fact, some historians point out that most of the advances in German naturism would occur while under National Socialist rule.¹⁵⁶ Over the course of the 1930s and 1940s organized British Naturism will tackle the struggles of the Second World War and enter an age in which a national organization was created to represent the interests of naturists across Britain.

¹⁵⁴ Pollen, "Naked Utopia".

¹⁵⁵ Morris, , *Feeling Nature*, 128.

¹⁵⁶ Matthew Jefferies, "'For a Genuine and Noble Nakedness'? German Naturism in the Third Reich," *German History* 24, no. 1 (2006): 63.

PART 2: WAKE UP ENGLAND! WAKE UP!

Though it was still in its small beginnings, Naturism had officially established itself in the culture of Britain. By the mid-1930s popular magazines such as the *Sun Bathing Review*, *Health and Efficiency*, and *The Naturist* were being actively published promoting and encouraging the naturist lifestyle. In the spring of 1933, the first issue of the *Sun Bathing Review* began with an article entitled “Wake up England!” It opened with a passage decrying England for falling behind the rest of the world stating that “Once more pioneers appeal to the dear old country to wake up! Once more the dear old country is being left in the lurch, and our insularity and conservatism leave us to follow the path where other nations lead.”¹⁵⁷ The article decries Britain for not keeping with the times and needs to catch up with the rest of world in regard to the beneficial practice of naturism. They also defend that the reasoning behind naturism is medical as they quote doctors in claiming that “the whole human race who habitually wear clothes, have in reserve an amazingly powerful and unsuspected health asset to fight the diseases of civilisation of industrialization.”¹⁵⁸ It is a call to action for Britain to embrace the benefits of the sun as well as numerous other benefits of naturism. With this wake-up call, more and more nudist groups were appearing seeking to

¹⁵⁷ “Wake Up England!” *Sun Bathing Review* Spring 1933, vol. 1 no. 1, 3.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 4.

practice sunbathing and establish their legitimacy. In 1932 a letter was published in *The Times* signed by George Bernard Shaw, Julian Huxley, Vera Brittain, C.E.M Joad and Winifred Holtby, a Hull novelist and social reformer which spoke out against the backwards morality of British culture.¹⁵⁹ They argued that:

Many other groups have been formed to practise air bathing, but have found it necessary to secrete themselves in the woods round London in order to avoid the attention of the public, the Press, their friends, and their neighbors. This need for secrecy is an iniquitous state of affairs! Semi-nudity can be viewed on the stage by paying for it, but cannot, it seems, be indulged in for health and well-being in the open air, until for lack of it one is ill enough to go to a hospital or a home for crippled children! The movement needs to be rescued from the ill-informed scorn and disrepute from which it has suffered, and to be raised to the level of other healthy recreations.¹⁶⁰

The appeal goes on to demand that facilities should be set aside out of public eye for the use of sunbathing just as various buildings are established for other health practices. It also established that sunbathing offered numerous health opportunities for indoor workers as well as their mental health. The letter was reviewed favorably by an editorial in *The Times* and the Sun Bathing Society advertised in its magazine that they received many positive letters regarding the issue and few to no negative letters. For the supporters of British Naturism that gave them the signal that the time was right for this movement to expand and that once the people of Britain were able to overcome their timidity, they will flock to enjoy the activities offered under the banner of naturism.¹⁶¹ The positive publicity for British naturism continued into the late 1930s through an article published in *The Daily Mirror* in which the newspapers psychologist Mr. Henry Harris gives an analysis of

¹⁵⁹ Morris, *Feeling Nature*, 156.

¹⁶⁰ J.H. Badley, H.P. Bibby, Vera Brittain, Elizabeth Sloan, Chesser, MD, Stella Churchill LCC, A. E. Coppard, J. C. Flugel, Robert Gibbings, Norman Haire, Winifred Holtby, Laurence Housman, W. Hope-Jones, Julian S. Huxley, C.E. M. Joad, A.C. Jordan, Margaret Mayo, Naomi Mitchison, Beverly Nichols, A. Rollier, Dora Russell, G. Bernard Shaw, Kathleen Vaughan, "Sunbathing," *The Times*, March 18, 1932, 10.

¹⁶¹ "Our Appeal in the Times," *Sun Bathing Revue*, Spring 1933, vol. 1 no. 1, 19-20.

naturism. Mr. Harris provides two analysis of the movement, one from a physical perspective, and another from a psychological perspective. From a physical perspective he cited that the movement was extremely beneficial and the skin, as an organ needs exposure to the sun and air to maintain its good health. He compares it to a plant, citing that if one were to cover a plant from the sun it would die and affirming that he himself takes a naked air bath every morning.¹⁶² Mr. Harris believed that while the physical benefits were great, it was the psychological that were the most beneficial, citing that:

it takes from sex the unhealthy emphasis which most moderns have to some degree. You must have observed that prudish people are precisely those who are most inquisitive about the body. Their warped consciences tell them that it is indecent to satisfy that healthy curiosity, so they see that no one else gets that natural satisfaction.¹⁶³

His analysis gave vindication to the nudist philosophy that the practice of nudism or naturism is not one which is practiced by cranks and sexual perverts, but rather one in which a healthy curiosity can be satisfied in a healthy fashion. In fact, he goes on to claim that “if anything, nudism, seems to stabilize and normalize neurotic, cranky, prudist, or sex obsessed people.”¹⁶⁴ For nudists this publicity was extremely beneficial because while their magazines could possibly reach thousands, *The Daily Mirror* could reach millions.

In addition to the publicity gained from newspapers published letters and conducting analysis of the movement, more books were published which examined the possible benefits of nudism. In 1934 William Welby publishes *Naked and Unashamed: Nudism from Six Points of*

¹⁶² “The ‘Daily Mirror’ Goes Nudist!” *Sun Bathing Review*, Autumn 1937, vol. 5 no. 20, 98.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

View in which he examines nudism and its possible benefits through the lenses of history, morality, health, psychology, aesthetic, and finally common sense (Appendix H). His overall analysis is a positive one though he makes it clear in his preface to the second edition that he himself is not a nudist. His goal is to simply profess the facts about nudism, and it is not meant to be a propaganda piece for the movement. Welby further establishes that if nudism is viewed positively in his book it is because the facts support nudism, viewing himself as a judge trying to provide evidence to a jury so that they can come to their own conclusions regarding the issue.¹⁶⁵ In his final, common sense chapter, Welby argues that it a person should not sun bathe naked in public, but rather that it should only be done where properly screened. In addition, he adheres to the belief that nudity should not be present on public beaches; slips should continue to be worn when on public beaches. He does however assess that it is possible to sunbathe naked in a non-sexual environment with other like-minded people in a properly screened establishment. The practice of sunbathing is a healthy one which can and should be practiced by all.¹⁶⁶ His final thoughts on the subject emphasized that “Nudism does offer a definite aide to health and happiness, and that there is nothing immoral or decadent about the people who practise it.”¹⁶⁷

With increased media attention garnered from events such as the Welsh Harp Riot, books, and positive reviews in newspapers, organized naturism continued to grow during the 1930s with new groups continuing to appear through Britain. These groups advertised their existence in the *Sun Bathing Review* citing that any individuals who wish to be “united in a desire now and then to

¹⁶⁵ William Welby, *Naked and Unashamed: Nudism from Six Points of View* (London: Thorsons, 1934), 13 – 14.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 79 – 84.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 85.

detach themselves from the trivialities and less valuable artificialities of civilized existence, may find opportunity for exercise and recreation under suitable conditions.”¹⁶⁸ These organizations would emphasize that they adhered to the philosophy of Gymnosophy and were not associated with changing sexual morals, demonstrating that their activities were not sexual in nature.¹⁶⁹ By 1938 the *Sun Bathing Review* ran advertisements for sixteen different clubs, though other articles suggest that there are as many as twenty six. Their Autumn 1938 issue ran advert entitled “Particulars of All Sun Societies Etc., Advertising in this Issue” which detailed numerous particulars concerning these clubs including but not limited to the address, whether nakedness was a rule or option, trial visits, meals, swimming accommodations, presence of gyms, the size, when the camp is open, and whether men were allowed without women.¹⁷⁰ Of the numerous items listed, there are two which are significant for organized nudism. The first is whether nudity should be a rule or if it should be optional. This was an emerging debate in the nudist community which was addressed in the same issue August 1938 issue. Of the camps listed in the “Particulars” advert, seven stated it was the rule, seven that it was optional, one that it was encouraged, and one listing as general. This data suggests that most camps were generally divided on the topic. Notable camps such as Spielplatz, Lotus League, National Sun and Air Association, and the Sun Folk Society all listed nudity as the rule.¹⁷¹ The article “Should Nudism be Optional” was written by Margaret Barton the secretary of the North Devon Club which labeled nudity as being encouraged but not

¹⁶⁸ “Supplement of The ‘P.R. Nudist Group, North London’” *Sun Bathing Review* Spring 1933, vol. 1 no. 1, 29.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, 29.

¹⁷⁰ “Particulars of All Sun Societies Etc., Advertising in this Issue,” *Sun Bathing Review* August 1938, vol. 6 no. 23, 100-101.

¹⁷¹ Ibid, 100-101.

necessarily the rule. Barton cites that European clubs demand complete nudity on their premises and had done so since their beginnings in the 1920s. Many British clubs were doing the same, but as seen above not all made it the rule. She emphasizes that at the North Devon Club nudity is very much encouraged but recognizes that there are times when clothes are needed, especially when the weather does not permit an individual to be comfortably naked. That being said, Barton emphasizes that there is a danger in allowing nudity to be optional citing that it “opens the door to this abuse of the movement” and should be watched carefully.¹⁷² One of the problems which Barton addresses is the fear of going naked and not having the most beautiful or appealing body which should be shown out in public. She quells their fears by stating that nudist camps are no beauty parade and that they are inhabited by people with all kinds of bodies, both fit and marred with scars and other marks of life. Therefore, the answer for Barton is that nudity should be required because making it optional can lead to problems including the presence of those who are not interested in the ideals of nudism.¹⁷³ This relates to the second significant issue addressed in the advert, whether or not single men would be allowed on nudist camps. According to the advert, eight camps said yes, a single man would be allowed, five stated yes with conditions, one by arrangement, and two listed as preferably not.¹⁷⁴ This is an issue which is debated in the British naturist movement to this day, and one which will be examined in detail later in this thesis. In the first issue of the *Sun Bathing Review* the rule was that men had to be accompanied by women in order to visit a nudist camp. The magazine cited that in order to attain acceptance in larger society, the movement had to adhere to societal norms which maintain a proper balance of sexes at social

¹⁷² Margaret Barton, “Should Nudism be Optional,” *Sun Bathing Review* August 1938, vol. 6 no. 23, 86.

¹⁷³ *Ibid*, 106.

¹⁷⁴ “Particulars of All Sun Societies”, 101.

events. Due to the fact that one of the goals of the movement was to demonstrate that nudity could be non-sexual between men and women, and that it was appropriate for children, there needed to be a balance in membership. What the movement needed was more women to join the movement because “women is for the race and man for the individual... if women approved, the whole of England would learn the joys and benefits of active sun and air-bathing perhaps within a year.”¹⁷⁵ This sentiment that men are more likely to think for themselves while women are nurturers who will support ideals of health is a common societal trend. The article cites that men need to bring women with them and allow them to stay dressed until they are comfortable with the idea of nakedness. The article concludes by stating that women are the “guardians of the coming generation” and by joining sun clubs they would be opening the door for better health for their children and grandchildren. Therefore, men should not be allowed in alone because the movement needs to show that it is a family organization geared towards physical and mental health. These concerns had diminished somewhat by the late 1930s as can be demonstrated by the fact that half of the clubs listed allow single males and five allow it with certain conditions in mind.¹⁷⁶

These early clubs also had to work hard to ensure they could properly establish themselves within Britain’s environment without causing trouble. When an individual wanted to start a new club to be advertised there were several key factors which they had to consider before they moved forward with their plan. When establishing a new club there were six key factors that nudists in the 1930s had to keep in mind: seclusion, accessibility, a south slope, sandy soil, water supply, and neighbors. Nudist camps had to be somewhat secluded mostly by natural barriers such as trees or

¹⁷⁵ L, “The Single Man and the Family SB Group,” *Sun Bathing Review* Spring 1933, vol. 1 no. 1, 21.

¹⁷⁶ “Particulars of All Sun Societies”, 101.

hazel, which was considered the best form of cover.¹⁷⁷ In order to be maintained, however, nudist camps had to be easily accessible and so it was recommended that they be located somewhat near a train or bus station. Cheap bus and train fares would play key roles on the ability of nudist camps to see a rise in membership and funding so as to maintain the camp and its existence. Geography was important not only for seclusion, but also to ensure that the camp got as much exposure to the sun as possible and that it would be easier to work the soil, hence why southern slopes and sandy soil was preferred. Access to water for bathing was a plus factor for camps to draw new members, but the real goal was to put in a swimming pool. The problems with natural water were that generally sea access or rivers required being on flat land meaning the land could be easily overlooked. A pool presented problems in that maintenance and drainage could prove to be challenging to find solutions for, the dangers including flooding into the property of others and the consent of local authorities needed in order to drain it into sewers.¹⁷⁸ The last, and perhaps most crucial item to consider was the local population. Most individuals very likely were not interested in a nudist camp ground cropping up in their midst and as such it was recommended to keep the motivations and goals for the campground a secret. When inquiring about the land, it was recommended to more or less lie and state the land was needed for a physical culture and sports club campground. It was important to establish good relations with the neighbors in the area as they could be a nasty thorn in the side of a developing nudist camp. The idea behind becoming friendly with them was that if they know you well, they were less likely to be upset by the presence of a nudist camp in their local area.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁷ N.F.R. "Selecting a Sun Bathing Site" *Sun Bathing Review* Spring 1933, vol. 1 no. 1, 23.

¹⁷⁸ N.F.R. "Selecting a Sun Bathing Site", 24.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 25.

Nudist publications from 1935 onward suggested that the movement was developing slowly but surely in Britain with new clubs continuously cropping up into existence. There was a general sense that the ideals of nudists, being somewhat supported by medical communities, were being viewed with less horror and scorn than they were when they first emerged as an organization in the nation. They were still very much the butt of jokes, but the laughter was well natured enough and there was a general acceptance that they are not as insane as once perceived.¹⁸⁰ What had begun as a revolutionary idea that was outlandish to some, has become something commonly practiced in British culture across the sexes and both in groups and in private.¹⁸¹ There were still misconceptions which the movement worked to dispel, not limited to but including the idea that nudists want to make the world completely naked and go without clothes at all times. This was an incorrect assumption as nudist magazines emphasized their desire to go naked in places where it was reasonable to do so.¹⁸² The 1930s ended with a British nudist movement that was slowly but surely expanding and developing new camp grounds for public use. Publications suggested slightly more acceptance in the larger society, though many misconceptions would still remain in regard to their goals and practices. Entering into the 1940s however, organized naturism in Britain would be faced with one of its greatest struggles to continue: World War II.

With the outbreak of World War II in Europe, the movement of British naturism would take many crushing blows, which would prevent it from growing and developing as much as it possibly could have. The Lancashire Group located in Blackpool detailed in 1943 that they were struggling to remain in contact with each other as many of them were involved in war related work.

¹⁸⁰ Editor, "Nudism in Our Time," *Sun Bathing Review* Spring 1935, vol. 3 no. 9, 5.

¹⁸¹ Editor, "Three Years Go By," *Sun Bathing Review* Winter 1936, vol. 3 no. 12, 120.

¹⁸² "Nudism in Our Time," 6.

The Staffordshire Secretary was included in a piece in *Health and Efficiency* asking if anyone knew of areas of land not suitable for agricultural development as much land was being seized for the war effort, meaning new prospecting groups were struggling to find land on which to establish a new group. The article discusses other groups as well, each of which facing similar struggles of finding locations which to establish themselves.¹⁸³ Despite the war, interest in naturism did not seem to decline, in fact the Editor of *Health and Efficiency* emphasized that interest in the movement was growing in the Midlands and the North. The problem was the lack of nudist facilities as many had their lands seized for agricultural purposes and the clubs that remained open are so remote that travel restrictions prevent people from visiting them as much as they might have before the war. There was land that could be used, but many of the owners did not want to rent it to nudists as there were still many misconceptions held by some in more popular society. This is partnered with lack of knowledge of what would become of the land in the post war world and a reluctance of owners to rent their land to sunbathing groups. Any new groups that emerged in the war years were too few in number to allow for substantial growth in the movement.¹⁸⁴ The war was not all grim news for nudists; despite the struggles which faced the movement, it continued on and did not vanish. Pre-war clubs located in southern Britain continued on much unchanged, some of which actually seeing a jump in membership.¹⁸⁵ One such nudist club which actually benefited from the war years was Spieplatz. It was largely because of the war that the nudist campground became the residential campground it is today. Initially holiday club members would come to Spieplatz as a place to escape the bombings in the city and find a place to sleep and rest.

¹⁸³ “Sunbathers’ Register More Sites Needed,” *Health and Efficiency* March 1943, vol. 13 no. 3.

¹⁸⁴ The Editor, “Between Ourselves: More Sun Clubs Wanted,” *Health and Efficiency* July 1943, vol. 13 no. 7, 145, 152, 160.

¹⁸⁵ John K. Shields, “Wartime Lessons for Nudists,” *The Naturist* March 1943, vol. 6 no. 4, 52 – 53.

Every possible structure in the camp was used to house these refugees and no one was ever turned away. Iseult remembers that it seemed hardly a day went by when new individuals would show up at the camp to leave their children with “Mac and Dorothy” while they returned to their destroyed homes to salvage what they could of their broken lives (Appendix I). Many new groups and families decided to make their stay more permanent as Spielplatz was a place to weather the storm. By the time of the wars end, many who had come seeking refuge now saw the camp ground as their permanent home. They enrolled their children into local schools and made the campground their home laying the foundations for the camp as it is today.¹⁸⁶ The war also did away with conflicts and controversies which had erupted between clubs. There is a greater sense of comradery and unity during the war years so as to ensure the survival of the movement. The perils of the war also made the squabbles of a pre-war world seem totally inconsequential compared to what was at stake. As was seen with the Spielplatz story, naturism was seen and offered as a respite from the tiring war. Taking time away from the stresses of the war was deemed to be essential as the mind and body needed a space to relax, which could be hard to come by during the war. Naturism was offered as the best form of respite from the war, a naked sunbather laying the sun is much further away from their day to day worries having left everything behind, even clothes. Nudist camps were isolated pockets of peace where a person could find a legitimate way of escape and recharge before heading back into struggles of the day to day world.¹⁸⁷

Though the naturist community did struggle through the war years, naturist magazines also published articles which detailed how they could be of use during the war years and support the

¹⁸⁶ Iseult Richardson, “The Spieplatz Story (part 2)” *British Naturism* Spring 1981, no. 67, 7.

¹⁸⁷ S. T. Heathdene, “Sunshine is a rest From War,” *Sun Bathing Review* Summer 1941, vol. 9 no. 34, 34 – 36.

war effort. *Health and Efficiency* included small advertisements urging subscribers to conserve paper and send any extra paper to be used for various items such as belts, cartridge and shell casings, mines, and radio sets.¹⁸⁸ Practicing naturism and exposing the skin to air baths was also seen to assist with the war effort by maintaining a healthy population. The national fuel saving campaign to assist with the war effort meant offices were colder and could not heat buildings the same as before. Dr. S. B. Whitehead offers the solution of exposing the skin to colder temperatures in small amounts. He argues that the skin helps maintain the body's heat, and by exposing it in regular air baths and exercising in these moments to avoid chill. This should be done regularly for fifteen minutes followed by a vigorous toweling of the body. Once the body has become accustomed to the cold undressed, being dressed in a cold office will not seem as bad.¹⁸⁹ The war years played a critical role in increasing national fitness as more and more physical fitness groups were emerging trying to urge the population to better physical health in the war effort. The war was in some ways a needed push to improve the health of the nation, but there was no official government support for naturism as one of the paths which could help improve physical health in the nation. The reason for this has that many British laws existed which make the exposure of certain parts of the body in public spaces illegal. A writer for *The Naturist* magazine suggested that the war would bring an end to these backwards ideals and naked sun bathing would soon be seen on all of Britain's beaches. The hope of the writer is that the government when planning for the post-war world would include in it plans for a saner thinking nation. What is most interesting in particular about this article, is it ends with a hinting that a scheme is in development for Naturist

¹⁸⁸ "Save Every Scrap of Paper," *Health and Efficiency* July 1943, vol. 13 no. 7, 160.

¹⁸⁹ Dr. S. B. Whitehead, "Fuel Saving and Fitness," *Health and Efficiency* March 1943, vol. 13 no. 3, 55, 62.

Unity and the formation of a national organization to represent all of Britain's sun clubs.¹⁹⁰ While it detracts from the main message of the article, it demonstrates an area of growth for the movement. This prediction would in fact come true, and in the midst of the struggles presented by the way, the first national British naturist organization would emerge in 1943.

Nudism Catches its Second Breath: The British Sunbathing Association

Despite some general fears that the organization would not last the war and the struggles some clubs faced to stay open, the first official unified organization for British naturism would emerge. It is an important distinction to make that while organized social nudism in Britain struggled during the war, the practice of nudism for leisure particularly at European continental holidays, thrived. A key difference between the nudists that would be establishing naturism in the post-war world would be the attitude with which they viewed nudism. For the early pioneers, nudism was highly idealistic with socialist and eugenic influences in its philosophies. The nudists of the post war world did not view the practice with the same idealism, but rather as a form of personal relaxation or freedom. Having exited a major world war, nudists wanted to simply relax and enjoy being naked outside. This is a monumental shift in the ideology of the movement and one which carries through to today. In interviews with modern naturists historian Ruth Barcan found that naturists prefer to look at it as a lifestyle choice rather than a philosophy. They will adamantly deny relation to the political ideas of socialism, anti-materialism, or vegetarianism. Rather it is just something they like to do, nothing more.¹⁹¹ While the naturists in the 1940's are

¹⁹⁰ George, "National Fitness and How to Get It," *The Naturist* February 1943, vol. 6 no. 3, 36 – 37.

¹⁹¹ Pollen, "Utopian Bodies and Anti-fashion Futures, 475.

not quite at this stage of thought, it is here that the ideological shift begins to move away from philosophical nudist ideas to ones of a different type of lifestyle with added health benefits.

Created in 1943, the British Sunbathing Association (BSBA) prepared for the post-war expansion despite lack of money and land to for the expansion.¹⁹² Despite the problems they faced, the first month of their existence seemed to suggest a positive future and began work right away to bring clubs into its folds. In order to be considered as a member of the BSBA the club in question had to demonstrate that they upheld a naturist lifestyle as a means of mental and physical culture and health.¹⁹³ The Association's constitution, completed in July of 1943, stated that "the object of B.S.A is to secure the co-ordination of organizations that cater for sun clubs which are established for the promotion of mental and physical culture with a vision for the emergence of a completely healthy people."¹⁹⁴ This constitution also established that Britain would be broken into three general zones: a Proprietary Zone, Northern Zone, and Southern Zone, the lines for which were yet to be firmly established. Each of these zones would be controlled by a council elected by the clubs in that zone so as to ensure that the local organizations had a part to play in controlling the framework of the association. A guest from America, Ray Connett, who witnessed the formation of the BSBA, detailed the honor he felt at being able to witness the birth of this organization. As an outsider there were many aspects of British Naturism he did not quite understand such as the propriety clubs, which referred to clubs that were individually owned as opposed to co-operatively

¹⁹² Clapham and Constable, *As Nature Intended*, 91.

¹⁹³ "British Sunbathing Association," *Health and Efficiency* May 1943, vol. 13 no. 5, 109.

¹⁹⁴ Hon. Secretary, John Rowlinson, "British Sunbathing Association," *Health and Efficiency* July 1943, vol. 13 no. 7, 160.

owned clubs like in the American movement.¹⁹⁵ As the meeting continued on Connett commented that he was

struck by the earnest sincerity of the delegates, - men and women who had spent money on railway fees from the north and south-west, and all who had sacrificed a precious week-end of outdoor relaxation to lay the foundation for the British Sun Bathing Association. Nudists all, they knew what nudism had done in health and happiness for families and friends. They were here in London to protect the future of nudism.¹⁹⁶

He emphasized the importance of a national organization to provide assistance for small clubs which may face persecution from the public sphere and save clubs from being closed as had been done in America. For Connett, the creation of the BSBA suggested that the country was ready to be invited to give nudism a try.¹⁹⁷ While Connett was hopeful for the BSBA, one subscriber to the *Sun Bathing Review* expressed his concerns that the nudists of Britain all had so many ideas surrounding what “nudism” was that it will be very hard to unify the various groups. He notes that nudism can get tied up with ideas such as vegetarianism and non-smoking with which it really has no direct connection. He also points towards the nudist groups who would be unwilling to cooperate unless they could impose their puritanical ideals across the board, and still others who saw nudism as a social movement fighting for a freer social life. If the BSBA was to succeed, it would have to get the various nudist groups to agree with each other and bear with each other over their differences.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁵ Ray Connett, “Nudism Co-Operates,” *Sun Bathing Review* Summer 1943, vol. 11 no. 42, 26.

¹⁹⁶ Connett, “Nudism Co-Operates,” 26.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid*, 27.

¹⁹⁸ Alec Craig, “Our Letter File: British Sunbathing Association,” *Sun Bathing Review* Summer 1943, vol. 11 no. 42, 34.

Despite the possible doubts about the ability to unify all the various ideas and opinions held by British Nudists the BSBA looked forward to the future and the post war world. The number one concern on the mind being to replenish the membership that had been lost over the war due to men and women working for the military and being shipped overseas. Those who were positive about the end of the war viewed it as a potential for many new recruits who would be seeking places to relax, slow down, and rid nerves of tensions and fears from the war they had just experienced. One writer believed that the benefits for nudism stood to be far greater now, than had no war been fought at all. He believes that the high tensions and fears caused by the war would be the push for young families to see naturism as an outlet of getting back to a relaxed life.¹⁹⁹ In order for this to occur, however, three points had to be considered: first clubs had to be devoted to the ideals of nudism and keeping them alive, second that the club be run on economically sound lines, and third that the club does not exist solely as a means to make money. The author cites in regard to the first point that clubs in the past lost the enthusiasm with which they began and the ethical standard has begun to slump. Regarding the second point, it is bad for the publicity of the movement if a club shuts down for financial reasons and so must keep an eye on its finances. This includes ensuring that members pay the subscription fee on time and not to slack with the fees which are due. Finally, the club run for its own monetary gain is a problem for the nudist movement as it may allow undesirable members to buy their way into the club leading to scandals which could harm the publicity of the movement.²⁰⁰ So while there were many benefits to be gained from the post war world, certain guiding points had to be maintained to ensure a healthy growth. With the goal of recruiting new members for the club, including soldiers from the war, the question of

¹⁹⁹ John Austin, "The Recruits Will Come," *Sun Bathing Review* Summer 1943, vo. 11 no. 42, 32 – 34.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 34.

nudity is breached again. Should new members be permitted to wear slippers for a time, or will they be required to be naked from the start? The general assessment was that if the movement is to grow, then the common man must feel comfortable enough to join. With this in mind “those of us who pride ourselves in having cast off the yoke cannot, I think, hope to help others discard it merely by precept and example.”²⁰¹ New recruits should be allowed to ease their way into the movement and therefore be allowed to remain at least partially clothed for a time so as to work up the courage and become comfortable enough to undress.²⁰²

A push for more members and publications to spread the news of naturism would continue into the 1950s. At its start, well known naturist magazine writer Robin Black would urge caution in spreading the news about naturism. In his experience it was the super enthusiast who was a recent convert excited by their new discovery may become a liability to the movement and his friends. He believed there wasn't quite enough support out in Britain for naturism to come boldly into the public eye in the new decade.²⁰³ Not all nudists agreed with Black's assessment, with a response in the May issue of *Health and Efficiency* that did not agree with Black's assessment. The idea expressed being that if the naturist movement was to grow, the public needed to be educated to understand its ideals. The movement cannot just sit back and wait for society to be ready and use the excuse that it's not the time is one which will do nothing for the movement. The assessment of the response was that while there doesn't need to be dramatic action, there does need to be a sustained campaign which presents the facts of nudism in a dignified manner. The purpose of an organization such as BSBA is to make its ideals and values known through public relations

²⁰¹ Corporal X, “Give the Soldier his Bathing-Slips,” *Sun Bathing Review* Winter 1944, vol. 11 no. 44, 76.

²⁰² *Ibid*, 74 – 76.

²⁰³ Robin Black, “Let Us Come Out Fighting,” *Health and Efficiency* March 1951, vol. 21 no. 3, 6 – 7.

and spreading the information that opportunities exist for would be naturists. What is needed is publicizing for the movement outside of its magazines so as to further spread the readership and reach a wider audience. The more naturists that speak up, the brighter the movement's future would be.²⁰⁴ The same issue of *Health and Efficiency* contained another response to Black's article written by Margery Gilbert, Hostess, HSC Surrey. Gilbert writes that many Naturists were already well known in society due to the work of the BSBA and that it was already out in the open. While she agreed that fanatics would not bode well for the future of the movement, she asserts that nudism had few fanatics amongst its members. She believes that to be secretive as Black would suggest provides material for sensational press to add salacious items to the suspicions already present in society. She asserts that the estimates for the numbers of naturists is 5,000, though this number is likely high, and the only way for that membership to increase is to further the education of the public and bring more people into the fold of naturism.²⁰⁵ For the general secretary of the BSBA Sylvia Bassam, publicity and membership was doing quite well in 1951. According to her assessment, more young couples and families were joining the movement with far fewer undesirable individuals trying to get in. One factor for this for Bassam is that naturism has had a largely positive representation in the popular press and a curiosity present in their articles instead of accusatory comments. In addition to better publicity, she attributes increased membership to the use of sunray treatment in hospitals as a curative and preventative agent. She believes that when more people experience this in a hospital setting, they are more likely to seek the genuine form of this treatment during the summer months so as to prepare for the winter months. Finally, she views increased membership as a reflection of changing ideals towards sexual education. For Bassam,

²⁰⁴ "The Way Ahead," *Health and Efficiency* May 1951, vol. 21 no. 5, 20.

²⁰⁵ Margery Gilbert, "Naturism is out in the Open," *Health and Efficiency* May 1951, vol. 21 no. 5, 23.

more and more parents were realizing that they can't teach sex ed without nudity being present and naturism offers a healthy outlet for this discussion. Bassam also makes one of the first mentions of a BSBA goal to spread nudism from the confines of clubs, to the beaches of Britain. She addresses that some people have already begun doing so on their own, but as it is illegal she does not condone the behavior.²⁰⁶ Robin Black also addresses the issue of beaches earlier in the year, though his assessment is much less positive than Bassam's as he believes half-baked attempts at attaining nudist beaches will be of no benefit for the growth of the movement.²⁰⁷ Though Bassam acknowledges this is not a change that is likely to come quickly, she believes the movement to be doing well in 1951 and that slow growth is in some ways better than mass conversion.²⁰⁸

With the spirit of expansion in the post-war world and hope for growth in the movement two family men Ernest Stanley and Jack Watkins set out in 1948 to establish a new nudist club. In June of that year, they found the desired site near Dartford on the outskirts of London, and thus the North Kent Sun Club was born, the largest nudist camp in Britain.²⁰⁹ The founders of the camp were in their 30s with children of their own sought to make their new club one which had a membership made up mostly of young people and families. A waiting list had to be created for younger men interested in joining the camp so as to ensure a balance of sexes, with the younger men chosen to be allowed in over older gentlemen. A decision which was made early on in the club's history was not to make nudity required by all who participated but rather to ensure the club

²⁰⁶ Sylvia Bassam, "How Stands Nudism Now?" *Health and Efficiency Summer Annual Summer 1951*, 13 – 14.

²⁰⁷ Robin Black, "Naturism's Target For Festival Year," *Health and Efficiency* January 1951, vol. 21 no. 1, 4.

²⁰⁸ Bassam "How Stands Nudism Now?," 14.

²⁰⁹ Clapham and Constable, *As Nature Intended*, 91.

was a social center that had amenities which would keep customers when nudity eventually became acceptable on public beaches. By the end of 1949 all buildings had been constructed on the premises of the camp, and by early 1951 the swimming pool had been successfully installed. 1951 was Festival of Britain year and as such the North Kent Club decided to host its own Festival of Naturism that same summer.²¹⁰

Preparations for the festival, as well as general buzz filled the pages of naturist magazines leading up to the event scheduled for June to September of 1951. The festival expected to receive foreign guests who were required to state their club of origin, in addition participants interested in attending from Britain had to demonstrate that they were subscribing members to the BSBA.²¹¹ The program for the festival included numerous events the program for which has been included in full below so as to achieve a full picture of the events offered at the festival.

June 3rd – Formal opening of Festival and of North Kent’s ‘Festival Pool’.
10th – Children’s Day: sports, games, eurhythmics. 17th – Comic sports. 24th – Treasure hunt.

July 1st – swimming gala, 8th – Children’s day: games, fancy dress. 15th – Recreation and preparation for Rally and Conference. 22nd – International rally and conference, preceded by camp fire on Saturday evening. 29th – Novelty sleuth’s contest.

Aug. 4th – 6th – Bank Holiday programme. 12th – Children’s Day: sports, games, competitions. 19th – Swimming gala. 26th – P.T., with judo and other displays.

Sept. 2nd – Recreation and preparation for Rally. 9th – Second International Rally and Conference. 16th – Treasure hunt; end of Festival.²¹²

²¹⁰ “The Sun Clubs of Britain: The Famous North Kent,” *Health and Efficiency* June 1953, vol. 2 no. 3 11 – 12.

²¹¹ Strix, “The Passing Scene,” *Sun Bathing Review* Spring 1951, vol. 18 no. 73, 10.

²¹² *Ibid*, 10.

As demonstrated by the events listed above, the Festival offered a wide variety of activities, many of which associated with some form of sport or physical exercise, keeping in adherence with the goals and objectives of the North Kent Club upon its creation. With such a large event being hosted over the course of three months, special precautions were being put in place regarding attendees and what they could do at the event. Attendees had to demonstrate BSBA membership and were not allowed to take any photographs. Any photographs being taken would be by the club's official photographers.²¹³ Though these precautions and rules were firmly established before the festival was to begin, not all were entirely convinced. In March of 1951, an Elizabeth Somers responded to a complaint from the North Kent Club regarding an article she had written in February of 1951 regarding her concerns for the Festival. Somers raised the concern that the event would become a peep show event which the club responded to quite forcefully by stating that

the Festival of Naturism is taking place at North Kent Sunclub only, and if Miss Somers had remembered any aspect of the North Kent policy she would have realized that any suggestion of a peep-show is nonsensical...safeguards are being rigorously maintained, because North Kent leaders are no less aware than Miss Somers of the need for them, for the protection of visitors and of old and new members. Might it be suggested that Miss Somers looks a little more deeply into her subject before she sets pen to paper in the future?²¹⁴

This scathing letter was met with somewhat apologetic tone from Somers, though she stands to defend her points. She picks a quarrel with the idea that previous articles in *Health and Efficiency* had failed to elaborate further on the precautions being made, hence her article from February. She claims that no details have been given regarding how individuals will exactly be selected as approved to come to the festival. She also raises problems with foreign nudists being invited, yet the letter she received from the North Kent Club seemed contradictory in this as they emphasized

²¹³ The Editor, "The Festival Programme," *Health and Efficiency* April 1951, vol. 21 no. 4, 3, 20.

²¹⁴ Elizabeth Sommers, "Second Thoughts on the Festival," March 1951, vol. 21 no. 3, 11.

that only approved naturists could camp at the club. Her concerns emerge from her role as a woman in the movement, and as such is more concerned regarding members attending the festival from foreign locations with no knowledge known about them aside from a name. She ends her response with thanking the organization for taking such care and wishing them much success.²¹⁵

June 1951 saw the festival opening with great success citing an attendance of 200 members within the first weekend, with more to be expected in the future. International attendees represented the nations of Canada, New Zealand, Belgium, France, Germany, Holland, Poland, and Jugoslavia.²¹⁶ As the festival carried on, attendee numbers fell due to poor weather with just over fifty campers for the events in August. The children's days figured in the largest turn outs given that of the club's 350 members, a third of them are children. In addition to the many games held at the event work was done at the camp, including one German camper almost single handedly building a new canteen for the camp. The officials of the club claimed to have written 2,000 letters during the Festival season paving the way for further visits by a majority of the British sun clubs as well as foreign visitors.²¹⁷ In addition to the wide success of the festival, the International Naturist Federation was officially founded, an organization which exists to this day.²¹⁸ The success of the Festival of Naturism lead one writer of the *Sun Bathing Review* to speculate the next hundred years and the future of British Naturism. She concluded that likely by the year 2051 there will no longer be a need for an organization as the ideas of nudity will have changed so much that it has

²¹⁵ Sommers, "Second Thoughts on the Festival," 14.

²¹⁶ "B.S.B.A. Notes and News: The Festival Opens – Programme for July," *Health and Efficiency* July 1951, vol. 21 no. 7, 8.

²¹⁷ "Festival of Naturism," *Sun Bathing Review* Autumn 1951, vol. 18 no. 75, 65.

²¹⁸ Edward, "A History of Naturism – Timeline," British Naturism, accessed June 1, 2018, <https://www.bn.org.uk/news/information/about-naturism/history-of-naturism/a-history-of-naturism-timeline-r28/>.

become a common and accepted part of life. She also refers to the changing ideas towards sexual education and how much more open school curriculum is regarding sexual topics that in the past would have to be passed around as half-truths amongst older and younger friends.²¹⁹ Though Dorothy and others in the nudist movement were hopeful for the future of British Naturism, trouble was brewing for the BSBA just under the surface, and the future of organized naturism was questionable.

Worst Break-Up Ever!

The 1950's would mark a major break up in organized British Naturism. Since its inception naturists in Britain have sought an outlet through which they could spread their ideals and inspire more people to join them in their naked utopia. Internal division would prove to be a major blow to the young BSBA. This internal division would largely come about as a result of disagreements of the roles of individual clubs and their representation in the larger organization. A stronger voice was desired for club representation in decisions being made in the BSBA. While solutions were attempted these differing ideas would lead to division. A new organization would spring up alongside the fractured BSBA. The process leading to this division and new organization is a complex one which requires close attention to the many meetings held at which major influential decisions would be made. This attention to detail is important to understand the motivations for division and the important status that clubs now hold in the modern British Naturism organization. Though this division would not last, it demonstrates that over much of its history British Naturism would act as its own hinderance towards advancement within society. The internal struggles and

²¹⁹ Dorothy L. Matthews, "Nudism's Next Hundred Years," *Sun Bathing Review* Autumn 1951, vol. 18 no. 75, 64.

split would cause British naturism to largely remain stagnant and struggle to advance in its goals of spreading its naturist philosophy to the British people.

In the spring of 1951, trouble began circulating under the surface regarding the BSBA and problems it had with spending money. On April 7 and 8 1951, a BSBA meeting was held in order to discuss the monetary issues which faced the organization. Finances had been a problem for the BSBA from the beginning and many plans had been suggested such as increase registered subscriber fees, club fees, and a capitalization on non-registered subscriber fees. Finances were not the only problem facing the organization as within the past year changes had been made to the BSBA constitution as well as methods of administration. There was concern that the BSBA did not properly represent the clubs and only adequately informed all the Clubs of what was occurring in the organization when problems emerged. The administrative system as it stood in 1951 had split Britain into three general zones. These general zones had councils that met on a weekly or bi-weekly basis for their meetings. All the clubs in the BSBA then gather for an annual general meeting (AGM). The problem with this system was that each zone was interested in its own affairs and they were not close knit enough group. There was a belief that there needed to be more links between the AGM and the monthly group club meetings.²²⁰ One solution to this problem, provided by Leon Gilbert, Secretary of Haslemere Club, would be for BSBA news to be more actively printed in magazines for general readership. In order to solve the money problems, instead of the paid position of a General Secretary, it would become a voluntary basis in which the job simply required sending out letters and allotting work to various clubs. This could increase communication between clubs regarding what work they could and could not take on.²²¹ Other

²²⁰ Leon Gilbert, "Money Matters and the B.S.B.A.," *Sun Bathing Review* Spring 1951, vol. 18 no. 73, 16.

²²¹ *Ibid*, 24.

nudist writers commented that individual nudists and nudist clubs should put more forward to help the finances of the BSBA. The idea here being that if British sun clubs want a parent organization, they should be willing to pay for it and not complain about fees. Instead of relying on mostly registered subscribers, not all of whom were members of clubs, there should be more money put forward by nudists themselves in support of the cause.²²²

In the summer of 1951, Roy Gill, a writer for the *Sun Bathing Review* and officer of the B.S.B.A. released an article in which he discussed the details of the Nottingham meeting from the spring, which did not go quite as well as planned hinting that a great deal of confusion was likely to arise in the coming months. The meeting was held, as discussed above to consider the financial problems which were facing the BSBA and the lack of clubs providing funds to assist keeping the organization going. A proposal was sent out that all club affiliation fees would be abolished and instead replaced by an agreed amount per-club member to be administered to all affiliated clubs. The meeting minutes of the North and South Zones hinted no opposition to the proposal and adopted resolutions to the effect of helping the financial situation. When the groups met in April at what Gill refers to as the “Extraordinary General Meeting,” twenty-one proposals were on the table, eleven of which dealt with routine policy matters, nine directly at increasing revenue, and a final proposal put forward by Haslemere Club.²²³ This proposal had largely already been laid out in Leon Gilbert’s article, though it is much more concisely put by Gill. The plan as put forward by Gilbert advocated:

(1) No paid officials; (2) Voluntary officers to do all the work, by an Admin. Comm. Reorganization; (3) Registered Subscribers scheme to be dropped, probably, in its present form; (4) Printing, etc., to be reduced to a minimum by

²²² Strix, “The Passing Scene,” *Sun Bathing Review* Summer 1951, vol. 18 no. 74, 41.

²²³ Roy Gill, “Whither BSBA Now?” *Sun Bathing Review* Summer 1951, vol. 18 no. 74, 46.

using duplicated sheets ; (5) All activities to be reviewed with an eye for economy.²²⁴

Gilbert's article published a week before the meeting caused this proposal to carry a great deal of weight amongst the twenty others. As part of the publication process, the article had been sent to the BSBA so as to check the contents, and the editor of the magazine had been strongly advised not to print Gilbert's article. This response by the BSBA lead them to be attacked in the editorial of the same Spring issue. This unfortunate turn of events lead the discussions regarding proposals at the meeting to be more tenuous then they perhaps might have been had the article not been published.²²⁵

The President of the BSBA at the April meeting determined that before detailed discussion regarding how to properly address the financial issues facing the BSBA, he wished to get an idea for broad policies the organization should pursue so as to guide more specific legislation. This discussion was focused on items 7 through 9 on the Agenda. Item 7 stated that every affiliated club should pay a levy on each membership unit. Item 8 stated that all registered members of clubs should become registered subscribers to the BSBA. Finally, item 9 was very much the same as the Haslemere plan. After much debate, item 8 was withdrawn leaving the votes to fall to items 7 and 9. Item 7 was lost with 25 votes in favor and 27 against. Item 9 was carried with 30 for and 25 against.²²⁶ With item 9 passed, the BSBA Administration Committee now stood behind a policy very different from the one which was used the past two years. There was a half-hearted attempt to discuss item 9 in greater detail and work out the small details, but this was delineated to a small council to be formed *ad hoc*. By the time of the meeting's end, a small council of 7 individuals

²²⁴ Gill, "Whither BSBA Now?", 46.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Ibid, 48.

had been established to work on Item 9 and come up with a detailed plan for how it should be carried out. North Kent Club also put forward a proposal that a new Five Year Plan for the expansion of the organization be drawn up, which was carried and would be released in December of 1951.²²⁷ This somewhat confusing meeting of the BSBA Admin. Committee and club left the organization without a firm solution to the financial situation and only a general plan going forward. As 1951 drew to a close, there was some question as to whether or not there was the need for an organization at all. In an opinion article regarding this matter, Wallace Arter reflects on the history of the movement in Britain citing that much of the modern movement owed itself to the actions of NF Barford and HC Booth, both of whom were responsible for creating some of the earlier clubs for British Naturism. Ultimately Arter was not of the belief that much was owed to organized naturism and that the current nudist press could complete many of the actions for which a national organization was responsible. He was of the belief that a Consultative Council of club leaders would be more valuable than general gatherings. More time should be spent at the clubs which required great individual sacrifice to create rather than at committee meetings.²²⁸

By December 1951, the BSBA had published its Second Five Year Plan which it hoped would garner support and fresh hope for the future of the organization and its role in British Naturism. One of the first and most important changes made in this new plan was that a county or group of counties could form a County and Regional Sun Bathing Association (C. or R.S.B.A) which create constitutions and objectives to be approved by the BSBA. The subscribers within those counties or regions could then change their subscription fee from the BSBA to their local C

²²⁷ Gill, "Whither BSBA Now?", 48.

²²⁸ Wallace Arter, "What Do We Owe to "Organization"?" *Sun Bathing Review* Autumn 1951, vol. 18 no. 75, 57 – 58.

or R.S.B.A. This being an effort to cut down on central office work and would allow for closer contact between clubs within those counties and regions. This is a direct response to the claim that the BSBA was too distant and allows members to take a more active role in their local clubs.²²⁹ Additional changes were made to the registered subscribers that the three original zones in which the nation was divided, would now be split into five: North Eastern, North Western, Midlands, South Eastern, and South-Western. The BSBA also refers to the role of registered subscriber secretaries who have played a significant function in helping new clubs organize. As part of the new five-year plan, secretaries would be placed in each zone allowing for a more local contact and increase the idea of a local association.²³⁰ The first location in Britain that would carry through this plan for local organizations was Kent, which was known as the K.C.S.B.A. Discussion had actually already been occurring in Kent to form a local group since 1950. The local organization as laid out in the five-year plan would not officially begin in Kent until 1953 where it was met and reviewed with great success for its work at spreading naturist ideals into the area. By June of 1953 seventeen other District Societies had been formed in the local Kent region.²³¹ The five-year plan also called for more contact with associations kindred to that of British Naturism through which more publicity and membership could reach the BSBA. Part of this plan entailed more publications of naturist magazines so as to better spread word about the organization. Finally, the plan established that once financial issues have been sorted out in the organization, there was a plan to

²²⁹ "The B.S.B.A.s Second Five Year Plan," *Health and Efficiency* December 1951, vol. 21 no. 12, 14.

²³⁰ *Ibid*, 14.

²³¹ Oliver Weston, "Local Organizations," *Health and Efficiency* June 1953, vol. 23 no. 7, 8, 20, 24.

employ a full time General Secretary which the organization felt would work to help expand the organization and create a program for finding more sites acceptable for the practice of naturism.²³²

In addition to the new five-year plan published in December of 1951, the BSBA released a new series of Aims and Objectives in January of 1952 to match the new plan. Ernest Stanley of the BSBA Editorial Board wrote that the aims and objectives of BSBA were very similar to those which were held by the magazine *Health and Efficiency* which were printed in full in the introduction of this thesis. His article on these aims and objectives asserts that if British Naturism was to expand, it must take action to further assert itself in society and to do this needs a central organization at its core to plan the courses of action to be taken. He calls for further publicity for the movement through the placement of advertisements for sun clubs in journals devoted to outdoor recreation. His thought process being that subscribers to naturist magazines already know of the benefits of naturism, and they are not the audience which needs to be addressed if the organization is to grow. What is perhaps most important in his editorial, is that Stanley officially asserts that one of the goals of the BSBA is to attain the right to sunbathe naked on the public beaches of Britain. As has been seen already this was something not all agreed with, and to the opinion of writers like Robert Black, was a waste of time. He sites that numerous beaches in France and Germany have already done the same and that there needs to be a greater push for public support in order to make this goal a reality.²³³ The call for the BSBA to further engrain itself in the public life of Britain in order to grow was one shared by others in the naturist community. Writer for the *Sun Bathing Review* T. Ivan Pyle commented that “There must be advertising and

²³² Weston, “Local Organizations,” 15.

²³³ Ernest Stanley, “B.S.B.A. Aims & Objectives,” *Health and Efficiency* January 1952, vol. 22 no. 1, 17-18.

editorial features outside the naturist Press so that we can reach a wider public.”²³⁴ He advocated for clubs to find a way to integrate naturist activities into the daily lives of their community especially through the lends of education and health. He believed that sun clubs should offer summer programs such as nude swimming, sun bathing, and games at schools and colleges. For this to successful, Pyle believes that the presence of the BSBA is crucial and was supportive of the plan to create the C. or R.S.B.A.s so as to have better local community outreach.²³⁵ Despite the positive response held by some for the new five-year plan, the question which began to emerge on naturist lips was where the money was going to come from for their big new expansions? The answers to which were still not clear.²³⁶

Recognizing that problems were brewing in the BSBA, a meeting was held in January 1953 at the Bonnington Hotel. This meeting was called by the North Kent Sun Club and consisted of clubs disaffiliated and still affiliated with the BSBA. The results of the meeting were largely inconclusive, but it was decided that any necessary reforms should be brought about by democratic means within the Association.²³⁷ By Summer of 1953, problems continued to grow under the surface with the editorial for the June issue of *Health and Efficiency* opening with “CRISIS – Yes or No?” This editorial hinted at threats of disintegration of the BSBA due to disagreements of the members within it. When reached for comment on the issue, T. Ivan Pyle stated that “expressions of opinions by a vocal minority do not necessarily constitute a crisis...independent action by an

²³⁴ T. Ivan Pyle, “The Way Ahead for British Naturism,” *Sun Bathing Review* Summer 1952, vol. 20 no. 78, 32.

²³⁵ Ibid, 33.

²³⁶ The Editor, “Generally Speaking,” *Sun Bathing Review* Winter 1952, vol. 19 no. 76, 96.

²³⁷ Edward, “A History of Natursim,”; Wallace Arter, “The Birth of the F.B.S.C,” *Sun Bathing Review* Summer 1954, vol. 22, no. 86, 5.

individual or group of individuals who are not prepared to accept majority decisions is always regrettable, but it does not connote ‘disintegration’.”²³⁸ However, according to an inside source the magazine had, four leading club members from the Administrative Committee had resigned and more clubs were being formed outside of the BSBA than clubs being formed within it. The editor calls for an AGM to be held to clarify the facts concerning the possible crisis.²³⁹ The following month, a letter is published in *Health and Efficiency* addressed to all readers who supported naturism as a movement. This letter identified that there was a growing crisis within the BSBA and that there was legitimate discussion of a new Association being formed due to lack of faith in the BSBA. This new organization, to be called The British Naturist Association (BNA) would seek to base itself on the broader naturist principles focusing on health and freedom, not just nudism. The object of this organization would be to focus on building a healthier nation through sun and air bathing. The belief is that this new organization would attract the masses of health groups who acknowledge that nudity is only part of their naturist program. *Health and Efficiency* magazine offered its support in this new organization which having learned the mistakes of the past would be assured in its success.²⁴⁰ In the same issue of the magazine, Frank L Mitchell, a former member of the BSBA released a statement regarding the creation of this new organization as he felt that the BSBA was in such a weak and ineffective state that it wasn’t worth saving.²⁴¹

²³⁸ The Editor, “CRISIS – Yes or No?” *Health and Efficiency* June 1953, vol. 23 no. 6, 3.

²³⁹ Ibid, 8.

²⁴⁰ “A New Association,” *Health and Efficiency* July 1953, vol. 23 no. 7, 3.

²⁴¹ Frank L. Mitchell, “An Announcement of Great Importance: The British Naturist Association,” *Health and Efficiency* July 1953, vol. 23 no. 7, 11.

This new organization would according to Mitchell would be based on the ideals of health, happiness, and freedom. Regarding these three ideals he states:

All sensible people are now agreed that Naturism is a *Health* movement in which sun and air bathing take their rightful part. Our quest has always been for *Happiness* (although no one would guess it if they had attended the last few A.G.M's of the BSBA!), and *Freedom* is the goal towards which all "natural people are heading. This Freedom must be of the body and of the mind and must embrace freedom to undress or remain clothed; to eat meat or to become a vegetarian; to smoke or not to smoke; and to think and saw what one wills without giving or taking offence.²⁴²

This new organization carries with it a desire to be better integrated into larger society by opening up the ideals which it stands for and emphasizing that it is not just nakedness. The ideals expressed by Mitchell are much more in line with the ideals of the pioneers of British Naturism. All this, according to Mitchell, can only succeed if created with cooperation between all the clubs within the BSBA to join this new organization for a better future.²⁴³ The publicity for the BNA continued in the August 1953 publication of *Health and Efficiency* with Mitchell writing a special editorial on the constitution of this new organization. At the time of writing the editorial, the organization still existed in mind only and the purpose of the article was simply an outlet for Mitchell to spread news about the new government organization on which BNA would be founded. This new organization would have a National Council functioning as the brain which would be controlled and directed by Federations. These Federations would be self-supporting and autonomous, controlled and directed by clubs associated with them on either a regional or county basis. Federations would have their own Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer to be elected annually by its AGM. Each club in the Federation would deal with all enquirers and concerns within its area. The Federations would be supported by a levy of one shilling to be paid by all members of the

²⁴² Mitchell, "An Announcement of Great Importance: The British Naturist Association," 11.

²⁴³ Ibid.

associated clubs, half of which would be passed on to the National Council for expenses. This National Council would be composed of a President, Secretary, and Treasurer to be elected annually by a postal vote of the Clubs and two Delegates from each Federation. In addition, the registered subscriber scheme as carried on by the BSBA would be ended, and instead those who are supporters of the Naturist movement can supply money to a “fighting fund” directed at fighting tyranny and bigotry whenever it comes in opposition to the organization. In such a way these supporters who may not belong to clubs but still support the ideals can feel pride in helping move the organization along.²⁴⁴ The BNA was welcomed across Britain by clubs affiliated, disaffiliated, and non-affiliated with the BSBA. The most common comment in this regard being that there has been a loss in democratic control in the BSBA by its club members. The hope was that in the BNA a new national organization which represented the interests of all sun-bathing societies.²⁴⁵

The end of 1953 saw continued discussion into the problems facing the BSBA and possible solutions for how it could salvage something from the wreck it had become, a wreck in danger of collapse. The topic of lost democratic control amongst the clubs and in the BSBA was a major topic of discussion when considering if the BSBA had any future in the country, and how exactly it got to the disastrous situation it was in. As it stood in the fall of 1953, the BNA was well on its way to complete formation, with a band of loyalist BSBA members making a final stand for changes which may have kept the BSBA in existence. Problems had really begun for the BSBA not only with finances, but also with the elected members of the board.²⁴⁶ The organization was

²⁴⁴ Frank L. Mitchell “The British Naturist Association,” *Health and Efficiency* August 1953, vol. 23 no. 8, 3, 30.

²⁴⁵ “Statement by the Editorial Board,” *Health and Efficiency* August 1953, vol. 23 no. 8, 18.

²⁴⁶ Oliver Weston, “Control by the Clubs,” *Health and Efficiency* August 1953, vol. 23 no. 8, 11.

created for by clubs and their members with an Administrative Committee made up of members from these clubs who had worked hard to create them and ensure their interests were represented. By 1952, there was great difficulty to find candidates in the Administrative Committee to take the roles of these previous leaders to the point that new members elected weren't necessarily the favorite choices of the club, but rather the only individuals willing to hold the offices. These changes in leadership left the Administrative Committee with only one leader of an established club in its ranks. More club leaders were added to the Committee after a vote for the salary of the General Secretary in 1952, since that time all five area secretaries for the five zones resigned. The reaction to this problem was not ideal as instead of consulting clubs for a solution, the Administrative Committee made decisions guided by personal views.²⁴⁷ One possible solution to this problem would be a complete re-write of the BSBA constitution, and negotiations opened with disaffiliated clubs so as to take into account their views and opinions. It was quite clear that the clubs wanted more control over what occurred in the BSBA and desired a system more like other recreational organizations in the nation.²⁴⁸ Clubs and individuals would hold an allegiance to County and Regional Associations which would be autonomous in their own area and responsible for all the local activities therein. The County and Regional Associations would then provide the personnel for a national organization from which all minor detailed work was removed. This system would allow work to be completed on a voluntary basis, allow different procedures for each association, and ensure that money would go towards beneficial activities. The Registered Subscriber scheme would be out as the clubs did not agree with any influence or sway held by individuals who were not actually members of clubs and therefore did not have their interests at

²⁴⁷ Weston, "Control by the Clubs," 14.

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

heart. This model was largely successfully carried out in the K.C.S.B.A which demonstrated the benefits of a local organization. The question which remained was could the BSBA follow through with this plan and regain confidence from the clubs. The remaining clubs in the BSBA needed extreme reforms in order to provide measures which acceded with the views of the club, rather than provide half-measures to simply keep them happy.²⁴⁹ Still yet not all who supported nudism felt an organization was necessary. In a letter to *Health and Efficiency* a supporter called for simply a society of individuals who shared a common belief in the cause of nudism. This society would create an atmosphere favorable to individuals to whom the BSBA made no appeal. This society would be more casual and would simply allow individuals to get in touch with each other, correspond if so desired and exchange information. In addition, such a society could exist should the BSBA regain its ground and would act as an outlet for individuals to simply share their love of nudism.²⁵⁰

The BSBA's intentions as laid out in the Five-Year plan for the creation of County and Regional S.B.A.s would prove to only be successful in Kent, with a lack of general funds preventing other such groups from getting off the ground. This combined with BSBA officials seeking to control the BSBA with their own interests in mind were what lead a great many clubs to disaffiliate and seek the creation of new organizations. A meeting was announced for October 17, 1953, at which all the various contentious groups were invited to meet and discuss a plan in which the clubs could work in harmony with each other. Oliver Weston, who was hopeful regarding this meeting felt that a combination of ideas needed to be established. First, he agrees with Mitchell's plan for a Federation of local associations and is a goal which the BSBA was

²⁴⁹ Weston, "Control by the Clubs," 23.

²⁵⁰ R.T. "Letters to the Editor: Stop the Rot," *Health and Efficiency*, August 1953, vol. 23 no. 8, 27.

moving towards with its plans for County and Regional S.B.A.s. The plan as proposed by Weston would involve County and Regional Associations controlled by two groups: An Executive Committee and a Council made up of representatives for each Association. The Associations themselves would have complete autonomy about their finances and affairs knowing that the strength of the national group was behind them. There would be no paid staff required and all work would be carried out by volunteers across the country. In addition, voting rights would be adjusted so that no one group had a stronger voice than others. The only exception being that a group contained units with enough autonomy that warrant their own vote. In addition, a separate category would be created for affiliated organizations which were not clubs. They could not vote, but they would have a voice at meetings.²⁵¹

At the September 1953 AGM, it was agreed that the registered subscriber scheme needed to be reorganized with limited voting rights, and in addition a committee would be created to re-write the out of date constitution.²⁵² If considerable changes were not made to the constitution of the BSBA, the minimum support which the BSBA maintained would not be enough to keep it functioning. The proposed Conference of Sun Clubs to be held in October was postponed in favor of an informal meeting being held by those clubs already planning on coming to London on the 17th.²⁵³ The meeting, held at the Cora Hotel in London, was convened by Jim Butterfield of Diogenes, Andy Jepsen of the Kent Regional Sunbathing Association and Rod Martin of the Sunfolk Society, and it was chaired by Wallace Arter.²⁵⁴ This meeting was largely positive,

²⁵¹ Oliver Weston, "A Fresh Start," *Health and Efficiency* September 1953, vol. 23 no. 9, 8, 16, 24, 31.

²⁵² Edward, "A History of Naturism"; "The A.G.M of the B.S.B.A.," *Health and Efficiency* November 1953, vol. 23 no. 11, 22.

²⁵³ The Editor, "The Truce Before the Peace?" *Health and Efficiency* November 1953, vol. 23 no. 11, 3.

²⁵⁴ Edward, "A History of Naturism".

asserting that no new organization should be formed without the BSBA being given a formal chance at rectifying itself. It was determined that a small council consisting of the Sunfolk, Diogenes, and Kent Regional Association would meet to determine if there was a possibility of finding a constitution of a national organization agreed upon by all.²⁵⁵ In December of 1953, a notice was sent out to the clubs in Britain which asserted an eleven point plan to maintain unification between all the sun clubs under one national organization. Most notable amongst these eleven were the formation of Regional Associations within new zones, formation of a Central Council made up of members from the Associations, and the autonomy of these Associations with some exceptions. In addition, these Associations would pay an agreed amount to the Central Council to cover working and incidental expenses, and no member of the Council would receive monetary benefit for their services. Many of the points laid out here were similar to those in the Five-Year Plan, including the creation of Regional S.B.A.s. These proposed changes were met with a great deal of hope and positivity that the controversies of the past could be buried, and organized naturism could continue united in Britain.²⁵⁶ Weston's hopes for an agreement to be reached amongst the disagreeing factions of the BSBA and other naturist groups would not be realized.

As a result of the meetings at the Cora Hotel, a new constitution by the BSBA was drafted for March of 1954 which the BSBA committee in charge of revising the constitution refused to adopt.²⁵⁷ After many months of deliberation and failed negotiations, a split organization was formed at the Kenilworth Hotel on April 24- 25 1954 known as the Federation of British Sun Clubs

²⁵⁵ The Editor, "The Truce Before the Peace?" 3.

²⁵⁶ Oliver Weston, "Goodwill and Unity," *Health and Efficiency* December 1953, vol. 23 no. 12, 5-6.

²⁵⁷ Edward, "A History of Naturism".

(FBSC). Wallace Arter, who was chair at the Cora Hotel meeting was also appointed to be the chair of this meeting as well. The meetings held at the Kenilworth had begun with an invitation from the BSBA to meet and discuss possible paths forward. They began with reading letters which had been exchanged between the group formed at the Cora meeting as well as the BSBA. Following the letters, it became clear that negotiations had failed and a vote was placed for the formation of a new organization. It passed with only one vote against and a constitution was drafted that day. Arter comments that though the task seemed daunting, members present were brief in their speeches regarding items for the constitution and willing to give way to majority opinions. Following the creation of the constitution, board members were elected, and a date was agreed upon for the first AGM of the FBSC. The previous alternative organization BNA largely fell out of discussion by the end of 1953, though the ideals of Mitchell's organization were a large element of the FBSC which can be assumed to be the final version of his original vision. The creation of the FBSC was met with great enthusiasm especially within the pages of *Health and Efficiency* magazine which referred to it as "an association of sunclubs, controlled by the sunclubs for the sunclubs is now an established fact."²⁵⁸ The FBSC was set up on a system of governing which starts with the individuals of the clubs. Each autonomous club would elect a member to the Regional Association which itself was a completely self-contained and self-governing unit. This Regional Association would then elect a representative to the National Council which was formed by representatives from these Associations and four officers. Affiliation fees would be fixed by regional associations and paid in accordance with the estimated costs of the region.²⁵⁹ There was a great deal of hope for the future of British Naurism under the FBSC and some doubt as to whether

²⁵⁸ The Editor, "Now It's Up to the Clubs!" *Health and Efficiency* June 1954, vol. 24 no. 6, 3.

²⁵⁹ The Editor, "Now It's Up to the Clubs!", 3.

they would be able to work alongside the administration of the BSBA. The FBSC allowed sun clubs to join their federations without breaking past ties which could allow for collaboration between the two groups, however unlikely (Appendix J).²⁶⁰

Though there were early considerations that maybe unity could be found between the FBSC and BSBA, the mid 1950s was largely marked by a general lack of cooperation between the groups. There was also a lament to mistakes which were made which lead to the divisions in the first place. Both the FBSC and the BSBA seemed to be competing, each one claiming that more and more sun clubs were joining them in an attempt to demonstrate which organization was more popular. Given this attitude between the groups optimism at unification was low.²⁶¹ The relations between the two groups was clearly poor as demonstrated by the AGM notes of the BSBA in 1955. During the meeting the president of the BSBA stated that “I took office...hoping that we could prevent the split which threatened the movement. We were not successful. There was never any intention on the part of the other side to make peace and then they had the utter audacity to blame the B.S.B.A. That was an utter lie.”²⁶² Where the BSBA seemed sour and focused on past conflicts, the FBSC’s AGMs carried a more hopeful tone to them feeling that the

impression is one of harmony and good fellowship, combined with a determination, on the part of the chairman and every speaker, not to revive the ‘feuding’ which led to the formation of the Federation. This determination promises well for the future if it means that trouble makers will receive short shrift.²⁶³

²⁶⁰ Ernest Stanley, “A Great Step Towards Unity,” *Health and Efficiency* June 1954, vol. 24, no. 6, 9.

²⁶¹ Strix, “The Passing Scene,” *Sun Bathing Review* Autumn 1954, vol. 22 no. 87, 32 – 34.

²⁶² “Round the A.G.M’s: 1 B.S.B.A.,” *Sun Bathing Review* Winter 1955, vol. 23 no. 88, 53.

²⁶³ “Round the A.G.M’s: 2 F.B.S.C.,” *Sun Bathing Review* Winter 1955, vol. 23 no. 88, 55.

It is clear in the sentiments from the AGMs of both groups that where the BSBA was more focused on past grudges, the FBSC looked with more hope to the future of their new organization which seemed bright. The divisions and conflicts within organized British Naturism would prevent it from expanding and growing as much as it could have during the decade. Resources were divided amongst groups and the inability for the two organizations to find a middle ground stunted the possible growth for the movement. By the end of the 1950s both groups had established clear lines of division between them, and this conflict within the organizations was very apparent with the 1958 Woburn International Nudist Conference.

This conference was to be held at Woburn Abbey, home of the Dukes of Bedford. The estate consisted of 3,000 acres in which rare birds could roam at will. The house stands on the site of a Cistercian Abbey which was taken by the Crown during the Dissolution of the Monarchies and granted to the first Earl of Bradford in 1547. The house was also known for being visited by Charles I and Queen Victoria, and in 1958 it would play host to the naturists of Britain and the world.²⁶⁴ The earliest of these conferences had been held in Britain in 1951 at the North Kent Club, and not long after the International Naturist Federation (INF) was born. It was determined to host International Nudist Conferences on alternate years so as to save the cost. The Duke of Bedford was known for having a keen eye for public attractions and he needed sightseers to come to his stately home so as to prevent economic failure. He happily offered the grounds in the hopes that it would bring in great revenue and public attention, which it did. A recurring problem when planning the events was representation of naturist groups in various countries. Some countries, like Eire and Italy had no formal organization of naturism, while others like Britain had multiple organizations representing naturists in the country. During the 1950s the FBSC had put to vote proposals to

²⁶⁴ John Austin, "The Woburn Story," *Health and Efficiency Summer Annual* Summer 1958, 3-4.

further link the group to INF and in that way be represented by an umbrella organization at the conferences, though this idea was turned down. In 1957 the North Kent Club wrote to both the BSBA and FBSC suggesting that an *ad hoc* council be formed with leaders from each organization to make decisions and arrangements for the conference the following year. This proposal was treated with reserve by the two organizations, and no official communication between the two groups had been sent despite each being welcomed by the INF itself. In March 1957 the North Kent Club sent another letter regarding the need to come to a decision as no decision had been made. The FBSC replied stating they would meet and discuss it, while the BSBA flat out turned down the proposal stating it was unacceptable. In April of 1957 the offer for official representation had been withdrawn with both groups having not established a proposal for British sun club representation at the conference. Given the lack of unity between the two groups, British naturism would not be fully represented at the congress itself. A concern spread in the movement that those who could have contributed a great deal to the success of the conference would now be relegated to the sidelines as spectators.²⁶⁵ This assessment by Stanley at lack of unity and representation going into the conference comes as being contradictory to other publications made at the time. An article published in April 1958 suggested that no blame should fall towards the BSBA for lack of proper representation at the conference because from the time it was decided to host the conference in Britain at the fifth conference in 1956, the BSBA expressed a desire for full representation of all British Naturism. According to this writer, an invitation was sent to the FBSC which was rejected. As a result, the BSBA sent out an invitation to all sunclubs regardless of their affiliation to attend to the best of their ability. It was also established that even the sunclubs not officially

²⁶⁵ Ernest Stanley, "Background to this year's International Conference at Woburn," *Health and Efficiency* February 1958, vol. 28 no. 2, 7-8.

associated with any Association would be doing their bit to help represent British Naturism. Despite the rejection of the invitation by the FBSC, the willingness of nonaffiliated clubs to assist demonstrated a small degree of unity within the movement.²⁶⁶ Despite the lack of agreement between these two articles, they clearly demonstrate the struggle for the BSBA and FBSC to work effectively together. As a result, an event at which much progress could be made for the advancement of the organization, opportunities would be lost amongst squabbling between these two groups.

As August 1958 approached, the anticipation and buzz for the coming event was growing both in the naturist community and the public press. The gossip columns in Britain would hail the Duke's offer to host the event as ranging from generous to plain derisive. In an endeavor to provide additional attractions to appeal to a wider audience than just delegates to the conference, an International Naturist Camp was to be created on the grounds and would function from the 17 to 31 of August. This camp would be naturist through and through and as such nudity would be the rule on the premises. There were concerns that this camp would be open to the public and the general fears that came along with that idea. Visitors were assured that while the press could come to the conference itself, the camp would be restricted to naturists who could prove they were legitimate through BSBA membership cards or current INF passports.²⁶⁷ On August 17 approximately 150 visitors were present with expectations of 1,000 visitors per day when they all arrived. Fifty delegates were expected from thirty-eight different countries. Those present at the start included Austria, Denmark, Holland, the United States, France, Belgium, Switzerland,

²⁶⁶ Arthur Hodgson, "World Naturist Congress comes to Britain," *Health and Efficiency* April 1958, vol. 28 no. 4, 5-6.

²⁶⁷ Hodgson, "World Naturist Congress comes to Britain," 5.

Germany, Australia, New Zealand, and Great Britain. Among the topics discussed at the Conference were winter sports in the Alps, nude bathing on British beaches, and the question of forming an explicit definition of naturism.²⁶⁸ Within nudist publications, Woburn received wide praise with accounts detailing the interesting figures present and the wide success which the event was met with within the Naturist community. Jack Grey, the Camp Superintendent, wrote that “despite personal exhaustion, both physical and mental, from my efforts on the Woburn Camp over many months, I can truly say, with all our international campers, that Woburn, 1958, was an unforgettable experience.”²⁶⁹ The success of the Woburn International Naturist Conference would bring much joy and inspiration to the naturists of Britain. With the new year approaching, 1959 would give way to murmurs of a possible union between the FBSC and the BSBA. The 1950’s had been a period of dis-unity amongst the naturists and a struggle for individual clubs to find themselves represented in the larger organization. This lack of unity within the BSBA and subsequent split with the creation of the FBSC demonstrated British Naturism’s struggle as an organization calling its future into question. The details for the split, while seemingly insignificant were crucial elements addressed in the path to unity between the two organizations. The subsequent union of naturist interests in Britain would lay the foundational groundwork for how the organization functions to this day.

A Path to Unity: The Central Council for British Naturism

The FBSC and the BSBA came to realize by the end of the 1950s that much of the work they were doing was being duplicated by the other organization. The 1959 AGM of the FBSC

²⁶⁸ Special Correspondent, “Nudists Gather at Woburn Abbey,” *The Times*, August 18, 1958, 5.

²⁶⁹ Jack Grey, “Woburn was Wonderful!” *Health and Efficiency* October 1958, vol. 28 no. 10, 14 – 16.

Surrey Downs put forward the proposal that better relations be established between them and the BSBA. The Vice-Chairman of the FBSC, Frank Mitchell, voiced a possibility of union between the two groups at the time, but his voice was a lone one, the groups were not ready for this big step yet. January 1960 saw reports of better relations growing between the two groups but the Chairman of the FBSC urged not to rush it and risk further divide. In 1960, an informal meeting was held between representatives of the FBSC and BSBA. This was simply a meeting at which both groups compared their similarities and differences, there was no substantial move for unification at this time. The Kent region protested against the members that made up the BSBA representative council and changes were made to their delegation to ensure that negotiations could continue smoothly. The BSBA General Secretary at the time, Arthur Hodgson stated at the 1960 AGM that plans were being put in place for a meeting with the Federation, though no official dates had been selected at that time. Hodgson's sentiment towards the meeting was one of regret that the division had come to pass in the first place and was willing to work with the FBSC to find a solution and bring them back into the ranks of the BSBA.²⁷⁰ The Sixth Annual Conference held in October extended an invitation to members of the FBSC so as to establish better relations between the two groups.²⁷¹ At this conference, a motion was passed which unanimously approved of the officers who had entered into informal discussions with the FBSC. The view in mind being one of possible cooperation. The hope was that these conversations would result in a satisfactory outcome.²⁷² When examining the situation in 1960, Robin Black wrote that if most of the problems which are present between the two organizations is because there are disputes between individuals, then

²⁷⁰ Edward, "A History of British Naturism".

²⁷¹ "Official Notes of the B.S.B.A.," *Health and Efficiency*, October 1960, vol. 30 no. 10, 41.

²⁷² "Official Notes of the B.S.B.A. Annual Conference Elects Woman President," *Health and Efficiency* December 1960, vol. 30 no. 12, 41.

maybe these individuals need to take a step back. This was demonstrated earlier in the year when the Kent Club demanded delegates for a meeting change because of conflicts with one of its members. Here Black also cites a debate which was ongoing regarding the terminology of “naturist” and “nudist” which he sites as a major divisive factor, yet very little attention has been given to this debate in naturist magazines. Ultimately, he calls for both organizations to put their cards on the table and discuss the best possible future for the organization.²⁷³ He cites that this division has done nothing but harm the organization over the years stating that:

At present, and for the past five or six years, we have made ourselves look silly in the eyes of all those who bother with us at all. How many times have we been asked *why* a movement which, even if we accept the membership figure as 50,000, can claim only one supporter in every 1,000 of the population, is hardly “popular”, has two organizations?...Is it too much to ask naturists, and nudists, to think the matter over, to do a bit of “pruning” and, for the sake of the movement to do everything possible to bring peace in our time?²⁷⁴

Black’s plea for peace was a sentiment clearly shared by both organizations and this dialogue would continue into the following year. By 1961 all discussion regarding the FBSC and BSBA suggested a joint membership was coming to the two groups. In September 1961 the FBSC AGM at Nottingham passed a resolution that BSBA clubs would merge with their own through the acceptance of a mutually agreed upon constitution. The following month, the BSBA Conference passed a resolution which called for a Central Committee to pursue steps to solve the differences between the two groups.²⁷⁵

The December 1961 AGM of FBSC heavily hinted at and suggested that meetings were continuous and that there was a plan for unification being laid down. The Official Bulletin of the

²⁷³ Robin Black, “Peace in Our Time,” *Health and Efficiency* December 1960, vol. 30 no. 12, 8.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 9.

²⁷⁵ “The Path to Unity,” *British Naturism* Summer 1964, no. 1, 7.

FBSC commented that among the main topics of discussion at the meeting was closer unity with the BSBA. The proposal that both organizations would agree to merge together with a new constitution was passed unanimously.²⁷⁶ The president of the BSBA Muriel Clark expressed her desires to see an understanding reached between them and the FBSC and promised that this would be a serious goal of hers. Muriel would not be successful in this goal due to her death in December 1961; her successor Dorothy Thornton would continue her goals.²⁷⁷ January through May of 1962 would see various meetings of the leaders emerge as they slowly worked towards ironing out the problems that had caused their divide in the first place. These meetings would largely consist of the chairs of each organization along with a small delegation going to the AGMs of the other to observe and discuss ways to move forward. These discussions had been occurring since 1961 and it was clear that while there was a desire to find a way to merge the groups, there was not enough active action in making the joining a reality.²⁷⁸

This would change in August 1962 during the third major meetings at the SE. Essex Club. The decision reached by both the BSBA and the FBSC at this meeting was that the two groups would come together by 1964. At which time the sun clubs would meet to create a new Constitution and electing the first officers of this new joint venture. Drafting of this constitution began in November 1962 at a meeting held in London at which the Naturist Unity Committee (NUC) was created and appointed to begin the process of drafting the Constitution. Attending this meeting for the FBSC was Jack Watkins (Chairman), Roy Lambert (Secretary) Peter Fallows (P.R.O), and Bob Wilson (S.W. Region rep.). From the BSBA Dorothy Thornton (President), Keith Pickering (Vice-

²⁷⁶ "Official Bulletin of the Federation of British Sunclubs," *Health and Efficiency* December 1961, no. 728, 4.

²⁷⁷ Edward, "A History of British Naturism".

²⁷⁸ "The Path to Unity," 7

Chairman), Arthur Hodgson (Secretary), and John Rowlinson (Editor 'Verity'). At the February 1963 meeting of NUC it was decided that the new organization would be called the Central Council for British Naturism (CCBN) and a draft of parts of the Constitution were sent to the FBSC lawyer. In April 1963 it was agreed by NUC that Dorothy Thornton and Jack Watkins would work together as the main drafters of the new Constitution. This joint draft was completed in June 1963, which was met with celebrating forty years of naturism at the Fiveacres club. This early draft was being circulated to various clubs around Britain for their approval. Between the months of September and October 1963 both the FBSC and BSBA approved the early drafts for the Constitution of the CCBN. In January 1964, NUC met for the fourth time to review the amendments which had been placed forward regarding the constitution. A final draft of the constitution was scheduled to be circulated to all the clubs in time for the May 10 Unity Meeting. The AGMs of both the BSBA and FBSC in the May issue of *Health and Efficiency* reported the excitement for the coming meeting and the expectations for the future.²⁷⁹ The FBSC notes reported that

I am confident that as one of our best known naturists has said, that "this is a grand constitution, and I am sure it will work well." Whether it does, or does not rests in the hands of you, the members of the naturist movement of this country, for it is only with your co-operation that it can be made so to do..²⁸⁰

Finally, on May 10, 1964, the fifth and final NUC meeting was held at which the final draft of the constitution was created, and it was agreed upon that the CCBN would officially begin in July.²⁸¹ The meeting was regarded as one of the most important days in the history for the advancement of

²⁷⁹ "Official Notes of the B.S.B.A.," *Health and Efficiency* May 1964, no. 757, 25; "Official Monthly Bulletin of the Federation of British Sunclubs," *Health and Efficiency* May 1964, no 757, 10.

²⁸⁰ "Official Monthly Bulletin of the Federation of British Sunclubs," 10.

²⁸¹ "The Path to Unity," 8.

British Naturism. When reporting in *The Times* the scene was described as being incredibly hot and one which could not have been comfortable for the nudists.²⁸² Fifty of the seventy clubs in the country sent delegates and friends to the meeting, leading to a group of over a hundred visitors to vote on the new constitution. In addition to representatives from British sunclubs, the president of INF Erik Holm flew in to show his support for the momentous occasion. The meeting was begun by a voting on the new constitution by leading members of BSBA and FBSC which was carried unanimously. Following the vote, delegates from each represented club were invited forward to sign a Founders Charter, which Erik Holm signed as witness and special guest. The official vesting date was decided upon to be July 1, 1964, and following a selection of eight Officers, with Jack Watkins as chair for the CCBN the historic meeting was adjourned. Immediately after the meeting, a press conference was held outside during which the journalists were given a comprehensive coverage of the events leading to unification and what it means for the future.²⁸³ During the press conference, Watkins asserted that naturism was a growing family health movement which required the addition of many new sun clubs due to their growing success. An interesting distinction made in the article by *The Times* was that the term ‘nudist’ was no longer accepted, and the official terms were to be “naturist” and “sunclubs.”²⁸⁴ This was a decision which had been reached in 1961 amidst discussions for unity in the BSBA. They determined that the term “nudist” was inappropriate and should be changed to “naturist.”²⁸⁵ This had been a debate occurring in the naturist community for some time especially during the period of division in the 1950s and hinted

²⁸² “Sunless Advent for Naturism,” *The Times*, May 11, 1964, 9.

²⁸³ “Official Monthly Bulletin of the Central Council for British Naturism,” *Health and Efficiency* August 1964, no. 760, 81-82.

²⁸⁴ “Sunless Advent for Naturism,” 10.

²⁸⁵ Edward, “A History of Naturism – Timeline,”.

at by Robin Black in his 1960 article “Peace in our Time”. In addition to the new term “naturist” being the official word to use, the organization provided a new definition for naturism which defined it as “a health movement which advocates outdoor recreation, including the judicious practice of sun, air, fresh water or sea bathing without clothes, either individually or socially, in private grounds or in other suitable circumstances.”²⁸⁶ This new definition asserts that the focus of naturism is to be a health movement which did not change since its inception in the 1930s, however it demonstrates the shift from optional nudity which wasn’t the norm, to nudity being common place and expected in a naturist environment.

The July issues of *Health and Efficiency* magazine would see the last time the AGMs for the BSBA and FBSC printed in naturist magazines. The sentiments carried by the BSBA were ones of both sadness and hope for the future acknowledging the sadness of the end of the BSBA after 21 years of existence, but the hope for the future and unity of the two groups.²⁸⁷ The FBSC did not express any sadness over its end but rather that with all information being placed together under the heading Central Council for British Naturism, it will be much easier for prospecting members to find a local club and not being concerned with clubs changing affiliations and appearing in the notes of one organization and changing to the other by the next month.²⁸⁸ With the CCBN officially vested in July, 1964 the organization began the publication of a new magazine to represent the interests of the group, aptly named *British Naturism*. This magazine established by the CCBN remains the organization’s official magazine to this day. In the first issue of the magazine, the CCBN released the new constitution which was officially approved in May. Perhaps

²⁸⁶ “Sunless Advent for Naturism,” 10.

²⁸⁷ “Official Notes of the B.S.B.A.,” *Health and Efficiency* July 1964, no. 759, 88.

²⁸⁸ “Official Monthly Bulletin of the Federation of British Sunclubs,” *Health and Efficiency* July 1964, no 759, 76.

one of the most important sections of the constitution which are essential for understanding how the organization planned to move forward in the future was its Objects, printed in full bellow:

The objects of the Central Council shall be:

- (i) In furtherance of the physical, moral, and mental well-being of the community the promotion of Naturism, a health movement which advocates outdoor recreation including the judicious outdoor practice of sun, air, fresh water or sea bathing without clothes, either individually or socially, in private grounds (sun clubs, naturist clubs) or in other suitable circumstances.
- (ii) To ensure the continuing co-operation of all bon-fide Sun Clubs and similar societies in the United Kingdom for their mutual assistance and encouragement.
- (iii) To further and safeguard the standards of the Sunbathing Movement and ensure that Naturism is presented creditably to the general public at all times.
- (iv) To represent the British Naturist Sunbathing Movement in all matters, including negotiations with and representations to Government, representation in international organisations and participation in organisations co-ordinating the interests of sports and recreations on a National scale.²⁸⁹

A clear emphasis of these objectives as laid out in the new constitution was growth and expansion into the public sphere of Britain. By placing public image as a main objective, as well as a desire to CCBN's involvement in sports and recreation around the nation and internationally, there was a clear desire for the organization to expand and fully integrate itself as a recognized form of recreation. The organization has struggled with this goal since its inception largely due to a fear of what too much action could bring. The mantra for the organization up until 1964 has been one of slow guided growth and no major jumps which could paint the organization in a negative or poor light. The organization already struggled against social views towards nudity and the fears of original members to not let their identities be known acted as a hamper on the potential growth and expansion of the movement to spheres outside of the sun clubs. Though the code names of early movements were gone, members were still cautious about revealing their identities for fear of negative reactions from friends or employers. A problem still faced by some modern naturists.

²⁸⁹ "Constitution of the Central Council For British Naturism," *British Naturism* Summer 1964, no. 1, 9.

This sentiment of more openness and better treatment by the press was carried in by Gordon Spence, a long-time writer for an article series entitled “Generally Speaking” in *Health and Efficiency*. When commenting on the publicity received by the creation of the CCBN he expresses that there was no commentary to which most naturists had become accustomed such as “meeting behind locked doors to argue about the bare facts of life...All the delegates remained unruffled in their overcoats and the windows were tightly shut.”²⁹⁰ The sentiment of each of these suggests secrecy and mystery behind closed doors. The language found in the constitution of the CCBN suggests a change in this general attitude of secrecy and fear. This change would not come easily or quickly and would make small gains until the late 1970s.

While British Naturism was healing its divisions and coming united together under the banner of CCBN, Britain was experiencing drastic change in its attitudes towards sexuality and public morals. The 1960’s saw immense changes in both social and cultural history around the globe in which sex would play a key role. Historian Arthur Marwick discusses these changes and listed sixteen developments which characterized the cultural revolutions of the decade. Amongst these was a ‘permissiveness’ which was described as “a general sexual liberation, entailing striking changes in public and private morals and...a new frankness, openness, and indeed honest in personal relations and modes of expression.”²⁹¹ The reasons for this change are widely debated by historians, but they seem to fall into two camps. The first, of which historian Hera Cook is a proponent argued the influence of increased technology, particularly in regard to contraception which played a key role in changing sexual norms and morals. In particular, she argues that

²⁹⁰ Gordon Spence, “Generally Speaking,” *Health and Efficiency* August 1964, no. 760, 23.

²⁹¹ Callum G. Brown, “Sex, Religion, and the Single Women c. 1950-75: The Importance of a ‘Short’ Sexual Revolution to the English Religious Crisis of the Sixties,” *Twentieth Century British History* 22, no. 2 (2011), 190.

historians place too much emphasis on structural forces and overlook the impact of new technology such as the pill which was made accessible to the British public in late 1961.²⁹² On the opposing side of the historical argument is Callum Brown who argues that there was a growth in pre-marital sexual intercourse before the pill's availability to single women and therefore the causes of this sexual revolution in Britain were cultural rather than technological in nature. He does agree that it reached a peak when the pill was released, but it was not the main influencer as Cook argues. Brown also argues that the rise in pre-marital sexual behavior was also impacted by a 'death of Christian Britain' and crisis within the church during the 1950s and 60s. The dominant conservative Christian culture in the 1950s was restraining for single women and desires for pre-marital sex. The changing social norms of the 1960s led to rising sexual activity and reduced Christian church attendance, leading to a religious crisis.²⁹³ As has already been established, naturists in Britain have worked tirelessly to separate themselves from associating nudity with sexuality in their ideals. This, however, did not stop them from printing advertisements in their magazines promoting gels and creams for breast enlargement for women. A common advertisement which would appear in many magazines in Britain from the 1930's though to the 1980s. Naturist articles in Britain however did not address the issue of the pill, but would instead focus on naturism and its beneficial roles towards sexual education, a topic which will be addressed in detail in part three of this thesis. Interestingly naturists did involve themselves in debates surrounding naturism and how it relates to religion. In the March 1943 issue of *Health and Efficiency* a Christian minister wrote an article entitled "Naturism and England" in which he argued that naturism and Christianity had a great deal in common and could benefit each other. He argued

²⁹² Hera Cook, "The English Sexual Revolution: Technology and Social Change," *History Workshop Journal*, no. 59 (2005): 109, 115.

²⁹³ Brown, "Sex, Religion, and the Single Women c. 1950-75," 189.

that naturism was a cure for indecent sexual behavior. He expressed the idea that Christianity and naturism were aligned and that the Gospels lead us to the free-est and fullest life possible which includes ideals of Naturism.²⁹⁴ While there was a positive response to naturism in one particular article future issues do not delve further into naturism and its relationship with Christianity. The possibility of a positive relationship existing between these two organizations does make sense due to naturisms devotion to promoting family values and a non-sexual environment. Most traditional naturist camps were governed by a kind of puritanism that regulated the establishments and it was virtually certain that orthodox sexual morality was much higher within naturist camps than outside them in the world at large.²⁹⁵ While the fact that everyone is naked in a naturist environment may have seemed off putting, this particular reverend does not seem to think it was a major issue. This does however demonstrate that naturism was permeating into various elements of British social sphere outside of health movements.

With the more permissive society developing in 1960s Britain one of the problems which the CCBN had to deal with was the new medium of film. Film was a powerful tool either for the benefit or detriment of the organization. While some pro-nudist films such as ‘Travelling Light’ were produced, they would often be run as second runner ups to the sexiest films which the British Board of Film Censors would allow. This was extremely damaging for naturists as the images of nakedness and sexuality became more and more intertwined. This negative public image which resulted from sexual films would stunt the ambitions present in the language of the CCBN constitution and is a topic which will be discussed in detail later in this thesis. This negative turn of public view for CCBN and the naturists caused a battenning down of the hatches to the point

²⁹⁴ Edward P.F. Stubbs, “Naturism and Religion: A Church of England Viewpoint,” *Health and Efficiency* March 1943, vol. 13, no. 3, 54.

²⁹⁵ Ableman, 91.

where by 1970 not even naturists knew the names of the officials in the CCBN. When the world congress came to Britain in 1970, the press were not allowed at the event as they had been for previous events from which most publicity had been positive for the movement.²⁹⁶ Once again, naturists were facing head on the confusion of nudity with sexuality, a stigma they had been fighting since the 1920s. Conditions for CCBN and British Naturists would not improve until 1978 with the International Naturist Federation holding its congress in Britain once again. Though nerves were high, and the press were restricted to a limited area. Tensions did not break until Orla Jess Jessen, a naturist from Denmark, strode forward completely naked to shake the hand of the elderly and fully clothed Mayor of Farcham in Hampshire who had been invited to the event. This was thoroughly enjoyed by the press and the event along with British Naturism was favorably publicized.²⁹⁷

The events at the INF Conference helped spur a new and revitalized push to drop the secrecy of the organization and enter the public eye more fully. The sentiment of 1978 was that the only way the movement could foster, and grow is if it is openly discussed and talked about. By remaining secret, and hidden from the world, it allowed ignorance to fester leading inaccurate assumptions to be made in the public press. Writer for *British Naturism* Pert Oxley wrote that the CCBN needs to advertise in magazines outside of naturist spheres such as ladies magazines, camping, leisure, caravanning, general interest, etc. so as to reach a wider audience. For Oxley this is an untapped potential which the organization was doing nothing to explore and expand into. To support his claim, Oxley refers to his local club TANDO which began the process of publishing weekly adverts in the local newspaper. In addition, TANDO organized big events in conjunction

²⁹⁶ Clapham and Constable, *As Nature Intended*, 95.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

with World Naturist Day so as to attract more members, which it has. Much like the first issue of *Sun Bathing Review* in 1930, Oxley calls for the naturists of Britain to wake up!²⁹⁸ In addition for a need of better PR as Oxley calls for, there were also calls for the defense of naturist photographs being confused with soft porn, especially in regards to children and teenagers. The editor of *British Naturism* established that the movement needed to make its position clearer and assert its Naturist Code which was worded beyond a doubt to the general and individual respectability of the movement. He establishes that “our seventy-year-old Movement never has, not ever will, accept that ‘soft porn’ is a true description of happy pictures of contended naked youngsters in the health surroundings of our clubs and naturist sponsored swims and saunas.”²⁹⁹ Debates surrounding naturist photographs and the merits versus possible damages of them were a topic that received much debate over the course of British Naturism’s history and is one which is asserted as the editor stated above. This cult of secrecy as it was sometimes called that had grown over the years in organized British Naturism was something that had to be done away with in the interest of growth. Magazine contributor Denys Williams argued that unless naturists took action, the organization would be doomed to remain behind a barbed wire of its own making. A common problem he found amongst naturists was their unwillingness to discuss that they were in fact a naturist in social settings because of a fear of backlash which may ensue. According to Williams, how can a naturist convince others that naturism is beneficial for physical and mental health if everyone is afraid to discuss it. Along with this need to expand he also brings up the topic of the problematic single male, something the organization has struggled with for many years. Williams asserts that naturism is a wonderful opportunity for a man and wife to take full advantage of and naturist organizations

²⁹⁸ Peter Oxley, “Let’s Wave the Naturist Flag,” *British Naturism* Spring 1978, no. 55, 14.

²⁹⁹ “Editorial,” *British Naturism* Summer 1978, no. 56, 2.

should do all they can to assist interested single men in finding women willing to experience naturism with them.³⁰⁰ Organized British Naturism had stumbled again, and again in its inability to take advantage of opportunities to expand out of fear of public response. The movement had over the course of its history also struggled with censorship in its photographs and appealing to the masses particularly women and youth. There are several factors which were present and ever changing during the decades of the movements, history from its inception to the creation of the CCBN which prevented it from taking full advantage to expand into the public eye. These major factors need to be examined individually and through the lens of change over time to better understand the cult of secrecy which plagued British Naturism for much of its history.

³⁰⁰ Denys H. Williams, "Banish the Cult of Secrecy," *British Naturism* Summer 1979, no. 60, 19.

PART 3: THE SPIRIT OF PUBLICITY & THE FUTURE OF BRITISH NATURISM

When examining the history of British Naturism and to better understand how it has sought to, and through much of its history, failed to establish itself in the public eye, individual problems which plagued the movement and their impact need to be examined. As has been established in this thesis, British naturists have consistently expressed a desire to expand into the public eye, while also being afraid of it due to the taboo of nudity. From a financial perspective, an organization such as British Naturism which requires funds for the upkeep of its camp grounds needs to entice new members to maintain and upkeep these facilities. In addition, should the movement continue in Britain it needs to entice new members, preferably young ones who can carry naturist ideologies with them into the future thereby guaranteeing the continued existence of British Naturism. Despite the fears and limitations, British Naturism would seek to solve these individual problems with the goals in mind for expansion of their ideals and physical organization. These problems include photography and the questions of nudity and proactive imagery, balance of the sexes in camps, youth presence, portrayal on film, and expansion to the beaches of Britain.

The Eye of the Beholder

Debates surrounding the necessity of nude photography in naturist publications began in earnest in 1951. Artist Bertram Stevens addressed the issue of nude photography in nudist

magazines. One of the many complaints regarding the publications was the need to re-touch the photographs, especially the genitals. To the general readers this was considered unnatural, but as Stevens points out this is required by law.³⁰¹ The question which remained was because the images were being re-touched and considered un-natural, should they even be printed in the first place? Though Stevens did agree that re-touching gave an unnatural look, he still felt nude photographs were important for a number of reasons. The first being that nude photographs have played a key role in changing public perception of the naked body and allowing for more educated discussion of the body itself. He comments on how nude images were once only found in saucy magazines pawned over by business men and curious teens and that nude photography was rarely seen or found in art shows. In the modern world, he claims that this has largely changed and that young adults can now walk past a display of nude photography and not be overcome by sniggers but rather hold a dignified conversation.³⁰² In addition, Stevens argues that though some retouching is done, the subjects of the photographs often pose in such a non-suggestive way that they still give off a sense of naturalness in the photograph. He also establishes that the individuals in the images are average every-day people to demonstrate that Naturism is not just for people of a certain body type. Finally, the nude photographs are important because they allow the public to actually see what it is like in a sun club and shows how happy and healthy the individuals who go to them are, nude photographs are an effective marketing tool that should not be done away with simply because of the need to retouch images.³⁰³ The nude images which Stevens describes shared very similar characteristics during the printings in inter-war era Britain. The naked bodies featured in

³⁰¹ Bertram Stevens, "The Importance of Naturist Photographs," *Health and Efficiency* March 1951, vol. 21 no. 3, 4.

³⁰² Stevens, "The Importance of Naturist Photographs," 5.

³⁰³ *Ibid*, 20.

magazines like *Health and Efficiency* were generally white, with some warmly tanned figures, as well as young and slim; a complaint which is addressed by nudist writers in the 1950's.³⁰⁴

The debates surrounding retouching images so that genitals such as the penis, or pubic hair could not be seen continued through the early 1950s. One solution which was offered to prevent the need of re-touching images was the use of “le Minimum” for nudist pictures. As the name suggests, “le Minimum” was a small article of clothing, very much like a modern-day bikini bottom which covered as minimal an area as possible in the genital region so that re-touching would be unnecessary (Appendix K). This fashion trend was commonly found on the French naturist beaches of the Isle de Levont. Noted commentator on Naturism, Roy Gill when commenting on the issue, discusses what he believes to be the main problems facing naturist photographs and why something like “le Minimum” should be considered. The first being that when a model is made to pose to “hide” their genitals, the resulting image looks just as unnatural as a retouched photograph, the second being that if the model is allowed to pose in a natural position then retouching is necessary to ensure the magazine will have no legal problems. As a result of re-touching nude models began shaving their pubic hair so as to make it easier for photographers to carry out any re-touching that may be necessary, a practice which according to Gill was not common amongst most British naturists.³⁰⁵ As a result, editors were more likely to choose images from professional nude models rather than average every day British naturists because of the troubles of re-touching. Gill comments on the fact that many readers have complained about too many models in the pages and not enough pictures of average every day naturists. In order to present more naturally posed photographs and allow for more every day

³⁰⁴ Polleen, “Utopian Bodies and Anti-fashion Futures,” 465.

³⁰⁵ Roy Gill, “Why not ‘Le Minimum?’” *Health and Efficiency* May 1951, vol 21 no 5, 14.

naturists to make the pages of the magazines, Gill highly recommends “le Minimum” as the solution to complaints about unnatural photographs. He makes it clear that this would not be something commonly worn in naturist clubs, only when faced with a camera. Clubs could make it known that this change has been forced upon them by the law, thereby placing the blame on them and maybe leading to some change.³⁰⁶

Gill’s opinions were not widely popular amongst the naturist community, and in October 1951 naturists wrote in to *Health and Efficiency* to give their opinions surrounding “le Minimum”. One opinion in favor of the garment suggested that maybe it be colored more like a natural skin tone so as to better blend in with the skin, though this supportive idea was the minority.³⁰⁷ Most naturists cited the garment as one which would be taking a step backwards for naturism and one which could bring more harm to public image than good. One commentator wrote that “from the standpoint of good taste the garment defeats its own object. Its obviousness immediately suggests sex-consciousness the very thing which nudism claims to minimize.”³⁰⁸ Another commented that it was a nasty piece of clothing and incredibly offensive being on line with the ‘posing pouch’ which was worn by many men in some nude photographs. This writer stated that they would rather “be either frankly clothed in useful and reasonable garments, or honestly and decently naked!”³⁰⁹ The article of ‘le Minimum’ is not widely seen in publications of *Health and Efficiency* and hence was not a widely adopted practice used by the naturist community. Retouching photographs was a problem to be sure, but it was one which they had to accept until laws changed.

³⁰⁶ Gill, “Why not ‘Le Minimum’?”, 15.

³⁰⁷ “Le Minimum,” *Health and Efficiency* October 1951, vol. 21 no. 10, 13.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 12.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 13.

In December 1951, Roy Gill responded to the back lash received for his support of the ‘le Minimum’ to be used in photographs. To start he asserts that he does not support the use of the garment in every day naturist venues, referring to the item as a ‘monstrosity’ to emphasize his dislike of it. In response to arguments that the use of “le Minimum” in photographs would give the wrong idea about naturism, he points out that photographs in publications like *Health and Efficiency* are all taken in natural settings, while the pin-up images of partially clad women usually feature women in artificial settings, in unnatural poses with garments like stockings or gloves.³¹⁰ Given this difference Gill does not believe that the use of “le Minimum” for photographs would lead to a loss of integrity in nude images. The issue of retouching has always been made in reference to women, even though both men and women’s images were retouched. Gill establishes that retouching a male nude picture is ghastlier in many ways than the retouching of a woman’s image. Ultimately Gill defends that “le Minimum” should be used only for certain photographs and maybe could be reduced over time as toleration increases.³¹¹

While the focus of the debates around nude photographs were on “le Minimum” they also brought up the discussion of increasing female readership of *Health and Efficiency*, the connection being made that maybe more images with ‘le Minimum’ would attract more women. One of the concerns raised in the article was the busty covers embarrassed women, making them not want to purchase the magazine. One proposed solution was that the magazine should use a regular cover for each issue with a cover design which would maybe make women less embarrassed and could lead to less criticism of the magazine.³¹² Nudist photographs and their retouching was a point of

³¹⁰ Roy Gill, “I Defend ‘le Minimum’ and Why,” *Health and Efficiency* December 1951, vol. 21 no. 12, 12.

³¹¹ *Ibid*, 13.

³¹² ‘le Minimum’, 13, 31.

tension for the publicity of the movement, and entering into the 1960s with the birth of the CCBN, British Naturism began a process of examining how it could best grow as an organization and improve its standing in Britain. By the mid 1960s, some conversations questioned whether or not the magazines should be printed at all, though as most new comers to the movement cited magazines as a starting point this was not a likely change to be made by the CCBN.³¹³ When naturists themselves were polled about naturist magazines, many surprisingly agreed with outside critics in that the magazines featured too many pin-up style pretty girls and “teaser” clichés on the covers. Despite the concern of the somewhat sexual covers and images that were emerging, leaders of CCBN suggested it wasn’t necessarily all bad as while some may purchase the magazine being enticed by the cover image, they walk away from reading it with an interest in naturism. So, while the motivation may not be the purest, it leads to a good end. Debates were resurfaced as to whether or not changes should be made to the magazine covers to not have a nude image at all, though the concern there being that vendors wouldn’t want to carry a non-flashy naturist magazine.³¹⁴ Issues surrounding publication of naked photographs in magazines would drastically change in the early 1970s when pubic hair would be allowed to be shown in naked photographs. Pubic hair at the time, was used as a cover for the genitals as they were not the focus of the image and the attractions were to the naked body as a whole. However, in the 1980s and 90s trimming of the pubic hair became more apparent and the new daring trend was to show the lips of the genitals.³¹⁵ *Health and Efficiency* would begin printing open crotch images which angered many naturists who felt that

³¹³ A. R. Sannar, “Nudist Publications and Nudism’s Public Image,” *British Naturism* Winter 1966, no. 11, 16.

³¹⁴ *Ibid*, 17.

³¹⁵ Barcan, *Nudity: A Cultural Anatomy*, 28.

their ideals were being betrayed in order to sell more magazines (Appendix L).³¹⁶ These later editions, especially of *Health and Efficiency* were in many ways counter to the family oriented ideals of Naturism, a struggle which would be most prevalent in trying to have more families as members and a more even mixture of men and women.

Too Many Men, Not Enough Women

The issue of ensuring a balance of sexes is a problem not unique to British Naturism. American naturism faced this issue on a large scale in the post-World War II world, the main concern being that their clubs would be perceived as homosexual hot spots. Even in early British Naturism history, pioneer groups were largely male in their membership with fewer women participating. The very first issue of the *Sun Bathing Review* addressed the issue by establishing the rule that single men were not allowed at sun bathing clubs and they had to be accompanied either by women or children. The article tried to assert that the motives of the men were not being questioned, but rather that whichever sun society the man was applying to had the right to judge him based on the ideals of the society and its goals for the future.³¹⁷ Its reasons for not allowing all men to join when they express interest is because they seek to reflect the accepted basis of social life in general society. The goal of the sun bathing movement was to educate larger society, but in order to do so they must maintain the proper balance of sexes that exist in society so as to prove that what it has to offer is in line with accepted social norms. What single men needed to do, was attract more women and entice more women to join. The article argued at the time that if women approved of the movement, then whole nation would enjoy sun and air benefits in a flash.

³¹⁶ Barcan, *Nudity: A Cultural Anatomy*, 27.

³¹⁷ L, "The Single Man and the Family S.B. Group," *Sun Bathing Review* Spring 1933, vol. 1 no. 1, 21.

They even reassured men that women they bring can stay in swimsuits until they are comfortable and that they should emphasize the health benefits of sun bathing with women so as to further entice them.³¹⁸ An advertisement insert for the Yew Tree camp in the same issue re-asserted that single men must be accompanied by a woman if they wish to join.

Debates surrounding the issue of the single man in naturist camps were relatively absent from the pages of naturist publications until the 1950s in which Robin Black defends single men and their usefulness to the movement. He sites that over the movement's long history, single men have played key roles in helping to found camps and do the heavily lifting in building them up. He refers to the histories of several camps, which he deigns not to name, and how single men were all part of its founding group.³¹⁹ Black reasserts that the so called "ban" on single men is not in place because their motives are in question, but rather to ensure a balance of sexes. Women were more likely to remain in the movement if they see women in the camps, too many men put them off. Black proposes that the current solution of just telling men that they should talk to women about naturism is hard to do, especially when they themselves can't take part in it. Rather, he suggests a probation period for single men in which they could be members for a six-month period and if they cannot produce a partner in that time, they would be asked to leave. In this way they can still participate in naturism while single, but also satisfies the need for balance as they will be asked to leave if they cannot produce a partner.³²⁰ There is however no evidence as to whether this probation policy was instituted by individual clubs.

³¹⁸ L, "The Single Man and the Family S.B. Group," 21.

³¹⁹ Robin Black, "In Defense of the Single Man," *Health and Efficiency*, July 1951, vol. 21 no. 7, 4.

³²⁰ Black, "In Defense of the Single Man," 5.

The issue of balancing the membership of camps would resurface in 1957 when Ernest Stanley, a writer for *Health and Efficiency* examined the issue from five different perspectives. He asserts that the policy of each sun club regarding single men would be unique to that club as they maintain the right to whatever policy best suits them. Having families as members in British clubs is important for its growth and image as the movement seeks to emulate society's values and appear as a normal activity.³²¹ If there were as many single women as single men seeking to enter the camps, there would not be a problem and the current discussion would not be held, but most applicants are men and in the interest of balance many are turned away. This sentiment that men were simply being turned away to balance sexes is not one which all men agreed with. In an angry letter to *Health and Efficiency* entitled "Fallacies, Misconceptions, and Hallucinations Surrounding the Single Male," the author asserts that anyone who asserts a bar on single men from entering naturist clubs must be imagining a depraved creature seeking to look at nude women for their own enjoyment. He refers to an Anti-Single-Man Brigade that seeks to prevent men from entering with no valid arguments as to why men should not be able to join. He also cites that he does not know of any women in this group and therefore how can they represent the idea that women would be uncomfortable with their presence. He also makes the claim that he has yet to find a woman who asserts that they are uncomfortable with more men in the camps. Ultimately, he fails to see any argument for why men should not be able to join and feels that he is in need of an explanation that to him makes sense as to why men should be turned away.³²² Another letter written suggests it isn't fair to turn away a single man because his wife doesn't agree with naturism.

³²¹ Ernest Stanley, "Balancing the Membership," *Health and Efficiency*, February 1957, vol. 27 no. 2, 6.

³²² S. Essex PRO, "Letter File: Fallacies, Misconceptions, and Hallucinations Surrounding the Single Male," *Health and Efficiency* February 1960, vol. 30 no. 2, 40.

He understood that the goal was to keep the “wrong types” out, but just because his wife does not agree with naturism does not mean he is one of them. The author ends his complaint by asking how many potential naturists have been lost because of these restrictions.³²³ Stanley cites that the only problem is not in too many single men, but rather British Naturism’s failure to attract women to the movement. He remarks that a single man is more likely to buy a naturist magazine than a single woman is, if a married man buys the magazine, he may share it with his wife.³²⁴ The problem however is reaching the women who are single for which he does not propose a solution but rather asks for suggestions from readers as to what could be done. Due to the lack of single women, the clubs are put on the defensive in how to deal with single men. Some clubs will admit young men as they are more likely to attain a girlfriend and thereby bring a woman. These single men however do not often stay long and leave the camps after a few seasons. This creates a system in the camps in which young men are allowed in with the hope of bringing women. While they are there, they often help run the camp doing much of the heavy lifting. When they leave after a few seasons they are then replaced by a new batch of single men and the process begins again. Ultimately Stanley asserts that this is a problem with no easy solution and one which has to be solved one of two ways, either single men bring in more women, or British Naturism adapt to better entice women to join the movement.³²⁵

While Stanley and many other naturists proposed that a married man or a man with a girlfriend could be easy, this was not always the case. Some men still struggled to bring their spouse and or girlfriend into the folds of naturism. One disgruntled man, listing himself as J.W.,

³²³ R.F. “Letter File: Outside Paradise,” *Health and Efficiency* June 1960, vol. 30 no. 2, 40.

³²⁴ Stanley, “Balancing the Membership” 7.

³²⁵ *Ibid*, 8.

wrote to *Health and Efficiency* complaining that he had tried all that he could, but his wife was still un-responsive to joining in. He asked readers to respond in the hopes that someone else may be able to provide suggestions for how he could better entice his wife to join in.³²⁶ The following month, a woman who listed herself as GA wrote a letter addressed to J.W.'s wife in the hopes that maybe she would be convinced if she heard how wonderful naturism was from another woman. She starts by trying to assert her reasons as to why JW's wife would be disinterested listing possible reasons such as not wanting to change her day to day life or perhaps being accustomed to the fineries of life and naturism seems to be the opposite of this.³²⁷ She continues on by stating that marriage takes two and she must understand how much her husband likes naturism, asserting that he is in an awkward position as he himself cannot enjoy naturism without her. She sites how saddened she is when she sees potential naturists turned away because of an unwilling spouse, even hinting that she may be heartless for not understanding his struggle.³²⁸ She continues by arguing that hundreds of people do it and it can do her no harm, only good. She also re-asserts that she wouldn't have to undress her first time if she did not want to. She urges it is something she may enjoy and that she should try compromising with him and go every other weekend and give naturism a try. She understands her reluctance and if she isn't interested in the offered activities then she can simply read or bring her knitting. Ultimately, she asks the wife to give her husband a chance.³²⁹ JW's letter received two additional responses in January 1960, the first of which suggested that he discuss the familial emphasis of naturism. He cited that

³²⁶ J.W. "Letter File: One Man's Problem," *Health and Efficiency*, November 1959, vol. 29 no. 11, 33.

³²⁷G.A. "Letter File: Play Fair, Mrs. W," *Health and Efficiency*, December 1959, vol. 29 no. 12, 36.

³²⁸ Ibid.

³²⁹ G.A. "Letter File: Play Fair, Mrs. W," 36.

ours is the only movement which caters for *all* the family – parents, children, even babies. To see other people’s children, as well as one’s own, growing up and to watch their progress from year to year is a source of continual pleasure to all parents, as well as to those couples who have no children of their own.³³⁰

In addition, he noted the wonderful social aspect of meeting like minded people and that his wife was more than welcome to be a spectator for her first visit. The other response to the letter related his story of taking his wife to see a naturist film, *Garden of Eden*, after which she seemed interested. She only agreed to visit a camp however if she could remain clothed her first time through, to which the writer adds he made no effort to force her to join on her first outing. The next time they went he said she gladly joined in and they have become active naturists ever since.³³¹ The Secretary of the Western Sun Folk also chimed in on the conversation, praising G.A. for her response and remarking that she is not seeing as many reluctant wives any more, in fact she finds that women are more keen after taking the first step than men are. Her advice for JW was to take a holiday to a naturist venue to determine if his wife would be interested in joining a sun club. In this way they don’t have to worry about a membership and can enjoy a nice holiday together.³³² Though JW received much advice and support from the naturist community, he commented in another letter that he has been unable to change his wife’s point of view.³³³ For some women, the problems for joining were not related to being embarrassed about nakedness or anything of such sort, but rather the financial costs of joining a naturist club. This naturist, referring

³³⁰ P.B Cooney, “Letter File: The Reluctant Wife,” *Health and Efficiency*, January 1960, vol. 30 no. 1, 40.

³³¹ Peter, “Letter File: The Reluctant Wife,” *Health and Efficiency*, January 1960, vol. 30 no. 1, 40.

³³² Secretary Western Sun Folk, “Letter File Fallacies, Misconceptions, and Hallucinations Surrounding the Single Male,” *Health and Efficiency*, February 1960, vol. 30 no. 2, 40.

³³³ J.W. “Postscript from J.W.,” *Health and Efficiency*, February 1960, vol. 30 no. 2, 40.

to themselves as GW stated that when their spouse realized the cost, they became much less interested and disapproved of the whole affair.³³⁴

The problem of women not being interested in naturism continued to be heavily discussed in the naturist community in the early 1960s. In an editorial entitled “Are Naturist Women Squares?”, the question was again raised as to why women did not seem interested in naturism. The author suggested that naturism was too simple for women. It lacked the color, flash, and mystery of clothing and the confidence it can provide. In their generalization, women did not want to all be equal in their nakedness thereby being reduced to a common denominator. Though the author provides no clear solution, they emphasize that pushing the family centered focus of naturism is what will ultimately win more women over. Women are interested in marriage according to the writer and therefore emphasizing family values will win more women over and it is an asset.³³⁵ Eileen Grey, long time naturist and *Health and Efficiency* contributor remarks that women have a hard time wrapping their head around naturism as a non-sexual item. She also mentions that they are put off by the seeming secrecy of naturism because they would have to go to secluded camp in order to participate. In response to these fears, Grey mentions that the only reason naturist camps are so secluded is because they are simply following the law and seeking to practice in such a way that does not come in conflict with those laws.³³⁶ In regard to sexuality, she comments that never once has she been approached in an inappropriate manner nor has she ever been privy to misconduct at the camps. In fact, she argues that men and women reach a more wholesome level of understanding. Some women questioned why there needed to be mixed social

³³⁴ G.W. “Letter File: The Reluctant Wives,” *Health and Efficiency*, July 1960, vol. 30 no. 7, 39.

³³⁵ “Are Women Naturists Squares?” *Health and Efficiency*, August 1960, vol. 30 no. 8, 3.

³³⁶ Eileen Grey, “Women and Naturism,” *Health and Efficiency*, September 1961, No. 725, 57-58.

nudity to which Grey replied that men and women were created as a pair, not separate and that shouldn't change regardless of whether clothing is being worn or not.³³⁷ She finally ends her argument for why naturism is beneficial for women by stating that it is healthy and beneficial for the children. Not only would they have exposure to the vitamins provided by the sunlight, but they would also grow up with a more appropriate knowledge of the human body and wouldn't have to go looking at inappropriate magazines to learn about the body.³³⁸ Her argument, like many trying to entice women to join the movements also hints that they are holding back their husbands and children from a wonderful experience that they will really enjoy! Though it is subtle there is a degree of naturist writers using some guilt to entice women, whether it be that their poor husband is suffering, and they can help by joining them and being naked, or that they would be depriving their children of an extremely beneficial opportunity both physically and mentally. This mentality of the generation of young women in the 1960s and 70s that had been raised to accept the needs of others and not make a fuss about their own desires. This logic was especially applied within the context of the pill as in gaining the ability to say yes to premarital sex without fear of pregnancy, they also lost the right to say no as men expected they wouldn't.³³⁹ A similar type of guilt or pressure is hinted at in the language of the article concerning women acting as barriers for their husband or children's enjoyment. In addition, the questioning on the part of other women regarding why there needed to be mixed social nudity is likely influenced by feminist groups in the 1960s with publications of books like *The Feminine Mystique*. Though much naturist writing was pushing family values as they felt it would entice more women to join, books like *The Feminine Mystique*

³³⁷ Grey, "Women and Naturism," 58 – 59.

³³⁸ Ibid, 59.

³³⁹ Cook, "The English Sexual Revolution," 121.

were condemning consumer society that fed the myth of the housewife which made women prisoners in their own home.³⁴⁰ These texts were damaging to traditional values of gender roles in the family, roles which naturism had supported in its goals of presenting to the world an organization based on traditional family values. If British Naturism was to bring more women into the organization, they would have to change their perception of who the naturist woman was to better reflect the changing ideas of gender roles as pushed by feminist movements in the 1960s.

The CCBN to better reach women, ran a regular feature in *British Naturism* by Barbara, a naturist who wrote articles seeking to appeal to women. In their 1966 Yearbook, Barbara addresses the modern woman, referring to the working girl using naturism as a break from her busy work filled life. The women Barbara is addressing are not joining naturism because they are preventing their husbands from doing something they want to do, but rather because it is something they will enjoy as individuals. She highlights that though women have made many advances as individuals in society, there is still the judging eye of Mrs. Grundy in the background which prevents many girls from joining a movement in which they can be free. Barbara highlights in her article various opportunities for how women can get involved in a sun club as well as reassuring them that they by no means have to undress on their first visit, though she comments that she'd be very surprised if they do in fact stay dressed.³⁴¹ In their 1981 Handbook, the CCBN lay out a description of who the naturist woman was, describing her as:

...all heights, weights, colours of hair and eyes, ages, levels of education and as brown as possible. She is fit or lazy, humorous or serious, usually responsible and healthy, reasonably articulate, possibly married with children and relatively sane. Her interests include reading, sport, knitting, people, dancing, chess, wine-making,

³⁴⁰ Florence Binard, "The British Women's Liberation Movement in the 1970s: Redefining the Personal and the Political," *French Journal of British Studies*, no. 22 (2017), 1.

³⁴¹ Barbara, "Women in the Sun," *British Naturism Yearbook*, 1966, 15.

conservation, cookery, and many others. She is organised or untidy, cheerful or bad-tempered, fashionably or warmly dressed or naked. In short, she is a normal woman who likes to take off her clothes.³⁴²

The remainder of the article continues to describe naturist women as those in charge of their own lives who like to get naked regardless of what the prudish and narrow-minded outsiders might say of such an action. She is a woman who looks to her own well-being and takes charge, someone who is tough. This depiction of a naturist woman is hugely different from the language being used before of women who are simply the barriers to their husbands from enjoying a nice leisure activity. The only negative comment the article makes is that many women too often look to their husbands for decision making and that naturism would be far more accepted by women if more women who were already naturists would be willing to devote more time to helping spread the cause. A male-dominated representation does not improve the public image of her lifestyle. Though this article does largely build up women in the naturist movement, it also confirms that women's lack of an active role in naturism is an ongoing problem for the CCBN and it is still calling for more efforts being placed in attracting them to British Naturism. The problem of enticing women to join Naturism often goes hand in hand with the images in the magazines of women. The women in the magazines are often young, skinny, tanned, and with large breasts. This is not representative of ordinary naturist women and makes it harder for women to be interested in joining British Naturism when the images they are presented with are the same ones they see in beauty advertisements. The ideals presented in ads and in magazines are often unattainable which is a deterrent to women joining. In the modern day, the technology allows the photoshopping of images. All magazines, whether they be women's or men's, glamorous in style or homely, photoshop the images. The result is subjects, both models and ordinary people are presented with

³⁴² Charlotte C. Peters, "Naturist Women," *British Naturism Handbook*, 1981, 8.

no wrinkles, blemishes or shadows on their faces.³⁴³ The problem of enticing women to join British Naturism is one which the movement faces still to this day, though progress has been made.³⁴⁴ Modern nudists are united together in ideas of accepting others as they are, whether they meet society's standards or not, as well as a critique of image culture and hypocrisies of modern fashion.³⁴⁵ British Naturism today further seeks to make progress through the establishment of a specific webpage for women on which they state that they hope to promote "greater awareness of the negative effects of societal pressure on women to look good" and "provide mutual support to help women be happier and more confident about their bodies."³⁴⁶ While British Naturism has made strides in its endeavor to have a better mix of sexes, its struggle to convince women to join their ranks has prevented the organization from reaching a significant margin of the population.

Think of the Children!

The inability of organized British naturism to have an even mix of sexes prevented it from growing as much as it could have, particularly in cases with married couples in which wives were not interested in joining a naturist club. In addition to the struggle of maintaining a balance between men and women, over the course of its history the movement struggled to attract the interest of youth in the nation. Naturism was a notoriously older crowd with few members in their young teens or early twenties. In the post-war British naturist community was largely composed of individuals who were in their twenties or younger at the end of the war. By the end of the 1950s

³⁴³ Barcan, *Nudity: A Cultural Anatomy*, 39 – 40.

³⁴⁴ . Peters, "Naturist Women," 8-9.

³⁴⁵ Barcan, *Nudity: A Cultural Anatomy*, 170 -171.

³⁴⁶ "Woman in Naturism," British Naturism, accessed April 19, 2019, <https://www.bn.org.uk/campaigning/womeninnaturism/>.

the children who had been five or ten years old in the camps were teenagers, some of whom began drifting away from naturism.³⁴⁷ Trying to include youth has proven to be a problem for British Naturism in its history. From the early years of organized British Naturism, naturists professed the benefits of naturism for youth from the perspective of growing up without shame in their bodies or a stilted view towards sex, a mantra which is repeated throughout the movement's history. The World's League of Sexual Reform, an organization based in London professed that one of the best forms of sexual education for youth was for parents to raise their children without any sense of mystery regarding the human body and sexuality. This practice is something that all men and women should do in a suitable environment whenever possible. Naturists jumped on this information professing that what they offered was the perfect place for this theory to be put into practice, expressing a desire for contact to be made to the organization to form a partnership of sorts.³⁴⁸ Children raised in a naturist environment "very quickly learn to take the primary sexual characteristics for granted. They romp together entirely free from sexual consciousness and without precocious desire."³⁴⁹ For the early years of the movement, children interested in Sun Bathing was key to its survival and continued growth in Britain. Younger children around the ages of eight and younger were cited as being natural nudists themselves taking no qualms in running naked around the home or outdoors. The belief was that for these youth, being raised in an environment in which the naked body was not viewed as something to be hidden and purely sexual would maintain these beliefs and practices, even when they realized not everyone else held their

³⁴⁷ Ernest Stanley, "Naturism in Modern Life Part 6," *Health and Efficiency*, April 1959, vol. 29 no. 4, 21.

³⁴⁸ "Sexual Education and Sun Bathing Clubs," *Sun Bathing Review*, Spring 1933, vol. 1 no. 1, 33.

³⁴⁹ Clifford W. Greatorex, "Sincere Comments Upon Naturism," *The Naturist*, September 1938, vol. 1 no. 10, 310.

beliefs.³⁵⁰ Given that the movement would survive out of the 1930s the movement was able to attain enough youth interest in order to keep it alive and functioning.

Discussion surrounding improving efforts to include youth in the movement resurge in the 1950s especially with all the events being held such as the Festival of Naturism at the North Kent Club. With more publicity and the possibility of growth, naturists began looking for new opportunities they could offer in order to entice youth to join the movement. Leslie Kay, a naturist who worked with youth for thirty years chimed in on the struggles of enticing teenagers to become nudists. She cites the problem that as they reach puberty young men and women become self-conscious about their bodies and are less willing to strip down in a public place. In addition, young adults gravitate towards what is popular.³⁵¹ Parents who are naturists are often dismissed as being tied to old ideas that are no longer considered cool and therefore since no one does it anymore, they are not interested. For those teenagers who may go against the general social norm and develop an interest in naturism, often times their parents are against it making it additionally challenging to bring them into the fold as their parents disapprove and will not allow them to go to a naturist club. Leslie argued that these teenagers are curious about their bodies and naturist camps are the perfect place for students to answer these questions in a healthy environment. The problem which remains even if there were interested youth, was the required distance traveled to get to naturist camps given how secluded they are.³⁵² Leslie's suggestion as a solution to this problem was a summer youth camp for young naturists, something which many youth

³⁵⁰ The Editor, "Children and the Sun Bathing Movement," *Sun Bathing Review*, Summer 1935, vol. 3 no. 10, 44-45.

³⁵¹ Leslie Kay, "Holiday Sun Camps for Teen-Agers?" *Sun Bathing Review*, Autumn 1951, vol. 18 no. 75, 50.

³⁵² Kay, "Holiday Sun Camps for Teen-Agers?", 51.

organizations associated with various sports already do. Leslie suggests that the B.S.B.A. would have to commit to an interest in sex education and sponsor a trial series of talks and discussions hosted for youth within reasonable distance of a sun club. This sun club should then be open to offering courses on swimming, gymnastics, or other forms of athletics for the interested youth. In order to gauge interest in such a club, Leslie polled two groups of parents. One group which she had held lectures for on sexual education, and another which she had not. In the latter group, 6% agreed to the proposal, 14% were extremely against and the remaining 80% were doubtful. In the group which she had held lectures for 63% were interested in the proposal, the remainder being doubtful with no one against it. The stipulations being that it would have to be a very well regulated and managed organization. Leslie felt that given this response, a summer camp ground focused on sex education and numerous physical activity opportunities is one possible solution to the youth problem.³⁵³

As Leslie mentions in her article, the youth were interested in movements in which they could find other individuals who shared a common interest. Writer of the series “The Passing Scene” cited in the *Sun Bathing Review* that the old spirit of getting back to nature had died in the movement and that naturism has blended with everyday life. New naturists lack the pioneering spirit of the early days and simply want holiday places to relax.³⁵⁴ While Leslie focuses on puberty as being a problem for why teenagers were not interested in naturism, others cited the circumstances under which naturism was born. The early movement grew out of a wide range of other general health and back to nature movements which offered the youth of the day something new and adventurous. To take part in these movements was considered going against the norm and

³⁵³ Kay, “Holiday Sun Camps for Teen-Agers?”, 52.

³⁵⁴ Strix, “The Passing Scene,” *Sun Bathing Review*, Summer 1953, vol. 21 no. 82, 46.

a large number of youth explored the opportunities offered. Modern naturism has nothing to offer modern youth except the novelty of taking clothes off, which for many is not enough of a motivator to join.³⁵⁵ In order to bring in more youth in the movement, some felt that the B.S.B.A. should emulate other popular youth organizations, in this instance the Youth Hostels Association (Y.H.A.). This organization establishes hostel opportunities across England for youth, and it was an organization meeting with a great deal of success. One of the reasons for this success being that it was very easy for youth to get involved in the organization. Naturism on the other hand, has a long and annoying screening process to ensure the person interested is in fact the right kind of person. The Y.H.A had many fewer rules and regulations making it easier for youth to get involved without having to worry about their sincerity being questioned. In addition, the Y.H.A sells itself as a holiday opportunity, whereas naturism was sold as a weekend opportunity.³⁵⁶ The holiday aspect allows youth to plan long trips over a range of locations due to their membership granting access to multiple associated venues. Naturism in Britain offered no such passport which allowed admission to naturist camps across the country, admission to these camps required memberships and long trial periods, preventing them from just driving up and visiting for the day. In order to attract the youth of the day, naturism had to change drastically to bring back the exciting adventurous pull of naturism as the youth would be the bed rock for the future. There was some doubt as to the B.S.B.A's ability to adapt itself to attract the youth.³⁵⁷ Due to changing social norms since the movement began in the late 1920s and early 1930s, British society had become more open minded to the point where in the mid-1950s people could go to a beach and lay around mostly

³⁵⁵ R.T. "Nudism and Youth," *Sun Bathing Review*, Winter 1953, vol. 20 no. 8, 78.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 79.

³⁵⁷ R.T. "Nudism and Youth," 90.

naked aside from some relatively small bathing suits that covered the genitals and breasts. For the modern youth, given this acceptance in society, the cost of becoming a member of a sun club, which are not cheap nor easy to get to was not worth it for all. Many sun clubs also lacked the modern amenities of modern resorts making them much less appealing to young adults. Though many knew organizations like the F.B.S.C. and B.S.B.A. needed to adapt and change, there was a concern in losing the essence of naturism. Naturism was simple and changing it to include all of the modern-day amenities could cause it to ruin what so many had struggled to build.³⁵⁸ While naturists struggled with ideas for how to bring in new young members in order to ensure the continued existence of organized naturism, another problem which emerged was youth leaving naturism when they reached their teenage years. Some like Wallace Arter attested that this was simply a rebellious phase that every young adult went through which would eventually end.³⁵⁹ It was recommended by some to simply let them be, it was natural that they should develop interests outside of naturism and if the parents tried forcing them to remain naturists, it may make them want to do so even less.³⁶⁰ Naturists began writing in to magazines such as *Health and Efficiency* raising their concerns regarding this growing problem, one of which commentating:

One of the couples who helped found out club – two of our best members – have resigned. They have a daughter who is nearly fourteen and she has refused to come with them to the club any more. She is an only child and they say they must put her welfare before their own pleasure. So we've lost them.³⁶¹

Robin Black, curious to hear from the teenager's point of view found that young teens find the whole thing somewhat silly, why bother play games closed off in a nudist camp when one can play

³⁵⁸ Wallace Arter, "New Blood for Nudism," *Sun Bathing Review*, Autumn 1956, vol. 24 no. 95, 46-47.

³⁵⁹ Ibid, 47.

³⁶⁰ Strix, "The Passing Scene," *Sun Bathing Review*, Autumn 1956, vol. 24 no. 9, 53.

³⁶¹ Robin Black, "The Years Between," *Health and Efficiency*, January 1961, vol. 31 no. 1, 7.

the same games outside and not feel like someone who would be considered a crank or a looney. Despite what appeared to be a somewhat growing problem, Black assures naturist readers that this does not spell doom for organized naturism and that the organization will continue to attract men and women of all ages who will ensure its continued existence.³⁶²

Regardless of the hope that new members would continue pouring in, some naturists, like Jack Gray felt not enough action was being taken to attract youth which he set out to do in 1959. Gray had worked as Camp Supervisor during the events held at Woburn Abbey and in this position, he was able to enquire from naturists across the world concerning youth groups in their countries and how they attracted youth to join the movement. Following his discussions, he decided to try to form a group for young British naturists called The Sunlanders. At the time of an article released in April 1959, no formal actions had been taken to make The Sunlanders a reality. Gray does point out that he had applied for membership with the B.S.B.A. and the F.B.S.C. In addition, he had supposedly received hundreds of letters of support for the creation of such an organization.³⁶³ Some sun clubs, in an effort to reach out in their local communities and invite groups such as boy scout troops to swim nights in the pool. Ernest Stanley, writer for *Health and Efficiency* also claimed that due to the enhanced status of some clubs, local parents were more willing to allow their teens to join if they wish, but this was certainly not across the board in the movement.³⁶⁴

Entering the 1960s with closer movements towards unification in the B.S.B.A. and F.B.S.C. naturists continued to examine the problem of youth in the movement. A new concern

³⁶² Black, "The Years Between," 8.

³⁶³ Jack Gray, "Accent on Youth," *Health and Efficiency*, April 1959, vol. 29 no. 4, 12.

³⁶⁴ Stanley, "Naturism in Modern Life Part 6", 21.

which developed was whether the youth would be willing to commit to club memberships and build up camps, or act as butterflies flitting from camp to camp. The butterfly group only sees naturism as a pleasure activity and do not necessarily limit themselves to membership at a camp when looking for a place to practice naturism. These groups while they are tolerated at the naturist camps largely do not contribute anything to the growth of the movement or improving camp life. They are not willing to do the work needed to maintain and build up camps, as they would much rather simply enjoy the amenities.³⁶⁵ Ernest Stanley sites an incident of a youth group which sought to camp for a weekend at a naturist camp, but when they learned of a curfew and that they would have to help with projects around the camp, interest in the event dissipated. They did however spend the same weekend at a different naturist camp which had more modern amenities and no need for the youth in the group to do any work around the camp. While Stanley believes that the group may have still enjoyed their stay at another camp ground, it still stands as a marker of the challenges the organization faces. One proposed solution was to create programs like the boy scouts in naturist camps for youth which would strive to provide them with enjoyable recreation as well as character building activities. The hope here being that more youth would become leaders in the camps, and not butterflies flitting around not contributing much at the growth of the movement.³⁶⁶ Entering into the early 1960s the desire for a more youthful vibe to be found in naturism is clear in changes made to *Health and Efficiency* magazine. The magazine began printing a colored cover, though the model on the cover was in a bikini and not naked, a trend that had been occurring for the magazine through the 1950s. In addition, more images were added, mostly of nude women including some that stretched across two pages, something more commonly found in

³⁶⁵ Ernest Stanley, "Whither Naturist Youth?" *Health and Efficiency*, August 1960, vol. 29 no. 4, 16-17.

³⁶⁶ Stanley, "Whither Naturist Youth?", 17.

a pornographic magazine rather than a publication meant to inform about a health group. Publications such as these only increase the struggles of naturist groups to portray a family friendly public image. In addition to these changes a new section of the magazine was created specifically for youth. The first article printed was in the November 1961 issue and it was written by a young naturist which is very clear in the language used in the text. The author starts his article by saying:

Any movement, whilst relying on the experience of its older members, must look for new ideas and enthusiasm from its younger members... Young people to-day – and that includes me – like Acker Bilk, Italian-designed clothes, Pepsi and Anthony Wedgewood Benn. We don't like old fashioned things like capital punishment, prudery, and racial prejudice. When we're told we're morally wrong and haven't got any values we tend to turn our history books and point to the two World Wars, the triviality of the twenties and the racketeering of the thirties. Naturally we revel in the scooters and transistor radios of 1961, and soon we shall be crowing round the first colour television pictures.³⁶⁷

The author of this article strikes a tone that likely fits the image of one of the butterflies which Stanley mentioned in his article about the problems of youth. This individual definitely expresses the cocky attitude and confidence which comes with youth when faced with an older generation that doesn't want to change. The author excitedly points out that new naturist youth organizations have begun taking form. He mentions two groups in particular which had formed in recent years. These groups included The Sunlanders, which had their origins in 1959 which had already converted some young adults to the movement. In addition, the North Kent Club established a youth group known as The Badgers which was meeting with success in their grounds.³⁶⁸ When discussing the amenities available at the clubs for youth, he remarks at the hard work of the pioneers doing the work for them. This is very clear when he comments on pools stating “Most

³⁶⁷ Bob Davis, “Calling Youth,” *Health and Efficiency* November 1961, no. 727, 53.

³⁶⁸ Davis, “Calling Youth,” 54.

clubs now seem to have a pool of some sort. Just like that. It's there. Dug by someone else.”³⁶⁹ He also emphasizes that youth need not give up the comforts of the age when visiting the naturist camps, a topic which had been a concern amongst older naturists worried about losing the essence of naturism and why it began in the first place. He finally ends stating that naturism is taking a youthful tilt hence why special attention is now being given to them in the pages of *Health and Efficiency*.³⁷⁰ Following the creation of the C.C.B.N. this naturist tilt mentioned by Davis in his article continued to spread through the roots of the organization. The 1966 yearbook for the organization cited that youth are the focus of the age, making comments towards changing the age at which they can leave school to sixteen as well as the Newsom Report. This Report, which was created by the Central Advisory Council for Education which identified serious failings in teaching less able students age 13 to 16. It was named after J.H. Newsom who was chairman of the advisory council.³⁷¹ An article addressed towards prospecting new youth members highlights the success of organizations like The Sunlanders and the Badgers. The Sunlanders, the article notes are not officially associated with the C.C.B.N. nor do they have a club affiliation but rather offer services traveling to various camps across the country as well as other trips out of the country in the summer. The article also mentions winter youth opportunities demonstrating a growth in expanding ways and places for youth to take part in. In addition to these groups, the C.C.B.N. also created a group called The Naturist Youth of Great Britain (N.Y.G.B) which offered opportunities similar to that of The Sunlanders. Organized British Naturism would continue making progress towards attempting to appeal to youth in British society and organizations such as the N.Y.G.B.

³⁶⁹ Davis, “Calling Youth,” 55.

³⁷⁰ Ibid, 57.

³⁷¹ “Half Our Future (the Newsom Report),” STEM Learning, accessed February 15, 2019, <https://www.stem.org.uk/resources/elibrary/resource/32666/half-our-future-newsom-report>.

would continue through the 1970s and 1980s. In the 1970s, a highly praised documentary entitled *Let's Go Naked* provided insight into how naturism was viewed by youth through the eyes of twenty-three-year-old Kate Sturdy, who was new to naturism, and sixteen-year-old Mark Frankl, who was raised in naturism. Kate was traveling to Cap D'Adge, a famous French naturist resort, as part of the documentary to gain insight from the perspective of a young adult. Though she cited some slight apprehension at going, she commented that it took her little convincing. By the end of her stay, Kate took quite naturally to naturism finding the whole experience wonderful and wishing she could stay longer. She commented on how much more relaxing the experience was than she thought it would be, and the thought of having to return home and wear a bikini at the beach seemed ridiculous to her now. Frank commented on how his friends viewed that he was a naturist, explaining that they were very inquisitive especially regarding what it was like to constantly see naked girls. He voices his frustration at the fact that they don't seem to understand that it's not about sex and that a naturist doesn't go around constantly thinking about it.³⁷² Kevin's sentiments regarding the sexual view of naturism by youth was yet another challenge which the CCBN had to overcome in order to entice young members to join their ranks. Though the growth of the new youth movements in the 1960s demonstrated growth in the area of garnering youth interest, keeping youth invested in the movement is still a concern to this day, though one which is improving. Efforts to better reach the public and young adults for the movement grew and changed over the decades, with one medium in particular making large splashes in the perception of naturism amongst youth and the general public in British society.

³⁷² *Let's Go Naked*, produced by Adam Clapham, presented by John Pitman, aired January 3, 1974 (BBC 1), YouTube, 50 min., https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0VgxL2rCmK8&list=PLxjizzBh-_hVhVgQYeR1DpKHWL7jwrbDy&index=3&t=0s.

Naked on Camera

Magazines and the images in them often enticed new individuals, particularly men, to join the naturist movement and organizations such as The Sunlanders and N.Y.G.B were created in an attempt to attract younger members. However, another form of publicity for organized naturism was through the medium of film and television through which they could reach a wider and possibly younger audience, enticing them to join the ranks of British naturists. One of the challenges which would be faced by British naturists when using this medium would be film censors managing how much, and what kind of nudity could be allowed on screen. In 1912, the British Board of Film Censors (B.B.F.C.) was created to tackle two major issues, portrayal of religious themes and nudity. When trying to determine what was appropriate and what was not, a forty-three-point list was released in 1916 detailing what kinds of scenes would cause the film to be edited and chopped, or not allowed to be shown. Among these points was “bathing scenes passing the limit of propriety.”³⁷³ As film and movies were becoming more and more popular and present in the public’s lives, a special committee was formed in 1917 in order to examine film and its influence on the general public. The consensus reached was to turn up the censorship of films as well as the lights in movie theaters! Despite the best efforts of organizations such as the B.B.F.C. films would prove to be more powerful than moralism and would become a permanent fixture in popular culture.³⁷⁴ One of the first naturist films to reach Britain’s shores was the American film *Garden of Eden* which was released in America in 1954 but was not allowed to be shown in Britain until 1957 where it struggled to be widely shown due to the B.B.F.C. and the nudity present in the

³⁷³ “Moral Panic,” *Visual Image: The Genius of Invention – Ideas that Changed the World* (BBC., Copyright 2013), from Films on Demand, 2 minutes 51 seconds, http://fod.infobase.com.providence.idm.oclc.org/p_ViewVideo.aspx?bc=0&xtid=57497.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

film. Despite the struggles it faced, it was positively received by the naturist community in Britain. While the film was not considered to be of the highest quality, one reviewer citing the cliché plot and cringe worthy dialogue, it was an honest and positive portrayal of naturism.³⁷⁵ The film follows a woman and her daughter who arrive quite by mistake at a nudist camp in Florida. The daughter, who is six years old in the film takes quite naturally to the prospect of going without clothes while the mother struggles with the concept. Over the course of the film she is eventually won over and joins in with the nudists. Hearing about what is going on, the main character's father-in-law comes to the camp with the intention of bringing them home, but he too is won over to the nudist ideals and by the end of the film they are all enjoying taking part in the nudist lifestyle. All the nudists that appeared in the film were regular members of the sun club.³⁷⁶ Their portrayal was praised by British naturists as they demonstrated how genuine nudists/naturists act. Most of the nude crowd scenes in the film depicted children and adults at play along the edge of a beautiful lake which was hailed for its wholesome and natural portrayal of nudity. Despite the limitations in the quality of the film, it was considered in Britain to be a pioneer in naturist films which positively depicted naturism and what it had to offer. In a point of comparison to the location of the film, it was pointed out that most British naturist camps did not have the same amenities available as in America, but that viewers interested in going to a naturist camp would not be disappointed.³⁷⁷ In a testament to the success of the film drawing in new members to naturism, after taking a reluctant wife was willing to try naturism with her husband following the film.³⁷⁸

³⁷⁵ John Austin, "Sunbathers on the Screen," *Health and Efficiency*, March 1957, vol. 27 no. 3, 4.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 6-7.

³⁷⁷ Austin, "Sunbathers on the Screen," 4, 5, 6.

³⁷⁸ Peter, "Letter File: The Reluctant Wife," 40.

The American naturist film *Garden of Eden* was released on the cusp of a major social change in Britain during the 1960s giving way to a more permissive culture and sexual revolution (Appendix M).³⁷⁹ This change in culture would see more of a challenge from the population against the B.B.F.C. and their censorship policies. Local authorities had the power to review decisions made by the board and over rule them either in favor of or against the release of the film. One of the major challengers to the B.B.F.C. was the Greater London Council which inspected all films that came its way questioning some of the board's decisions, damaging its authority. These challenges lead to some films being allowed in areas of Britain whilst being banned in others.³⁸⁰ Evidence of this occurring appeared with the release of *Garden of Eden*. When it arrived in Britain, the B.B.F.C refused to license the film at all, not even granting it an "X" rating, meaning it could only be viewed by adults. The board cited the reason for this being that they would not be distinguishing between one form of adult nudity and another. The London City Council however, ignored the B.B.F.C.'s decision and granted the film a "U" rating, meaning it could be seen by anyone in the London City Council Area. Berkshire also granted the film a "U" rating, the town of Reading in Berkshire however granted it an "A" rating, meaning children could only see the film if accompanied by an adult. Middlesex was much less lenient in its rating of the film, giving it an "X", restricting it to adult audiences. Finally, Surry and East Ham banned the film entirely, meaning anyone interested in the film would have to go elsewhere.³⁸¹ This lack of uniformity

³⁷⁹ Sue Harper and Justin Smith, *British Film Culture in the 1970's: The Boundaries of Pleasure* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 138.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid*, 25 -26.

³⁸¹ Austin, "Sunbathers on the Screen", 5.

within Britain regarding film censorship meant that the ability to see films like *Garden of Eden* heavily relied on how lenient the local board of film censorship was.

Film censorship in the 1960s caused many film makers to protest against a system “which denied them the opportunity to hold a mirror up to their times – or, indeed, any time.”³⁸² At the cusp of the 1960s and social change in British culture, one of the most famous British naturist films was produced. This film, *Travelling Light* would receive wide rave reviews following a difficult process from concept to screen. Edward Craven Walker, the creator of the film originally had the idea in 1955 when he wanted to bridge the gap between reading about how wonderful naturism was and being able to see it, his project would come be realized with the assistance of producer Michael Keatering. Keatering cast Elizabeth Elcoate-Gilbert in the titular role for the film, though in all publications she is simply referred to as Elizabeth. They shot scenes for a film which was originally intended as an orientation video of sorts for individuals interested in becoming naturists and was not meant for wide public release. Following the release of naturist films to the public in 1956 and 57, Keatering and Walker decided to change the idea and create a feature film to be shown to a wider audience.³⁸³ With this decision in mind, Keatering now had to build a cast for the film of individuals who needed to be photogenic, could act naturally on camera, and willing to be shown on film regardless of who would see it, even friends and relatives who may not be sympathetic to naturism. The search for cast would take a number of years, three of the titular characters actually being found at the Woburn International Naturist Congress in 1958. These new cast members included two German sisters, Ingrid and Helga, along with Ingrid’s

³⁸² Geoffrey Robertson, “The Future of Film Censorship,” *British Journal of Law and Society* 7, no. 1 (Summer 1980): 81.

³⁸³ Michael Keatering, “Traveling Light,” *Health and Efficiency*, February 1960, vol. 30 no. 2, 4.

Canadian fiancé Robert. By the end of filming the cast would turn out to be quite international, featuring actors from America, Britain, Holland, Canada, Germany, Switzerland, Scandinavia, and Italy. After the initial cast was put together at Woburn, the first scenes of the film were shot at a nearby empty coast to determine how well they all actually worked together, and despite some setbacks created by poor weather, it was determined to continue forward with the film which would continue at an International Naturist Campsite, which was to be determined at that time in 1958. It was decided to film at the campground Intersun in Corsica though due to the campground being closed to visitors in the Summer of 1959 the filming location had to be moved to a camp called Villata. Over the course of the film's production between the years of 1957 and 1959, some of the greatest setbacks would come in the form of poor weather for filming. In the Autumn of 1958, the filmmakers felt it necessary to film a sequence which would be Elizabeth's first time at a nudist camp, the chosen site being Five Acres. Due to the poor weather over the course of their stay on site, none of the footage they were able to film would be usable.³⁸⁴ When the filming finally made its way to Corsica, the main struggle would prove to be keeping the film cool so as to ensure it would not be damaged in the heat. In addition to weather challenges, given how many years the film took to film, it was difficult to send word to all cast members regarding the filming to be completed in Corsica. Luckily all were able to be contacted and began making their way to the filming location. The film was set back an additional eighteen days after arrival due to a shipping strike in Italy, preventing some key cast members from joining the crew on the agreed date. Finally, when all had arrived the film was shot including a unique under water sequence featuring a French-Polish naturist named Yannick which would become one of the film's more iconic sequences.³⁸⁵

³⁸⁴ Keatering, "Traveling Light," 5.

³⁸⁵ Ibid, 5 – 6.

The film was finally shot and ready to piece together, but the film was not yet ready for release. Keatering would now have to face the challenges of censorship, a challenge he was not prepared for.

When filming and setting up scenes and shots, Keatering was well aware of the taboos surrounding pubic hair being shown, but also sought to film scenes which felt natural without any sensationalism added to it. One of the ways in which this goal was reached was the inclusion of scenes of children ages two to ten playing in the nude in the hopes it would emphasize that naturism was a family affair which could be enjoyed by all. When Keatering submitted the film to the censors, he carefully marked scenes which he felt may be subject to be cut noting what had been allowed in in naturist films in the past. The censorship office however did not agree with Keatering's ideas surrounding nude children, and a majority of these scenes had to be cut from the film. This came as a major shock as it was felt that these scenes would be the least likely of all to cause problems. When commenting on the issue Keatering stated that "I eventually reluctantly felt bound to cede most of the points so far as the children were concerned; but what a shocking state of affairs exists in this unnatural world of ours that such action should become necessary." Despite these cuts that were made Keatering was able to win other battles on the cutting room floor and the film was finally ready to be released to the public despite some scenes being somewhat uneven due to the omissions which had to be made.³⁸⁶ The film was praised for escaping the tedious and banal story lines which so often stunted naturist films. Instead it simply told the story of a woman experiencing social naturism and enjoying a holiday abroad in Corsica. There was no overt pro-naturism message of the film and it was not described as being propagandic in nature. Rather in

³⁸⁶ Michael Keatering, "Censored!" *Health and Efficiency*, May 1960, vol. 30 no. 5, 5.

provided a visual of naturism in idyllic surroundings with beautiful, tan human beings enjoying the world around them in the nude. The underwater scene featuring Yannick was well liked and considered to be the highlight of the film. With a run time of about fifty minutes, the reviewer in *Health and Efficiency* highly recommended to see the film with its brilliant concentration on naturist themes which were well worth a visit to the cinema.³⁸⁷ Walker believed that most people went to see the film to get a glimpse of naked people on screen with no interest in naturism, though he claimed that many people walked away with a desire to give it a try. The film ran on the West End for eight and a half months, managing to make well over 300,000 pounds according to Walker. Walker, came away with enough personal profit from the film to buy and run his own naturist club (Appendix N).³⁸⁸ With more and more attention being given to naturism through mediums like film, naturist clubs were called upon to take advantage of this attention so as to attract more members. 1959 had been cited as a good year for naturism due to the warmer than average summer, leading more people to give naturism a try. Clubs were urged to hold more “Open Days” on weekends during which the public could come and visit a club in clothing just to get a sense for what was offered. In addition, naturist clubs were urged to take out more ads in local newspapers, the argument being that a naturist club in and of itself could be considered news and the publicity would be helpful. Looking beyond local news agencies, the attention which naturism was receiving was garnering the interest of larger networks such as the BBC. Clubs were urged to not let this wave of popularity diminish and invite representatives from organizations like the BBC to come to the camps and report on them so as to continue getting better publicity out to the British public.

³⁸⁷ John Austin, “‘Traveling Light’ is on the Right Lines,” *Health and Efficiency* May 1960, vol. 30 no. 5, 11.

³⁸⁸ *Let's Go Naked*, produced by Adam Clapham.

Interested parties need a place to get information in order to join the movement, and if clubs were silent in not sharing information or experiences, organized naturism ran the risk of not taking advantage of the publicity which was available to them.³⁸⁹

This greater publicity due to the development of film, while having positive opportunities for naturism also carried many dangers with it as well. Given the more promiscuous nature of the 1960s in Britain's culture, and protest against film censorship, by 1969 the number of films the B.B.F.C. passed with an "X" rating far exceeded that of any other category.³⁹⁰ With more and more adult films being released and the sexual revolution climate of the 1960s, there was a concern amongst naturists, specifically the FBSC, that their depictions of nudity as natural would be skewed on film. Since naturist films became popular due to *Garden of Eden* many new naturist films were created and produced, not all of which presenting naturism as well as films like *Traveling Light*. Two other films, *Nudist Paradise* and *Nudist Story* while praised for their professional quality, raised many eyebrows amongst the naturist community with all the scenes including alcohol and undressing that were giving a wrong impression as to what naturism was.³⁹¹ Looking back into the history of films being made concerning naturism, some pre-war films such as *Round the World with Nothing On* when restored amounted to not much more than being a peep show. An additional challenge to presenting informative and accurate naturist films to the public is the cinema itself. Movie theaters had to compete with home television sets and in so doing had to entice audiences out of their homes with films that were epic, horror, or had a sex angle. As a result, theater owners had to determine what the commercial value of a film was and whether it

³⁸⁹ Ernest Stanley, "The Publicity Angle," *Health and Efficiency* April 1960, vol. 30 no. 4, 10 – 11.

³⁹⁰ Harper and Smith, *British Film Culture in the 1970's*, 22 – 23.

³⁹¹ Ernest Stanley, "Those Naturist Films!" *Health and Efficiency*, December 1961, no. 728, 85, 87.

would be worth showing it. Though naturist films were being approved by boards of censors, they were often given X ratings, coupling them with films that had more salacious themes. A major problem for the public image of naturism which this posed was that naturist films would often be used as a pre-cursor to the main sexual film to be shown to titillate the audience before the main show. This association of naturism with sex flicks could serve to damage the portrayal which many films tried to express.³⁹²

Another complaint which many British naturists had concerning recent so-called naturist films, was the use of models for the main cast as well as lack of cooperation with sun clubs. There was a degree of understanding on the part of the naturist community for producers to desire professional actors for their films, even if they did not share in the ideals of naturism. These actors, as they were not naturists and therefore did not adhere to naturist ideals could therefore be filming scenes which a naturist would not film knowing that it would not be something done by a naturist, further skewing portrayal on film.³⁹³ A recommended solution to this problem was a more active role of the club in the production of the film. This would include going over the script with producers detailing which scenes were realistic, discussion with the cast to help them better understand naturism's goals and ideals as well as working with club members to determine the degree to which they themselves could participate in the film instead of hiring random extras for background scenes. In an effort to better address these problems and distinguish between genuine and non-genuine naturist films, the FBSC created a Certificate of Approval for naturist films which were reviewed and determined to be factual representations of naturism and its adherents. The first certificate to be awarded would go to another naturist film by Michael Keatering called

³⁹² Stanley, "Those Naturist Films!", 86 – 87.

³⁹³ Stanley, "Those Naturist Films!", 88.

Sunswept.³⁹⁴ Though many felt regardless of the problems, naturist films could ultimately be beneficial to the movement, organizations like the FBSC were still angered by decisions of censors like the BSBA to give the films X ratings and partner them with films of a more sexual nature.

In November 1961 the FBSC wrote an open letter of protest to the BSBA regarding the problems of film censorship and the X ratings being received by naturist films. The chairman of the FBSC complained that films carrying the title of “nudist” films while not being reflective of nudist values were harmful to the growth of a health movement whose membership is made up of ordinary families. In addition, these films tainted the good nature of naturist films which actually represented the ideals of British naturists. The chairman brings up major points of complaint detailing the problems of these films. Their major complaints were: the use of models who were not naturists themselves, presence of alcohol on club grounds which are not in fact permitted, strip-tease techniques which pay more attention to the female body and can only serve as a means of sexual titillation, the depiction of club grounds as being like commercial camp grounds which they are not, and finally the implication of innuendo in dialogue between characters adding to sexual undertones in the films. The chairman makes clear that the FBSC supports the censorship of films which detract from healthy and wholesome themes but detests the allowance of films which pose as naturist or nudist simply to portray nude images on screen.³⁹⁵ This protest by the FBSC was met with a mixed response in the naturist community. Wallace Arter praised the protest stating it was long overdue and that the chairman expressed many views of which he himself was privy to. His only regret was that the complaint did not come as a joint project from the FBSC and the BSBA.³⁹⁶

³⁹⁴ Stanley, “Those Naturist Films!”, 96, 85.

³⁹⁵ “Protest!” *Health and Efficiency*, November 1961, no. 727, 85 – 86, 96.

³⁹⁶ Wallace Arter, “FBSC Protest – A Worthy Effort,” *Health and Efficiency*, November 1961, no. 727, 93.

Gordon Spencer, long time writer of the series “Generally Speaking” in *Health and Efficiency* published a scathing rebuke of the FBSC and its protest of the BSBA which he claims will have minimal to any impact at all. He reminds the FBSC that the purpose of the BSBA is not to ensure that the films approved are all factual or completely representative of real life and that the occasional inaccurate nudist films really don’t matter to the censors. He also jabs at the organization with an “I told you so!” sentiment given that the past he had written about the problems which naturist films could pose for the organization. Spencer continues his article by pointing out what was wrong with the six points made by the FBSC in their protest. His ultimate argument is that their complaints are worthless.³⁹⁷ In regard to the use of models in the films he comments “oh dear oh dear! The F.B.S.C. might as reasonably complain that the delectable Marilyn Monroe does not, unhappily typify American womanhood.”³⁹⁸ He comments further that no law requires naturist camps not serve alcohol and therefore doesn’t understand what the FBSC thinks the BSBA will do with naturist films that depict alcohol. In addition, regarding strip-tease scenes he felt it were natural that an undressing scene be included as that is something every nudist does and is a natural item to include. Finally, in regard to the comments on portrayal of the camps, Spencer asks the FBSC if it is immoral to enjoy luxury if it can be paid for? He continues by stating “if the Federation seeks to ban luxury as untypical it might as well campaign for the closing down of the entire film industry, and be done with it.”³⁹⁹ The only items which Spencer agreed with were the unneeded focus on female nudity and the suggestive dialogue, though ultimately Spencer does not see anything being done about the issue. Finally, Spencer continues by pointing out that the

³⁹⁷ Gordon Spencer, “It Can’t Do the Slightest Good!” *Health and Efficiency*, November 1961, no. 727, 89.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 90.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 92.

stamp of approval as given by the FBSC for genuine naturist films had so much red tape to go through, most movie producers wouldn't even bother with it. According to the FBSC, films that received their approval had the following conditions:

That this film will not be changed in any way so as to affect its content or meaning after the showing...at which the FBSC committee awarded this certificate, its wording or any other part of it shall not be reproduced in any way (posters, press advertisements, sound broadcasting, television, etc.) other than that described (on film leaders or trailers) without written permission being requested from the FBSC accompanied, for information purposes only, by full details of its intended use and such permission being granted.⁴⁰⁰

These regulations as laid out by the FBSC meant that the film could not even advertise their stamp of approval without written permission from the FBSC nor could it be used in any promotions of the film. It is actions and fine print such as this which add an element of secrecy and lack of openness with the public. Even in the 1960s when many in the British naturist community were calling to expand on the popularity of films and take advantage of what seemed to be becoming a society which could look positively on naturism, these self-imposed limitations existed. Advertising that a naturist film was approved by the FBSC as one genuinely portraying the lifestyle might seem like something which the organization would want to have advertised to the general public, but this was not to be the case. Instead, the organization sought to write an angry letter to the BSBA which, according to Spencer, would care little for the issues which the organization was voicing complaints about.

The letter by the FBSC would have no impact on the BSBA and the film industry's portrayal of naturists on screen, leaving many British naturists waiting once again for another film like *Traveling Light* to portray an accurate picture of naturism. The opportunity for another positive

⁴⁰⁰ Spencer, "It Can't Do the Slightest Good!", 92.

portrayal would come in 1969 with the production of a TV documentary special which would focus an episode on naturism. This would be the first time that naturism would be presented on the small screen, making itself more widely available to the public. Unfortunately, the documentary was not what they had hoped for and would turn out to be somewhat lacking. The documentary was filmed as part of a BBC2 program, "Man Alive" which depicted various areas of human life and social groups. Problems were evident from the beginning when the BBC did not make contact with the CCBN earlier in the year so as to create a coordinated program and allow discussion between leaders in the movement at the episode's producer. What actually occurred was individual camps being contacted by the BBC asking for permission to film on their grounds.⁴⁰¹ Some camps simply refused while others asked to wait for Spring and better weather. Joint editor of the program, Desmond Wilcox described that documentary as an honest depiction of people who passionately believe in naturism as a way of life. Secretary of the Manchester club, Roy, who took part in filming noted how little notice was given and how rushed the process felt. Participants also had to sign discharges before the BBC would consider including the footage they had attained from the camp. Upon completion of the documentary, Roy actually viewed it favorably commenting that "I feel that much good has accrued to the naturist cause through this venture...I hope the way is now open for even better naturist publicity by way of mass media in the future."⁴⁰²

Not all naturists who were interviewed regarding their opinion of the documentary agreed, with one particular individual feeling that only those within the movement seem to be able to produce a satisfactory depiction of naturism to attract new participants. The *Daily Telegraph* also

⁴⁰¹ Walter, "Before the TV Camera – not QUITE the right image created?" *British Naturism*, Winter/Spring 1969, no. 19, 6.

⁴⁰² Walter, "Before the TV Camera – not QUITE the right image created?", 7.

commented on the film that there was much to be said in favor of the healthier depiction of nakedness in the documentary, but as a psychologist interviewed for the documentary argued, naturism would be the death of sex as all the various bodies would put a person off the idea. Other newspapers such as *The Times*, *Daily Express*, and *Daily Mirror* all chimed in giving reviews of the documentary, many commentating on how comical some of the scenes appeared and how non-sexual the whole affair was. W. M. Hill of the *Southern Evening Echo* commented somewhat harshly on the naturists stating that “in the flesh as it were remind one of prancing milk bottles...an awful lot of whiteness and bulging below the neck.”⁴⁰³ Given the somewhat mixed reception by the general public, and amongst naturists themselves, this documentary was not quite the publicity they hoped for. While no complaints were made about inappropriate portrayals on the film, it was one which given its somewhat poor communication in the naturist community could have been better established to reflect the naturist lifestyle in Britain.

The naturist film and documentary scene would not make any headlines in naturist press again until 1979 when BBC1 produced another documentary on the lifestyle called *Let's Go Naked*. This new opportunity of spreading the word concerning naturism was another chance at organized British naturism to take advantage of a publicity opportunity, and luckily for the organization, this documentary was much better received than the previous mishap a decade prior. The idea for the documentary had been broached in early 1978 when British naturist Henry Berney was contacted by BBC Television producer Adam Clapham regarding making a documentary with a focus on naturist holidays. Adam was himself a supporter of the CCBN following a summer trip to a naturist camp in Yugoslavia in 1977. Adam and Henry quickly got to work determining

⁴⁰³ Walter, “Before the TV Camera – not QUITE the right image created?”, 8.

locations for shooting and places they should explore for the documentary. Adam's goal was to write a program which followed British naturists on holiday, preferably with a few who had never been on a naturist holiday themselves. The process continued with letters being sent to various government and tourist agencies in order to attain permissions for filming and other details. To help include more support from the CCBN Henry arranged a meeting for Adam with Ernest Stanley and Roy Lambert, ranking members of the organization.⁴⁰⁴ This meeting was held on the grounds of the North Kent club, though the weather was not appealing for naturism. Some of the more important elements to secure for the documentary would be ensure smooth filming at resorts like Cap D'Adge which on peak weekends saw upwards of 50,000 visitors. There was additional concern following an incident at Cap D'Adge at which a German documentary crew had been attacked by German vacationers who were annoyed by the crew, though the BBC was assured they would not need police protection. In August the production team had found their non-naturist in Kate Sturdy, a 23-year-old student teacher who was nervous but excited for the trip. Kate would take to naturism quite naturally though she played a minimal role in the final cut of the film. Though there were some hiccups in getting the crew ready at Cap D'Adge filming overall went very well and Henry commented that every member of the crew took part in the naturist life style at least once or twice while there.⁴⁰⁵ The positive experience of making the documentary, as well as the close work with the BBC demonstrated a significant improvement from the last documentary a decade prior. The producer, Adam, had a personal and vested interest in the film which is clearly felt in the final production as it is a largely positive take on naturism and naturist holidays. The public response was more than what the CCBN could have hoped for.

⁴⁰⁴ Henry Berney, "TV Millions See Europe Bare," *British Naturism*, Spring 1979, no. 59, 5.

⁴⁰⁵ Berney, "TV Millions See Europe Bare," 5.

The finished film follows reporter John Pitman as he explores naturism and naturist holidays all around the world. Among the notable locations he visits are the well-known French resort Cap D'adge, Paul Zimmerman's Klingberg in Germany, Koversada in Yugoslavia, and Tree House Fun Ranch in California. The documentary explores the popularity of naturism around the world and interviews those who practice it, providing the view points of the young and old. Henry Berner, a naturist tour operator, commented that naturists were pouring in to places like Cap D'adge in the thousands where previously it had been in the hundreds. Pitman comments in the opening of the documentary that "Europe has fallen to the nudists" and that followers of the movement have turned what was once an eccentric past time into a multi-million-pound industry.⁴⁰⁶ He further cites that in 1978, more than fifteen million people in Europe took naturist holidays. The documentary as whole provided an educating glimpse into the lives of naturists around the world often comparing other locations to Britain and how they differ. It also confirms that British naturists were quite shy, and even though it was made up of respectable people who were doctors, lawyers, clergymen and teachers, they did not want to reveal themselves out of fear of media backlash.⁴⁰⁷ Response to the documentary was largely positive with newspapers such as the *Daily Express* commentating "How artificial it is to be inhibited about our bodies. Apart from the pleasures of swimming without a bikini biting across our bodies, think of the packing you wouldn't have to do, and husbands would never have to hear their wives moan, "But I haven't a thing to wear."⁴⁰⁸ Others like the *Daily Telegraph* took a more humorous approach stating "Possibly the best viewing homes will be those with two sets in different rooms so that the

⁴⁰⁶ *Let's Go Naked*, produced by Adam Clapham.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁸ Jim Christopherson, "A Film to 'CAP' them All!" *British Naturism*, Spring 1979, no. 59, 3.

generations may be segregated, and laugh at different bits.”⁴⁰⁹ President of the CCBN Gerry Ryland was very much pleased with the program commenting on how people as a response have begun openly discussing the topic in their workplaces. While they themselves swear they wouldn't try it, they expressed sympathy and understanding to those who did. He commented that many were put off by the naked shopping in Cap D'edge, though he pointed out that if one were to watch closely not everyone was naked. He ends his remarks on the documentary by stating that “never before in the history of British naturism has there been such a concerted promotional effort. If Britain does not ‘Go Naturist’ in the 80's it will not be for want of trying.”⁴¹⁰ Chairman of the CCBN, Derek Lee remarked that the film demonstrated the kind of beneficial publicity that could be garnered when the media worked together with naturists to produce a film based on factual information and not simply sensationalism. The only complaint he voiced was the film seemed to suggest that naturism was an expensive form of holiday treatment which not everyone could enjoy. This concern was mimicked by Roy Lambert, the General Secretary, but he also praised the film for being responsible for a massive surge of interest into naturism and naked holiday trips abroad. He expected that there would be such an influx of potential members that clubs in Britain would struggle to keep up. Overseas manager of the CCBN Jim Christopherson and Alan McCombe R & LO also voiced concerns over the portrayal of naturist holidays as only for the middle aged and wealthy. Christopherson further commented that when he and his wife camped in Cap D'Edge during the high season it only cost them two pounds per night. He also expressed his joy that the

⁴⁰⁹ Christopherson, “A Film to ‘CAP’ them All!”, 3.

⁴¹⁰ Ibid.

film was starting more conversations, citing discussions he was hearing at his local bank and some people who seemed interested in giving it a go.⁴¹¹

The excitement and publicity garnered from *Let's Go Naked* made many British naturists excited and determined to ensure people who became interested would be fully supported by the CCBN. The wide popularity of the documentary provided the organization with a unique opportunity at expansion that it had not seen in quite some time. Jim Christopherson, while excited by this made it clear that the organization had to prepare for a significant rise in interest. His concern was that naturist holidays would fill up fast, leaving some shut out due to too many bookings or so many individuals applying to Britain's camps that would technically exceed their capacity. Firstly, he urged that clubs not shut their doors and fit as many new members as they possibly can, even when the number of persons is one or two per acre. In addition, he emphasized the importance of making the supporters of naturism who were not officially members feel welcome. Given that naturism was becoming more and more popular, it is understandable that memberships will fill up and not everyone will be able to become a member, and these individuals are just as entitled to visit the naturist camps as any other. Thirdly, he urges that naturists in Britain support naturist holiday firms as they are a base for expansion. Finally, if naturist holiday packages cannot be afforded, he expressed that individual trips should be taken with larger and larger groups to demonstrate to the governments of various countries that there are people interested in more naturist venues. By doing so, Jim argues, more and more countries would be willing to expand naturist opportunities, including to the beaches.⁴¹²

⁴¹¹ Christopherson, "A Film to 'CAP' them All!", 3.

⁴¹² Ibid, 4.

Entering into the 1980s British naturism saw tremendous growth in its clubs and the increase in naturist holiday makers. In addition to more naturists, more homes were being upgraded with home video recorders/players. This was an opportunity which naturists had not been taking advantage of so as to bring video footage of naturist camps into the home. There have been some opportunists who have sought to take advantage of this by creating small videos at the camps, the quality of which have been so poor they were comparable to films made in the 1920s. The outcome of which pictured naturism in a poor and unprofessional light.⁴¹³ Due to the higher quality of broadcast television sets, CCBN set out to make a film which would be made by a professional company and meet the higher technical standards of the age. The organization began reaching out and seeking a film company which would do justice to the story and ensure to avoid and possibility of being misrepresented as soft-core porn. The CCBN also retained the right to cut any features from the film as they saw fit. An agreement was reached with Heritage Video of Macclesfield which undertook the creative and technical aspects of the film. It was determined that while the film was to be informational, it would not be a documentary and would have a plot and characters. The story would follow a female lead with a male supporting actor.⁴¹⁴ With this in mind, there were certain elements which the creative team wanted to ensure were included, and some to avoid. Among those being avoided were cliché scenes of bouncing beach balls and volley ball as the only activity which naturists partake in. In addition, the creators wanted to have a sense of humor through the lens of misguided attitudes towards naturism and the embarrassment of the average guy in the street. The creators hoped that by creating an entertaining feature they could help the audience relax around the nudity present in the film. Finally, the crew wanted the film to be

⁴¹³ "Educating Julie," *British Naturism*, Winter 1984, no. 82, 20.

⁴¹⁴ Don Holstead, "Into the Video Age," *British Naturism*, Autumn 1984, no. 81, 5.

informative but also avoiding a preachy tone and too much naturist philosophy.⁴¹⁵ All other participants in the film were to be local naturists who agreed to appear in the locations at which it would be shot. While the goal was to depict naturism in Britain, the film would feature the main character experiencing naturist holidays as well. A request was sent out to naturists in Britain for any 8 mm or 16 mm film which they could send in as supplementary footage to be used were appropriate in the plot. The goal was for the film to be released at the end of 1984 in time for the Christmas season. The film would be made available to the general public for home use.⁴¹⁶ Once again it was apparent that this film was being produced in close association with the CCBN and would largely consist of real naturists, something which had been a major complaint in previous naturist films.

The result was a film entitled *Educating Julie* which cast Gail Ward in the titular role of Julie Potter (Appendix O). Julie is a young student who for her class final paper has been assigned the topic of nudity in the 1980s. Julie, who is aghast at the idea at first enlists the help of her boyfriend Steve in conducting research. Steve is interested in the ideas of sex, pornography, and strip clubs whilst Julie stumbles across a naturist magazine. Julie soon becomes interested in researching naturism and visits a local naturist club to start conducting research. Her boyfriend refuses to undress and seeks to use a fake name, but Julie takes quite naturally to naturism and strips down without a problem. The film continues with Julie becoming more and more interested in naturism while growing apart from her boyfriend who doesn't understand it and cannot look at nudity except through the lens of sexuality. As part of her research Julie travels to Cap D'Adge and makes many naturist friends in her travels. When she returns, she has become a converted

⁴¹⁵ "Educating Julie," 20.

⁴¹⁶ Holstead, "Into the Video Age," 5.

naturist and continues to visit clubs, much to the annoyance of her boyfriend. Following a brief falling out, he is eventually won over to her side and strips down alongside her. The two of them decide to expand her research and include nudity in America as well and take a trip to a nudist camp in Florida, a nudist camp with far nicer amenities than anything shown in Britain. The film ends with an enlightened Julie showcasing her research to her classmates not as a paper, but rather as a video of her experiences with nudity in the eighties.⁴¹⁷ This film would be a landmark in British naturism as the first film on the subject to be made available at home for viewers. The film was received positively by naturist viewers citing that the events depicted were plausible and largely well reflective of naturist ideals. The only complaint was it could have used a dash of documentary. The ultimate consensus regarding the film was that “every home should have one, and on a cold winter’s night bask in the blue of the sea, and wallow in the warmth of the summer sun.”⁴¹⁸

With the positive and increased interest in British naturism following the success of *Let’s Go Naked* and the subsequent response of *Educating Julie* British naturism was making improvements in making itself better known to the world and showed signs of success in its endeavors. While these improvements were certainly worth marking, there was one final aspect of British naturism which continued to stunt the organizations growth, and which would not be resolved until the late 1970s. This was the issue of expanding from the reclusive walls of the nudist camps and sun clubs to the coasts and beaches of Britain. All activities which were made available to naturists for much of the organization’s history would be limited to the confines of

⁴¹⁷ Gale Hardman. *Educating Julie*. 1984; (Heritage Video International.) Online Accessed 3/6/18 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OGax40qRJHw>.

⁴¹⁸ Gerry Ryland, “Educating Everybody,” *British Naturism*, Spring 1985, no. 83, 7.

these secluded sun clubs which were considered an essential part of organized British naturism. Questions began being raised in the 1950s whether they were really necessary and if members of sun clubs got something more out of them than someone who lays out naked in the sun on a deserted beach. The answer was not easily answered and came down to whether the member helps contribute to the growth of the camp. If they do nothing to make it better than it was when they arrived, then they really attain no additional benefits. That being said if a family actively bathes naked on deserted beaches and holds to naturist ideals and beliefs then it is still a victory for naturism as this means that even though they are not in a club, they are of a like mind to other naturists and therefore help spread naturist ideals in their families.⁴¹⁹ It was during the 1950s, a particularly tumultuous time in organized British naturism that talk of expanding to beaches for naked bathing and tanning began occurring in earnest leading to many heated discussions and conflicts on the place of the beach in organized naturism.

The Battle for the Beaches

Naked bathing by the sea has been a part of British culture since the nineteenth century. Referring back to the beginning of this thesis, bathing suits were not common until 1837 when Parliament made them required by law. This was not accepted by all as was seen in the journal entries of Reverend Francis Kilvert. Naked bathing was reduced to the actions of individuals who found secluded patches of sand where they could strip off if confident in their seclusion. Under British law there were four provisions under which a person could be prosecuted for nudity on the beaches. Of these four only one would come into effect to combat nudity on beaches directly, these being local bylaws. In 1809 a Mr. Crunden was caught bathing naked on a beach and when tried

⁴¹⁹ Will Greenwood, "Are Sun Clubs Really Necessary?" *Sun Bathing Review*, Summer 1956, vol. 24 no. 94, 23 – 24.

in court he was charged with committing an act which outraged public decency. Violation of public decency was a law in effect in Britain up through the early 1980s and anyone who stripped off in public could be charged under this particular offense. When such behavior is brought to court, the question is asked as to whether it was indecent. Indecent here being defined as “behavior ‘offending against recognized standards of propriety.’”⁴²⁰ The next law in place dated back to 1824 which stated that any person who “willfully, openly, lewdly and obscenely exposing his person with intent to insult any female shall be deemed a rogue and a vagabond.”⁴²¹ With this law in mind, it stands to reason a man could sunbathe naked on a beach facing down, it would be getting back up that is the problem. The third law in place which can be applied to laws on the beach was created in 1847 but was only firmly enforced throughout England in 1974. This law stated that “willfully and indecently exposing one’s person in the street or any place of public resort or recreation ground belonging to a local authority, or any unfenced ground adjoining or abutting upon any street to the obstruction, annoyance or danger of residents or passengers.”⁴²² This law suggested it was safe to sunbathe on private land or as long as one was behind a fence of some kind. The fourth and final law in place regarding public nudity are the local by laws. These were most difficult for naturists to navigate as they were different from area to area. In order to ensure no local bylaws were broken, naturists were recommended to call the local Town Hall for a copy of bylaws to determine what they could and could not do.⁴²³ The caution here being that even if nothing is explicitly mention an action, this does not make a traditionally illegal action suddenly

⁴²⁰ Graham Hodson, “The Law of the Beach,” *British Naturism*, Summer 1984, no. 80, 5.

⁴²¹ Hodson, “The Law of the Beach,” 5.

⁴²² Ibid.

⁴²³ Ibid.

legal. These multitudes of laws would make it difficult for naturists to practice nude bathing on beaches and stand as major barriers to organized naturism winning legalized nude beaches.

In the early 1950s amongst the beginnings of dissention and schism in the BSBA, talk began to circulate surrounding the possibility of expanding to beaches for nude sunbathing. A Mr. Eperon writing for *The Daily Herald* commented that

they are a peace loving people these naturists, and they do not want to upset anyone or to draw peeping crowds...what is the object of nudism? To promote bodily health by exposing the human body to the air and sun. And to promote a saner attitude towards sex...But why do nudists want to come out in the open and sunbathe on the beaches? Because they want the public to accept nudism as a normal and healthy thing – not as something that should be done secretly behind screens in special camps.⁴²⁴

This relatively favorable attitude towards nude bathing on the beaches in public was not a sentiment shared by many naturists themselves. Wallace Arter urged caution to ensure that no sensationalism could emerge as a result of nude bathing on beaches. Kath Burgesses of Woodlands Sun Club was horrified by the idea and feared that it could have serious and devastating repercussions for the movement as a whole. Others in the naturist community viewed these beach naturists as fanatics that would put off decent people from joining sun clubs.⁴²⁵ These negative ideas regarding British naturists expanding to the beaches comes contrary to the aims and objectives of the BSBA, which for many years professed that expanding to nude beaches was a goal, though in those years little to no action was taken in this regard. In fact, the legal possibilities were not explored until fall and winter of 1952.⁴²⁶ The most restrictive measure being discussed were the local by-laws in place which could restrict the practice of nude sunbathing. Most reports

⁴²⁴ Editor, “Assault on the Beaches,” *Health and Efficiency*, May 1953, vol. 23 no. 5, 3.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid*, 3.

⁴²⁶ Oliver Weston, “Down to the Sea – Sans Slips,” *Health and Efficiency*, June 1953, vol. 23 no. 6, 6.

from local newspapers in areas like Brighton seemed friendly towards the idea of naked sunbathers in small areas of their beaches. Despite this friendly and seemingly tolerant response, many within the movement like the individuals mentioned above were wary of nude beaches and were in many ways opposed to them. The Kent County Sunbathing Association had begun making steps towards investigating local laws and determining areas where naturists could sunbathe, and it was recommended by some that other areas follow suit. Countries like Germany and France already had beaches for nude sunbathing, and it was only a matter of time before these opportunities became available in England.⁴²⁷

By the fall of 1954, more and more people desired finding suitable places for nude bathing in Britain, especially following holidays to such locations as Ile du Levant and Montalivet in France or German beaches around Sylt. Once again, interested naturists were urged to continue forward with extreme caution as any legal trouble could make it much harder for further expansion to beaches for nude recreation. Writer Ernest Stanley compares the situation of Britain to that of Germany by pointing out that beach resorts were created there because there was a wide and popular demand for them. At the time in Britain, there was not such large scale demand for nude beaches, and Stanley was of the opinion that it would only happen in Britain when there was a demand for it.⁴²⁸ That being said, organizations such as the Kent County Sunbathing Association had made huge strides in their attempts to attain nude bathing beaches in their local area. Through their work, over half a dozen small stretches of beach with no local by-laws specifically calling for bathing suits were acquired for naturist youth. These were not legally recognized official nude

⁴²⁷ Weston, "Down to the Sea – Sans Slips," 7.

⁴²⁸ Ernest Stanley, "A Naturist Beach in Britain," *Health and Efficiency*, October 1954, vol. 24 no. 10, 4, 5, 31.

beaches and were still accessible to the public, meaning naturists who did use the beaches had to be prepared to cover up should any other visitors come by, lest any trouble should result. The creation of the FBSC also gave new hope in establishing naturist beaches with newly created Regional Associations which could double efforts and reach similar success as Kent County.⁴²⁹

The discussions surrounding the availability of nude beaches in Britain came to be referred to as the “Battle of the Beaches” and were reaching wide popularity, including in foreign countries. This raised concern for some naturists as European countries now believed that there were nude beaches available in England. Strix of “The Passing Scene” commented that yes, it is ridiculous that naturists could not bathe naked on the beaches, that was just the way things were and British naturists had to simply accept this fact. He ends his argument by quoting a friend on the individuals fighting for nude beaches who held the opinion that “if these fanatics wish to become martyrs, I wish they’d do it in some other place.”⁴³⁰ This mindset held by Strix and others who opposed expansion to British beaches demonstrated once again the inability and lack of desire for British naturists to expand further out and take risks. The movement had progressed slowly and steadily throughout its entire history without taking too many brash or risky steps to further expand themselves into the public sphere. That being said, it cannot be generalized that everyone agreed with the opinions of those like Strix. The following spring issue of *Sun Bathing Review* featured a direct response to Strix and his opinion of nude beaches. T. Ivan Pyle responded by criticizing Strix and his seemingly negative view on beaches, his ideas carrying the notion that it would be a waste of time. Pyle argues that action must be taken so as to encourage the development of naturist beaches even if it would not occur in their lifetime, but maybe their children and future generations

⁴²⁹ Stanley, “A Naturist Beach in Britain,” 5, 31.

⁴³⁰ STRIX, “The Passing Scene,” *Sunbathing Review*, Winter 1955, vol. 23 no. 88, 57.

of naturists would benefit from their activism. The beach is a natural place to practice naturism and naturists simply wish to be accepted by those who wear clothes, referred to as textiles, to practice in appropriate places.⁴³¹ In regard to the comments on martyrdom, he argues that he has never made secret his status as a naturist and has never faced any harsh criticism. He argues that if more people were open in their discussions of naturism and gently invite friends and colleagues to join them, then people will be more accustomed to the idea. Once they are accustomed to the idea, then naturism would cease to be an audacious and become more widely accepted and it will be easier to establish naturist beaches.⁴³²

The use of secluded beaches for naked sunbathing would continue through the 1950s and into the 1960's. The ability for these beaches to exist, even when local authorities knew of their existence gave many naturists hope for the future. Some beaches were cited to have hundreds of visitors, some of whom were international naturists. These beaches were arduous to get to, and it came to no surprise as to why they were not widely used by the public. Any time clothed beach goers stumbled across them, many seemed to join in or simply move off without causing any problems. This silent revolution that had been occurring on the beaches lead some to believe that definitive change would occur in the new decade.⁴³³ News of more naturist beaches spreading began giving hope to some of the slightly older members that a move towards official beaches could be possible. When articles were written regarding these beaches however, no locations were ever mentioned as a means of ensuring no possible problems could emerge. Naturists did not want

⁴³¹ T. Ivan Pyle, "Foundations for the Future," *Sun Bathing Review*, Spring 1955, vol. 23 no. 89, 8.

⁴³² Pyle, "Foundations for the Future," 9.

⁴³³ Philip Vernon, "Britain's First Naturist Beach?" *Health and Efficiency*, November 1959, vol. 29 no. 11, 4-6.

their beaches to be invaded by those who could cause harm. The only downside to this being that many naturists in Britain could not enjoy or partake in these secret and secluded spaces as they have no means of learning their location.⁴³⁴

Naturists entered the summer of 1960 with high hopes for the creation of an official nude beach on the shores of England, hopes that would prove to be dashed by the end of the summer. In order to gauge possible interest in the creation of nude beaches in England, Philip Conway was sent out by *Health and Efficiency* with a survey to various resorts along the coasts. Conway's results were not indicative of any nude beaches being created that year. Resorts such as the Weston-super-Mare in Somerset cited that their small stretch of beach was filled by holiday users leaving no room for a naturist section, they also commented that they were a family resort, suggesting that nude bathing would not fit into these ideals. The region of North Wales and Ryle responded to Conway with the sentiment that no action would be taken in this regard. Scarborough argued that their beaches would not be able to provide satisfactory screening for the naturists and therefore would not consider the idea. He did come away with some hopeful leanings from Blackpool which asserted that there was no interest in a naturist beach in the area and therefore they had no plans to establish one. The possibility here being that if interest was voiced then perhaps something would be created. Conway's findings unfortunately did not bode well for British naturists; his final conclusions being that naturists would have to continue going to secret beaches for the time being.⁴³⁵ Despite the negative findings of Conway's survey, there was still a push for the possibilities of naturist beaches and holiday centers to be developed. The argument being made that they would attract hundreds of holiday makers both from England as well as from

⁴³⁴ I.H. "Letter File: Naturist Beaches," *Health and Efficiency*, February 1960, vol. 30 no. 2, 40.

⁴³⁵ Philip Conway, "Free Beaches this Summer?" *Health and Efficiency*, March 1960, vol. 30 no. 3, 6 – 7.

abroad. Naturist holiday centers like Montalivet stood as examples of the possibilities which could be opened to the public if resorts would be willing to sell land or allocate land for this purpose.⁴³⁶ It would also help naturist clubs in Britain as many are unable to serve holiday makers due to being filled to capacity with members, hence deterring possible new naturists. Ernest Stanley hoped that someone would be willing to offer land for these purposes, but the chances were not likely given the results of Conway's findings. In the meantime Stanley re-asserts that naturists should use caution and pay close attention to the by-laws of the regions in which they chose to sunbathe naked. He advised moving at least two hundred yards away from the nearest person before stripping down, but to be prepared should anyone come by. If nude beaches were to be created, naturists needed to gain popular respect and therefore respect the opinions of others who may not agree with naked sun bathing.⁴³⁷

Unfortunately for British naturists, these warnings were not adhered to by all and by then end of the summer in 1960 two run-ins with police had occurred at Norfolk beaches and beaches in Kent. The Norfolk situation arose concerning a nude sunbather in violation of a local by-law which stated that "no person shall within 200 yards of any street or public place or boat, yacht or vessel having persons on board unless effectually screened from view, bathe from the bank or strand or of any water or from any boat thereon, without wearing a dress or covering sufficient to prevent indecent exposure of the person." While naturists did not agree with the idea that the naked body was indecent exposure, these were the laws in place and naturist sun bathers needed to be more careful. Luckily for the bathers in Norfolk the police were only considering pressing charges and no further legal action was taken. Naturists were reminded to pay close attention to the by-

⁴³⁶ Ernest Stanley, "Naturist Beaches Unlimited," *Health and Efficiency*, July 1960, vol. 30 no. 7, 16.

⁴³⁷ Stanley, "Naturist Beaches Unlimited," 17.

laws in place so as to ensure problems like this would not happen again.⁴³⁸ The situation which had emerged in Kent was investigated by the Kent County Sunbathers Association and it was determined that no by-laws had been violated. Rather the police had received an anonymous tip which they responded to so as to ensure there would be no public nuisance. The police in the region had expressed in the past that they had no trouble with nude bathers in the area as long as no crimes were committed. Further investigation by the Kent County Sunbathers Association found other problems which were being caused by naturist bathers not because of their nakedness, but rather their conduct. There were reports of naturists driving through private property to avoid tolls and lighting camp fires which caused a risk of grass fires. This conduct was regrettable and only increased the negative opinion of naturists in the local community and such conduct was a much greater threat towards their ability to establish a naturist beach. It was actions such as these that also threatened the established understanding which the Kent County Sunbathers Association had managed to garner in the region allowing for nude bathing to occur on secluded beaches.⁴³⁹ Problems would continue for naked beach goes into the following year as more naturists found themselves in local papers for the wrong reasons. Robin Black comments on two incidents which occurred on beaches in Britain. The first being that two non-naturists were walking along the public beach and were approached by two male sunbathers who warned them that they could not go any further given that it was a naturist beach. These individuals were understandably insulted having been approached in such an aggressive manner. The naturists were likely to get off with a warning, but news stories such as this one did not help further the cause of attaining public support for nude

⁴³⁸ Ernest Stanley, "Behavior on the Beach," *Health and Efficiency*, October 1960, vol. 30 no. 10, 16.

⁴³⁹ Stanley, "Behavior on the Beach," 17.

beaches.⁴⁴⁰ In another beach instance, a small group of nude bathers had been discovered by some onlookers and instead of covering off, the nude bathers continued walking about in full view. The result of which was a formal complaint being made and a local law enforcement which traditionally would look the other way was forced to take action. Black was understanding in the sense that many naturists were frustrated by how long it was taking for an official beach to be created in England. He cited however, that actions such as these were in fact hindering the progress towards this goal and should not be encouraged.⁴⁴¹ By 1966 there were still no official naturist beaches in England. The still young CCBN organization worked with sun clubs to assist members of the clubs with holiday packages to well-known coastal resorts at which they could enjoy naked sun bathing on the beaches. The CCBN also expressed the sentiment that they hoped that beach resorts would see the financial success these continental resorts had and would follow suit. In the meantime, the CCBN praised the work of the Kent County for their work with local authorities in establishing an understanding regarding naked bathing on some beaches. In addition, the local authorities near the deserted beaches of Hebrides attested that sunbathers could go nude there as long as no offenses were given to non-naturists. The CCBN continued the mantra of caution when on public beaches and reminded visitors to remain 200 yards from the nearest individual, cover up if they come near, and if they settle nearby be prepared to give up any hopes of naked sunbathing that day. Regardless of the challenges which lay ahead, the CCBN was confident in its ability to win public support for nude beaches in the next few years.⁴⁴² While this sentiment was hopeful, it would be over a decade until British naturists were finally successful in attaining a legally recognized nude beach.

⁴⁴⁰ Robin Black, "Aftermath!" *Health and Efficiency*, November 1961, no. 727, 28, 31.

⁴⁴¹ Black, "Aftermath!", 31, 34.

⁴⁴² "Naturist Beaches" *British Naturism Yearbook*, 1966, 9.

Discussion for the creation of a nude beach began with the Hastings Borough Council in 1978 in close communication with the CCBN.⁴⁴³ In August 1979, Brighton was officially voted to become Britain's first clothing optional beach following a vigorous campaign by local councilor Eileen Jakes, who was herself a naturist. The debates regarding whether or not to allow the beach raged on for months and months between Eileen and her main opposition Blackman. Blackman in his opposition to the beach cited that "I personally have got no objection to people showing their breasts and bosoms and general genitalia to one another. Jolly good luck to them, but for heaven's sake they should go somewhere more private." Blackman was concerned that the nudists would want to further spread from the beach to the local public parks which he viewed as a dangerous prospect.⁴⁴⁴ Eileen's methods in spreading the news for the benefits of the beach were in some ways controversial as she passed around nude pictures of herself on holiday to her fellow council members. It was agreed to set aside a 200-yard stretch of beach for the sole use of nude bathers. Jakes upheld the belief that the presence of the beach could increase tourism in the town which would bring in more money and help build it up. Following a visit to the site and determining the kind of barrier to put up so as to make the area more private, the council officially voted on the creation of the beach. Brighton's Deputy Mayor Alfred Feld commented that it was a bold move, but one which reflects their moving with the times.⁴⁴⁵ Brighton was considered by local residents to be a more liberal town keeping pace with the times, and because of this sentiment it made sense that the first nude beach should be there.⁴⁴⁶ The beach would be officially opened on April 1, 1980,

⁴⁴³ Derek Lee, "Central Council for British Naturism", *British Naturism Handbook*, 1981, 1.

⁴⁴⁴ Madeline Morris, *Witness: Nudist Beach*, from BBC World Service, *Witness History*, MP3 audio, 10 min. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00j84cs>.

⁴⁴⁵ "1979: Brighton Bares All," BBC On This Day 1950-2005, http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/august/9/newsid_3906000/3906605.stm.

⁴⁴⁶ Morris, *Witness: Nudist Beach*.

months later making national headlines along the way. The day was cold with biting winds, but supporters still showed up swimming in the nude. One participant, Arthur Albrow a 61-year-old grandfather who had never been swimming naked before commented that there was no difference. Eileen Jakes chose not to make the plunge due to the cold weather, but still celebrated with a glass of champagne. Blackman made an appearance as well, though he came to protest the opening of the beach rather than support it.⁴⁴⁷ The sign put up at the beach read “Official Naturist Beach: Beyond this notice clothing need not be worn for bathing, sunbathing, or other recreation.”⁴⁴⁸

This first nudist beach certainly wasn't perfect, and it had its faults both for nudists and the local community. For nudists, given that the beach was made up of pebbles, it wasn't the most comfortable place to be lounging in the nude and made long stays unlikely. For the locals, a problem which emerged was the location of the beach as it wasn't far from various tourist attractions such as the Brighton Pier and the Marina. In addition, on the cliffs above the beach was a well-off suburb known as Kemp Town who were against the beach in its early existence. They complained it was too near a children's playground about 300 yards away. Women from the local church also came with protest signs calling to ban the beach, but over time, people got used to the beach. Tourists also became a problem for naturists as their beach was along the tourist road for the town's attractions. David Johnson, a local to Brighton recalled a group of Japanese tourists getting out of their cars, taking pictures of the naturists then returning to their vehicles and continuing on. The response to which was to build a mound of pebbles to protect the nude bathers and tourist bystanders who may not agree with the beach.⁴⁴⁹ The beach came under threat in 1984

⁴⁴⁷ “Chilly Dipping as Brighton's Nude Bathing Beach Opens,” *The Times*, April 2, 1980, 4.

⁴⁴⁸ Morris, *Witness: Nudist Beach*.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid*.

when local press coverage ran headlines calling the beach “A Pervert’s Playground” causing many nudists to fight back against the bad press and keep the beach open. Two supporters of the beach Donald Bruce and Georgina Hierons went around collecting signatures in support of the beach from visitors, collecting nearly 1500 signatures. Mike Herring reported on the issue for *Health and Efficiency* calling for Brighton to keep in mind that it was 1984 and Brighton needed to keep with the times (Appendix P). He also commented that when visiting the beach, the behavior of those there was anything by perverted and constituted of a range of groups and ages enjoying the sun. The threat did not last long and ultimately was unsuccessful as Brighton remains a nudist beach today.⁴⁵⁰

With the success of Brighton beach, more nude beaches in Britain began to appear into the 1980’s. Charlotte Peters and Phil Vallack were two naturists who worked tirelessly to spread nude beaches throughout Britain. When Charlotte was PRO at CCBN her office was approached by a number of local authorities and private beach owners interested in allowing nude bathing to occur on their premises including Felixsworth and Walton. Vallack’s approach to spreading the ideas of nude beaches were not completely favored by all naturists and was not considered to be supported by the CCBN. Vallack published a book entitled *Free Sun* in which he lists possible places to go nude bathing both in Britain and while on holiday. The book was beneficial in the sense that it helped concentrate naturists in specific locations thereby establishing naturism as a local custom in the area.⁴⁵¹ The nude beach fever continued to spread and in 1985 another nude beach was added at Holkham. The beach had been used for many years unofficially by naturists but following an

⁴⁵⁰ Mike Herring, “What’s Happening Down South?” *Health and Efficiency*, January 1985, vol. 85 no. 1, 19.

⁴⁵¹ Denys Rendell, “Beach Naturism; An Idea Whose Time Has Come,” *British Naturism*, Winter 1984, no. 82, 13.

unfortunate incident in which a naked man jumped in front of female visitors demanding sexual favors, nude bathing was banned in the area. Cliff Lewis of CCBN approached the owner of the land, Viscount Coke and the Nature Conservancy Council in an effort to redeem naturists in their eyes and demonstrate that the unfortunate actions were not characteristic of naturists. Following a series of meetings between the groups, the naturists were granted a stretch of beach for their use.⁴⁵² Though nude beaches had been a point of contention both within the ranks of naturists and in the public, they would become a staple of Britain's beaches with Brighton's nude beach becoming one of its more famous beaches. As an organization, CCBN had succeeded where the FBSC and BSBA had failed in expanding naturism from the secluded walls of the clubs, to the shores of Britain. Despite contentions in the years following their creation, it was clear that nude beaches were here to stay.

⁴⁵² Cliff Lewis, "Turning the Tide at Holkham," *British Naturism*, Autumn 1985, no. 85, 16-17.

CONCLUSION: BRITISH NATURISM IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Over the course of its history, organized British naturism struggled to make any significant gains towards acceptance in British society largely due to internal conflicts within the organization itself, as well as an inability to act on opportunities when they presented themselves. A foundation built in intense secrecy and fear over the judgmental eye of society and figures like Mrs. Grundy, hindered the movement from taking any risks, simply allowing itself to grow and develop along a slow and determined path. Organized naturism's presence in the public eye was not particularly significant until the 1970s and 1980s with the increase of films and documentaries geared towards enticing new participants as well as the push for nudist beaches. Among some of the more significant developments in the 1990s included the creation of the organization's website in 1996 to reach a wider audience online, though the older members found this to be a difficult change. This website continues to be a major selling point today, offering opportunities for members to chat in forums as well as provide useful resources to naturists in general. Perhaps some of the most useful being downloadable legal guides which educate naturists on the laws surrounding public

nakedness to ensure no negative encounters occur as in the past. In 1998 a new youth organization was formed known as the British Naturist Youth Network which sought to reach out to young naturists ages 15 – 25. The youth group was changed in 2002 to the Young British Naturists (YBN) and it has expanded its membership age from 18 – 30.⁴⁵³ British naturism has continued into the twenty first century growing to a point far greater than its pioneers could have imagined. These growing changes are reflective of a time in which a greater emphasis is placed on body positivity, and the spread of free the nipple movements in the late 2000s. Britain saw continued expansion of its nude beaches with the addition of Dyffryn in 2000, making it the first nude beach in Wales.⁴⁵⁴ Britain's beaches continue being converted to being accepting of nude bathers to this day with articles appearing in popular news outlets such as *The Telegraph* advertising the best nude beaches which Britain has to offer, Brighton included despite the pesky pebbles.⁴⁵⁵

Within the workings of the organization itself, the early 2000s saw for the first time, the ability of members to vote on policy either in person at AGMs or in proxy. This was a process which took thirty-six years and allows for members to take a greater role in the functions and policies of the organization. This increased role within the movement reflects some of the problems which had caused the schism in the 1950s with the BSBA failing to keep members and clubs well informed concerning policies being supported going forward. In the modern organization, members can make their voices heard more directly on issues which impact them all. The CCBN

⁴⁵³ Stephen Amor, "Fifty-Three Year Journey," *British Naturism*, Summer 2014, no. 200, 18.

⁴⁵⁴ Pat Thompson, "Nude Beach Discussions 'Ongoing' at Dyffryn," *British Naturism*, Summer 2000, no. 144, 4.

⁴⁵⁵ Tristan Rutherford, "Britain's Best Nudist or Naturist Beaches," *The Telegraph*, June 15, 2015, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/europe/united-kingdom/articles/Britains-best-nudist-or-naturist-beaches/>.

also expanded the presence of British naturism into the legal scene, campaigning more than ever to win legal favors for naturism. Following the release of a government report in 2000 entitled *Report and Recommendations of a Review of Sex Offences*, representatives of CCBN worked to ensure that naturism was seen as a legitimate activity, going so far as to be invited to present at a Commons Select Sub-Committee. They were successful in this endeavor, but other battles such as the Anti-social Behavior Bill and further conflicts at Holkham are continues challenges for British naturism fighting for acceptance in larger society.⁴⁵⁶ It is clear, however, through these actions the organized British naturism in the twenty first century was not afraid to take a stand, demonstrating significant growth from its past. In an effort to expand events and entice a larger public participation in British Naturism, an annual event began being hosted in 2006 at the York Maize Maze and Alton Towers water park, the latter being the source of numerous accounts of first-time experiences and featured on the cover of several *British Naturism* magazines including the Spring 2018 issue.⁴⁵⁷ These events have come to be among the organizations highest grossing and with large numbers getting involved, demonstrating an initiative to bring more people in than had ever been seen in the organizations long prior history. In 2009, the official decision was made to change the official name of the organization from the Central Council of British Naturism, to a simpler and reduced British Naturism (BN).⁴⁵⁸ Perhaps one of the largest celebrations in the organization's history was in 2014 when BN celebrated its 50th anniversary, counting from when the CCBN was created in 1964. Where the organization continues to struggle to this day is on the question of balancing membership in clubs and the problem of the single male. In the summer of 2009, an

⁴⁵⁶ Amor, "Fifty-Three Year Journey," 18.

⁴⁵⁷ Pam Fraser, "My First Year With BN," *British Naturism*, Winter 2018, no. 218, 29.

⁴⁵⁸ Edward, "A History of Naturism – Timeline,".

article entitled “Singles are Singled Out – Fact or Fiction” which contained much of the same arguments and language that could be found in articles on the topic from the 1950s. It cited that single men were useful to care and maintenance around the clubs, but that they were a risk to take on as there may ulterior motives. The article also included discussion on the problem of single men with unwilling girlfriends who needed help finding ways to entice them to join.⁴⁵⁹ These concerns, and others voiced by the author were the same as decades prior in the organization’s history and are reflective that little has changed when trying to solve the problem of the single male.

In addition to the problem of the single male, BN continues to seek ways in which to entice more women to join the movement, as well as better reach out to the youth of Britain. The website for BN as it stands today, contains a webpage dedicated entirely to women in naturism providing them with links to testimonies, articles, and websites which may assist in their decision to bare it all at a club or other BN event.⁴⁶⁰ In addition to this special attention on the organization’s website, BN hosted a special women’s day event in the 2018 season. This event was a place for women to explore body image and hear from the experiences of a life model as well as author of the photography book *Naked Britain*. It was cited as a major success with one third of the attendees never having tried naturism before.⁴⁶¹ In addition to making progress trying to make women feel comfortable in their bodies, BN works tirelessly to provide opportunities for youth that they would find exciting to try. In 2004, a documentary was aired entitled *Diary of a Teenage Nudist* which centered on naturist youth and why youth were becoming interested in naturism. The main narrator

⁴⁵⁹ Roni Fine, “Singles are Singled Out – Fact or Fiction?” *British Naturism*, Summer 2009, no. 180, 26 – 27.

⁴⁶⁰ Information regarding women in naturism today can be found here: <https://www.bn.org.uk/campaigning/womeninnaturism/>.

⁴⁶¹ Louise, “Women’s Day,” *British Naturism*, Winter 2018, no. 218, 12.

of the production was eighteen-year-old Bianca, who had been raised on a naturist club site and in recent years largely due to body issues had not taken part in naked living as much as she had in the past. Bianca decided to set out and explore why young people liked naturism, exploring the stories of people who had never been naturists before, as well as members of YBN. Her travels in the film even took her to America where she experienced how naturism was different across the sea, finding pieces which she enjoyed and found uncomfortable. She ultimately ends her journey realizing that naturism wasn't all roses and that even though she still wouldn't participate all the time, was not turned off by it. Bryony and her boyfriend Neil were two young British naturists featured a few times in the film. They comment that their experience making the film was a relatively positive if at times awkward experience. When the documentary was aired in December of 2004, Neil was somewhat disappointed in the end result, while the documentary did largely paint naturism in a positive light, it included some seedy sides which he did not appreciate. Overall, he cited the film as one which should prove to be beneficial for bringing in more young naturists.⁴⁶² An examination of youth and naturism would come to the small screens again in January 2012 with the documentary *My Daughter the Teenage Nudist*. This documentary focuses on what they refer to as the "Facebook generation" and follows the stories of a few young adults as they explore public nudity. The young adults in the film all enjoy spending time naked doing various activities whether it be baking, or participating in the London Naked Bike Ride, something which eighteen-year-old Mollie viewed as a kind of protest against society. This was a point of concern for the representatives of British Naturism in the film, as they expressed the need for young people to come and replace them, but the youth pictured here wanted nothing to do with the clubs. Meanwhile, Daryl, the youth leader for YBN spends the duration of the film seeking out new

⁴⁶² Neil Gibson, "Diary of a Teenage Nudist," *British Naturism*, Spring 2005, no. 163, 9.

members for British Naturism, a goal in which he is only partially successful. While the documentary did not necessarily hint at big improvements for BN, it did demonstrate that more and more young adults are coming around to the idea that being naked is okay, they just don't all want to officially become naturists. Other young adults, such as Alex age 25, have begun getting naked as a way of protesting against body image in the media, and uses public nude events as a venue to preach body and self-acceptance. By the end of the documentary, Daryl had managed to attain twenty-two new YBN members, a feat he was exceptionally proud of.⁴⁶³ Though not all of the young adults in the documentary were interested in naturism, it was clear that more youth are open to the possibility of going naked.

The YBN movement as of 2018 cited an increase of 57.4% in membership, especially after raising the bar of YBN cut off age to 35. The only problem which new leadership saw was that most YBN members were ages 27 – 30 and the group needs to find ways to attract the 18 to 24 age range crowd. With this goal in mind a YBN leadership committee has been formed to find new ways to appeal to this younger crowd.⁴⁶⁴ The 2018 season proved to be one of the most successful for British Naturism, both as a whole and in YBN. The organization cited the largest rise in membership in fifteen years, with numbers in 2017 around 8,300 members which by the end of 2018 had jumped to 8,900. Andrew Welch, BN's commercial manager believed that this jump in membership was due in large part of the big group events which BN plans every year. Indeed, within recent years the organization has moved away from closed door events to more public outings to locations such as theaters and restaurants.⁴⁶⁵ BN continues looking ahead into 2019 with

⁴⁶³ *My Daughter the Teenage Nudist.*, directed by Amanda Blue, 2012; ZKK for Channel 4, 2012. Online. Accessed February 14, 2019 <https://licensing.screenocean.com/record/133475>.

⁴⁶⁴ Thomas McPolin, "YBN...The Resurgence Continues," *British Naturism*, Winter 2018, no. 218, 28.

⁴⁶⁵ Elliot, "UK's Official Naturist Group...".

the hopes to see more exceptional growth as was seen in 2018. Naturism as a movement is a unique response to society's questions surrounding what is deemed moral and appropriate. The naked human body has been a point of contention throughout history. How much can and should be visible to the public eye has led to much controversy and conflict. Naturism is a unique response to this question and offers social response that seeks to make the human body normal, a trend which has become much more prevalent in recent years.

Naturism and its history plays an important role in the perception of the human body throughout history, and has impacted this changing image into today's modern age. The earliest forms of the movement viewed nudism as a philosophy which would lead humans into a bright civilization in which there was peace and understanding between mankind without a stitch of clothing to be seen. In addition man would move more away from its overindustrialized state back to nature. Early philosophies would defend their ideals on the basis that nudism could improve the health of the nation through exercise and eugenics, controlling the population by matching the most physically fit and healthy to produce healthy children. Organized naturism during these early years would be considered dangerously close to socialism, and in many cases quite wacky and laughable. The modern ideas surrounding British Naturism as a leisurely activity rather than a philosophy based on human improvement demonstrates how the movement and organization has adapted and changed over time. Its beginnings in the 1930s were a reflection on the dominating ideals towards health and building up a nation during the inter-war years. Following the horrors of World War II, the population sought to find an outlet to relieve tension which had been built during the war and relax. As a result, naturism was there as a way for people to relax in nature and drop away their woes and strife along with their clothes. Unfortunately for the organized clubs of Naturism this was not to be the case and internal disputes would tear it apart, leaving organized

naturism unable to act on the possibilities of post war Britain and therefore not expand to a wider population as it had once hoped it would. With Britain's sexual revolution in the 1950s and 60s British Naturism managed to come back together to form the CCBN, but now had to struggle with mediums such as film which more closely aligned them with sex thereby damaging their reputation. Film however was a double-edged sword and it also provided many outlets for them to advertise the naturist lifestyle, though not always successfully. Organized naturism also made significant gains in expanding to Britain's beaches in a legal manner, returning in some small way to the nude bathing characteristic of the late 1800s. It has only however been in recent years that British Naturism has been able to expand into the public eye and promote itself in a way which appeals to the public. Though Britain has not become the naked utopia some early pioneers believed it would become, the organization of British Naturism has finally begun to leave behind its secretive heritage, finding more success with public events and stepping out into the public eye; naked of course.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A**Bathing Machines at Britain's Bognor West Beach**

MessyNessy, "Victorian Prudes and their Bizarre Beachside Bathing Machines," Cabinet and Chic Curiosities, Accessed January, 5, 2019, <https://www.messynessychic.com/2014/04/15/victorian-prudes-beachside-bathing-machines/>.

APPENDIX B



Women's Bathing Costume 1850 – image in the Summer 1985 issue of *British Naturism* No. 83

APPENDIX C



Hans Surén as pictured in the opening pages of *Man and Sunlight*

APPENDIX D

HAROLD LAURANCE Invites...
EVERY MAN in the BRITISH EMPIRE
from 16 to 60 years of age to
BE a SUPERMAN in 1938
OFFERS his Amazing "WORLD-BEATER" COURSE OF HOME TRAINING
THE COURSE ★ Perfect Physique ★ Virile Manhood ★ Magnetic Personality
THAT GIVES ★ Mighty Strength ★ Mental Power ★ Tireless Energy
UNDER A SENSATIONAL GUARANTEE
for only **1/- PER WEEK**
INCLUDING APPARATUS FREE

TO ENCOURAGE THE MANHOOD OF THE COUNTRY IN THE PURSUIT OF PHYSICAL FITNESS
HAROLD LAURANCE OFFERS
£1,000
IN PRIZES
 ★ Two 1st PRIZES of £100
 ★ Two 2nd PRIZES of £50
 ★ Two 3rd PRIZES of £20

IN 1930 I AM GOING TO BEAT ALL THE WORLD'S RECORDS IN BODY BUILDING THAT I SET UP IN 1937

YOU CAN BE ONE OF THE SUCCESSFUL OF 1938

HERE IS MY OFFER TO YOU

POST THE COUPON TO-DAY

SEIZE THIS - FOR 1938 YOUR GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY

★ **BEAT THE "WORLD-BEATER" COURSE** which I can supply for 1/- per week and start of your 11th week.

★ **Also a copy of my sensational new book "Superman"** (published by the author) together with a FREE **APPARATUS** (the best of any ever made) for home use, and including the full working Book Programme.

NAME: _____
 ADDRESS: _____
 HAROLD LAURANCE, 1938
 Post to HAROLD LAURANCE
 LEGGATE HOUSE, 113 FLEET STREET, LONDON, E.C.4
 (Phone: HAROLD 133)

“Be a Superman” Advert which reflected which demonstrated the ideals of male masculinity.

Adverts like these would be commonly found in the pages of Naturist magazines like *Health and Efficiency* through the 1960’s.

APPENDIX E



W. TR "VITA" is the registered trade mark of Pilkington Brothers Ltd., St. Helens



VITA GLASS

"Vita" Glass transmits the health giving ultra-violet rays at all times of the day when there is direct light. We supply either in clear or semi-transparent form for Windows, Skylights of Private Residences, Schools, Hospitals, Offices, Factories, and in Verandas and Conservatories and on Poultry Farms and for all Horticultural purposes.

Write for full information.

EATON, PARR & GIBSON LIMITED,
 Plate, Sheet & Ornamental Glass Merchants,
 41-53, KINGSLAND ROAD,
 SHOREDITCH, LONDON, E. 2.

The Glass which transmits Ultra-Violet rays

Advertisement for Vita Glass appearing in the May 22 issue of *The Times*

APPENDIX F



NEW SUN LAMP

The regular use at home of the latest type of **LUMSDEN SUN LAMP** is one of the surest ways of preventing illness and keeping fit during the winter. It is easy and cheap to use.

£12 10s. A.C. D.C.

Or easy payment terms. Mercury Vapour Type.
Send for **FREE BOOKLET** and 14 days' trial offer

LUMSDEN LAMPS

D. M. LUMSDEN, 35 MILLBURN, ALMONDBANK, PERTH
SCOTLAND.

Advertisement for a lamp as appeared in the Winter 1936 issue of the *Sun Bathing Review*



FREE TRIAL!

WORLD FAMOUS
HEALTH RAY
Dual-Purpose
Ultra-Violet or Infra-Red
PRE-BUDGET PRICE
£6 complete. 5 Years' Guarantee.

ULTRA-VIOLET RAYS—Will give you a wonderful tan, improve your appearance, form vitamins in the tissues and increase your vigour and vitality. Strongly antiseptic, they destroy germs. Pimples, blotchy and unhealthy skin yield quickly to their purifying action.

INFRA-RED RAYS—Relieve Rheumatism, Lumbago, Neuritis, Influenza, Colds, Fibrositis, etc.

TEST THE HEALTH RAY
at home for 7 days at our expense. If it does not ease your aches and pains and make you look and feel better, your money back in full. **Medical certificate no longer required.** Made for home use. Safe and easy to use. All voltages AC or DC. Immediate delivery.

Send no money now

Over 650,000 people in the U.S.A. and Great Britain have tested these lamps in their own homes. They tested them for healing and tanning powers, looks, service, convenience and economy. They **KEPT** the lamp.

Order direct from the Makers. Not sold in shops.

DON'T WAIT! POST COUPON NOW

HEALTH RAY CO., Dept. S.B.127, Southampton
Please send me details of your FREE TRIAL OFFER of the Health Ray.
Name

Address

.....

.....

Sunlamps would continue to be advertised into the 1950s (*Sun Bathing Review* Summer 1951)

APPENDIX G

Illustrated Brochure
1/-
POST FREE

SPIEL PLATZ

IF SUMMER COMES
NEXT YEAR
MAKE UP YOUR MIND TO VISIT
England's Premier Nudist Resort

Swimming
Sunbathing
Holiday Residence
Freikörperkultur
Tennis
Badminton

Write to:
The Warden, SPIELPLATZ, St. Albans
Phone: GARSTON 2126. Grams: "Sunshine, St. Albans"

Early advertisement for Spielplatz in the Autumn 1938 issue of *Sun Bathing Review*

SUN BATHING

HOLIDAY

RESIDENCE

GET HEALTH AND JOY THE NUDIST WAY

ILLUSTRATED BROCHURE POST 3/6 FREE

AT SPIELPLATZ PRIVATE RECREATION GROUNDS ST ALBANS PHONE GARSTON 2126

Spielplatz advertisement in the Summer 1951 issue of *Sun Bathing Review*

APPENDIX H

"The Best Book on the subject yet published" —a recent review

NUDISM —

FROM SIX POINTS OF VIEW

(SECOND EDITION NOW READY)

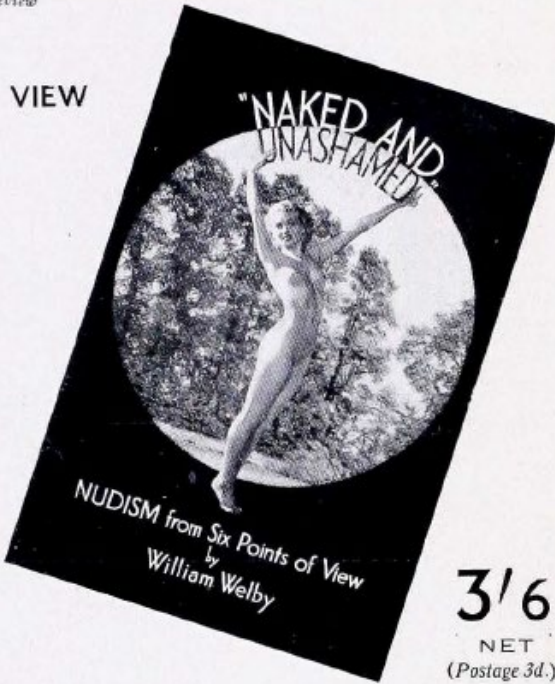
It is not the purpose of this book to provide a learned discourse, neither is it intended as a text book, nor as propaganda for or against Nudism. The subject is dealt with from the Historical, the Modern, the Health, the Psychological, the Æsthetic and the Common Sense points of view, and it is planned to provide for its readers information which will assist them to form a sensible judgment free from fallacies and prejudices.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION
 THE HISTORICAL POINT OF VIEW
 THE MORAL POINT OF VIEW
 THE HEALTH POINT OF VIEW
 THE PSYCHOLOGICAL POINT OF VIEW
 THE ÆSTHETIC POINT OF VIEW
 THE COMMON SENSE POINT OF VIEW

Illustrated by
 15 Full Page Art Plates of
 Beautiful Nature Studies

THORSONS, Publishers, Dept. 87, 91 ST. MARTIN'S LANE, LONDON, W.C.2

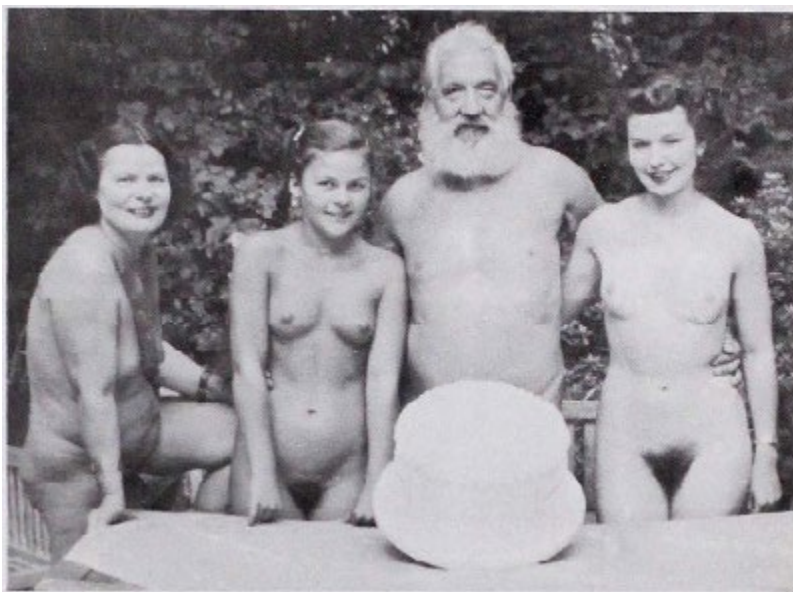


3/6
 NET
 (Postage 3d.)

Advertisement for *Nudism from Six Points of View* in the Spring 1935 issue of *Sun Bathing*

Review

APPENDIX I



The Macaskie family (Dorothy, Cosette, Charles, and Iseult) pictured at Spielplatz's 21st birthday party in 1949 (*British Naturism* Spring 1981, no. 67)

APPENDIX J

Federation of British Sun Clubs

A national organisation for Unity in Naturism

Membership of the Federation is confined to Sun Clubs and Prospective Clubs and has no provision for individual naturists who will be catered for by the Regional Associations. Correspondents are established throughout Europe and the British Empire.

Regional Associations

Regional Associations to provide services of information in their area are now forming in Wales, North-Eastern, Midland, Eastern, Southern and South-Eastern England.

Club Secretaries are invited to write for a copy of the Constitution with a view to membership and all who are interested should apply for information concerning their Regional Association to the Hon. Sec., D. Jenkinson, 129 Glesk Road, S.E.9.

Collective Insurance Scheme is now in operation for member clubs

Advertisement for the FBSC in the November 1954 edition of *Health and Efficiency*

APPENDIX K



Two images featured with Roy Gill's article "Why Not "*Le Minimum*"" – the image on the left demonstrates the retouching of naturist photographs. This retouching was deemed to make the image look unnatural and was disliked by many naturists. The image on the left featuring a French naturist on the Ile du Levant wearing 'le minimum'. Despite the unnatural look of retouching photographs, very few images appeared in the years ahead with 'le minimum'

LE MINIMUM !!



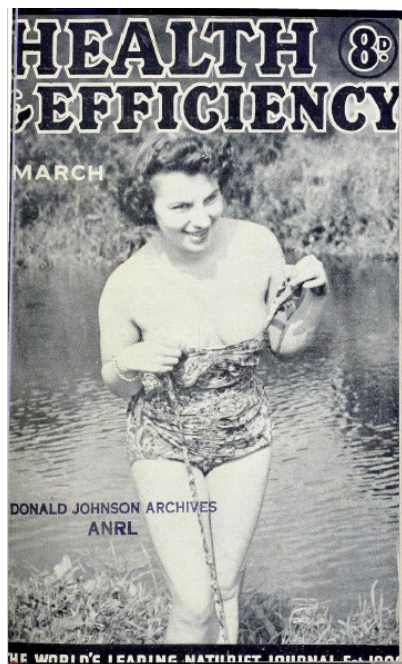
COVERING for
SUNBATHERS,
POSEURS and
NATURISTS is our
COTTON POSING
POUCH with IN-
VISIBLE waistband

2/6 post free. 1" Elastic Satin SLIPS, all
colours 12/6, FIG LEAVES 5/-, SATIN
ELASTIC pouches 5/-, POSING SLIPS
4/6 & 5/6. GOODS BY RETURN
POSTAGE FREE. Send 2½d. stamp for
Illus. LIST of POSING and SUN-
BATHING Slips to :

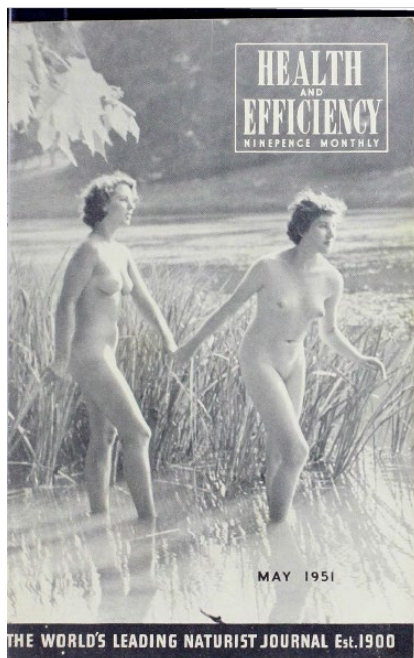
E. A. STANLEY LTD. (Dept. M)
53 HIGH STREET, LONDON, E.17

Advertisement for 'Le Minimum' found in the August 1954 issue of *Health and Efficiency*.

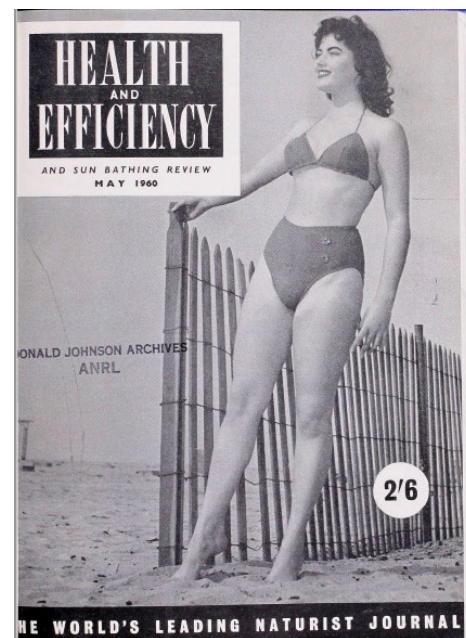
APPENDIX L



H&E Cover March 1943



H&E Cover May 1951



H&E Cover May 1960



H&E August 1961



H&E Cover September 1979



H&E September 1979 pg. 36

Health and Efficiency's content and images changed over time to include images that were more sexual and titillating in nature than previous covers or images. It was for pictures like the ones in the September 1979 issue that naturists felt their ideals were betrayed by the magazine, depicting images which did not evoke the ideals of the movement.

APPENDIX M

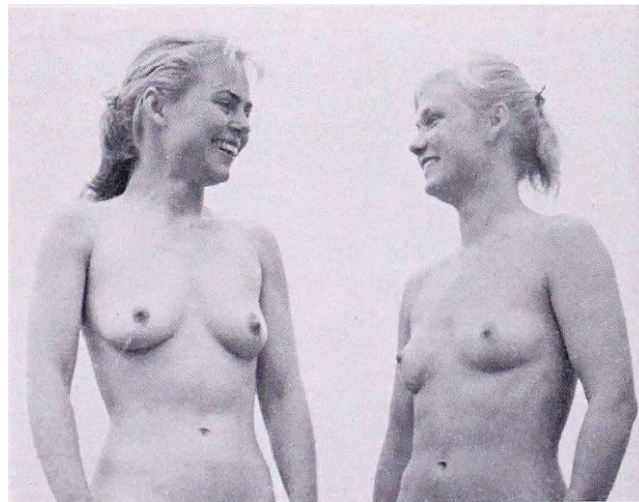


Advertisement for the American film *Garden of Eden* as featured in the February 1957 issue of *Health and Efficiency*

APPENDIX N



Elizabeth, star of *Traveling Light* featured in H&E February 1960



Ingrid and Helga, the Naturists who Keatering met at Woburn featured in H&E February 1960



Image of Yannick in the underwater sequence of *Traveling Light* featured in H&E February 1960

APPENDIX O

EDUCATING
Julie

Summer Time
1984

THE WORLDS FIRST NATURIST VIDEO FEATURE FILM

Starring **Gail Ward**, as shy naive Julie Potter who is given a project to research during the summer vacation "Nudity in the 60s".

This delightful film follows her research, which takes her to naturist locations in Europe.

Share with her the humour, the embarrassment, the conflicts with family and friends, and the first time she has to strip off.

Educating Julie reveals all!

Heritage Video Ltd.
42 Jordangate, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK10 1EW, England.
Remember to state whether you require VHS or Beta. Allow 21 days for delivery.
Credit card holders ring (0625) 615919 for priority ordering.

HERITAGE VIDEO
VISA

Advertisement for *Educating Julie* featured in *British Naturism* (Winter 1984). By casting a young actress, BN demonstrates its attempts to use the film to appeal to a younger audience use the film as a way of enticing youth to join the movement.



Actress Gail Ward and Director David Ball. Photograph by Don Grahame, featured in the Spring 1985 issue of *British Naturism*

APPENDIX P



Images of Petitioners at the Brighton Nudist Beach in 1985, as featured in the January 1985 issue of H&E

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