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What’s been happening this month? Oh not much. Just the world’s biggest Arts festivals and a couple of Prides round and about. Busy, busy times. But we’ll have plenty about them in other pages, so let’s look at some other items, shall we?

In the Borders, controversy sparked as Pastor Angus Buchan, a South African preacher, was no-plat- formed by the Scottish Borders LGBT Equality Forum. The 65-year-old was due to speak at the Volunteer Hall in Galashiels, as a guest for Hope Church, an Evangel- ical group based in Tweedbank. The cancellation of the event follows Pastor Tatchell’s criticism of him during a press interview in which he quoted homopho- bic remarks made by the Pastor in 2011.

This starts to get confusing. Remember Tatchell was no-platformed by Fran Cowling of the NUS in Feb, following his signing of an open letter in the Observer last year denouncing the no-platforming of Germaine Greer and others for transphobic com- ments, stating that we should engage in debate and that “You do not have to agree with the views that are being silenced to fight for these tactics liberal and undemocratic.” So it seems bizarre that he should be the inspiration to deny a stage to some- one whose level of homophobia is no greater than most churches in this land. I can’t tell who is no- platforming and who any more. Is it better to deny someone else the right to speak if they say some- thing you find abhorrent? Do you then deny other the right to contradict and try to educate them? It’s exhausting to think around.

We stop for a moment and give thought to those who perhaps have priorities in life other than cabaret (just because I don’t understand doesn’t mean I can’t empathise). There is a sub-culture of footballing and watching others football, appar- ently. Equality Network in partnership with the SFA have launched a campaign addressing homo- phobia on the terraces. The ad featured in match-day programmes across the SPL. Prin- ciples involved are as follows:

1. Take steps to actively involve LGBT people in sport and visibly support LGBTQ inclusion and equality.
2. Challenge homophobic and transphobic behav- iour and ensure a posi- tive and welcoming sporting environment for LGBTQ participants.
3. Develop policies and practices that are inclu- sive, informed by a bet- ter understanding of the issues and barriers for LGBTQ people.
4. Work to further include trans people in sport by under- standing the differing needs for trans participants and begin to reduce the barriers which prevent trans people from taking part in sport in their acquired gender.
5. Strive to make continuous improvements to greater in- clude LGBT people in Scottish sport.

In other competitive sports news, we’ve not mentioned gay marriage for about ten minutes. Well, the scores are in from last year and National Records of Scotland have disclosed that over 5,200 same-sex marriages were con- ducted in 2015. In comparison, there were just 4,950 Catholic all-sex weddings in the same timeframe. Hu- manist ceremonies peaked at nearly 3,300 - many of which will have been our lot throwing their pink pound around.

To wrap things up, we’d like to express support and love to Scott Agnew, who this month revealed his HIV status in an interview with the Daily Record. He told of the ex- perience of getting his results, the sense of discovering more value in life as well as his hopes and thoughts on the future. He just completed a 21-stone drop after a 6-month campaign in Edinburgh with his one-man show “I’ve Snapped My Bang String, Let’s just Talk.” Our respect and adoration to him for speaking up and work- ing to re- duce the stigma of an HIV posi- tive diagno- sis.
Hard to believe that the summer’s end is in sight, I write this as we enter the last week of the Edinburgh festivals season and the city and indeed our scene venues are packed to capacity in a wonderful explosion of culture. It’s become something of tradition in our city for things to go rather quiet in the first part of Sep as we return to normal and the visitor numbers decrease but there is still much to see and do on our scene so let’s have a quick round.

All the scene venues enjoyed a busy fringe festival season and you may still have a chance to enjoy some of the performances taking place in CC Blooms before the curtain falls on August 25th. Post the curtain call, Fri nights at CC’s continue to be fun for all with Hip Hop on the first floor and iKandy in the basement with music styles to suit all. Also the Queen of Edinburgh Drag, Alice Rabbit, following a busy fringe season returns to her regular Rabbit Hole slot. All that, some tasty food and drinks offers makes CC’s the place to head for a chilly Sep evening.

Planet has kept the pre club party going during the festival and will continue on into Sep with the highlight being Thu nights when the £200 prize quiz and karaoke on offer coupled with regular drinks promos makes it the best way to kick off your evening.

Speaking of pre club, Habana should be firmly on the list, with banging tunes and drinks a plenty and fabulously stylish new look, many a late evening can be enjoyed in the company of the regulars therein. If clubbing is on the cards, head for Chalky’s for all the fun. With Ministry of Cheese being a highlight, what weekend of fun is complete without a visit to Chalky’s. If you’re interested in joining the team at Chalky’s they’re on the lookout for new staff. If you’re interested, check out their Facebook page for details.

This Fringe season saw the 25th anniversary of working in collaboration of Pleasance Courtyard and Waverley Care - a partnership which has seen thousands of pounds being raised. This momentous event was marked with a special reception as well as the annual comedy gala. The work that Waverley Care does in offering support to those with HIV and Hep C along with tackling stigma and education is invaluable. You can support Waverley Care this Sep by taking part in a special Come and Sing the Sound of Music. This is your chance to take part in a special choral performance on 27th Sep 2013 at St Cuthbert’s Church. For more information and to book go to www.waverleycare.org.

Looking slightly beyond Sep, Bearscott’s annual Bearscottfest takes place from 13th-16th Oct at various venues. The news hot off the press is that all advanced weekend tickets are completely sold out. But there are a few more tickets left for the Sat night at the Caves event check out Bearscott.org.uk for more details.

Coming up on 13th Sep is a brand new LGBT night at the Mash House on Guthrie Street with the launch of Gitz & Grime. There will be two rooms with top DJ’s spinning the tunes, so be sure to drop by. Check Facebook even for more info.

Finally, if you’re looking to chill out following the festival madness then Café Nom De Plume for the best in food and drinks or if pub grub is what’s wanted, wander up to The Regent for a pint or two of real ale and tasty bar meal. There are also drinks and snacks a plenty and great quiz fun for all available in The Street!

So there we have it, another month rounded up, it’s been a wonderful Aug with our venues packed out - let’s keep the momentum going into the autumn.

Whatever you choose to do enjoy it and stay safe.

Until next month, Brett
Scotland’s largest showing of LGBT Pride took place last weekend, where thousands took to the streets of Glasgow. Pouring rain did nothing to dampen the spirits of everyone marching for our continued visibility, showing our strength in numbers and above all else, doing what we do best… sharing love! It’s truly moments like the march on Sat that make you understand how far we have come and why we have to keep going. So to everyone who marched, proudly… Pride in Glasgow belongs to you.

Glasgow Green played host last weekend to Pride Glasgow’s show featuring a cast of talented local artists such as the fabulous Reba Martell, May and Robert Miller and many more. Headlining Sun was girl group Stooshe!

Pride Glasgow is now a massive profit making enterprise, presided over and led by Chief Executive Alison Smith and they sure are splashing the cash on fabulous acts to entertain the crowds of Glaswegian Pride goers.

Free Pride also took place with a more activist and rebel spirit driving its energies, so a huge well done to all who took part! Some of the floats were just fabulous, Tesco and Saltire Tish sponsored by Underground were all huge assets to the March, which made it feel like a party to which everyone was invited. Someone mind me kids… Kerry Kerton took to the Riding Room stage on Pride Sat, which I’m sure was a fabulous show! With her salty patter and big boobs I’d imagine she would feel right at home in Glasgow!

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Welcome to another edition, so let’s dive in! This month’s cover story is Edinburgh Fringe Festival: the biggest and most diverse arts event in the world. We explore some of the key highlights, including performances at Traverse Theatre Edinburgh, featuring Panti Bliss, who has made a significant impact in recent years. The festival is a melting pot of talent, and it’s impossible to highlight just one event, but this month’s coverage reflects the spirit of the Fringe and its role in showcasing a diverse range of artistic expressions.

The Edinburgh Playhouse has hosted many unique musicals, cabaret acts, and more. We delve into its programming to bring you a glimpse of what to expect. But the Fringe Festival is not just about the performances; it’s also about the atmosphere, the vibe, and the overall experience. So, if you’re planning to visit, expect to be overwhelmed by the sheer variety of options available.

There’s also a focus on Aberdeen and its theatre scene, with reviews of performances across the city, including at the Theatre Royal and the Music Hall. These venues are not only significant for their history but also for the dynamic events they host, making Aberdeen a hub for theatre lovers.

In addition to the theatre reviews, we also have a section dedicated to Aberdeen’s nightlife, featuring interviews with local bars and venues. This month, we feature La Lombarda and Cherry Bakewell, two establishments that are well worth a visit for their atmosphere and offerings.

The article concludes with a reflection on the importance of supporting local arts and entertainment venues, especially during challenging times. The sector has faced significant hurdles, but the resilience and adaptability of artists and venues alike are truly inspiring. Whether you’re a seasoned theatre-goer or a newcomer, there’s something for everyone at this year’s Fringe Festival.
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