Is everyone OK? Just checking. Given that there have been two news stories this month of people being lured to their doom via Grindr this month. Reading them, Jseph Dahmer could have used Grindr as a replacement for Delicatessens. (If they had that in his day, obvs).

Gordon Semple, originally from Inverness, was a 55 year old ex Police Officer living in London who went missing in April and whose remains were found weeks later in the flat of a 29 year old Stefano Brizi, who is standing trial this month for the murde. Brizi has claimed in court that Satan told him to entice Semple and dissolve his body in a bath of acid. Whenever Satan talks to me it’s more “eat the doghnut(s)” or just small talk, you know, what Liberace’s last party was like, that kind of thing.

Meanwhile Stephen Port has pleaded not guilty to 29 offences against 12 men, including four murde, seven rapes and four sexual assaults as well as administering a substance with intent. He is al- leged to have lured twinks to his flat and spiked their drinks with GHB, having done so with them in four cases dumping their bodies in a local grave- yard to look like overdoses. Looking at the images from the Met Police I think I’ve proba- bly been in a fair few flats just like that (not saying how many exactly, even if I could count that high). Many of us have. How could those guys know that would be the place they would die?

The big question is how do we do this to one an- other? How do we become so disconnected from each other, from our connection as fellow queer beings? Are apps to blame or is it the way we use them the real difference in terms of how we see each other and ourselves? Reading over the de- tails I hear Andy Bell in my head singing “I like to read a murder mystery, I like to know the killer isn’t me”. Gives me shivers (“up and down my spine”).

On a much happier note, someonelooking to bring people together is the rather wonderful Miss Annabel Sings, who is hosting a series of cabaret workshops in association with Dive Cabaret, LGBT Health & Wellbeing and Luminate Festival. They’ll be at Tron Theatre in Glasgow on 5th and 12th Nov and 22 Nov in Ayr Campus - all events are held from 4-5.30pm.

The other Annabel from Dive, the equally lovely Miss Annabel Cooper, has just re- turned from the Iris Prize LGBT Short Film Festival in Cardiff. She was there as Director of the film High Heels Aren’t Compulsory starring trans act- rist and actress, Jo Clifford (pictured). The film was shortlisted there but also won Best Short at SQIFF last month too. The film’s writer, Elaine Gal- laughar, who transitioned in 2013 whilst working as an engineer at Faslane, is currently crowdfunding her way through a creative writing course at Gau- gow University. If you’d be interested in donating you can find her on: patreon.com and make a pledge.

Much confusion from Westminster this month - all surrounding the Alan Turing Bill. In political moves that could require the original Enigma code-break- ing machine to figure out, news emerged that dis- members of our community. Male homosexuality was not decriminalised in Scotland until 1980. But there were in effect two “Alan Turing Bills” being pro- posed. There was the Private Members Bill submitted by SNP MP John Nicolson, who wanted the pardon to apply automatically to all men convicted under outdated gross indecency laws - but due to the filibustering (reaching so much that the time for a bill to be considered has passed) by Tony Seraphinuk (UK Justice Minister) this version was defeated. Like a politi- cal vandling from its loss confused and panicked news out- lets.

Cooler heads pre- vailed though and to quote Yoda, “there is another” - that being a Lib Dem led amendment to the Policing and Crimes Bill. It seeks to give an automatic pardon but only to the de- ceased gay and bi men convicted in England and Wales under now-obsolete anti-gay laws. Anyone living could use the existing appeal process.

But now Scottish Justice Secretary Michael Matheson has announced in the Scottish Parliament that the Scottish Government will introduce an automatic pardon for men convicted of old “homosexual offences” that are no longer crimes. This will apply automatically to all such men, whether still alive or not. There will also be a “conviction disquised” system whereby conviction records can be re- moved so they no longer affect things like employment checks. The announcement got applause and cross-party support in the Parliament.

65,000 men were convicted post-decriminalisation in England and Wales in 1950. 15,000 of those are thought to still be alive. Although numbers in Scotland would be expected to be much lower, it’s still a monumental step in healing a rift with wider society still lively felt by older members of our community. Male homosexuality was not decriminalised in Scotland until 1978.

Marking Trans Day Of Remembrance, which is 20th Nov, Ayrshire LGBT+ Development Group are holding a series of conversation cafes to explore the needs and experi- ences of transgender people, their family and friends and local service providers. Join them at one of the following conversation cafes throughout Ayrshire University: 15th Nov at Kilmarnock Campus, 17 Nov in Kilmarnock Campus, or 22 Nov in Ayr Campus - all events are held from 6-7.30pm.

Let’s try and be nicer to each other. Unless someone wears Crocs, then it’s open season. If you’re up to fabu- los things don’t forget to drop us a line at news@scotsgay.co.uk so we can let others know (a month’s notice is best).
Here we are again, the autumn has well and truly set in with the clocks going back to launch us into the darkness of winter. It seems like we have all had a great fun over Halloween when the scene was certainly set to be buzzing with some fabulous costumes on show. There have been some big developments across all the scene venues as well as in our community. So let’s go to it and round up all the news from across Edinburgh.

Let’s kick off with the big news that Chalky’s Late Night Lounge has poured its last drink. After a solid run since taking over from GHQ, John and the team decided it was time to move on and shift their focus back to Planet Bar so put the venue up for sale. It quietly snapped up and has been re-launched as Club Infinity. Infinity is adopting a broader spectrum that goes beyond the LGBT audience and is welcoming a broad cross-section of Edinburgh. However the new owners intend to build on its long-standing association with the LGBT community and will continue to feature LGBT nights.

By the launch night on 29th Oct it was confirmed that former Chalky’s duty manager, Jordyn Chalmers had taken the job of general manager and was at Scottybar with her at the very best in this new venture. Things are set to start well for Infinity with a Halloween spectacular party featuring an appearance from celebrity GoGo Wan performing a DJ set on the deck!

For all the latest news and events from Infinity be sure to check out their Facebook page. As for John and his team, we at ScotsGay say thanks for your hard work during the Chalky’s years. Chalky’s was not only a major scene venue but a huge supporter of Pride Edinburgh and their valuable contribution can not be underestimated. We wish John every continued success.

Speaking of Pride Edinburgh, the team at Pride were nominated for a 2016 Icon award alongside Café Habana and Local Trans advocate, Jan Irvine. All three attended the award ceremony on Sun 3rd Oct but sadly none actually went up to claim an award. However Pride Edinburgh has officially announced the date for Pride Edinburgh 2017 which is going to be Sat 5th June 2017! Official venue and events will be announced early in the New Year but make sure to pop the date in your diary!

The Icon Awards saw the best and brightest of the LGBT and Diversity community from across Scotland gather together in celebration of the diversity and meritorious people and organisations in the LGBT community and will continue to feature LGBT nights.

Elsewhere on the scene, the Street Bar sees the return of Glazed for a Gay Fawkes Night special on Sat 5th Nov to kick off the festive season. Horde, Auld Falafa and the Manuel in Rose Street which has continued to attract more than its fair share of the BHA community with its weekly quiz too!

The woman pictured in the CCTV image above is of interest to this ongoing investigation. The woman is of interest to this ongoing investigation. She is a white woman with long brown hair which is dark at the roots and lighter at the ends. She is wearing a white cardigan and a blue top. Scottybar is looking for information on the identity of this woman.

Abuse

Abuse

Every Day is a holiday for the LGBTQ+ community. On 20th Nov the street-based service for LGBTQ+ people in the West End will celebrate its first anniversary and to mark the occasion will be holding an open mic night. The event will be a chance for people to share their stories, make new friends and have a bit of fun. The evening will start with a talk by local activist, gay rights campaigner and former Cage member, Elanor Wilson.

The event will start at 6pm and finish at 8pm. There is no charge to attend but the street-based service will be asking for donations to support the work they do. The service is based at 5-7 Comely Bank Road, EH11 3LA and is open Monday to Friday from 10am to 6pm. The service is also available to anyone who needs it by phone or text.

In 2016, the service worked with more than 200 people and it is expected to work with around 250 people in 2017. The service provides a safe and supportive space for LGBTQ+ people who are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness. The service provides a range of support including emotional support, practical support and information.

The service is run by the Scottish Catholic Youth Network and is funded by the Scottish Government and the Scottish Catholic Charities. The service is also supported by the Scottish Catholic Youth Network’s LGBTQ+ fund.

If you would like to attend or find out more about the service, please contact them on 020 8332 3000 or email info@thecy.org.uk.
The Waterloo Bar will be having a Halloween fancy dress party with Christeen’s Karaoke Kapers as well as having DJ Carmen up during the weekend! Its set to be spooktacular!

Pride Glasgow held its Halloween Ball at the Crowne Plaza followed closely by the Icon Awards headlined by Chesney Hawkes, what a night to miss out on! Holy Trinity at AXM are bringing drag superstars Sharon Needles and recently crowned all-star winner Alaska over for Halloween weekend! Its set to be spectacular!

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The drag scene in Dundee has boomed in recent months with the recent sale of the building Deansador is looking for new premises - we shall see. There are also rumours of another LGBT pub opening. But if neither happens we’ll be left with just Klozet and the Salty Dog.

Dundee’s first ever Pride which is set to happen in Aug next year. You can expect to find some Halloween themed Cabareoke down Underground, where I’ll be embodying the Queen of the Night.

Remember Bear Night is coming soon, chest rugs at the ready on the first Fri of every month. Grab your wands, swirl and flick them in everyone’s face in Speakeasy for their Wizards and Witches weekend! Harry Potter would probably blush at the sights on set but I’d imagine you’ll all have a magical time!

Polo has you covered for dancing the night away with a different theme all week from Polo Goes POOOF! to Freaky Grindr Fridays, make your body and don’t be afraid of the dark, lots of fun happens when the lights go low.

Katie’s Bar have resurrected Ginger Rogers for Halloween Sat with the best costume winning a prize! So get creative, get scary and most of all get yours! Motherucker are going burlesque! Saucy bitches that they are!

The Gallery will have the lovely and talented Martin hosting karaoke and make sure you don’t miss Barbara Blyndland at the Merchant Pride on Sat! The pipes on that woman will blow you away!

So enjoy your Halloween’s creatures of the night, drink responsibly, kiss, dance and stuff your face with a chippy on the way home! You deserve it! Go forth and slay Halloween this year, next up Xmas! Mwah!

There have been a lot of changes in Dundee since my last column.

I’m currently working with LGBT Youth Scotland on planning Dundee’s first ever Pride which is set to happen in Aug next year. Sponsorship has already been promised by the Malmaison Hotel and an application has gone off to Dundee Council for funding. The proposed site for the event is Slessor Gardens.

With the recent sale of the building for development, it looks like Out and B4Out will shut their doors at the end of the year. I hear that Dean is looking for new premises - we shall see. There are also rumours of another LGBT pub opening. But if neither happens we’ll be left with just Klozet and the Salty Dog.

The drag scene in Dundee has boomed in recent months with the last drag night I ran at The Ambassador being a sell out. Acts appearing included Vivienne Coxx, Vanity Desire, Karma and Dosage. Look out for posters for the next one.

Allsorts is the LGBT Youth Group for young people 13-25 in Dundee. It runs every Tue from 6-8pm at The Shore, 15 Shore Terrace. An LGBT Youth Worker will be available for drop-in 1-1 support before each Allsorts group from 5-5:30pm at The Corner Drop-in, 13 Shore Terrace - just go in and ask to speak to someone from LGBT Youth Scotland. You can also access The Corner Mon-Sat 2-6pm for support or info/advice on sexual health or anything else you want to chat about.

Over 25? Then LGBT Vintage may be for you. They run a Cafe last Thu of each month at Madigans Food Emporium, Castle Street from 5-8pm. Tel: Pat on Dundee (01382) 345358. LGBTvintage@gmail.com or LGBTvintagescotland
Chitty no longer soars over the orchestra sky it’s more of a dampener than magical.

It’s the tale of a crazy inventor and his brand new tour for 2016.

Welcome to another edition, the autumn number in our theatre is now underway and the annual festive treat that is Pantomime is getting your closer as the nights grow longer. The entire Scottish theatre community is enjoying a golden moment with a wealth of productions making up a varied programme of offerings right across the country both amateur and professional. Theatre has never been healthier and this month Scotland has been travelling further afield to sample some of the offerings all of which this month started life as motion picture. Let’s go to it and check out those reviews.

Chitty Chitty Bang Bang Review

Ian Fleming’s charming fantasy story became famous following the release of the 1968 film starring Dick Van Dyke, 35 years later in 2002 the film was given a theatrical treatment and opened in the London Palladium. Following several successful UK tours and a brief run, West Yorkshire Playhouse have launched a brand new tour for 2016.

It’s the tale of a crazy inventor and his family as he assembles his dreams and imagination to take flight as they embark on an adventure that ultimately tells the story of good and always wins against evil and the power of love to heal the wounds of time.

While the original stage production featured the most expensive prop in history which was the car itself, this new production suffers from not enough wig factor. Using a stylish set and a heavy reliance on projected images where Chitty does arrive on stage it’s smaller than it’s ever been and when the car takes to the sky it’s more of a drammer than magical. Chitty no longer soars across the orchestra pit but bounces centre stage a shadow of its former glory.

Despite the lacklustre star of the show, the performances from the cast make good compensation. Following great success in the last tour of The Producers, Jason Manford and Phil Jupitus reunite as Caractacus Potts and Ransom Bomburst respectively. They deliver in spades especially Manford who’s voice is now really starting to shine with its warmth. Jupitus continues to turn on the buddy role aided by Claire Ayres as royal couple who take being spoiled to new heights. The particular highlight of this production is the Chitty Chitty Bang Bang theme played in doo-wop style by Ian ‘Fletch’ Fletcher who delivers a performance that’s charming but not out scary enough to terrify the smaller members of the audience.

With a bubbly samba, and a witty one liners wrapped up in gorgeous lighting and costumes this would be a full out winner for all the family but a slightly overlong running time and the underwhelming Chitty Chitty itself takes the gloss off this production.

Perhaps for the smaller members of the audience there is just enough magic in this production to make it sparkly?

Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, Festival Theatre, Edinburgh Run Ended, UK Tour continues.

Lady of the Night

judging by this out the fact that the company has announced Priscilla Queen of the Desert as the next production to grace the Alhambra stage makes this one theatre company to watch closely. Stirling stuff indeed.

The Witches of Eastwick Review

Linthgow local company LAMP serve up usual dream, lust and craving for an annual outing in John D’arcy and Dave Brown’s wicked American take on three female protagonists, the ‘Witches’ Alison Etheridge, Jimmy Scott and Sarah Reilley. Blending in all for a good in the town of Eastwick, a shared longing and desire for a new man is the perfect mix” comes to life in the form of a charismatic, stranger, a devil-like character, Darryl Van Horne. Seducing each of the women in turn, Darryl teaches them how to further expand the powers locked within, through their new unholy lifestyle scandalizes the towns people but the women are no longer the screamister and events spiral out of control, the women come to realize that Darryl’s influence is corrupting everyone he comes into contact with and resolve to use their new-found strength to escape from his lives.

While the original production as produced by Cameron Mackintosh featured big budget special effects music, and special instruments that are able to play on their own. It would be easy to assume a local company wouldn’t be able to deliver to such a high standard.

In this case Director Sandy Quinnus has successfully managed to drive the action along and succeeds for most of the way. Where the production falls slightly is my belief for the leading ladies to truly blend their voices together in pitch harmony. There is also a sense of a lack of togetherness from the small pit band which doesn’t make any sound issues being encountered by the cast any easier. Where special effects are deployed in the production, on the night of my viewing it was slightly overused as a smoke machine sailed through the cast disappeared into a haze generating titters from the audience.

That aside, this is a good solid production that the cast and audience enjoy in equal measure. LAMP should be proud of looking after the show and getting the production for the annual offering and truly to the ship they return to its usual bril¬liant self and starts in no time at all by the 1st December so make sure you don’t miss out! It’s always a good accompa¬niment to an office party or to excessive mulled wine.

Forthcoming along the up-to-the-minute:

Four Pillars will be launching World AIDS Day this year doing a film showing at Queen’s Cross Church courtesy of Reverend Scott Rennie. If all goes to plan, the film choice is my personal choice and an LGBT+ favourite of mine, The Normal Heart, an excel¬lent hard hitting film. If you can’t manage the film night, I’d still rec¬ommend a watch! One last event from Four Pillars will be an Open Mic Night Special on 24th December in Chez Chene Bar to help with its future planning.

In aid of supporting charities and for a bit of something new Fellow Barrans Leigh Walsh and are doing the Ultra White Collar Boxing (UWCB) raising money for Cancer Research UK. We’re in training just now but on 31st May at the AECG we, and many other fighters, will be doing an all amateur boxing match. It’s a big fancy black tie event and everything! We will have collections in this Char’s Bar so give generously if you’re about! It’s all for a good cause and I will be splitting my dona¬tions with Four Pillars to show support for my LGBT+ family.

Well that’s me for another month y’all have a great month and I will be seeing you next issue! Much love guys. Don’t party too hard!
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