GORDON AND STAFF ARE OVER THE MOON TO ANNOUNCE HABANA AS YOUR FAVOURITE SCOTTISH GAY BAR AS VOTED BY THE READERS OF BENT HAVING ALSO WON BEST BAR BOY – STUART AND BEST DJ – CHRIS (RUNNER UP) A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL WHO VOTED

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MON, TUE, WED AFTER 9PM
SELECTED BOTTLES £1
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JUST HOW FAR SHOULD WE GO TO STOP OFFENDING PEOPLE?

London’s Mayor Ken Livingstone has been in the news recently after comparing a Jewish journalist to a Nazi concentration camp guard. He won’t apologise and may yet find himself being removed from office by the Standards Board and banned from public life for five years for breaching the subsection of The Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) (England) Order 2001 which says that councillors "must treat others with respect".

Strangely, the press didn’t complain quite as much (and he didn’t apologise either) when he personally welcomed a rabidly homophobic Muslim cleric to his city. But, hey ho, pooves are expendable when it comes to courting the Muslim vote.

In Oslo, at an International Lesbian and Gay Association shindig many years ago, I recall a visiting US Anian youth sports team, who had been giving us some stick, being quelled with a copy of the fairly strict Norwegian law outlawing homophobic speech.

And then there was poor simple Tom Forrest who braved the wrath of Scotland’s liberal intelligentsia after saying that gays weren’t welcome to share a room in his remote B&B in Kinlochewe. Fair enough that the publicly funded VisitScotland threw him out of their scheme, but full marks to the man for his honesty. At least we now know what he thinks of us and can choose to spend our money with more sensible hoteliers!

Edinburgh University’s Library is currently in a quandary as to what to do about a single copy of the Koran. It seems that the space to which it is allocated by its classification (their scheme) is on the lowest shelf - but Followers of Islam have kicked up because sticking their Book on the floor is disrespectful. For the last six months, it has been unavailable to the general reader because it’s sitting on an administrator’s desk whilst s/he works out what to do with it!

Stand firm and there will be a major stushie. Give in and then the adherents of every other set of God Botherers will moan about their Books being disrespected and the library will have to remove all the bottom shelves!

It’s all getting a bit like how I remember the plaintive appeal to the authority of the teacher in the school playground when a brat was offended: “Please Miss, he said that I pee’d the bed”. And Miss would diplomatically do her best to sort it out.

But we’re supposed to be grownups now. With thicker skins. And stronger bladders. Ultimately, I’d rather know what people think of me than be misled by all this nissy PC nonsense which can lead us to thinking we’re liked when in fact we’re loathed or merely tolerated.

Just for the record: I loathe the superstitious and their imaginary friends, but I tolerate the ones who tolerate me - I’ve even shagged a few of them (but I did wash my hands afterwards).

As far as the unshelveable Koran is concerned, were it not for the respect I have for books in general, I’d advise the University to rehearse it (along with the rest of the Theology section) in the smallest room in the Library!

Which would be nice for the trees.

John Hein

E-mail: editorial@scotsgay.co.uk

There will be a formal, court-based process for dissolution of a civil partnership.

Further information about civil partnership is available on the WEU website: http://www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk

ScotsGay

HALF WAY DOWN THE AISLE

The landmark Civil Partnership Act will be brought into force on Mon 5th Dec this year. Any couple wishing to form a civil partnership will be able to give notice of their intention to register at a Register Office from that date. This will allow the first civil partnerships to be formed in time for Xmas on Wed 21st December, after the 15 day waiting period has passed.

The Civil Partnership Act allows same-sex couples to make a formal, legal commitment to each other by forming a civil partnership. However, it’s not marriage (unlike the happy couples in our pic from the first gay weddings in Amsterdam) and it’s not available to opposite sex partners. And Register Offices in Scotland have so far been underwhelmed with interest. Glasgow has received six enquiries since the legislation was passed in November, Edinburgh has had one, whilst Scotland’s busiest office, Gretna, has only had a couple of dozen tentative enquiries over the last year.

Important rights and responsibilities will flow from entering a civil partnership, helping same-sex couples to organise their lives together.

Provisions in the Act include:
- employment and pension benefits;
- recognition under intestacy rules;
- access to fatal accidents compensation;
- recognition for immigration and nationality purposes.

- a duty to provide reasonable maintenance for your civil partner and any children of the family;
- civil partners to be assessed in the same way as spouses for child support;
- equitable treatment for the purposes of life assurance;

The process of entering into a civil partnership will be administered by the local registration service. On the day of registration, each member of the couple will sign in the presence of the registration officer and two witnesses.

The Act also allows for same-sex couples who have entered legally recognised overseas relationships to be treated as civil partners in the United Kingdom.

KEITH COWAN’S JUST DESSERTS

Weel kent Edinburgh queen, Keith Richard Cowan, is to receive an MBE from another Queen for “Services to Diversity”. ScotsGay thinks that this is Royalspeak for rampant poovery but hope that he and his mum enjoy their day out at the Palace anyway!
Any one else reading this is still in age to come along then too. If will perhaps read this and man- Andy Gentle and it is hoped he ed in GOC’s Scottish cycling to all and it is hoped that a num-

junction at North Middleton Commonwealth Pool, Dalkeith 10.30am outside the

45 miles) circuits will be on offer. (60-65 miles) and moderate (40-

over the past 25 years. Both long roads - this being partly down to

will retrace much of the route of

month's run (on Sun 10th Apr)

To mark this anniversary, next

GOC today.

Moorfoot Hills. It was attended

Peebles and back via the

and was a run from Edinburgh to

held on Sunday 13th April 1980

and Gay Scotland as the

er in Scotland for an organised

since gay cyclists first gottogeth-
er in 1975. It is the first time

It's nearly a quarter of a century

GOC 25th Anniversary Run

it’s nearly a quarter of a century

since gay cyclists first gottogeth-
er in Scotland for an organised

run. Advertised in Gay News and

Gay Scotland as the Edinburgh Gay Cycling Group, the first organised event was

held on Sunday 13th April 1980

and was a run from Edinburgh to Peebles and back via the

Moorfoot Hills. It was attended by six participants - two of whom

are still very much involved in GOC today.

To mark this anniversary, next month’s run (on Sun 10th Apr)

will retracemuch of the route of

April 1980’s inaugural run - but

with more deviation onto minor roads - this being partly down to

the increase in volume of traffic on main roads that has occurred

over the past 25 years. Both long (60-65 miles) and moderate (40-

45 miles) circuits will be on offer. The longer route will start at

10.30am outside the

Commonwealth Pool, Dalkeith Road, while the shorter circuit

will start at Noon on the A7 road junction at North Middleton (OS66, NT357588).

A warm welcome is extended to all and it is hoped that a num-

ber of those who have participat-
ed in GOC’s Scottish cycling activities over the years will

make a special point of joining us on this occasion. The Edinburgh Gay Cycling Group

was started by a guy called Andy Gentle and it is hoped he

will perhaps read this and man-
ge to come along then too. If anyone else reading this is still in touch with Andy maybe they


uk/ for stern advice.

Peter Lee used one of the local

NHS Stop Smoking Services to

support his quit attempt and hadn’t

looked back since. “It has really

made a big difference to me. Stopping one habit has motivated

to me to improve other things in

my life including improving my diet and taking lots of exercise. I

feel fantastic and friends are always telling me that I look better for

it. I think that there probably is a higher percentage of smokers in gay

bars and clubs. I find it really

off-putting - it makes people

smell horrible, really unattractive! And you really notice the morning

after that your clothes stink and

have to be washed.”

DISCRIMINATION ON THE MOVE

Have you experienced discrimina-
tion? Are you interested in equali-
ty issues and how this affects your

community? Would you also be

keen to learn more about working

with your local media in order to

change the coverage your area of

concern is getting?

Then come along to one of these

FREE events!

– James Watt College, Greenock,

Wed 6th Apr

– Sabhal Mór Ostaig, (Gaelic

College), Isle of Skye, Thu 14th

Apr

– The Weigh Inn, Burnside,

Thurs, Thu 21st Apr

– Aberdeen (venue to be con-

firmed), Wed 8th Jun

Help is available with interpreters,

crèche facilities, transport and

accommodation provided this is

agreed in advance. Full disabled

access and oop systems fitted.

Agenda for the day/booking

forms available at

http://www.forumondiscrimina-
tion.org.uk/ or Write: Forum on

Discrimination, Scottish Civic

Forum/Fòram Catharra Na H-

Alba, 16 Jackson’s Entry,

Holyrood Road, Edinburgh, EH8

1 (tel: 0131-524 9392).

Fax: 08700 511192.

BAIRNS MEAN

PRIZES!

Following receipt of a grant from the local Council of £1005, Flags

LGBT Centre, at 56-58 Cow

Wyn, Falkirk have expanded

their opening hours yet again.

The Centre is now open every Sun

afternoon between 2pm and 5pm

for “Afternoon Tea”. Each week,

the “3 o’clock quiz” will kick-off at

3 o’clock (who could have guessed!), giving participants the

chance to win a cash prize! Rules

are simple:

– players can enter individually or

in teams of up to three persons

– thirty questions will be asked (in

two halves, to allow for a com-

fort break), the winner being the

person or team with most cor-

rect answers

– entry to the quiz is £1 per per-

son

– the winner will receive half the

admission takings

– in the event of a tie, a series of

sudden-death questions will be

used to determine a winner.

– in the event of a team winning,

they may also elect for sudden

death questions to find an indi-

vidual winner - however, all

team members must agree to

this strategy.

So, why not pop along this com-

ing Sunday? It could be your lucky
day!

FLAGS is also looking for a

new computer after their existing one went “phut”. If you’ve got an old one you were thinking of

throwing out, please toss it in their
direction! Contact them on Falkirk

[01324] 617717 or

E-mail: flagsgb@btinternet.com

WAVERLEY CARE THROWS OPEN ITS DOORS TO THE PUBLIC

Waverley Care, Scotland’s lead-

ing HIV charity, is holding its first ever Open Day at the Solas Support and Information Centre, 24 Abbeymount, Edinburgh on

Fri 18th Mar from 11.30am-1.30

pm.

The Open Day provides a

unique opportunity to find out more about the broad range of

services available to people living with HIV.

Invitations are being sent to

healthcare professionals, social

work offices and voluntary organi-

sations across the city but the

event is open to anyone who

would like to know more about

what’s on offer. People who may

want to use services - or who wish

to learn more on behalf of friends

or family - are particularly wel-

come. Staff from the various proj-

ects will be available to talk about

their particular area of work and

referrals will be available.

In addition to the Solas Centre,
Waverley Care's projects include a residential respite unit, day care service, café, support groups, arts project, African support project, counselling, children and families service. The charity's volunteer co-ordinator and buddy co-ordinator will also be on hand to talk about opportunities for getting involved in volunteering for the charity.

David Johnson, Director of Waverley Care said: "We are very much looking forward to welcoming visitors to Waverley Care Solas. Twenty years on, HIV has changed in many ways and our services try to reflect this. Waverley Care is committed to meeting the changing needs of our service users and we hope that people will want to come along and hear about new initiatives and about ways in which we can meet ongoing support needs."

Waverley Care Solas was opened in December 1991 by former Runrig star, Donny Munro and has since been visited by a number of its high profile Patrons including rock icon Shirley Manson and top-selling author Alexander McCall Smith.

For further information, please contact: Karen Docwra on 0131-226 2206. E-mail: fund@waverleycare.org

STEPPING OUT

Out gay man Keith Raffan has resigned as the Liberal Democrat list Member of the Scottish Parliament for Mid Scotland and Fife.

SNIPPETS

NAE POOVES

The Church of Scotland is to come under renewed pressure to oppose homosexuality after the formation of a group of evangelicals within the Kirk: Forward Together. It follows concern from many in the pews that the Kirk can often seem too accommodating to a secular agenda, in both belief and practice.

VAMPIRES

Diverse Artists, based at the LGBT Centre in Glasgow, are looking for fresh blood! If you’re interested in the creative arts, give Aileen Graham a ring on 07931 309093 or E-mail: admin1@glasg.org.uk

SOCCER

The Gay Football Supporters Network will be coming to Glasgow in June for their annual gettogether. They can be found online at http://www.gfsn.org.uk/

UNCERTAIN DATE

A heat for Mr Gay UK was due to be held as part of Twist at the FLBAR in Stirling on Wed 23rd March but, as ScotsGay went to press, the whole Mr Gay UK contest was “on hold” according to the organisers. We suggest you contact the venue directly nearer the time to see if it’s still on!

PLAY IT STRAIGHT

Scots bisexual star Alan Cumming is to narrate a new reality TV show on C4 from 8th Apr. “Playing It Straight” will feature a beautiful girl looking for love who will have to tell the gays from the straight men if she wants to win.

UNFAIR TRADE

A free public seminar on Prostitution and the sex industry in Scotland is being organised by Edinburgh Active Citizens Group and Zero Tolerance in Edinburgh City Chambers from 7.30pm on Thu 10th Mar. More info: 0131-469 6048 or E-mail: jane.meagher@educ.edin.gov.uk

GAY BALL

The annual Brownlee Ball, to raise funds for the Brownlee Centre at Glasgow’s Gartnavel Hospital, is to take place at the Glasgow Marriott Hotel on Sat 26th Mar. Tickets, priced £35, are available from Claire Zone, Waterloo Bar, Revolver Bar, Brownlee Centre and by post from GBAWF, PO Box B3954, Glasgow. G45 9WB. Tel: 07973 306701 or E-mail: info@gbawf.org.uk

BAD LADS WANTED

ITV’s hit show Bad Lads Army is looking for recruits who will have to live for a month in a 1950’s National Service army camp and ensure cold showers, early starts and a gruelling exercise regime. The producers are looking for a really wide cross section of participants this year - love rats, serial shaggers, hoary henrys, binge drinkers, layabouts, lager louts and generally naughty lads - with or without a criminal record! If you’re aged between 18 and 24 and think you’re hard enough to take part then please call 020-7286 1441 requesting an entry form or logon to http://www.itv.com/badlad-samy/

HEBRIDES

G-heb is back on the net at http://www.reachouthighland.org.uk/page34.html

CHEAP JULIAN

ScotsGay readers can get £2 off tickets for Julian Clary’s one night appearance on Sat 19th Mar at The Academy in Glasgow. Book before 28th Feb on 0870 771 2000 or via http://www.ticketweb.co.uk quoting “Academy Offer”.

VAGINA PLAY

LGBT Youth Scotland volunteers FUSION will perform Eve Ensler’s Award winning play “The VAGINA Monologues” in Edinburgh at St Brides Centre, 10 Orwell Terrace on Sun 27th Feb and Tue 8th Mar (signed performance) at 7pm. On 27th Feb, there will also be stalls and information on a variety of topics of interest from Noon-5pm in the café at St Brides’.

TOP SCOTS

Halifax Bank of Scotland were the top gay friendly Scottish employers in the recently published Stonewall Corporate Equality 100 Index. They came 13th whilst the only other Scottish employers in the UK-wide survey were Stratclyde Fire Brigade (27th) and Stratclyde Police (28th).

GIVING

The Newtown Bar raised nearly £1,000 for Waverley Care and Positive Voice on World AIDS Day and have just raised a further £420 for the Tsunami Appeal.

MAD NOT BAD

Daniel McCafferty, manager of Dundee G Zone, part of “Scotland’s largestweb based LGBT community” would like to help start a Pride Event for Dundee and is looking for similarly minded organisations and individuals.

E-mail: daniel@g-zone.co.uk
The POLYSUPER Project Presents

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from DJ PETE HIMS WORTH

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SKOOL DISCO...Mon 30th May

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Any Night in MAY
Shame

Shame – Scotland’s most exciting new Alternative Club has arrived at The Complex, who are already home to the very successful Velvet Women’s Club Night, Nightshade; Madison’s Rock Night; Saddleramps, and now the new home of the famous Bury from Glasgow. Gay Blessings are also conducted at The Complex, (just like The Simpsons!!) as Weddings are a main part of their business. After a roaring success of a launch night at The Complex, Shame is here and you are ready for it, you naughty people! A balanced and happy mix of male and female was achieved.

On arrival at this impressive converted gothic church, guests were greeted by the awesome spectacle of Te Pooka juggling fire. As people queued to enter Shame’s launch night these skilful and seasoned performers warmed them with fire.

A free glass of bubbly also awaited guests as they arrived.

Shame attracted some very interesting and relaxed people, a wonderful mix of the LGBT, fetish, Goth & alternative communities married together beautifully, quite an achievement. The music was a good mixture of interesting and very sexy music to dance to, blended in with some fantastic classics, such a refreshing change to the club scene. DJ Tekhed will be introducing an impressive list of guest DJs including – Primal T, Michelle, Metus; the man with no name and a very stunning young lady! Many more DJs are lined up, and live performances are also planned.

An interesting slide show was projected onto the roof and could be viewed from both floors all night. And a digital slide show was projected onto a huge screen above the dance floor. I saw the lovely Pete Burns dancing on the screen at one point.

Upstairs is a large airy chill out space where you can chat, play pool or gaze down at the busy dance floor. This interesting area is filled with big comfy couches, a second bar, pool table and two frayed glass booths, one of which was occupied by Crew 2000 with a very busy information stall run by 4 very helpful volunteers. They also provided free condoms, lube, dental dams and many other useful free things!

Also upstairs is the dungeon area, run by the friendly, approachable and helpful Nightshade, and a very attractive woman with fangs! Nightshade also run a club at The Complex. The equipment supplied by Nightshade made quite a spectacle with the awesome cross positioned in front of the stain glass window made by Elaine A. Adam.

‘Airbrush Body Art’ – A temporary tattoo that looks like the real thing – were provided by A.G. Body Art and went down a treat as we all got lovely tattoos.

The word on the street is that all who attended had a fantastic night and they will be back for more in their droves, with all their friends, Shame is the talk of the town! The organisers have put a lot of thought into putting this together and it has paid off with droves of happy people. See www.webflyers.co.uk /Flyer/2047 for more info.

As we go to press, we hear that the Townhouse Sauna has closed down. More in our next issue.

Wee Alan has gone AWOL as only the young and pretty can manage. Last believed to have been seen in his distinctive Parka in London Road on Mon 22nd Feb, he’s been bodyswerving our editor on the phone and his copy hasn’t arrived. Which is what I came in!

Heading down Leith Walk, I see that No 1 8 is ten. To celebrate, they held a most successful party weekend in aid of the charity ‘Airbrush Body Art’ – A temporary tattoo that looks like the real thing – and went down a treat as we all got lovely tattoos.

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As we go to press, we hear that the Townhouse Sauna has closed down. More in our next issue.
Leather guys, boiler suit guys and - much in evidence - killed guys danced, laughed, hugged and kissed the night away. DJs Davie and HiFi Sean kept the dance floor packed, the club processed all those new memberships for 2005 at breakneck speed and we welcomed guys from all airts and pairs with homegrown visitors from Edinburgh and Dundee and guys who had heard of the club in London, Newcastle, Northern Ireland and The Netherlands - and made a little visit.

Remember the Next One on 4th Mar in Glasgow and a new Club night in Edinburgh at the Complex on 25th Mar. Directions and maps to the venues are on the Burly website http://www.dv8scots.co.uk/

Annual membership is available on the door at £10. Discount news: you can get 10% off products from the Juju website. Don’t forget that your Violate membership card will also get you 10% off in Spyker and Cyber on Kings Street. Also Melicious and all UK outlets of Clone Zone.

Clubs Allure takes place every Wednesday Night, 11.30pm until 4am at The Tunnel, 84 Mitchell Street. Entry is £3 or (£2 with text message) the night features DJ Darren playing all the best Pop, R’n’B & Dance. A top class sound floor and fantastic drinks prices, this is the only place to be seen on a Wednesday Night. For more information contact Gordon or Shaun at Thorn Leisure on: 07813 269995 or 0141-204 1000 or E-mail: thornlesure@yahoo.co.uk

The next club ‘Rebound’ is on Fri 11th Mar at a brand new venue. Rebound is ideal for those who like their perversions served straight with a twist! Doors open at 8pm, club runs until 2am, doors close at Midnight. Tickets are £10 on the door or £6 for members.

Salutations and felicitations, gentle folk. Welcome to another barrel-scraping edition of life on the scene in Glasgow. Frankly my dears, there is fuck all going on that wasn’t going on last month and indeed the month before that ad nauseum for as long as anyone cares to remember. Club nights come and go, new venues struggle to open and die from lack of interest. Everyone bitches about the scene and round we all go again. Meanwhile his Royal Highness gets richer and fatter, we all get a little older and I get more hard bitten and cynical than even I believed possible. Still it could be worse, just wait and see!

So once more on with the motley. The next BURLY event in Glasgow will be at The Arches on Fri 4th March. The doors open from 10.30pm until 3am and tickets are £8 for members and £10 on the door or £5 for members.

The first Burly of 2005 crashed the 400 barrier for the first time with 420 guys turning out.

UK-wide Virtual Chat and Date
Up to 120 OnLine NOW!
Swap messages with other callers OnLine NOW!

0909 973 5512
Calls cost just £1/minute. ScotsGay, P.O. Box 666, Edinburgh, EH7 5YW

The next BEDLAM Goth Club event is Sat 26th Feb. Usually takes place the last Saturday of the month. Doors open 9pm-2am at the Qudos, Main Floor, Queen Margaret Union, Glasgow University, Hillhead. Bedlam Tickets usually available from: Osiris, 487 Great Western Road & Missing Records, Wellington Street, and on the door on the night or E-mail: bedlamcorp@bedlamcorp.plus.com

So once again I reach the end of another column. The rats are gnawing at the skirting and the last remaining candle is guttering in the draft from the snores of the sleeping ward nurse. I’m going to go to sleep now, Teddy says “It’s time.” Remember folks whatever you find to do: be safe.

Angharad
E-mail: Angharad@drink.demon.co.uk

WWW:
http://www.bedlamcorp.co.uk/

The Cube presents Passionality every Monday night. A night of pop, chart and dance music. Doors open at 34-44 Queen Street 11.30pm-3am. Entry is £3 or £2 with a flyer. Also FUN is on every Tuesday with DJs Shawn Roberts and Shazza Hallwell. Doors open 11.30pm-3am. Entry is £3 all night.

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Angharad
E-mail: Angharad@drink.demon.co.uk
FIFE MEN PROJECT
Men’s Health and Well-Being Programme

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT
SEXUAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

The Fife Men Project has been operational since 1997 engaging with men in public sex environments (pse’s), supplying information, support and condom supplies. Our aim is to minimise the transmission of HIV/AIDS, Blood-Borne Viruses and Sexually Transmitted Infections. Although working mainly with men who have sex with men the project does support people of all sexualities.

The project is currently seeking volunteers to work throughout Fife in public sex environments, pubs, clubs and social meeting places. Volunteer co-ordinator positions are also being recruited to link with other services and offer support to the initiative volunteers.

The Fife Men Project operates in partnership with Fife Healthy Men Project linking with local GUM and other sexual health services throughout Fife.

Full training is provided and out of pocket expenses will be paid.

Please note that at present these opportunities are on a volunteer basis.

All volunteers are asked to agree to an Enhanced Disclosure Scotland check.

For more information and an application pack please contact:

Mr Frank Watson, Administrator
Fife Men Project, 5 South Fergus Place
KIRKCALDY, Fife
KY1 1YA
Tel: 01592 265666
Fax: 01592 643866
Email: enquiries@fifemen.co.uk
Website: www.fifemen.co.uk

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glasgow
@ the arches
Fri 4 Mar
£8 / £10 10:30 - 3 am
then 1st Friday of every month

edinburgh
@ The Complex
39-40 Commercial Street
Fri 25 Mar & Sat 16 Apr
10:30 - 3 am (tbc)
£7* introductory door charge
* donation made to Waverley Care
then 3rd Saturday of every month (tbc)
resident dj’s dave and hifisean
dress code: denim, sports, kits, industrial, uniform, rubber, leather
dvbscots.co.uk
07930 357 401

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GET YOUR DANGLY BITS HERE!
Lothian and Borders Police have taken a bold step forward in an attempt to ensure that members of their workforce who identify as either Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender can declare their sexual orientation or gender identity in an environment free from fear and worry that they will be discriminated against.

L&B are the first Force in Scotland to introduce this monitoring and indeed are at the forefront of monitoring throughout the UK. Currently 3 Forces in England, Bedfordshire, Lancashire and Leicestershire are introducing monitoring for new recruits but are some way from asking existing staff members.

Monitoring has been introduced to send out a positive message to both the public and staff alike that being LGB or T is something that the Police are trying to embrace, whether or not the person is ‘out’ to colleagues or not.

It is not intended to be a ‘Big Brother’ style of information gathering where highly personal information about staff is kept for ulterior motives - it is about creating a confident and open workplace environment for all staff, whatever their ethnicity, religious belief, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.

Chief Inspector George Denholm, Head of the Diversity Unit of Lothian and Borders Police said, “As an emergency service provider and public employer, we need to reflect the needs of the community we serve. We have a diverse workforce who bring different skills, abilities and backgrounds to the job. It’s important that we value the diversity of our workforce and make them feel valued. The introduction of monitoring, I hope, sends out that message. We can’t honestly say that we reflect society as a whole if we are oblivious to the backgrounds of our own staff”.

Sergeant Paul Matthews, The Force LGBT Liaison Officer added "If officers and staff are confident enough to divulge their sexual orientation or gender identity internally, then I hope that confidence will naturally transfer itself to the wider community. We have to investigate homophobic and transphobic incidents almost on a daily basis, hopefully the public will feel more secure and confident enough to tell us about these incidents if they are aware that we value our LGBT staff and take these issues seriously".

Staff are being asked a number of other questions in the survey, including their ethnicity, faith or religious belief and if they have a disability. There is no requirement to complete the survey and indeed there is an option for staff to 'choose not to say'. Some staff have raised concerns over confidentiality and how the information would be used, but those fears have been allayed by the process which is being adopted. Inspector Dennis Hunter, the Forces Gay Police Association (GPA) representative said, “I’m absolutely sure that any sensitive information staff may provide will be kept secure and in the strictest confidence, and in fact only 3 of the most senior HR personnel in the force will ever be able to access the information. Any statistics gathered will be anonymous and will be used in such a way that will not inadvertently ‘out’ people against their wishes. I can’t stress enough how important it is for the police to make this leap in support of something the GPA has been fully supportive of for a number of years".
PARTY WITH PRIDE AT HABANA

We’ll be taking over Gordon’s howff for an

EGGSTRAVAGANT FUNDRAISER
on EASTER SUNDAY
(27th March) 8pm-1am Prize Raffle with some super prizes
(and a few really naff ones like a year’s sub to ScotsGay)

Drag Racing
(well, it can be pretty racy stuff)

with
Samantha Swallow
and
Heather Boa

Karaoke
(Bring your own earplugs)

Free Creme Egg for first x punters in the door
(where x = number of eggs in the box we ain’t bought yet)

And Ms White is threatening to give Mr Hein a baldy
(but he and you can find out more about that on the night)

Don’t forget: Pride Scotia is on Saturday 25th June
Hello everybody! It may be a bleak cold bill-ridden February but the clubs and pubs of Dundee are keeping up our spirits with all the usual offers and events on.

Brooklyn’s Bar has all the usual on, including karaoke on Wed, Fri and Sun with hostess Suzie, who is also in charge of the popfest that is Handbag Heaven on Sat nights. Downstairs, Out is holding a DJ competition to look for the next big talent on the decks. If you think you have what it takes to get the crowds jumping then get yourself down there each Wed night, and you might end up with a regular gig! A new DJ is entertaining on Thu nights, entry is £2.50 and all drinks are on the same prices and promos as in Brooklyn’s Bar. Charlie’s Bar have their next quiz night on Tue the 1st of Mar, kicking off at about 8pm. DJ Ross is playing the Fri and Sat nights, as well as hosting the gay-friendly Mojo every second Thu night at the Dundee Students Union.

Diversitay, the Dundee LGBT Switchboard, has distributed its new newsletter iculgbtayside. Hopefully a regular on the scene this newsletter provides an insight into what Diversitay does and the services it can offer, as well as providing news and views on what is happening in the Dundee LGBT scene. Volunteers for the switchboard and contributions that can be made to the newsletter are always welcome, details of how to get in touch with Diversitay are at the back of the mag.

The next social night will probably be held on Wed 16th of March, at the Braes. Exact details and confirmation of the night can be obtained by getting in touch with them.

Folk, that is about it for this month, any comments or upcoming events that are needing publicised then drop an E-mail direct to me or the magazine and I’ll do my best to regurgitate it the next issue that comes along.

Chris
E-mail: courier_chris@yahoo.co.uk
Hi there, here is this month’s round up of what’s happening North of anywhere.

Over the last few months the builders have been in at the old Castro’s site. Gone are the distinctive yellow doors and bar fittings and what looks like a retail unit has taken their place. Despite rumours to the contrary, I don’t think it will be re-opening as a gay bar/club. However, this location has been associated with the LGBT scene for many years so I decided to do some digging.

The Castro’s/Pink Flamingo site has been associated with the Aberdeen gay scene for a decade. From the dusty archives of ScotsGay I discovered that the Pink Flamingo had only recently opened when Scotsgay burst on to the scene with issue 1 back in December 1994. Described as a ‘Plush cocktail bar frequented by the trendier crowd’ it offered an alternative to Flannies and Club Caberfeidh. The Pink Flamingo offered competitions, a pool table and pinball machine as well as music to blow your ears and was open 7 nights a week. They held amateur stripper competitions and one was won by local ‘stud muffin Freddy’. I don’t have the photo that appeared in the magazine but does anyone know if Freddy is still around? After Flannies went straight in Aug 95, the Pink Flamingo remained in competition with Club Caberfeidh. The Pink Flamingo had only recently opened when Flannies went straight in August 1995. In Nov 99 the building was refurbished and re-opened as the Monkey Bar. Unfortunately it wasn’t gay friendly as a few folk found out. However it didn’t last long and in Dec 2000 Bar Castro’s opened. In true Aberdeen style the LGBT crowd flocked to the new venue and Madisons aka Club 2000 promptly closed. There was a cozy, quieter bar atmosphere upstairs with pumping music downstairs. They ran regular competitions and theme nights including Leather & Lace, Cum in your Pants and a Bob the Builder night complete with JCB outside. These nights proved to be very popular and even the bar staff joined in the fun. The front doors gained a rainbow logo above the name which raised a few smiles with enlightened passers-by. This had to be Aberdeen’s most visible LGBT venue. After Out Clubbing opened, rumours of Castro’s demise started. In Jun 2002 Bar Castro’s was severely damaged in a fire and closed. There have been many rumours about it re-opening and although the building was re-roofed nothing ever happened and it has stood empty ever since. Recently the builders have been in and the rumours have started again. But this time it definitely looks like it has changed to a retail unit and sadly another piece of Aberdeen’s LGBT history is consigned to the archives.

Phase Scotland still don’t seem to be moving anywhere. They have been hoping to get out of their Justice Mill Lane offices for some time now and I can only assume that they are still having problems with getting the lease signed for their new offices. Walking past their new premises at 11 Waverley Place the office is still empty with no sign of life. I see the Arts Centre has three dates back in May 2003 and this is their latest venture to bring LGBT plays to Aberdeen. The dates are Thu 14th to Sat 16th Apr so look out for further details.

Pride in Aberdeen 2005 is set for Sat 4th Jun in Duthie Park and once again hopes to build on the success of previous Pride events. I am sure the committee is very busy behind the scenes but with only 3 months to go, there has been little publicity or request for volunteers. If there is anything happening please let Aberdeen know!

The Belmont Cinema continues its Rainbow film season with a new print of Whatever Happened to Baby Jane? starring Bette Davis and Joan Crawford. Dates are Sun 27th and Mon 28th Feb and the Belmont can be contacted on (01224) 34534. More to come.

Photo: www.g-zone.co.uk/aberdeen

Castro’s in 2005

Aberdeen Cares Drama Company’s production of Torch Song Trilogy. ACDC performed Beautiful Thing back in May 2003 and this is their latest venture to bring LGBT plays to Aberdeen. The dates are Thu 14th to Sat 16th Apr so look out for further details.

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Cops and robbers
Cum in a straight guy
Dirty black hunks take your dick
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Fucking a big black guy
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PIT teacher & virgin student
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and fuck you
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In kernow: Cornwall with clients throughout the UK and Europe
Flashback. After Scotland's devolution, under First Minister Donald Dewar, the then health minister, Susan Deacon, inspired by the success of sex education in countries like the Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark set up four Brook Centres in Scotland's cities and established Healthy Respect, championing the supply of better information on sexual issues for young people. But there was trouble at Mill. Liberal protesters had forced the Bank of Scotland to back down from a multi-million pound deal with homophobe televangelist Pat Robertson and soon after, minister Wendy Alexander announced the repeal of Clause 28, banning the 'promotion' of homosexuality by local authorities. Social conservatives went on the attack. Religionists led by the late Cardinal Winning; newspapers championed by Martin Clarke, then editor of The Daily Record; entrepreneurs led by Stagsoach boss, Brian Souter and the man behind the Bank of Scotland's PR and a former editor of Scottish editions of The Sun, Jack Irvine joined peroxide prampushers chanting 'Keep the Clause'. The flegding Scottish Parliament looked set to topple. Homophobic billboards went up across Scotland, gay venues were attacked, there were illustrations in newspapers showing how to spot homosexuals, Labour lost the by-election in Ayr and with 'Keep the Clause' a playground catch-phrase, there were beatings, a suicide and murders of gay men. The Scottish Daily Mail hardly had a word to say about it. Where were the 'storms', the 'fury' and the 'outrage'? There was a smell coming from the woodshed. The story dominating the papers was the conviction of Luke Mitchell for the murder of Jodi Jones. Mitchell, a disturbed goth, attended Catholic St David's school, certainly no shining model of all that was good in education! There had been a suicide of a 15-year-old girl who had hanged herself in her bedroom in Dalkeith. Her friends claimed she'd been a victim of bullying. School inspectors saw nothing wrong with the school and left praising its 'good standard of education within a very caring and supportive atmosphere'. Anyone thought to ask gay kids how caring and supportive Catholic schools were? (Perhaps, the Executive should wrap it up in a Sewell motion and ask Westminster to deal with it). Without paying too much attention to the well-oiled cogs of the Catholic media machine, their chief of propaganda, Peter Kearney told The Herald: "From the date Cardinal O'Brien's article was published, (the one that labelled the strategy 'state sponsored child abuse') we had more public debate in the 10 days following than in the 10 months previous. To say be raised awareness of it would be an under-

statement." Mario Coni soon returned to The Sunday Herald. This time, where he belonged, in 'Guest Vocal', a spot that strongly suggested this was a one-off. How we prayed. Coni was pumping the idea that we should all treat sex holistically in schools "and not exclusively as a medical issue". Fine, if he meant we could be more open and honest about all aspects of sexuality, but he did it. It was the same boiled sweet in a different wrapper: No sex please, we're Catholics. It is difficult to take seriously a spokesman for an organisation that got sex so wrong it had to stash money in overseas accounts in preparation for compensation payouts to its sex victims. The message that casualties, chalked up in their thousands in the lost years of sexual prohibition and censorship promoted by the Church, could only be rectified by more stringent measures, was astounding. Coni was happy that the strategy had taken on board his insistence that it contained "clear educational guidelines..." Problem was, the "appropriate information" provided by Catholic schools with its "emphasis on the moral and ethical framework within which we view this great gift" exclude the rights of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and the transgendered. Coni was happy the strategy had taken so long to "get the right answer". In right-wing gobbledegook, it was a blow to "political correctness". He added in his address: "I would define the victory, if victory there must be, as being one for good sense. For that the Executive deserves our thanks". But perhaps the "thanks" – if that's what you want to call the misery that will be heaped on our nation by this unnecessary pandering to the Church - was owed to the apparently "abstinence plus" supporting Scottish health minister, Andy Kerr who told The Scottish Daily Mail: "We expect the right of faith groups and others to hold onto and promote their religious, moral and spiritual values". Dancing with the devil, it seems the minister had had a wee private meeting, undated and unminuted, three days before Christmas, with Cardinal Keith O'Brien; not long after O'Brien had warned in parliament that gays were "captors' of sexual aberrations". The delayed health strategy now winged its way out of the Executive doors on a white fluffy cloud, transformed into what Coni now described as an "impressive document... Gone are the ambiguous language of political correctness and provocative neologisms; the talk of 'celebrating sexual diversity' and tackling 'ereworsion'... Gone is the 'safe-sex' mantra; replaced with the alengin-er wiser rhetoric of 'abstinence plus'..." Yes indeed. Gone was the safer sex message that had saved so many of our lives; gone was the recognition that gays too were part of Scotland and deserving of the protection of its parliament; gone was sexual diversity to be replaced by the straitjacket of sexual conformity and gone were those nasty neologisms. (Aah! Remember when gay meant hap- py before it was hijacked?) The Catholic Church was H-A-P-P-Y! These were the 'guidelines' they had always wanted over. Even family planning workers could be barred from entering their schools at the insistence of head teachers, effectively giving Catholics a veto. Linn Macwhirter got it exactly right in The Sunday Herald: "Abstinence plus what? Abstinence plus rampant promiscuity? Abstinence plus judicial sexual exploration? Abstinence plus a bit on the side now and again? The Executive sexual health policy is an asyrmom: just say no – except when you say yes". This had been five years in the making, cumulating in a cash injection of just £15m of public money, only some of which would go to centres helping pregnant teenagers. What a total f**k-up! Even that was still too much for the Catholic hierar-

chy. Cash for abortions had the Catholic Church's mean-spirited spokesman Peter Kearney waving his todger in The Scottish Daily Mail: "This is a staggering investment in approaches which have demonstrably failed. To plough good money after bad on such a scale is very worrying". Well let's hear it for 'Abstinence-plus' then! It's like...
getting gang-banged by a couple of ejaculations round the back of the bike sheds; just the sort of message that will open the school doors to the Silver Ring Thing and all sorts of other dirty Us and Jesus-Say-When-then-shenanigans. As Kearney worried no time explaining in The Scottish Daily Mail: “The Scottish Executive must translate its rhetoric on abstinence into reality by giving equally serious financial support to groups offering abstinence-based advice”. There! What did I tell you? What hope do we have of becoming a modern nation with the Church round our necks? Scotland is top of the league in unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections. In five years, Herpes and Chlamydia went up by 50% amongst teens, over 38,000 became pregnant in just one year. 16,000 had abortions. Will the ‘strategy’, led by the same group who stripped it of its purpose really do the trick? Oh, please, do me a favour! Now I see why Jack Straw argued that Westminster, not Holyrood, should have responsibility for abortion. We have been exposed as a nation of superstitious, morally conservative red-necks for years. 

Swooning in adoration at Catholic successes, The Edinburgh Evening News gave Forward Together, a bunch of Church of Scotland militants, the oxygen of publicity over their decision to celebrate gay issues and the disease is spreading. The Sunday Mail discovered a cop giving out towels and making sandwiches in a gay sauna in Edinburgh. They stopped only at printing the recipe for the sandwich filling! What hope is there of turning a comic into a newspaper or the ‘force’ into a ‘Service’ if this is all it takes to put you off your dinner. 

PC Delwyn Williams, 32, resigned from the force on Friday after his astonishingly open letter to his colleagues. He told The Mail: “This is an educational scandal…” but he was referring to the lack of history taught in schools, surely? Grant frothed at the Executive’s effort to “recognise and celebrate the contribution that LGBT people have made to Scottish society”. Adding that “the news sparked fury from experts” who said were available for anyone who wanted sex. He refused all offers and excuse. May I finish by repeating the words of London’s mayor: “You cannot work for The Daily Mail and expect to have the rest of society treat you with respect.”

Cops come from all walks of life, and cum in all ways too! If there are gay cops – and of course there are – I expect they will do all the things that gays do. But what do you do when your lifestyle comes up against a bunch of reactionary, sexual prudes? Apart from line the sauna and expect to have the rest of society treat you with respect”.

E-mail: garry@scottishmediamonitor.com

Read the papers, post your comments or search for material at the SCOTTISH MEDIA MONITOR website: http://www.scottishmediamonitor.com/

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CANADIAN PRIME MINISTER EMBRACES SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin strongly defended same-sex marriage on Feb 16th as Parliament began debate on the bill to legalise it nationwide. Courts already have legalised same-sex marriage in eight of Canada’s 13 provinces and territories.

“I rise in support of a Canada in which liberties are safeguarded, rights are protected and the people of this land are treated as equals under the law,” Martin said. “Our deliberations will not be merely about a piece of legislation or sections of legal text — more deeply, they will be about the kind of nation we are today, and the nation we want to be. This bill protects minority rights. [As] public legislators, we are responsible for serving all Canadians and protecting the rights of all Canadians. The rights of Canadians who belong to a minority group must always be protected by virtue of their status as citizens, regardless of their numbers. These rights must never be left vulnerable to the impulses of the majority. We embrace freedom and equality in theory. Mr. Speaker. We must also embrace them in fact.”

“[S]ome have counselled the government to extend to gays and lesbians the right to ‘civil union,’” Martin said. “This would give same-sex couples many of the rights of a wedded couple, but their relationships would not legally be considered marriage. In other words, they would be equal, but not quite as equal as the rest of Canadians.... [S]eparate but equal” is not equal.”

The bill is expected to pass this spring. Most Liberal, Bloc Québécois and New Democrat MPs support it, along with a few Conservatives.

SWISS TO VOTE ON PARTNERSHIP LAW

Swiss voters will have their say on a same-sex partnership law on Jun 5th. The measure was passed by Parliament in Jun 2004 but religious conservatives then collected enough signatures to force a nationwide referendum on the law.

It will be the first time an entire nation has voted on same-sex partnerships.

The law extends many marriage rights to registered same-sex couples but withholds rights in the areas of adoption, in vitro fertilization and taking each other’s last name, according to the newsletter of the European Region of the International Lesbian and Gay Association.

CZECH REPUBLIC REJECTS PARTNERSHIP BILL

A same-sex registered partnership bill failed in the Czech Republic’s Parliament on Feb 11th by a single vote. It was the fourth time a partnership bill was defeated.

Most of the 82 MPs who supported the bill are from the Social Democratic, Communist, Freedom Union and Civic Democratic parties. Most of the 83 no votes came from Christian Democrats.

SPANISH SUPPORT SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

A scientific poll by La Vanguardia newspaper found that 61 per cent of Spaniards support extending full marriage rights to same-sex couples. Spain’s Parliament is expected to legalise same-sex marriage this year.

Thirty-two per cent of those questioned opposed the plan. The poll also found that 44 per cent of Spaniards favour letting same-sex couples adopt children but 50 per cent do not.

Pollsters questioned 1,000 adults by phone. The margin of error was ±3.16 per cent. “We are seeing in Spain an historic cultural and ideological change,... the result of a slow and sustained evolution by all of society toward respecting differences and diversity”, said veteran gay activist Jordi Petit.

RUSSIAN SUPREME COURT REJECTS SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Russia’s Supreme Court has refused to amend the Family Code to allow same-sex marriage saying it’s a matter for other branches of government to consider.

The suit was filed by Eduard Mishin, editor-in-chief of the Gay.ru Web site, and Eduard Murzin, a member of the Parliament of the Russian internal republic of Bashkortostan, after officials rejected their attempt to obtain a marriage certificate. Murzin is heterosexual but wanted to help publicise the cause of gay equality.

“I do not belong to a sexual minority, but I am ready to stand up for the civil rights of gays and lesbians in Russia,” he told the Maskovsky Komsomolets daily.

Murzin said the heterosexual definition of marriage violates the Russian Constitution and the European Convention on Human Rights. The couple plans an appeal to the Council of Europe’s European Court of Human Rights. The day after Murzin’s and Mishin’s attempt to marry, Gay.ru was evicted from its offices. Police Qetaki said on Feb 10th.

Murzin is heterosexual but wanted to help publicise the cause of gay equality.

“We are seeing in Spain an historic cultural and ideological change..., the result of a slow and sustained evolution by all of society toward respecting differences and diversity”, said veteran gay activist Jordi Petit.

FIJI MAY LEGALIZE GAY SEX

Fiji’s Law Reform Commission will look at legalizing gay sex, Executive Chairperson Alipate Qetauki said on Feb 10th.

Sodomy is banned in public and private. Violators face up to five years in prison.

Paradoxically, Fiji’s 1997 constitution is one of only a handful in the world that ban discrimination based on sexual orientation.

TURKEY GETS A GAY RADIO STATION

Turkey’s first gay radio station has come on line. Web-only Radio Rebel can be heard at http://www.dotures.radyosu.com/ “Our main aim is to put the sound of homosexuals on the map”, one of the founders, Sanem Yurttas, told Roi TV. “We are responding to the dominant system which tries to cut off our voice.”

The station transmits music and programmes in Turkish, Kurdish, Laz, Circassian, Armenian, Syriac and Arabic.

Short sentence in gay murder case

The apparent ringleader in the 2001 killing of a naked gay man in a cruise Vancouver, Canada, park has received only a six-year prison sentence.

Local gay activists criticized the length of the sentence and British Columbia Supreme Court Justice Mary Humphries, who determined there was no evidence the killing of Aaron Webster near Stanley Park’s cruising trails was a hate crime. Ryan Cran, 23, and at least two other men beat Webster, 41, with baseball bats, a golf club and a pool cue.

Gay former Member of Parliament Svend Robinson called on B.C. Attorney General Geoff Plant to review the case and remind prosecutors to use hate crime laws. WWW: http://wocknernews.com/
A friend of mine described this book as queer Mills & Boons with attitude and he’s not far wrong. Not that I’ve read any Mills & Boons myself, you understand, but I don’t think the sex scenes in those books will be quite as steamy as the ones in this one. It’s the story of the gorgeous, muscular and very fit Derek Bracken, who comes to Hollywood, like millions of other gorgeous, muscular and very fit boys to chase his dream. There he collects a posse of other young men to service Tinseltowns closeted stars and gay mafia dons. But of course the established gay sex industry doesn’t take competition lying down, (pun intended) and all hell breaks loose in a battle for gay superiority. This is a quite a good little undemanding novel, you know, the type to take to bed with you and to read a few pages before you go to sleep. You might however like to wait for the paperback edition.

Gilgamesh
A New English Version
Translated by Stephen Mitchell
Published by Profile Books
£ 14.99
This book is as far removed from the previous as you can possibly get, there’s no steamy sex, there are no sexy hustlers and ancient Mesopotamia is just about the furthest you can get from Hollywood. This is simply a brilliant translation of the world’s oldest epic.

Lost for almost two millennia, the eleven clay tablets on which the epic was inscribed were deciphered and fully translated in 1853 in the ruins of Nineveh, and the text was not deciphered and fully translated until the end of the century. When the great poet Rilke first read Gilgamesh in 1916, he was awestruck. ‘Gilgamesh is stupendous!’ he wrote. ‘I consider it to be among the greatest things that can happen to a person.

The epic is the story of literature’s first hero, the king of Uruk, what is now present-day Iraq and his journey of self-discovery. Along the way, Gilgamesh discovers that friendship can bring peace to a whole city, that a pre-emptive attack on a monster may have dire consequences, and that wisdom can be found only when the quest for it is abandoned. In giving voice to grief and the fear of death, perhaps more powerfully than any book written after it, in portraying love and vulnerability and the ego’s hopeless striving for immortality, the epic has become a personal testimony for millions of readers in dozens of languages.

Mondo Homo
Your Essential Guide to Queer Pop Culture
By Richard Andreoli
Published by Alyson
£ 12.99
This book is a co-operation of nine writers and their work has encompassed a fairly wide spectrum of cultural reportage resulting in this irreverent look at gay icons and it gives you an insight into the landscape of contemporary queer culture. Although written by American writers this book nevertheless has made the jump across the Big Pond successfully and is as relevant here as it is in the States. This definitely is a book to have lying about.

Black Ice
Translated from the German by Anthea Bell
Published by Bitter Lemon Press
£ 8.99
This is another one of those books that occupies another special part in my heart, the crime novel. Only this one is much more than just that, it is one of the most beautifully told stories of our years, in which humorous noir dialogue and poetry flourish. It’s a well crafted thriller, set in a European world of small-town hypocrisy and was deservedly made into a film in 1998. It is written by Hans Werner Kettchenbach, an essayist, script writer and best-selling novelist, whose work is now available in English for the first time.

It tells the story of Erica, an attractive local heiress, who is married to Wallman, a man with expensive tastes. When she falls to her death near their lakeside villa, the police conclude it was a tragic accident. Scholten, a long-time employee of Erica’s, isn’t so sure. He knows a thing or two about the true state of her marriage and suspects an almost perfect crime. Scholten’s maverick investigation into the odd, inexplicable details of the death scene soon buys him a ticket for a most dangerous ride.

I found it hard to put this one down when I started it and I’m sure so will you, thrilling from the first page to the last.
**Johnny Was And Other Tall Tales**
By Greg Wharton
Published by Suspect Thoughts Press £ 9.99

Johnny Was And Other Tall Tales is a collection of short erotic fiction by the EAA Award-winning author Greg Wharton. Apparently one of the stories in this book has been selected for Best Gay Erotica 2004. I liked in particular that these stories don’t just tell a tale, but rather that they are true stories and faithful accounts of the realities of sex and treat the act as simply another part of life, just as messy, embarrassing, penetrating, funny, meaningful, deceptively simple and complex, just like the real thing.

**Best Black Gay Erotica**
Edited by Darienk Scott
Published by Cleis Press £ 9.99

Painfully correct or not, this book is full of nothing but the steamiest of hot black men on man sex. It’s got it all, from the slowly building heat of Reginald Harris’ love story “The Last but not least for this month is a

By Dorothy Nelson
Published by Dalkey Archive Press £ 7.99

Last but not least for this month is a book that left me deeply affected with its disturbing rendition of family life. It’s the story of the Crawford family which is dominated by Dor (Joe), a manic-depressive thief and liar who has spent two years in prison for exposing himself in the woods to young children and couples. Ma is a weak and downtrodden victim of her husband’s violent temper who occasionally flirts with her son Benjiee, an overly sensitive boy with little hope for future happiness. As the narrative passes back and forth between the members of the family a compelling portrait of abuse and its consequences is constructed, one that contains both horror and humour in the sexual and social sicknesses of the characters.

But it’s not all doom and gloom, Dorothy Nelson has managed to weave into this book some moments of extremely black humour and making this a darkly funny story of a dysfunctional Irish family.

Dirk Kriete
E-mail: dirk@drink.demon.co.uk

**Arts**
by Martin Powell

Time for a brief walk taking in some of Edinburgh’s smaller galleries.

Cockburn Street has the Collective Gallery. The exhibition on at the time, now over, was Born Under a Bad Sign by Gordon Dalton, Hazel McLeod, and Christopher Walker and Skull and Grace by T Christy Cole. Conceptual art which reminded me of the Stuckists depredation that the trouble with most conceptual artists is they have got no concepts. This isn’t quite fair, looking at the Gallery’s Web site one can see what their concepts are. Unfortunately to me they are unable to convey it through their art.

Visual art that can only be understood by reading about it can best be described as crap. Still I’ll keep visiting there, sooner or later they must have a good exhibition.

Further down the road is Stills who until 12th Mar have an exhibition called American As Well by the Uruguayan artist Martin Sastre, which is a series of video works. The irony of a series of videos in a gallery called Stills appealed to me but seems to have been totally lost on the gallery. This got off to a bad start with me in a piece where the artist was expounding on the ability of video art to span the world without leaving home, but hasn’t that been the case since the invention of moving pictures? I have seen the Keystone Cops but they have never been near my home. This is followed by a series of other works. I was quite struck by The El True Hollywood Story which is about television celebrities who are famous because they are television celebrities but are otherwise vacuous. Masturbated Virgin. The Game struck me as a successful pastiche of mindless late night music video TV, but if I wanted to see such TV I’d watch it, not go to a gallery to get an illusion of it. There is more work and it’s on until 12th Mar.

Down the hill to Market Street and the Fruitmarket Gallery. This gallery is totally unpredictable and adventurous, which is a fancy way of saying some of what it exhibits really appeals to me and some of it just doesn’t get through.

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**This isn’t quite fair, looking at the Gallery’s Web site one can see what their concepts are. Unfortunately to me they are unable to convey it through their art.**
Film

by Malcolm Epstein

At the cinema box office the biggest moneymakers in recent years are always children's films. Those obsessed with them should study the Film 2005 BBC1 programme in which Jonathan Ross always covers new releases to please his kids. Assuming our readers only get to the kids' sections of film reviews, we refer you to this one.

Kinsey (15) has Liam Neeson as a 'date doctor' who, whether he has a personal interest and admit it to his wife. He is the mother of an attractive 17 year old son who have once been living apart for years. When they meet again he falls in love with her. To keep it to an acceptable certificate for British audiences the mother is seen watching the son make love to his girlfriend. While they were separated she admits her immoral life had become an addiction. If violence is your scene, Hostage (18) must be considered. Bruce Willis has such power now he produces as well as stars in films when, as here, he found a book that impressed him and chose a French director, Florent Siri, whose past work he had admired. Bruce is the best thing in this drama as a police inspector persuading mental cases to give up their hostages. But watching teenage hoodlums terrorize people till Mr. Willis arrives is too nerve-wracking for me. I preferred Hitch (12a) that has Will Smith as a 'date doctor' who, for a fee, helps countless people of both sexes to find their ideal partner by improving their conversational techniques. No matter if someone is overweight or less than lovely, he tells them how to handle every situation. It is a fun comedy. In our world knowing Mike Arlen is always interesting in pictures of appealing guys an effective opening line is: 'I know a professional photographer always searching for good looking models and I would love to show him snapshot of you.'

Kinsey (15) has Liam Neeson as the person who caused international furore in 1948 with his book Sexual Behavior of The Human Male. Alfred Kinsey began his career for many years studying wasps as a zoologist. He happened to notice books on sex education were ridiculed outdated and decided to gather information from thousands of men about their sex lives. His book revealed that 37 per cent of men were interested in homosexuality. Though happily married with three children, he himself was trying to keep his sexual interest and admit it to his wife. Without him, America would not be the sexually uninhibited place it is in most states today. It is not very subtle for the makers of Million Dollar Baby (12a) directed and starring Clint Eastwood has had rave reviews, but I am too affected by 30 years of knowing that professional boxers risk brain damage which can put them in comas for many months and those who come out of them are often in wheelchairs.

Clint helping a girl boxer win bouts had me wondering about the brain damage she could be suffering. However I appear to be in the minority. A few years ago I met a bricklayer who made cash by bare knuckle boxing. As it is not legal here, tickets cannot be printed for evenings of six bouts and customers must be notified by phone. There are vast numbers who love to see blood run. Hollywood knows there are millions who love horror films usually with unknown casts grateful to work. I walked out of Scream a few years ago when high school girls were being slashed with knives. It was such a hit they made Scream 2 and Scream 3. Now Robert de Niro has joined in with Hide and Seek (18). If you like to see a dead woman floating in a bath with slashed wrists filling it with blood this is the film for you.
The movie capital occasionally proves that big budgets are not necessary if you have an original script and polished direction. It has with Criminal (15) in which unknowns stun you with so many frauds your head will be reeling. Essential viewing if it plays anywhere near you. The audience I saw it with were mesmerized.

The Sea Inside (PG) from Spain has had rave reviews with Javier Bardem as a man paralysed from the neck down in a diving accident. Spending his life bedridden, he argues with authority that his life machines should be turned off when he wants them to be. This subject was covered with great humour once in a play that became a film Whose Life is it Anyway? that has been revived recently on the London stage with Kim Cattrall.

Writer and director James L Brooks was responsible for a Jack Nicholson film As Good as it Gets that was showered with Oscars. His new movie you must add to your list is Spanglish (12a) - a word that is a hybrid of Spanish and English spoken by many Latinos who live in America. Paz Vega is a beautiful single parent with a six year old girl in Mexico City who searches for a better life in Los Angeles living in a Latino quartar for six years where only Spanish is spoken. To earn more, she becomes a housekeeper for a well-off white family, but she still doesn't speak English although her daughter has learned it at school. Working for top chef Adam Sandler, his wife Tea Leoni and their two children combines great comedy and high drama that you will enjoy. It is so well written it is the first time I have loved Adam Sandler on screen.

The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou (15) is a South Seas adventure by writer/director Wes Anderson who has more imagination than most. Bill Murray is an oceanographer whose partner has been eaten by a shark and is determined to track him down. Wes maintains interest by casting Anjelica Huston and the most admirable actress in films today, Cate Blanchett in the leads. To know how brilliant this woman is, you need to compare her playing Queen Elizabeth I a few years ago with her Katherine Hepburn recently in The Aviator. Such expertise is rarely seen films like this.

Aliens of the Deep is an interesting curiosity that can be seen with a 3D effect wearing glasses at a few IMAX cinemas as well as at London’s Science Museum. Marine biologists explore the floors of the world’s oceans all directed by James Cameron who made such a world hit of Titanic. You rarely see films like this.

A calendar that moves must be a novelty and while a photographer was taking pictures for one, in Dieux du Stade a movie camera followed around 45 nude French sportsmen chosen from the cream of the nation’s rugby players. Having it on a DVD showing the work that went into this 2005 calendar with make up girls rushing in and out of shots is interesting. And one of the images forms this month’s ScotsGay front cover. The only disappointment is the lack of crotch interest. For that, the British still lead the way. If you like the idea of 23 incredible erections in your direction there is one magazine you should track down:

Volume 14 of Mike Arlen’s Guys. But you’ll not be getting any of them on our front cover!

Any of us planning a Greek holiday should take in From the Edge of the City from Millivres Multimedia that highlights a side of Athens not generally known. Russian immigrant families have late teenage sons in Omonia Square prepared to sell their magnificent bodies to tourists so they can spend their money at the local brothels.

You won’t learn this from any Greek travel brochure.

Those of us enthralled by a recent TV series about the earliest black and white movie film taken a hundred years ago should know it is now on DVD. Shot mostly in Yorkshire, The Lost World of Mitchell and Kenyon is a 175-minute phenomenon as, although without sound, it can be freeze framed to show stunning guys we would love to meet if time trips were possible. It has cost the British Film Institute a fortune to copy old film discovered in a basement on to modern stock. I will be studying this for years.
Chubby Hunter
Shiny, thick, 20 year old black guy looking for anything in the books but not the end. Can accommodate for travel. Box SG62004.

Passive 39
Cherry 28 year old, 6'2" tall, shaved head, good looks, active, drives hard, shares home. Box SG62010.

Boss Dad Seeks Top Son
Athletic 20 year old boy seeks experienced top son who will take on the role of dominant or be used to fulfill his needs. Box SG62011.

Blond Co Needs Master
Shiny, clean, achieving goal (32) would love to see a strong dominant. Anyone who can see this. Bloody, Box SG62012.

Help
For 20 years old boy looking old with gun for fun and friendship/fun. Has had serious injury but not that long ago. Box SG62013.

Transvestite Seeks Gay Friend
Any gay or TV seeks similar boring fart to enjoy domestic or other settings. Box SG62014.

Mature Gay Guy Looks For Fun
Fun party every Sunday afternoon each week and stay with me in India forever. Who wants to know? You can stay for hours in our very own "ghionnsachadh ach cha'n 'eil moran 'a' BHEIL GAIDHLIG AGAD!

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BISexual TV
Brilliant! TV seeks playful dates for fun and friendship. Fun never met me. Box SG62020.

Bisexual Men
There has been a first time for every thing. (41) Box SG62021.

Cardinal Seeks Gay Male
Cardinal Seeks Gay Male for regular fun and friendship. Any age, J/S, V/S. Box SG62022.

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