Margaret Thatcher is dead. It’s very likely that most of you know this already. And before I go on I am also aware that:
a) many of you were born after her reign and have very little idea of who she was, and care even less, and
b) many more of you are sick to the back teeth of hearing about her. But the fight over her legacy - over history - is fierce. And we should all have our say, lest David Cameron’s assertion that, “We’re all Thatcherites now” takes hold.
Thatcher was first elected as British Prime Minister in May, 1979. Arriving at 10 Downing Street, surrounded by photographers and supporters, she paraphrased the Catholic Prayer of Saint Francis: “Where there is discord, may we bring harmony. Where there is error, may we bring truth. Where there is doubt, may we bring faith. And where there is despair, may we bring hope”. It’s fair to say that in the eleven years that followed, harmony, truth, faith and hope were in short supply. Indeed, most Scots seemed relieved when she was finally deposed in Nov, 1990.
In recent weeks much has been said and written about the hated Poll Tax, introduced in Scotland a year ahead of England and Wales, and the Miners’ Strike, where Thatcher is still seen by right wing commentators as finally breaking the backs of the unions (in fact more than a quarter of working adults in Scotland still choose to join a trade union).
The sinking of the retreating Belgrano warship during the Falklands war has also excited much comment. Her somewhat heartless response to the deaths of 323 people, “Rejoice” is well known. What many don’t know is that after being grilled about the massacre on the BBC’s flagship news show Nationwide, her husband Denis went radge at the show’s producer yelling that his wife had been “stitched up by bloody BBC poofs and Trots”. And there is no doubt that Thatcher, like much of the British establishment at the time, was anti-gay. In a speech to the Conservative Party conference in Oct, 1987, she spoke about education: “...but it’s the plight of individual boys and girls which worries me most...Children who need to be taught to respect traditional moral values are being taught that they have an inalienable right to be gay...All of those children are being cheated of a sound start in life - yes cheated.”
In a speech to the Conservative Party conference in Oct, 1987, she spoke about education: “...but it’s the plight of individual boys and girls which worries me most...Children who need to be taught to respect traditional moral values are being taught that they have an inalienable right to be gay...All of those children are being cheated of a sound start in life - yes cheated.”
In May, 1988, Section 28 of the local government amendment to the Children and Young Persons (Scotland) Act 1930 came into force which effectively prevented teachers from even mentioning the subject in schools, and inevitably led to the homophobic bullying of gay and straight kids just for being a bit different.

Martin Walker
martin@scotsgay.co.uk

Clue s26 was repeated in June 2000 in Scotland as one of the first pieces of legislation enacted by the new Scottish Parliament. At the time in England, the young David Cameron would repeatedly attack Tony Blair’s plans to abolish Section 28, publicly denouncing then-Prime Minister Blair as being “anti-family”. In 2009, Cameron supported a Conservative amendment on abolition that retained certain parts, which experts and campaigners described as “Section 28 by the back door”. Fortunately this was unsuccessful, and Section 28 was repealed by the Labour government in England without such concessions. It wasn’t until June 2009 that Cameron formally apologised for his party introducing the law, stating that it was “a mistake”.
I came out as bi just as Section 28 was being introduced. In the late 80’s, going to protests and demos “Against the Clause” was as natural as popping down to the local gay bar. I hated Thatcher, and the very idea that you could be queer and a Tory was unthinkable. But it wasn’t just LGBT rights, Thatcherism seemed to want to take away everything I cared about. Schools, hospitals, libraries... all suffered cut backs almost out of existence. Things that as a nation we owned - like gas and electricity were sold off. She diminished communities, denied that society even existed and taught that greed, above everything else, was good.

Regardless of your political views, no one would deny that it was the leader who caused the problems in the first place - expanded their wealth. Demonstrations were frequently crushed with a police force that seemed more like an armed wing of the state. I really hated her. I wanted her out of my life, and everything she stood for to die and stay dead.
When I was a child my father was a little too quick to use his fists in temper. I distinctly remember thinking that one day that I would be bigger, older and stronger and would return to give him a good kicking. I never did, although I still feel strongly that what he did was utterly wrong. Revenge would be to reduce myself to his level. So I didn’t cheer “Rejoice” at the death of an old woman from a stroke. And face it, Thatcherism is very much alive and well.

Denis Thatcher thought his wife had been “stitched up by bloody BBC poofs and Trots”
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LGBT University Society News

ABFAB, the Aberdeen University LGBT Society would like to thank everyone who made it along to their 25th Anniversary of both the society and of the Gaylyth. Partygoers enjoyed a three course meal, wine and danced along to a amazing ceilidh band before heading to Cheezr for the official after party. The event had attendees from all over Scotland and further afield including East Anglia, Switzerland and Germany. As much as the night was about having fun it helped raise awareness and an amazing £2100 for charity plus more news on LGBT+ rings in the changes and ABFAB raise an amazing amount for charity plus more news on LGBT happenings in the region.

Other News

As LGBT Idahod Dinner is being held on Thu. 16th May at 7pm in a central Aberdeen venue which will be confirmed on registration, go along and join in a social gathering to celebrate International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia with a fixed menu with a drink for just £23. For more information and to register, please E-mail info@Gmhc.org.uk or Tel: Alan Cowan on Aberdeen (0224) 576796 by Mon 6th May at Noon. The Dinner is organised through the North East LGBT+ Development with support from the Grampian Regional Equality Council, Aberdeen City Council and LGBT youth Scotland. With the new single force Police Scotland in operation across the country there are now more options for reporting LGBT hate crimes to them including online at www.scotland.police.uk/hate-crime or by calling 101 as well as the direct options you can still report remotely via a few agencies in Aberdeen including Gay Men’s Health by phone on Aberdeen (0224) 930935, E-mail: grampian@gmh.org.uk or in person at 266 George Street.

That’s me done for another month. Remember if you have any news, events, photos or gossip to send them to the usual address or tweet me at andiabz

Gay Men’s Health News

The team at Gay Men’s Health in Grampian have been busy out and about and online with outreach and getting the word of good sexual health out to gay and bisexual men across the region. Look out at www.facebook.com/gmhscotland to find out more about the next few months are the amazing talents of Lloyd Daniels appearing along with Claudia Patrice with many more well-known acts lined up for following months. Also featuring in the next few months are the amazing talents of Miss Jason, Dave Lynn and well I beg your pardon Cheezr can promise you a Rose Garden Look out for dates and news in the next few month’s columns. As well as bringing you acts, Cheezr has a great in house entertainment team including the bouncy bees Miss Romy, Miss Cherry Bakewell, Robbi Dazzler and Scarlet Diamonte with quizzes, cabaret and game shows. If you’re more of a dancer get your boogie shoes on and dance the night away to tunes from Steve Motion, Craig Whis, Scott West and Kevin Thorburn with Liam Down’s alternative night on Tue for those with a different taste in music. Check Cheezr out on Facebook or follow on twitter @cheezrtweet

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Edinburgh

May is upon us. The weather is finally starting to warm up a little. Thanks are due to all those who have passed on their comments on my first column - it’s appreciated. Keep those tweets and emails coming in and let’s get down to business.

First up, the latest news on Pride Scotia is that it’s to be on Sat 15th Jun. Plans are for the Pride March to assemble outside the Scottish Parliament for the usual speeches before heading up the Royal Mile at 2pm. Confirmed destination is Bristo Square and Tavistock Row House – where there will be entertainment on indoor and outdoor stages, a Health and Community Fair, an unlicensed Tea Dance, a Club Room with local DJs marshalled by Cilla Stack, and a Sports Bar with sport on wide screen TVs. More details will be available in the Pride Guide which will be available in the pubs and clubs and online at www.pride-scotia.org a few weeks before the event. As most of the funding for Pride comes from advertising in the Guide or the hire of stalls at the Health and Community Fair, advertisers and stall holders should contact Pride Scotia on e-mail hello@pride-scotia.org or Tel: 0131-556 9471 or download details from the website.

Planet are celebrating 3 years reborn on Fri 15th May. Already? Their birthday party promises to be a real host as this year, John and the staff are going for a Las Vegas vibe. Elvis, apparently, will be in the building, alongside some tasty showgirls. Dresscode is not compulsory, but it’s a chance for you all to drag kings and queens to strut your stuff if you’re inclined. Moreover, the whole event is a fundraiser for Pride Scotia, so this is the most attend event of the month in Edinburgh ever.

I had an amazing night in Planet just last week. John and the boys certainly seem to be on a winner with the crowds packing themselves into the best pre-club bar on the scene, with happy days promos running Mon-Thur and their own quiz with prizes up to £200! running on Thur, plus all their house spirits are now top brands. Don’t forget Gilbey’s will be entertaining the crowds now and again too.

At the Regent, it’s confirmed that Legendary Quiz Mistress Siobhan has returned with a brand new quiz night held from 8pm on the first Mon of every month, (which in May is Mon 6th). I was in attendance for her Apr return quiz and my old partner in crime certainly had the vibe going! Check it out and maybe you can win a nice prize for testing your knowledge!

At Habana they are launching the first ever Golden Pot Awards. Nomination forms are already available from the bar and the Award Ceremony will take place on Sun 26th May, with a fabulous Mystery guest host at the podium. Combine this with the regular Habana offerings and some of the best deals and promotions on the scene you’re on a winner!

Moving next door to CC Blooms, it just goes from strength to strength in there. Not only is the food awesome but they’re still producing some amazing nights. The launch night of Disc Co. purveyors of beatucuious beats and smooth grooves takes place on Sat 27th Apr with Dale Loth at the decks promising the bash mix of kitoch and current house and disco tunes. The team in CC’s have also confirmed May 29th as the second Disc Co. date. Don’t forget that CC’s also hosts the Church of High Kilo every Sun. Finally, CC’s still has its Thu Night Camp evenings.

Moving to the Street, if you wanna chill out with a few drinks and nibbles it’s still the place to be! Then as the evening moves into late night pop down stairs and bust some moves.

Down Dublin Street at the New Town Bar, the Easter event of McVeer & McNamara – the musicals was a smash success - the bar was packed and the crowds went mental. The success has prompted the NTB to announce that this Fringe Festival they are becoming a fully-fledged venue! Not only will the usual Famous Sunday FULLHOUSE be on the table, but The new G Spot Show - featuring comedians like Jojo Sutherland, Scott Agnew, Charlie Ross, Stu Murphy, Vic Gee and many more... A dark comedy show called Funny 2 will be travelling up from the South, Glasgow based favourite Suzie McCauley will debut her solo show at the NTB and Michelle McNamara will take up residence for a week long show! The plan includes the downstairs bar being converted to a 50 seat theatre. Looking at May, Sat 26th is Beer Night and the following afternoon sees afetch party in full swing. Sun 26th May is a pants party but the boys will have just completed the Marathon so give their legs a little rub. Finally the makeover in the toilets is complete and it’s looking amazing. I spoke to my pal Stephen at the bar to try and get the Goss surrounding this year’s Pride in the NTB but he was tight lipped, but told me to expect the usual - tits and teeth and a Moody-good show!
In the last month we have had many fantastic acts across the Dundee scene. Before Out brought in yet another amazing local act: The Brass Nex, who performed lots of popular club hits and performed them so well that you just might have thought you were listening to the real artists themselves. Made a great atmosphere and it brought in a lot of new faces to the packed pub. Out as always is the one and only nightclub to be in on the scene! Unbeatable and unmatched!

Klozet has had many an act in the past month including: The Drag with No Name, back once again to Klozet’s stage by popular demand. Mandy Gup, another top drag act, followed her fabulously. Then soon after was the highly acclaimed Boy George Experience and last but not least was the night dedicated to the memory of the late Brian Crayford hosted by the illustrious Nicki French where there was lots of Karaoke, fun and games all to a good cause.

The Salty Dog recently hosted a Party Monster Theme Night! Another great success with lots of merriment and madness as always. Number 11 Sauna is still going as strong as ever with new eagerly awaited theme nights and developments still in the pipeline.

Out is the one and only nightclub to be in on the scene in Dundee.
Joanne Mackenzie -Winters

Highlands

Put a spring in your step at the next LGBT night in Aces at Miami Nightclub (High Street, Inverness) on Tue 7th May. Doors open at 8pm. Free entry.

A new LGBT social group is starting up in Fort-William with an initial gathering on Tue 4th Jun. E-mail: morgan@tramstop.org or Tel: 07925 930838 and you will be put in touch with the Lochaber locals.

Highland Rainbow have set up a new Facebook page to raise awareness.

The Highland Rainbow Folk elected a new committee at its AGM in Inverness in Apr and have now set up their own Facebook page to raise awareness about issues concerning older LGBT people.

Meanwhile the Highland LGBT Forum have a new group of eight charity trustees for its committee following its 10th AGM. In Apr, the Forum hosted an LGBT awareness-raising conference in Petterhead with the Equality Network, Northern Constabulary and Highlands & Islands Equality Forum. The next event will be held in Stornoway on Fri 24th May and they look forward to meeting some of the LGBT community living in the Hebrides. After a summer attending Highland Games, future conferences will be held at Orkney in Sep and Shetland in Oct.

Look out for the new LGBT group which meets socially twice a month in Thurso (lunch on the first Sat and also on the third Thu evening). You can E-mail them at northhighland@gmail.com or search for “North Highlands LGBT” on Facebook. They welcome LGBT folk, friends and family from Caithness, Sutherland and Orkney.

Visit www.gay-ma.org.uk for LGBT events listings from dancing and walking to discussions and dinner.

Highland Rainbow have set up a new Facebook page to raise awareness.

For full details of all Highlands venues and emporia see the inside back page.

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Can you believe it’s nearly half way through the month? It’s getting in to summer time – that means sitting in the garden with a nice cold drink then getting your groove on down in Glasgow’s scene.

I’m looking forward to this summer, we’ve just heard that Pride Glasgow is going to be back, and all our bars and clubs will be busy as the days get longer and everyone comes out to enjoy their social life after the cold, frosty nights we’ve had of late.

The Gallery in the heart of the Merchant City continues to keep giving with live football on the screens, a weekend of drunken karaoke – there’s always something to put a smile on your face, going in to see the friendly faces of Drew, Ian or any of the staff are in stark contrast to the counterparts of London or Manchester. Head on downstairs and you’ve got the wonders of new and modern art on your doorstep – Drew and Ian curate some exciting displays from local artists and some from further afield – it’s definitely a diamond in the rough.

The Polo Lounge brought up the gays from Holyrood over Easter - a great weekend was had by all and they keep on giving. DJ Queesie is back with Power Ballad Thu – oh how I missed him! Power Ballad Thu must be the best night on the scene, closely followed by Elvisa Belle De Net’s Pop Quiz. She certainly knows how to spin some tunes!

The Underground is as fun as ever with two whole nights of karaoke and laughs from my favourite queen, Bee Farrel! Join her every Thu and Sun from 9ish if you want to sing your heart out! DJ Marc continues to please the crowds, his furry chest and great music taste keep the bears, otters, pandas and cubs more than happy! Big shout out to the ever friendly staff, such a nice bunch!

AXM recently celebrated their first birthday with us on Glasgow’s scene with a very busy weekend of giveaways and entertainment. Peggy Weissen joined the team at AXM for a very busy birthday night out and they were also giving away tickets to One Direction. Barbara La Bush is to continue to grace Glasgow with her presence in AXM every bank holiday weekend, such fun!

That Audrey Hepburn at The Court is hilarious, I’ve said it before but she’s definitely just a cook short of being a full blown Drag Queen with her acid tongue and great voice – but she’s so welcoming and gets all the virgins up to sing. Tony and the team continue to give us all the scene needs, and I’m looking forward to enjoying a pint outside in the sun soon!

Let me talk about another Drag Queen, the wonderful Bella Houston – she resides over in Dalmorica’s – she’s been hosting Karaoke for many a month and she’s got to be the nicest, grandmother like, drag queen out there. Join her on a Sun to continue your Sun Sesh with some Karaoke.

Speakeasy is all about the change! Nancy Clench brings back her Wed Night Karaoke, reminding me about the times when she first came to Glasgow over 2 and a half years ago! We bid farewell to DJ Jamie for the last time, he’ll be sorely missed on the scene - the friendly, “straight” bear that he is! Still the Trophy Room keeps on giving what you’ve used to, so join DJ Susie Gov in PHQ above Speakeasy every Sat Night!

Before I go, remember the Gay Men’s Health drop-in clinic happens at their Glasgow HQ on Bell Street every Thu 4.30-7pm to get your HIV results in 20 mins! The boys at GMH have been rather busy each Thu so make sure you get along to have your check up!

Well, that’s all for me. Enjoy the start of the Spring as we come in to Summer - I hope the sun comes out for you all!
The Full Monty Review
Edinburgh Festival Theatre

In 1995, a Simon Beaufoy written film script was to change the face of British cinema. The tale of 6 out of work steel workers from Sheffield who decide to use the money to make by taking their clothes off was taken not of the British viewing public but cinema goers around the world. The movie was of course The Full Monty. The story set against an industry still reeling from the effects of Thatcherism and the human impact of discovering sexuality, suicide and self image was transformed into something of a Jack Locker Musical when the action was transposed to Chicago. Now the film's writer has corrected this mistake by bringing the Full Monty on UK tour. This play version expands the 88 minute film into a two stage production and it’s a real treat to behold. The increase of running time has allowed the script to be fully opened up and the stellar cast revel in portraying perhaps the most human characters on the British stage. Kenny Doughty as Gaz takes the best of Robert Carlyle’s film performance and enriches it with more perspective and comedy as Gaz struggles to raise the funds in order to keep his son Nathan in life. All the film characters are here in a fully fleshed out form. TV’s the Bill writer Simon Ross is turning in a fine tuned performance as Gazal who is struggling to stop his wife from going mad on the high street with a Baileys whilst she doesn’t know that he is not working. The particular highlight of the show is the relationship of Lomper (played by Coronation street star Craig Casey) and Guy (played by Kieron Owen). In the film the fact these characters were gay and start to fall in love was touched upon by a touch of hands and a loving look. In the stage production this has been opened up in a full scene where they actually change. The Full Monty is the Arts... the Arts...
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