The Story of Uganda’s First Openly Gay Man

CALL ME KUCHU
The Story of Uganda’s First Openly Gay Man
ScotsGay caught up with Greg at FAQ Scotland to find out what the new project is about:

So, what is FAQ?
FAQ’s all about guys having the best sex and relationships - but to find out what that really means we need to get people talking. FAQ is a website and we want you to visit and talk to us.

What happens when I visit?
Have you ever seen Big Brother? People love it or hate it but basically what we’ve got on the FAQ site is a diary room where guys can tell us about how they meet other men and about the sex they like.

Is FAQ just online or is there something more?
As well as the diary room we are asking guys to give us a call and talk to us – like the diary room these telephone interviews are confidential, and they give us a bit more time to get into more of a conversation about the sex and relationships men are having. If you’ve got time for an interview we’ll set it up to suit you and we’ll give you £20 as a thank-you for your time.

What are you trying to achieve with FAQ?
FAQ respects that men are the experts in their own lives, so when they talk about sex and relationships they talk with real know-how - about what they want, what keeps them healthy and happy, and what can happen that makes it hard to always play safe. All the experiences we can capture can help us think more about what we need to do here in Scotland to help guys be safe and healthy.

How will it make a difference?
If we look at places like Australia they’ve been really good at listening to guys, their real lives, and then making sure that the information or services men need reflects what they say they want – so we want to listen and find out what works and what should be different.

How can I be a part of it?
Check out the website at www.faqscotland.co.uk and do a diary room entry, or even better get in touch to do an interview with me – or if you’ve got questions, I’m happy for you to just make contact. I hope some of your ScotsGay readers decide to take a look and get in touch with us.

GLASGAY!

FILM: Call Me Kuchu
In an unmarked office at the end of a dirt track, veteran activist David Kato labours to repeal Uganda’s homophobic laws and liberate his fellow lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender men and women, or “kuchus.” But David’s formidable task just became much more difficult.

A new “Anti-Homosexuality Bill” proposes death for HIV-positive gay men, and prison for anyone who fails to turn in a known homosexual. Inspired by USAnian evangelicals who have christened Uganda ground zero in their war on the “homosexual agenda,” the Bill awaits debate in Uganda’s Parliament. Meanwhile, local newspapers have begun outing kuchus with vicious fervor under headlines such as: “HOMO TERROR! We Name and Shame Top Gays in the City.”

An empowering documentary for LGBT activists everywhere.
Glasgow Film Theatre
Tues 23rd Oct at 6.45pm

COMEDY: Bearly Funny
In a fundraiser for our good friends at Gay Men’s Health, Andrew Doyle, Scott Agnew, Davie Strong, Susie McCabe, and Jonathan Mayor present a top night of stand up comedy. The Stand (Glasgow)
Sun 21st Oct at 7.30pm

VISUAL ART: UNIT-E
Artists: Garry McLaughlin, Kris Kesiak, Yiannis Roussakis, Snookie Mono, Rachel Frances Sharpe, Syrus and Death Rattles
A multi-discipline group show from seven very diverse artists exploring the theme of ‘unions’. Using photography, digital art, street art, installation and illustration, artists will explore and create original work inspired by their personal and political responses.
Presented as an evolving format of rotating ‘pods’ or ‘units’, Recoat Gallery will also create a symbiosis for this show, with original works which move organically through the space. The exhibition is free of charge.
The Virginia Gallery
Daily until Sat 10th Nov at 11am
So, usually Sep is a bit of a slump month on the scene, as we all recover from Festival Fatigue! Not the case last month though, as Sep was a veritable hive of activity and it doesn’t stop into Oct!

This is an exciting month for Positive Help as they will be hosting their largest ever volunteer intake. Positive Help volunteers provide life-changing practical assistance to people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C (HCV) in Edinburgh.

All Positive Help volunteers receive great training, proper support and mentoring and the chance to do work with a tremendous feel-good factor. If you have a car driving license, DIY or decoration skills, or simply fancy making a difference to people’s lives, Positive Help want to hear from you! Give them a call on 0131-558 1120.

Of course we have X-Factor back on TV now, and for those who are in a quandary because you want to go out but you also want to watch the X-Factor, Planet has solved this problem for you! They are showing the X-Factor on their huge screen, and you can watch this while bashing into one of their exclusive v-cocktail jackets - which are a steal at only £5!! And carrying on the party spirit, DJ Bijou is on the decks from 9pm playing all the latest hits and requests. With branded spirits plus mix from the bar. And for anyone who hasn’t tried Elbow, I had what was quite possibly the biggest porty eyes, moisten your delicates and retina-scorching, paradigm-shifting films to better than the first, with over 100 in attendance! And the crew now have the Body Shop on board as their sponsors, who will be donating prizes for all future nights.

Everyone was buzzing with party spirit, with drinks and party games a-plenty to keep the crowds entertained. There is a real buzz of excitement evident, and Ewan Cairns was awarded Mr Gay Fife 2012, and Naomi Blackey was named Miss Lesbian Fife 2012. If you want to get in on this some sweet action, you don’t need to wait long - the next one will be on Wed 10th Oct at The Jam Jar in Dunfermline. And there will be a special bonus “HallowQueen” night on Wed 24th Oct at The Jam Jar. Big things afoot for Fife, with rumours of a Fife Pride in 2013 also. And if you’re 18-25 and looking for something to get involved in, there are now 2 LGBT youth groups in Fife - one in Kirkcaldy and one in Dunfermline. E-mail info@hghyouth.org.uk for more info if you would like to attend the group, or volunteer to help out.

Mumbo Jumbo celebrated their 4th birthday last month, with a wild shindig at their usual venue, The Bingo Club. Providing the best sounds from the underground with DJ Trendy Wendi and Steve Austin, the next night is on Sat 13th Oct at 11pm, with a free pre-party club at Elbow Bar. And for anyone who hasn’t tried Elbow’s menu yet, may I suggest you do so? I had what was possibly the biggest burger in existence. Not only is the food is made with very high quality ingredients too. Just the ticket for lining your stomach before a night of partying at Mumbo.

And over the bridge in the Kingston, it’s all happening in Fife! The second Fife LGBT night OUT IN FIFE was even bigger and better than the first, and the crew now have the Body Shop on board as their sponsors, who will be donating prizes for all future nights.

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We need drivers, home supporters, fundraisers and office assistants.

As part of the Positive Help volunteer team you will...

* work directly with people living with HIV and Hepatitis C in Edinburgh
* full training and support
* meet new people and have fun!

Get in touch for more info! 0131 558 11 22

Local Heroes Wanted!
It's been a while hasn't it, readers? Well I'm sure you'll be glad to hear that since the festivities of the Fringe, we're back to a monthly magazine with some new features from me in Glasgow's section! This month I've taken to the streets to interview some of the Scene's best talent - this month it's the Court Bar's manager Tony Toland and the Underground's DJ Marc Stuart. We've got more of these interviews coming as I delve deeper into Glasgow's Scene.

We've had the joys of welcoming students back to the city of Glasgow, with freshers from all over the UK coming to Glasgow Caledonian University, Glasgow Glee, St Andrew's and all the colleges. The PR Boys and Girls from Gayfest were out and about at the Freshers' Fayre welcoming new students to their bars. Remember, if you're a student - join your LGBT society - a great way to meet new people, enjoy some social events and make your time at University or College just a little bit better!

Luke & Jack, Glasgow's favourite local shop hosts the Virginity Gallery beneath its roof - this month the Gallery had an exhibition called 'YOUTH' - all young artists showing off their best pieces. It's been the first time this year that there's been a proper exhibition for the local artists, so it was great to see such good quality pieces from a young cohort. The Virginity Gallery will take part in Glasgow this year - again - opening their space to a new exhibition and some baroque nights.

The Waterloo Bar has been taken over by some familiar faces - the boys that owned Bennet's before it's take over are back on the scene and hope to great things ahead for the wee bar but now under Central Station. A welcoming atmosphere, friendly staff and customers and some great entertainment from the staple that is Cher Shitfix. It's a great wee bar and we all wish the best of luck to the new boys in charge.

Someone I never really knew about from the outside but has touched my heart recently is someone that's a young face in Scottish society – a great way to meet new people, welcome the new gays to our scene. Re-Jigging their customers with 7 days a week entertainment by various events: In the Scene's best talent – this month it's The Wanted "I Found You" (big sucker for catchy pop songs!).

DJ Marc Stuart - The Underground Bar
What's your favourite song of the moment? The Wanted “I Found You” (big sucker for catchy pop songs!)

What do you do in your spare time? I'm a bit spontaneous and love travelling across the city of Dunfermline. Follow me on Twitter @NathanSparkin... (30 characters remaining)

Tony Toland - Manager of the Court Bar
How long have you been at the Court Bar? I have been in the Court Bar for a year and a half.

What's your favourite night of the week? My favourite night of the week is Mondays, that's a toughie every night is a great night, never a dull moment at all!! There's always a wee special to have a giggle about over the bar.

What's the best thing about being the manager of The Court Bar? Absolutely the reactions of the crowd and even more so the staff. They still have the wonderful Audrey Hepburn hosting Karaoke and belts out a few tunes herself, just to make sure she's heard across the Market City – so get in and enjoy the company in the Court Bar!

The Riding Room said goodbye to one of their barquees acts this month as Vendetta Veni moved to New York for a new challenge! velvettv, they're still been entertaining their customers with 7 nights of barquees, comedy and live music with a great cocktail list and an amazing atmosphere – so if you've not tried out the joint on the corner, get in!

A Monday Night in Club X is a favourite amongst the gay scene staff with DJ Elaine De Hele Blyake pumping out her tunes at CRUNK. She's one of the gay scene's best DJs playing her own remixes of the best music. Be sure to take the Scene to a Monday and join Elaine and the team for a great wee night!

Well, that's all for this month. Remember you can see me every Thursday, Saturday and Sunday in the Court Bar.

The Underground welcomed a new diva to their bar this month after Bane Flames left to go on holiday for a month. Bertha was her name and entertaining was her game. She was belting out tunes at their Tue Karaoke night, alongside Miss Minn and others who had taken to the downstairs bar to enjoy the chat from a slightly nervous but capable Bertha. You might recognise her, so get in contact if you can guess who she is!

Speakeasy has been continuing to bring the scene DJ Jamie Myth every Sat from 9pm till 1am. His favourite mix of pop, chart and swing dance. He's a favourite with the Sat night crowd who get dancing and singing away to some classic power tunes so get in there on a Sat night if you fancy a change from the usual. The Trophy Room is still open for business above Speakeasy every Sat night with DJ Shane Bar and the hostess with the mostest, Nancy Clench – who's apparently making an appearance on telly very soon!

The Court Bar seemed to have a great night when barman Andrew and manager Tony decided to pull pigs in a very different manner than we're used to on Glasgow’s scene – Naked. The boys spent all night with just a wee bit of fabric keeping their modesty and the customers, bunch of pervs, loved it! They still have the wonderful Audrey Hepburn hosting Karaoke and belts out a few tunes herself, just to make sure she’s heard across the Market City – so get in and enjoy the company in the Court Bar!

The aims of the network include social events, awareness of LGBT issues, lobbying for employment issues and support in the workplace.

The Underground staff have been touring the Highlands for public sector employees in Highland will be launched on 11th Oct at Eden Court in Inverness. Speakers are due to include Gillian Shaw (local employment solicitor), and Grampian LGBT staff network. Highland Council, NHS Highland, Constabulary, Highlands & Islands Fire & Rescue Service, HIE, UHI, S&N. The Underground will be launching a new guide for LGBTQ staff and visitors.

It's a bit of a turn on since the Dunfermline scene has been written off with recent new developments in the Dunfermline scene. In fact, all the fun so far, don't worry as there is plenty, plenty, plenty more where all that came from!

Over the past few months we have been entertained by various events: In Nightclub the Dunfermline heat of the annual competition Mr Gay UK was held and from the reactions of the crowd and even more so of the judges, who were lucky enough to get such a good view of the action, it went down very well! Nightclub was also entertained by the X Factor Act Two Shoes

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"Salty Dog Goes Shipwrecked" with their very successful new single "Tart Me On" which had everyone on their feet feeling boot. Coming in on Sat, top of of more live acts, is “The Big 2012 Freaked Out HalloWeen Party” where £500 cash is up for grabs along with plenty games and other fun and frillics to ensure everyone a great night.

Meanwhile in Klozet there have been many great live acts also over the summer with many more to come this coming month. All this has been aided by the newly installed new live license Klozet has been granted allowing them to stay open until 2.30 on Sat, every Sat and they are currently in the process of getting the live licence extended to include Fri and the occasional Sun too! The partying just does not want to stop on the Dunfermline scene!

In the Salty Dog the partying is just getting better too! With regular theme nights being held on the last Sun of every month with a free buffet as well, of course, as a great selection of tunes. This new tradition was started off with a bang with the highly successful “Salty Dog Goes Shipwrecked" with their very successful new single "Tart Me On" which had everyone on their feet feeling boot. Coming in on Sat, top of of more live acts, is “The Big 2012 Freaked Out HalloWeen Party” where £500 cash is up for grabs along with plenty games and other fun and frillics to ensure everyone a great night.

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Here we go again with an update from this wee corner of Scotland. News on Gay Men’s Health, Zone Youth in Norway, Cheerz Bar & more.

Following a very successful launch on 1st Sep at Cheerz Bar, Gay Men’s Health have hit the ground running and have been out and about at Freshers’ Fayres, bars and Wellmans Sauna getting the message out that they are here and ready to provide a service for gay and bisexual men across Grampian Region. One of the pieces of work that they are keen to get people involved in is the peer advocacy programme, helping to provide sexual health information to others. If you would like more information please E-mail: grampian@gmh.org.uk

GMH are always on the look out for more volunteers too, you can help with outreach, promotional work, video and marketing, admin and loads more with something to suit everyone whether you can spare 1 hour or 1 day. Drop in at 246 George Street or go on line to apply at www.gmh.org.uk

Zone Youth LGBT have been to Stavanger in Norway recently to find out more about LGBT culture and sexual health in the region. They learned quite a lot including when civil partnerships came into place, rights on blessings in church, how the Internet has had a similar impact on community and more. There will be a presentation produced and available soon with a huge thanks to Tone and Morten of LLH Rogaland and Kim of Queer Youth Stavanger for their presentations and help during our trip.

Cheerz Bar & Club have upped the tea time cabaret offering now to include not one but three fabulous drag queens including well known faces Miss Cherry Bakewell or should that be the International Miss Bakewell following a wee show in New York!

Scarlet Diamante is on the bill too plus Aberdeen’s very own Bobbie Dazzler who’s been let loose from a black bag somewhere in Torry to entertain and embarrass the unwitting customers. Joe Frances is making a return to Cheerz soon too with the usual hits and chat you have come to expect.

Off the beaten track but still part of gay Aberdeen is Wellmans Health Suite which is open 7 days a week from Noon- 9pm with a sauna, steam room and jacuzzi to help relax and chill you after a busy week. You will also find trained outreach staff from Gay Men’s Health there every Wed from 6-9pm to answer any questions you may have about sex, sexual health or just general chat too.

The Freshers are back in town and that can mean a few things but mainly that the Uni LGBT societies are back up and running for the new term. The teams at both Aberdeen Uni’s ABFab and RGU:LGBT have been out and about promoting themselves and getting record numbers of new members joining up too. If you are new to town and at university please look up the societies and get involved.

That’s it for another month with this column being typed on my iPad in my hotel room in Stavanger at ridiculous o’ clock! As ever if you have any news, views, events or gossip get in touch in the usual ways.

Don’t just book online. Talk to a real person, here in Scotland.

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Web: myworldcruises.co.uk

Paul Soave
• Gay Friendly • Personal Tailored Service
• Instant Deals Available • Regional Connections
• Disability Positive • Suits Every Budget
• Groups Catered For • Quality • Exclusive

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**LIVE GIGS**

**SPARKS**
TWO HANDS ONE MOUTH
Sat 21st Oct
HMV Picture House

Having announced an intimate show at London’s Bush Hall, which sold out instantly, Sparks now announce an extraordinary tour that will see them deconstruct and reinterpret songs from their own extensive and unique catalogue.

**Marc Almond**
POP TROUBADOUR
Hits and More!
Sat 29th Sep
HMV Picture House

The show will feature Marc Almond’s Hits and Singles, a few of Marc's personal favourites and possibly a new song too! Planned to coincide with Marc Almond’s Pop Troubadour album - A double CD collection of Hits and Singles 1983-2012.
In Britain married men who develop a passion for drag often receive help from their wives with make-up and clothes. They insist, and could be telling the truth, that they don’t fancy men. Other guys with feminine tendencies enjoy getting into dresses and don’t fancy men. Still more fancy sex changes become transsexuals.

The film explains none of this but Minin makes it a story to see despite the extraordinary length.

You have to enjoy crying to appreciate RUST AND BONE (15) about a girl in America, Marion Cotillard, who trains huge orca whales at the Marineland park to do tricks till one turns her on. She wakes up in hospital without her legs. A stunning guy, Matthias Schoenaerts, with a six year old son, makes her life bearable with his devotion and in time makes her realize sex is possible.

In Uganda is a country to spend time in. Forty years ago their dictator Idi Amin ordered thousands of Asians to leave the country. As they knew he killed anyone he ordered thousands of Asians to leave the country. As they knew he killed anyone he ordered thousands of Asians to leave the country. As they knew he ordered thousands of Asians to leave the country.

So many tragic sex changes become transsexuals.

Lena Hedlund has the kind of sex appeal to make the sex appeal. In recent years the government has come up against in my career, dealing with homophobia and the men who have been treated equally in employment.

I am fiercely passionate about equality — about providing people from the LGTB community and other sections of society, with real career opportunities in companies which value them and value diversity in the workplace.

To ensure employers are right for his business ethics, Stewart personally screens companies that he feels would be a suitable match for his clients and aims to provide a portfolio of clients committed to equality and inclusion. Explaining his motivation, Stewart added: “If anyone it’s important to know you’re in a job where your employer values and supports you and that’s where we step in.

“Our message is that people should be able to be themselves and we expect employers to embrace that. If someone is an LGTB community member they have not had the support to reach their full potential and I want to change that.”

All employees are covered by The Equality Act 2010, which, in a nutshell, means if you feel that you have been discriminated against or bullied at work because of your actual or perceived sexual orientation, this should be protected by this legislation. However, despite these laws protecting LGTB rights — there are still many barriers to break down. Research carried out in 2010 by the Scottish Government revealed that 31 per cent felt someone who has had a sex change operation would be an unsuitable primary teacher with 18 per cent saying the same of gay men and lesbians.

A GROUNDBREAKING online adoption service dedicated to equality and inclusion has been set up in Scotland. inclusivejobs.co.uk has been set up by Stewart Hastie, who, as a gay man, has encountered a number of homophobic situations in the workplace.

Stewart said, “I started up this business because of the barriers and challenges that I have come up against in my career, dealing with homophobia and the men who have been treated equally in employment.

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People often don’t realise who might get their assets after they die, and more importantly who might not. Who is in charge of your funeral, and who isn’t. Making a will is a sign of respect for yourself and your loved ones. In making a will:

1. You get to make decisions that you are happy with.
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For more information, or to upload your CV, visit inclusivejobs.co.uk or ring 0845 6000226.

WORTH TRACKING DOWN

In the latter forties Jack Kerouac and writer friends decided to drive and thumb their way across America for the experiences they could write about. His best selling book about the trip THE ROAD (15) has finally been filmed. They do many jobs like picking cotton on the way. Newsreel Garnett Hedlund has the kind of sex appeal to make you believe many girls welcomed him into their beds for as long as he wanted to play. When an older guy fancied him he was happy to screw him for $20 which must have meant a lot more than it was over 60 years ago. One of the writers was a guy that is shown when Garnett is happy to give him a lingering kiss on the lips. One of the memorable pictures of the year.

NOW IS GOOD (12a) has a breeziness that makes it one of the oftput pictures of the season. Dakota Fanning is a teenage girl dying of leukaemia who decides to experience everything in a hurry from drugs to shoplifting to sex. Happening to find a letter teen good looking neighbour, Jeremy Irvine, helps. It shows the agony her parents are put through while she is being treated and the comments and problems that I did and that they were being treated equally in employment.

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“London is a lot more inclusive and traditionally many people from the LGTB community have gone south for jobs which has meant that this country has lost a wealth of talent”, he said.

“Well I want that to stop here. I want people who live in this country here to feel there are real opportunities here with inclusive employers.

What we are doing is breaking down barriers and challenging stereotypes to inspire people to have the careers they want to have and not jobs that society thinks they should have - be that lawyers, doctors, bankers, teachers etc.

“Our message is your sexuality should never hold you back from achieving your true potential,” explained Stewart.

For more information, or to upload your CV, visit inclusivejobs.co.uk or ring 0845 6000226.
1. “Civil partnerships already provide homosexsuals with all the legal benefits of marriage and confer all the same legal responsibilities, so that same-sex marriage is not necessary.”

2. “We are used to describing civil partnerships as identical to civil marriages, which essentially they are, except for the term used, the combination of genders, and some minor differences in bureaucratic procedures which are irrelevant once the deed is done. Oddly, they never reach the logical conclusion that since the two are legally equivalent, there is no good reason to give them different legal names. The non-difference of gender can hardly be a good reason, since we do not usually apply different legal terms to acts and arrangements between two people of the same sex that apply to those between a man and a woman. The word “murder” applies as much to a man killing a man as to a man killing a woman, and “rape”, “robbery”, “joint ownership”, employment, “compensation” and “bequest” are similarly comprehensive. When we further consider that having different terms obliges the government to create a registry office to print, store and use different forms, the distinction between “marriage” and “civil partnership” seems to pointless bureaucratic untidiness, so why not just tidy them into the same drawer? The reason gay unions were not simply called “marriages” from the start was to postpone the argument we’re having now, by creating a soothing illusion that gays were being invited to play a separate team rather than join the heterosexual game. The trick worked, which makes me wonder whether the suffragettes might have got women enfranchised a bit sooner if, instead of demanding “the vote”, they’d merely asked for a “Women’s Electoral Preference Ratification”. This would have had the same value as a man’s vote and been counted in the same election, but would have been cast at a separate polling station and printed on pink paper. Once men had got used to that, and realized that it hadn’t destroyed democracy, it could have been retracted, with only a little more controversy, as a vote. 2. “Marriage” is a unique term with a special meaning, etc.”

This line is from the Barbara Cartland School of rhetoric. As we have seen, “marriage” is a word you can put in romantic songs, whereas “civil partnership” is just too stuffy legalistic. “Love and civil partnership/ Love and civil partnership/ Go together like... on a sunny day and a gardener’s lip.” Ah, forget it! Even people who have little time for religion can get sentimental over the word “marriage” and feel uneasy about redefinition, especially if they never ask themselves why they value this word at all, so valuable, so rich, that they would lose it if for no better reason be made more widely available. If it’s a prized word, is it not understandable that gays might prize it equally, and selfish to stop them enjoying it? Gays can be romantic too: I have known several who were one and one still is. But then it’s not just about romance; it’s even more to do with saciness. Church leaders protest that a legal redefinition will damage the word’s sacred significance, which is odd, because it should be obvious to them all that sacred significances don’t depend on legal definitions. The fact that there is no legal definition of “God” does not stop church people from revelling in the word’s perceived sacredness at all times, and if the government, in an impish mood and with time on its hands, were to create a legal definition of “God”, that would not threaten other definitions unless they also passed a tax banning other definitions. Since the government is not planning to ban alternative, non-legal meanings of “marriage”, we can all continue to use it in any special sense we fancy. Cardinal O’Brien can use it to mean “heterosexual union” or even “toboggan occasional table” if he wants to. In fact the issue over the word might be resolved if we all agreed to use “marriage” to mean “toboggan occasional table” and then thought of a new word to signify both heterosexual and homosexual unions: “bunkedart” for example. The new word would not have any previous romantic or sacred connotations to be spoiled, and couples who wished to use it might well be romantic or sacred would have to make an effort and behave so lovingly towards each other as to invest the word with the desired lovely connotations, since it did not come out with them automatically included.

3. “Marriage is a heterosexual thing.”

Yes, if only heterosexuals have it. Voting was a makt thing once, and was held up as an argument against women’s suffrage. This kind of argument-by-definition is no good when what is being argued over is the definition, and it can be translated as “They shouldn’t have it because they DON’T have it.”

4. “Marriage has always been defined as a union between one man and one woman.”

This is the old good standby known as the appeal to tradition, i.e. social custom must never change. We are asked to ignore the fact that our society has a long tradition of changes in social custom, and that changes in the past are usually changes for the better, whereas future changes threaten to undermine civilisation, or at least make some bishops sad.

5. “Gay marriage would threaten traditional marriage.”

De-bearing this one, all you sometimes have to say is “How?” The only imaginable response that isn’t a slur is “Because it would decrease respect for marriage and put people off it”, which means the question of whether individuals SHOULD consider marriage if their respect for it depends on gays being excluded. No one wants to hear those dreaded words: “I’m sorry darling, but I just can’t take our marriage seriously anymore now that you can do it.” I want a divorce! How can that go back to the adoption agency. There’s been little point in having THEM around either since gays were already allowed to adopt.

6. If gay marriage goes through, what’s to stop Muslims marrying all cows; many shares; many thin air; marry the universe; etc?

Animals generally can’t say “I do” and sign the register, though a highly trained parrot might just make it. Consent and legal purpose are equally lacking in the other examples. The slippery slope argument is also used to avoid tears of legalized polygamy, though that long-standing tradition is portrayed, without a whiff of disapproval from God, in the Old Testament, which makes nonsense of the claim that the churches are defending a changeless tradition based on one man and one woman. Use of the slippery slope often signals that the opposition is running out of arguments and has had to start arguing against some imagined future proposal rather than the one it has failed to discard. A currently fashionable sleight is the fear that if gay marriages become legal, priests etc will be forced to conduct them. This idea is admittedly so tempting that they do better not to put it into our heads, as I might even convert to Catholicism for a chance of having my same-sex marriage conducted by Cardinal O’Brien, and I only see the lock on his face.

The reality, however, is that church participation in Scotland would be entirely voluntary, while in the rest of Britain it would be explicitly disallowed. English gay couples set on church weddings will therefore be looking for venues in Scotland: a rosy economic prospect for Goreta Green provided they can make the place more appealing to gay tastes by toning down its campsiness. The effectiveness of all the arguments against same-sex marriage might partly explain why the churches’ outcry over little more than a word is at least as vociferous as their previous failed struggles against partial decriminalisation, equal age of consent, civil partnerships, gay adoption and the inclusion of sexual orientation in the equality act, in which far more was materially at stake for gays. If your script is poor, it is tempting to override the performance. It could also be that, as with drowning food stocks in a famine, the less that remains to be fought over, the more valuable the remaining becomes. Both sides are aware that the battle for gay legal equality is in its endgame, and the change from “civil partnership” to “marriage”, though legally slight in itself, will clinch it for good (except for the slight hitch preventing voluntary church involvement in England and Wales). Endgame workers know that even when the outcome seems predictable. The third reason for which might seem a disproportionate drop is that, for the first time, more is at stake for church leaders than for gays. “Marriage” might be just “one little word”, but priests etc put huge value on words, which are their stock in trade. “Civil union” has never been part of their stock, but “marriage” always has, and at one time they were the only people who sold it. Even when registry offices took some of the custom, they offered the same basic product minus the religious coating, so the churches could still feel that they offered more and that there was the original. Now that the registry offices look to offer an enhanced rather than reduced product, the churches feel that the marriage patent has been stolen from them. Worse still, the support of all major parties for same-sex marriage means there is little churches can do about it, so they look weaker and more humiliated than ever, the gap between church and state wider, and their God still more ineffectual. No wonder they are cross.

This is a remarkable time to be homosexual in Britain. We should be proud of ourselves for having taken on the once-mighty churches and won, and the lower the opposition estimate the gay percentage of the population: the prouder we should be for punching above our weight. (This is not of course to deny the vital role of our heterosexual supporters.) At the same time we should beware of complacency and remember that the battle in Britain has been just one in an ongoing worldwide war. Every time we see a photo of a same-sex couple being legally united, we should think of another same-sex couple, united in death as they hang from cranes in Iran. One battle over should give us more time for others. Secular Scotland

Robert Canning
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Secular Scotland

How the world can change. It can change like that. Thanks to us, a little word “married”. So sang Frieda Schieder in the stage version of “Cabaret”, but what if the story was transposed to modern Britain and Schieder became a lesbian? She then might sing that the world can change “thanks to four little words: in a civil partnership”. Somehow, though, it doesn’t have the same ring.

The row over same-sex marriage in Britain is very much about that one little word, though the focus is not on the word’s power to change the world but on the world’s power to change the world. Most religious bodies seem united in their insistence that “marriage” can only ever designate a legal union between a pentic- owner and a vagina-bearer, except when they themselves stretch the term to include mystic attachments between nuts and a new-fangled partner not believed to have a body anymore. The Marriage Day address recently read in Scotland’s Catholic churches even claimed that the exclusively heterosexual definition was the “universally accepted” one, which might make us wonder why there’s such a row about it. We might try to end the row by reassuring religious conservatives that, if “marriage” can only ever mean what it says it does, then they can have anything to worry about, but I doubt that would do the trick, since they seem to have no end of reasons on their side. Here are some of the most popular, along with my responses.

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For LGBT+ friendly caravanning, camping and hostelling, meeting others and their environment.
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**TARTAN TRAVELLERS**
Scottish based club for all LGBT+ fans of caravanning, camping and hostelling.
Tel: 01358 720859. www.tartantravellers.wix.com/info

**GAY CARAVAN & CAMPING CLUB**
A means whereby gay people can come out, meet others and their environment. Tel: Ian on 07977 317872. www.gaycaravanclub.com

**RAINBOW FAMILIES**
A multi-disciplinary, multi-setting, multi-sector, non-profit making umbrella organisation aiming to support parents of LGBT+ people. Tel: 07977 317872. www.rainbowfamiliesuk.org

**SISTER BOBBY OPI**
A group of female and trans female activists based in the Scottish English Lake District and other parts of the UK and Europe Wide LGBT Caravan Club. Tel: 0131-337 2314. Write: 4 Clifton Terrace, Edinburgh. EH12 5DR.

**DIVERSITY**
A group of friends and gay men who meet in the south of Scotland, and at its retreat house near Dumfries. Tel: 0131-337 2314. Write: 4 Clifton Terrace, Edinburgh. EH12 5DR. www.diversitysociety.org.uk

**QUEER YOUTH**
Queer Youth Scotland is a youth organisation for 16-25 year olds. Meet Tue 6-8pm. www.queeryouth.org.uk

**GLADYS GAY RABBITS**
A group of friends, whilst respecting each other's community and our families. Tel: 0131-523 1104. www.gladysgayrabbits.com

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**TEAM SCOTLAND BADMINTON**
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**GLASGOW YOUTH**
A social support group for LGBT youth, gender variance young people and their communities.
Meet Monthly Wed 7-9pm at Beaufort Hotel, 11 Swans Of Scotland:
Tel: 0141-548 8121. E-mail: graham.kane@yls.org.uk

**MORAY:**
Meet every Tue 6-8pm. www.moraygba.co.uk

**QUEER YOUTH**
Queer Youth Scotland is a youth organisation for 16-25 year olds. Meet Tue 6-8pm. www.queeryouth.org.uk

**GAY COMMUNITY**
A group of friends and gay men who meet in the south of Scotland, and at its retreat house near Dumfries. Tel: 0131-337 2314. Write: 4 Clifton Terrace, Edinburgh. EH12 5DR. www.gaycommunity.org.uk

**STORY**
The Edinburgh convent. Write: Hazel Marzetti, LGBT Officer on 0131-548 8121. Tel: 0131-523 1104. www.hazelmartin.org.uk

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