

Ginsberg, writer Joan Nestle, and activist Harry Hay. The sun-drenched crowd of several thousand went wild as ACT UP of New York led a contingent of nonpermitted marchers from the Village onto the lawn. "I sensed more militance than in recent years, more receptiveness to the militant messages we heard later," said Shane Que-Hee, a longtime friend of Hay's. Harry grated the audience with criticism of ACT UP's "hetero-imitative" confrontation tactics. ("Very Hay-ish" commented Que-Hee.) A lengthy historical introduction as only Harry could give it further ruffled the crowd. But, dressed in the latest Faerie fashion — a tutu of crinoline and army camouflage — Harry gained his listeners' favor as he proposed the Radical Faerie approach of "askance" tactics, as exemplified by his costume. His remarks received sustained applause, and were reprinted in three lesbian and gay newspapers around the country.

Que-Hee felt, upon seeing Harry onstage, that he physically summarized the years of the lesbian and gay movement in the United States. He noted that "age did not bring resignation except for those physical things that age demands as its due; the mind would never bow to anyone."

In the next day's parade Harry marched with the Radical Faeries, who ran through the streets of Manhattan with a vigor and color uncommon even for them. This followed Harry's curt (and rather shocking, to those who had extended the invitation) refusal to march in the founders' section of the parade. It was not uncommon for Harry to decline just such well-intentioned civilities; he once sent a friend into convulsions of laughter by complaining that "the kids" in the movement were looking at him as "the Dinosaur Duchess." In a 1983 letter to a friend, he complained that he was "already scheduled to be a dinosaur for a gay gerontology conference, and now San Francisco Gay Pride has asked me to come up and be a dinosaur" — the same week! He requested to march in a different group.

Through the years, Harry remained true to his Marxist politics, never once becoming anti-Communist despite his own painful experience. As upheavals began in the Soviet Union, he was fascinated with Gorbachev's *perestroika* and intently watched as reforms swept Eastern Europe at the turn of the decade. "I was delighted and felt it was long overdue," he said. "And I was thunderstruck by the revelations of what had been suppressed by the bureaucracy, and by the primitiveness of the U.S.S.R. It brought back memories of the absolutely wonderful experience between 1938 and 1942 where we were actively exploring theory and practice, with regular six month evaluations and adjustments. We'd say, 'Wouldn't it be wonderful if we lived in the Soviet Union and could do this every day?' It turned

out that it wouldn't have been." It saddened Hay to see people "throwing out the baby with the bath water" in completely denouncing Communism, and pronouncements of the decline of Marxism, he insisted, were premature. "Marxism needs to be revised, based on new scientific knowledge, particularly of human behavior," he said. "The underlying methodology will be proved sound." Harry was pleased in 1990 to be working with an advisory council to help facilitate that revision.

As they passed their twenty-fifth year of "walking hand in hand together," as Hay often described their relationship, the loving companions Hay and Burnside looked ever more like a couple, alike yet complementary, supportive in a thousand details by practiced instinct. Their ongoing dialogue continued with as much excitement as ever, and the vivacity and hardness of both astonished their friends. It was their union, Harry once told a television interviewer, that gave him the will to keep going. "I had to wait until I was fifty to find out what my life was all about. And since then, it's been the most sumptuous life you can imagine."

In the spaces between their togetherness, Harry spent long nights scanning newspapers for political and scientific information, firing off letters filled with news, insights, and his ever-present opinions. Often he bent over his typewriter until dawn; depriving himself of sleep seemed only more agreeable to Harry as he grew older. As he prepared remarks for his frequent speaking engagements, he increasingly wove stories from his own life into his speeches, looking down from, as Black Elk called it, the mountain of old age. Harry recounted scenes from the Mattachine, from demonstrations in the 1930s, from his days on his uncle's ranch, all to illustrate points about freedom and community.

Even in his old age, Harry sometimes marched alone — and with substantial impact. One solo protest started innocuously, but ended up among his most newsworthy feats. It began at the 1986 Gay Pride Parade in Los Angeles, a march sponsored by Christopher Street West (CSW), in honor of the street where the Stonewall riot took place in 1969.

What became known as the "Harry Hay Incident" was actually one aspect of the multifaceted "Valerie Terrigno Incident," a complex political scenario involving the first mayor of West Hollywood, which was then ballyhooed as the world's first gay-run city. Terrigno, an open lesbian, had resigned over a scandal that Harry felt involved a "wicked miscarriage of justice." A story in the *Los Angeles Times* described the plan of CSW to block the appearance of former Mayor Terrigno in the upcoming festivity.

Harry's reaction was that "any place I walk, Valerie walks with me." Disdaining a "blatant or hetero-imitative type of confrontation," he wanted