

TWO BOYS

QBoy and George share a gig

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22 February 2007

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ALRIGHT FRED?

Richard Fairbrass plans his comeback

Life etc 22



Gilbert and George seemed to find each other finger lickin' good as they launched an extensive exhibition of their work at the Tate Modern in London last week. For more information, and comments from their curator, see page 15.

Photo by Scott Nunn.

POLICE NEED CRUISERS' HELP AFTER MURDER

By Andrew Gilliver and Jeni Quirke
NORTH WEST CORRESPONDENTS

Detectives are appealing for witnesses after a man was brutally beaten to death at a popular gay cruising ground.

Malcolm John Benfold was attacked by a group of people during the early hours of 30 January on Blackpool's Middle Walk, a well known cruising place.

Benfold, 57, of Bute Avenue

originated from Wolverhampton but had lived in the Blackpool area for a number of years. His body was discovered around 4am and a post-mortem examination revealed he had been subjected to a brutal attack, suffering major head injuries.

Three men have been charged with the murder of Benfold and have been remanded in custody pending trial.

But police say they know other people were in the area and want them to come forward to act as witnesses.

Detective superintendent Kevin Toole, who is leading the investigation, said: "While three men are currently charged with murder this is very much an active enquiry and I still need the public's help to find out exactly what happened to Mr Benfold.

"I have been impressed by the level of public support and by the response so far as a picture is beginning to emerge of what happened on the Middle Walk that night. I would urge people to continue to come forward with even the smallest piece of

information."

Local LGBT liaison officer, PC Lindsey Nottingham, wants anyone who was on the Middle Walk in the early hours of 30 January to contact the police whether they believe they have anything relevant to the enquiry or not.

She pointed out to those that may be hesitant to come forward that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, cruising is no longer an offence.

"It may be that some people are hesitant to come forward due to the reasons they were on the Middle

Walk that night," she said. "Some people are unaware of the change in legislation and may fear that they will be prosecuted if they come forward. This is certainly not the case.

"Our priority is to secure the conviction of those responsible for Malcolm's death. To do this the community need to come together and make a stand against those responsible by telling us what they saw and heard that night.

"We need to demonstrate to those who may see members of the LGBT community as easy targets that we

are not and that we will step forward and speak out.

"Those who do come forward will be treated sensitively and myself and my team of LGBT community volunteers will ensure that they are supported by us personally throughout the process if required."

Anyone with any information should contact the incident room at Blackpool on 01253 293 933 or speak directly to PC Nottingham on 01253 607 242. LGBT community volunteers can be contacted on The Blue Phone 07940 979 610.

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INSIDE: Find out how to get your dream job in our special recruitment guide.

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"FOUL INDIVIDUALS" CASH OUT IN DISCRIMINATION TRIBUNAL

By Darren Scott
SCOTLAND
CORRESPONDENT

A gay Scottish sales manager was awarded almost £120,000 in compensation after being called a "wee poof" by his boss.

Jonah Ditton, 32, from Paisley worked at CP Publishing in Glasgow for only eight days when he was sacked for not being "psychologically balanced".

His manager and company owner, Warren Paul, allegedly used rhyming slang for "bent" when referring to Ditton, as well as telling him – in an aggressive tone – to "shut it, you wee poof".

The tribunal were told that the

bullying began only one day after his £25,000 a year post began when Paul mocked Ditton's choice of clothing in a camp voice. On another occasion, when wearing a cream-coloured suit to work, Paul said to Ditton: "You look like a cream puff."

The compensation of £118,309 – awarded under the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2004 by an employment tribunal – is believed to be the highest made by a tribunal in Scotland for bias on the grounds of sexual preference.

Ditton told the hearing that his sexual orientation had never been an issue before working for Paul.

He said: "I do not feel my sexual-

ity had any bearing on my ability to do my job. They are foul individuals and deserve to be punished."

Paul said that CP Publishing – who were not present at the hearing – would be seeking advice regarding civil action against Ditton, stating that their position is that he wasn't an employee of the company.

Calum Irving, director of Stonewall Scotland said: "This makes clear more than ever that Scottish employers have a duty to tackle homophobia in the workplace."

"Apart from destroying a person's career, allowing homophobia to carry on unabated blights the working environment and can destroy a firm's reputation."

Celebs put best foot forward for equality

By Steve Bustin
SOUTH COAST
CORRESPONDENT

Celebrities are donning their walking boots to support Stonewall for the fourth annual Equality Walk in Brighton on 6 May.

Coronation Street's Anthony Cotton, Duckie star Amy Lamé and Mr Gay UK, Mark Carter will all be pounding the streets of the seaside city to raise money for Stonewall's campaign against anti-gay hate crimes and homophobic bullying in schools.

Registration for the walk is

£10 with walkers encouraged to get additional sponsorship. All those taking part will receive a free t-shirt and an invite to the prize-giving party at Legends Bar at the end of the day. The 10km walk is being devised in conjunction with Brighton Lesbian and Gay Sports Society to take in all the major sights.

For more details or to register visit equalitywalk.org.uk or call 020 7593 1874.



Duckie's Amy on another Stonewall walk.

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CITY RIDES TO RESCUE OF THREATENED PRIDE PARTY

By Rory Michael Smith
MIDLANDS AND EAST
CORRESPONDENT

Birmingham City Council has ended speculation about whether the city will have a Pride this year by announcing they will back the event this May bank holiday.

"I am pleased to say we are now moving together under the umbrella of Birmingham City Council, making the event bigger and better and putting the community at the heart of what happens," said Dave Babbington events director for Everevent who are producing the event on behalf of Brum's gay business association, the B5 group.

The theme of this year's festival will be "united for equality" and organisers are actively seeking support and ideas from all sectors of the second city's diverse community.

Organisers plan a parade that will wind its way through the city before arriving at new location, Millennium Point. Later there will be a concert for gays and their friends, that will be run by the council in collaboration with the community. This concert will be a ticketed event with a quarter of all monies raised going to charity.

The city's gay village will be open throughout and will provide

a warm welcome following the concert. On the Sunday the gay village will stage a free community village day. This event will be produced by Everevent and will take a back to basics approach while incorporating suggestions from those who have attended previous Prides. A queer arts festival will also run concurrently to the festivities and will seek to explore rights and art in all its forms.

One of the biggest changes is the decision to direct all the fundraising gathered before and during the event away from the event itself. The cash raised will not be used to fund Pride but will go directly to charities including those supporting research into breast cancer and testicular cancer.

Organisers hope that the changes made to this year's festival will mark out Birmingham's Pride celebrations as something vibrant and unique.

"Birmingham Pride began in 1997 and now, in 2007, it's time to make some changes," said Babbington. "Lots of work has been going on between the gay community and Bir-

mingham City Council to give the event some stability, growth and financial input and make it into an event the community and Birmingham can be proud of."

Anybody interested in taking part in this year's parade, volunteering, sponsoring or setting up a stall can contact Babbington on 07870 899 373 or everevent@blueyonder.co.uk.



Birmingham Pride will go ahead this year.

I'm glad to be Kay in The Producers

By Andrew Gilliver
and Jeni Quirke
NORTH WEST
CORRESPONDENTS

Bolton comedian Peter Kay is currently fulfilling a lifetime ambition by playing the theatrical gay icon Roger de Bris in the Manchester tour of Mel Brooks' classic comedy musical *The Producers* at the city's Palace Theatre.

Kay says that he fell in love with the original 1968 film when he was young.

"I've always been a huge fan of *The Producers*, ever since I first saw the film on telly when I was 11," he said.

"For years I harboured a secret ambition to turn *The Producers* into a stage musical, even going so far as to write a rough stage adaptation for it in an old school exercise book. Luckily, Mel Brooks beat me to it and created what I think is the funniest musical of all time. So to finally get an opportunity to play a part in a production of it is definitely, for me, a real dream come true. I can't wait."

The *Producers* tells the story of

failed Broadway impresario Max Bialystock and his extremely anxious partner Leo Bloom as they attempt to make a fortune with the most tasteless stage musical ever, *Springtime for Hitler*.

However, they find that

they've soon entered a whole new dimension of theatricality when they enlist the help of "the world's worst director," Roger de Bris.

The Producers is at Palace Theatre Manchester until 12 May. Call 0871 677 0000 or visit ticketmaster.co.uk.



Peter Kay is fulfilling a life long ambition by appearing in *The Producers* stage show.

SIR IAN TAKES ON TWO ROLES FOR RSC

Fans of Sir Ian McKellen will be doubly delighted this spring as the Burnley born thesp returns to Shakespeare's county to tackle two weighty roles.

The award-winning actor and star of the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy will be appearing as Shakespeare's King Lear and as Sorin in Chekhov's *The Seagull* for the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford this March.

The duo of performances will be McKellen's first for the company

since 1989 when he appeared as Iago in a production of *Othello*.

The two plays will be performed in repertoire but McKellen is undaunted at the prospect of hard work.

"The RSC has always presented its work in repertoire and as an audience and an actor, I know the thrill of seeing the same company playing in different plays on adjacent nights or best of all on the same day", he said.

Appearing alongside McKellen in the productions are Wolver-

hampton born Frances Barber and former *Doctor Who* star Sylvester McCoy who will play the fool to Sir Ian's king.

The production is to be directed by Trevor Nunn a former artistic director of the RSC.

King Lear and *The Seagull* will both be performed at Stratford's Courtyard Theatre from the 24 March to 21 June and the 17 April to the 23 June respectively.

For further information log on to rsc.org.uk.



Gay rapper QBoy got a big round of applause when he told the crowd at a Boy George party that he was taking on the subject of homophobic bullying in a TV documentary. QBoy was Boy George's special guest act at the event at Koko in Camden High

Street, north London on 7 February. The documentary will look at kids coming out at school and will be screened at 10.30am on 26 February on Channel 4 as part of the station's gay week.

Photo by Scott Nunn.

BOOKWORMS PREPARE FOR YLAF

The York Lesbian Arts Festival is gearing up for another gathering of authors, singers, dancers, performers and walkers.

YLAF 2007 will take place over two days capitalising on its previous successes over the weekend of 27 to 28 October with a one-day book festival and disco as well as an outdoor concert.

"It's fantastic - we're already receiving approaches from sponsors and proposals from people around the world, wanting to get involved in the next event," says YLAF chair Hiraani Himona, who explains there's a lot happening behind the

scenes.

"We're expanding our board and working with our sponsors and funders on developing the resourcing of our organisation, as part of our strategic plan to build on our success. We want to continue to deliver the unique, vibrant, innovative, diverse, international event that over 3,000 lesbians love to experience."

YLAF continues to attract award-winning high calibre authors and performers like Val McDermid, Sandi Toksvig, Ali Smith, Sue Perkins, Stella Duffy, Sarah Waters, Abha Dawesar and Jackie Kay. It

also offers support and development opportunities for new and emerging writers too, with workshops by leading authors.

Himona has also quashed rumours that the event will move to London.

She said: "We will continue to consider options like mini-tours and break-out events around the country, but YLAF's roots are in York. I don't foresee that changing. The city is a very central, successful, supportive and popular host for our guests who attend from around the UK - and all over the world."

See ylaf.org.uk.

Outdoor festival will be a Scotia first

Plans are underway to make this year's Pride Scotia into Scotland's biggest gay party in years.

The event, which will take place in Edinburgh, will be held on 23 June, beginning at 12pm with a march from East Market Street which will culminate in an outdoor festival held - for the first time - at Pillrig Park on Leith Walk.

Peter McDougall, Pride Scotia director, outlined their hopes for

live bands and acts to perform on the main stage, with further tents offering a tea dance, a ceilidh, a chill-out area and stalls from people within the local community.

McDougall noted that in addition to a demonstration from the gay and bisexual rugby team, Thebans RFC, there will be fire-eaters.

Pride in Scotland switches city's between Glasgow and Edinburgh each year, with last year's event mak-

ing the headlines when Strathclyde Fire and Rescue employees refused to attend for the distribution of information leaflets. The nine firemen were later disciplined and made to attend diversity training.

McDougall said that this year they had a number of fire fighters wishing to take part in Pride proceedings.

The day is expected to end with a lavish club event, details of which will be confirmed soon.

Around Britain

Attack arrests

DARLINGTON

Five people have been arrested in connection with the homophobic attack of two brothers on 15 January in Darlington. The victims – aged 21 and 26 – were in the town of Spennymoor when they were set upon by a mob, receiving head and facial injuries. Four males and one female – all aged between 15 and 23 – were put into custody on suspicion of affray but have been released on bail pending further enquiries. A decision on whether to bring charges will be made by mid-March.

Crime conference

SWANSEA

Tackling Homophobic Hate Crime in Wales is the theme of this year's Stonewall Cymru's annual conference in Swansea next month. Speakers will include representatives from the South Wales Police and the Crown Prosecution Service, and workshops exploring how police can engage with queer communities will also be held on 31 March. For details call 029 2023 7744.

Nurses network

MANCHESTER

The North West region of the Royal College of Nurses is launching a queer network for its members. The network is also open to those who have an interest in working and influencing the formation of RCN policy and activity around the region. The network will support members to promote gay issues within their own organisation and look at ways of tackling discrimination at work and in care environments, will hold 10 evening meetings a year and plans to involve social and peer support.

Bullying employers' guide

NATIONAL

Stonewall has launched a new guide to help employers deal with anti-gay harassment at the workplace. "Bullying: preventing the bullying and harassment of gay employees" is available from Stonewall, or can be downloaded from stonewall.org.uk.

Police launch association

READING

Thames Valley Police will be launching a Gay Police Association on 21 March. The association launch is planned to be a "major networking event for both the police and the gay community of the Thames Valley," according to chair Alistair Melling.

Shirley Bassey clothes auction

LONDON

Flamboyant outfits from Dame Shirley Bassey's wardrobe will go on auction at a charity event to benefit children's charity Barnado's. The event will raise funds for the work that Barnado's does with young queer people. Hey Big Spenders is on at Café de Paris in central London, on 30 March. For more details and to book tickets, visit barnados.org.uk/shirleybassey.

Tatchell speaks on freedom

CHESTER

Peter Tatchell will deliver a talk on the Global Struggle for Queer Freedom as part of the University of Chester's Diversity Week 2007 – Slavery and Freedom. The veteran activist will discuss current issues facing the queer community on 28 February. Call 01244 511 138 for details.

Volunteers needed

EDINBURGH

Gay Men's Health in Scotland's capital city are seeking volunteers for their HIV Comeback Tour campaign. They are looking for people who enjoy talking to gay and bisexual men on the scene. Recruits will join a team providing information about safer sex and HIV testing. Full training is provided. Contact james@gmh.org.uk.

Sex workshops for men

LONDON

London's gay men have the chance to hone their sexual skills, as GMFA is bringing back two of their most popular courses. Exploring SM is a four-day course (10 to 11 and then 24 to 25 March) and Confident Cruising – Out and About is a one-day course on 3 March. The courses are free of charge to gay men in London, but places are limited and need to be booked in advance on 020 7738 3712.

MORE BRITISH NEWS IN BRIEF, PAGE 10

Hair raising experience as Navy man helps charity

By Haydn Price
WALES AND SOUTH
WEST CORRESPONDENT

A Royal Navy chief petty officer has volunteered to have his chest hair ripped off his body to help raise money for an HIV charity.

It is hoped that at least £2,000 will be raised for the Terrence Higgins Trust when chief petty officer Simon Henwood of the Royal Navy joins five other people for the sponsored chest hair removal

in Bristol on 23 February.

The six men will experience pain like nothing they have felt before as they offer up their chest hair. But they will be in safe hands, with waxing services being donated by the management and staff of local beauty therapy specialists the Treatment Rooms.

Organised by Bristol-based rehabilitation case manager Niall Milligan, the men, including Milligan's partner Darryl Bullock (who recently made headlines

around the globe as the first man in the UK to apply for the dissolution of a civil partnership), have already raised well over half of their £2,000 goal.

Milligan said: "THT do some outstanding work, The charity needs every penny it can get to continue the work they do in fighting, treating and educating people about HIV, and this is a way that we can support that work and have a bit of fun at the same time."

As well as the Treatment Rooms, other local businesses have offered their support.

Come To Daddy, the London-based club for bears which re-launched in Bristol in January, has pledged a portion of the club's door take to the cause as well as offering all of the guys taking part free t-shirts and a year's free membership.

The waxing takes place at the Old Market Tavern in Bristol starting at 7.30pm on 23 February.

PROPERTY HIGH-FLYER SUES OLD FIRM

By Darren Scott
SCOTLAND
CORRESPONDENT

An estate agent who marketed Scotland's highest value residential property has claimed he was the victim of discrimination for being gay.

Gordon Lockhart, 33, was told his services as manager of the RE/MAX Clydesdale were no longer needed when he returned from marrying his partner in a civil partnership ceremony in New Zealand.

He was the top RE/MAX associate in 2005 and has previously won awards for his work and earned over £50,000 a year.

Lockhart, from Clarkston in East Renfrewshire, claims his dismissal came about after he told one of the company directors that he was gay. He said that he was later told via e-mail that he was fired due to poor customer service.

He is taking the company to an employment tribunal for unfair dismissal and discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, and believes that being sacked so shortly after talking openly about his sexuality. The company deny his claims.

He said: "It is ludicrous in this day and age that anyone should be treated differently just because they happen to be gay."



Audiences will become sleuths, solving "sex crimes" and finding out who caught which sexually transmitted disease from whom at a Whodunnit LGB Healthy Sex evening hosted by Chris Green (aka Tina C and Ida Barr). The event, to be held at the Science

Museum's Dana Centre in London, on 22 February from 7pm to 8.30pm, will see audience members roam around different "sex crime" scenes in the café, where characters, scientists and sex objects from the science museum will provide clues and witness accounts

to the "crimes" committed. Also performing will be burlesque and cabaret stars Dusty Limits as Professor Victor Violet, Miss Fancy Chance from the Burly Q troupe as Lady Pearl Plumage, and Tracey Tamer as Miss Red Hot Poker. Photo by Scott Nunn.

COUPLE DEFIANT AFTER BEATING

By Andrew Gilliver
and Jeni Quirke
NORTH WEST
CORRESPONDENTS

Manchester Lib Dem Councillor Marc Ramsbottom, 43, whose partner was violently attacked in the city centre on 10 February, has said that he will not let the homophobic attack prevent the couple from going out.

An unidentified man accosted Ramsbottom and his partner Tim Hartley, also 43, late on Saturday night, and shouted offensive abuse. The man then threw a bottle hitting Hartley who later needed 15 stitches

and three staples in his head.

The councillor who has lived in Manchester since the mid 1980s says that he has never experienced such an attack before.

"It shakes you up but it shouldn't prevent you from going out and enjoying yourself," he commented.

Hartley agrees: "I will probably be a bit more careful now about the route I take home. But it's certainly not put me off going out for a drink at night."

The couple were close to Bourdon Street in Ancoats when the attack occurred.

The attacker is described as white, between 16 and 22, and slim.

He had short blond hair, wore a black tracksuit top and bottoms and a black baseball cap, and spoke in a local accent.

Ramsbottom and Hartley have publicly commended the local police for their handling of the situation but the attacker has not yet been found. Anyone who witnessed the attack is urged to call Greater Manchester police on 0161 856 3540 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.



Tim Hartley needed 15 stitches after the attack.

THE ICONIC MALE

New Paintings and Drawings by
STEPHEN B WHATLEY

Exhibition continues to Friday 2nd March 2007



Posing Pouch and Pecs



Stallions

The passionate work of Stephen B Whatley is in numerous private collections worldwide, and in public collections including BBC Heritage, Historic Royal Palaces and The Royal Collection. Many celebrities have sat for a Whatley portrait and his major commissions include paintings of Buckingham Palace and 30 paintings for the Tower of London - reproductions of which line the Tower Hill Underpass, the main entrance portal to the Tower from the Underground Station. This is his first exhibition of paintings and drawings with a homo-erotic theme. In the words of the artist, "A new and exciting interpretation of the ideal of male strength and beauty... an orgasm of art!"



Market Place Cowboy



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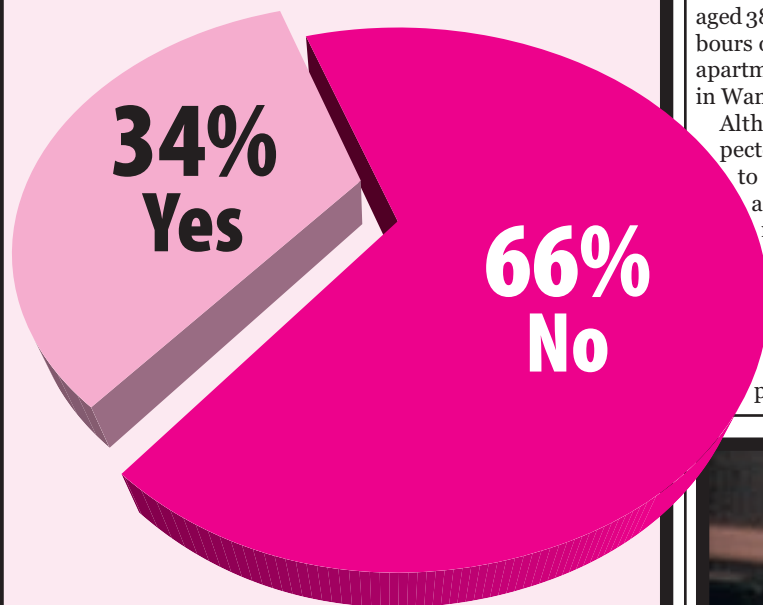
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BallotBox

Are you doing anything to mark LGBT History Month?

That was the question we asked you in the last issue. This is how you voted.



This week's question is:
Do you find this time of year depressing?

To vote visit
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We will publish the results in the next issue.
To comment more on this or any other subject email letters@pinkpaper.com or write to The Pink Paper, Spectrum House, Unit M, 32-34 Gordon House Road, London, NW5 1LP.
And let us know if there's a question you want answered through our Ballotbox.

FIRM MOURNS AFTER SUDDEN DEATH OF WEBSITE FOUNDER

By Tris Reid-Smith

The co-founder of leading dating website Gaydar has been found dead, eight floors below the window of his London penthouse.

South African born Gary Frisch, aged 38, was found dead by neighbours on 10 February outside his apartment block near the Thames in Wandsworth, south London.

Although no foul play is suspected, police are investigating to see if Frisch's death was accident or suicide. A post-mortem reported that he died of "multiple injuries" and detectives are still waiting for the results of a detailed toxicology report.

Frisch, a serial IT entrepreneur, founded Gaydar

with his boyfriend Henry Badenhurst in 1999 after a friend told them he was having trouble finding a partner. The site is now thought to be earning more than £1 million a year with over four million subscribers.

Frisch and Badenhurst split up last year but they stayed in business together, running QSoft, Gaydar's parent company as chairman and managing director.

A QSoft statement said: "Gary was a highly-regarded leader and colleague who cared first and foremost about the gay and lesbian community we serve. He was an accomplished entrepreneur and a very generous man who also cared deeply about the people who worked for and with him.

"Gary's legacy as a co-founder

of the Gaydar phenomenon is immense and it is one that we shall both celebrate and continue into the future. Gary will never be forgotten and he is deeply missed by us all."

In the wake of the news, gay magazine Bent postponed a launch of its own competitor dating site as a mark of respect.

However QSoft used the day of GaydarRadio's fifth birthday to announce a £2 million investment into their brand – a plan conceived by Frisch and his board before his death.

The investment plan will see the launch of GaydarNation which will bring together the firm's male and female dating sites, Rainbow Network and the radio station.



Gary Frisch: Co-founder of Gaydar.

QSoft said the announcement was always planned for that night and was not linked to Frisch's death.



Gaydio Radio's Ian Wallace and Toby Whitehouse were celebrating as they re-launched onto the airwaves. The Manchester community station has been broadcasting throughout February

and launched its efforts with Bonnie Tyler's help on 2 February at AXM bar on Canal Street. She treated a capacity crowd to classics like Holding Out For a Hero and a soon to be released remix of Total Eclipse

of the Heart dueting with rock band BabyPinkStar. Gaydio is on air on 87.7fm in the central Manchester area until 4 March. Listeners elsewhere can checkout the station live on gaydio.co.uk.

Their words... not ours



Rufus Wainwright tells of his Oz obsession during his tribute concert to Judy Garland.

"You wouldn't even exude warmth if you were on fire."

Dancing on Ice judge, Jason Gardiner, is less than warm to contestant, newsreader Kay Burley.

"Matt's cute. He's 'married' now, but I'd have asked him out!"

Ian Watkins, H from Steps, has a little crush on Matt Lucas. We imagine they would have had very ugly babies.

"On bad days I put on my mother's fine gowns and became the Wicked Witch."

Unhealthy attitudes found in NHS

By Haydn Price

WALES AND SOUTH WEST CORRESPONDENT

Serious gaps in the standard of healthcare for lesbian, gay and bisexual people living in North and Mid Wales have been identified in a report carried out by campaign group Stonewall Cymru.

The Inside-Out report highlights concerns about discriminatory attitudes of health professionals towards gay service users.

One in four respondents reported experiencing hostile and judgemental attitudes after coming out to healthcare staff.

The report also revealed that there was little awareness or understanding of the specific needs of queers among healthcare staff.

Gay men felt pressured into taking HIV tests simply because of their sexual orientation and les-

bians were given inappropriate contraceptive advice.

Jenny Porter, community liaison officer at Stonewall Cymru, said: "It is shocking that the healthcare system does not acknowledge the specific needs of lesbian, gay and bisexual people and this has an adverse effect on the treatment they receive.

"The report highlights the need for equality training to be given to all healthcare staff so that lesbian, gay and bisexual people receive treatment that is appropriate to their needs."

The Inside-Out report is the result of a year-long project exploring the experiences of gays accessing health services in North and Mid Wales.

The report will be launched to health care providers in St Asaph on 16 March, followed by a launch at the Welsh Assembly the following week.

For more information contact 029 2023 7744.



Available throughout the north west from Wednesday 28th February or download now from www.lgf.org.uk

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Police probe phone a friend hoax calls to helpline

By Haydn Price
WALES AND SOUTH
WEST CORRESPONDENT

A Gloucestershire helpline supporting the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities has been inundated with hoax calls, according to local police.

Gloucestershire Police, who are investigating the source of the texts say volunteer's time at Gay-Glos helpline is being wasted due to the scam.

Unsuspecting members of the public are receiving a text message, supposedly from a friend, saying the sender is out of credit or in trouble. They are then asked to contact the helpline number urgently.

When the number is dialled, it is answered by one of the helpline's trained counsellors. On one day the organisation,

formally known as Gay and Lesbian Friend Helpline, received 31 unnecessary calls in an hour.

A Gay-Glos spokesman said: "It's appalling that a free service can be targeted like this."

Gay-Glos celebrates 17 years of supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people this year.

The organisation, whose patron is Sir Ian McKellen, changed its name last year to reflect the fact that it is no longer just a helpline.

As well as one-to-one support, Gay-Glos has been running training for organisations and schools under the Healthy Schools initiative.

Funding from the Big Lottery has helped set up rural friendship support groups, which are thriving.

Nurse Gladys celebrates 10 years of Amnesty at birthday bash

By Liam O'Driscoll

Lynda Baron, Nurse Gladys Emmanuel in Open All Hours, will be hosting a 10-year birthday celebration of Amnesty International's LGBT UK Network on 27 February.

A long-term supporter of Amnesty's work on behalf of the LGBT community, Baron will be fronting the celebration of the launch of the network and seminal book *Breaking the Silence* (Human Rights Violations Based on Sexual Orientation).

Along with the glitz of a party and high profile speakers such as MP Ben Bradshaw and Peter Tatchell, the main thrust of the event will shed light on other "dark places of the world that

Amnesty International is seriously concerned about such as Cameroon, Nigeria, Uganda, Nicaragua."

Linda Wilkinson, of the Amnesty International UK board and LGBT Network member, said: "The current situation in Iraq has resulted for the first time in a UN report on the murder of homosexuals and Ali Hili of the Iraqi LGBT Group will be speaking on the situation in that troubled country."

The event will also look forward to what the group is going to do in the future. With past celebrity heavyweights such as Elton John and Simon Callow, the group should be able to muster high profile support for future campaigns focusing particularly on Eastern

Europe where Wilkinson is "very worried about countries like Poland that may have theoretically legalised homosexuality, but haven't produced the goods."

Finally the event is partly a thank you to Lynda Baron who, Wilkinson said, "has given us advice and moral support and been great at cheering us along."

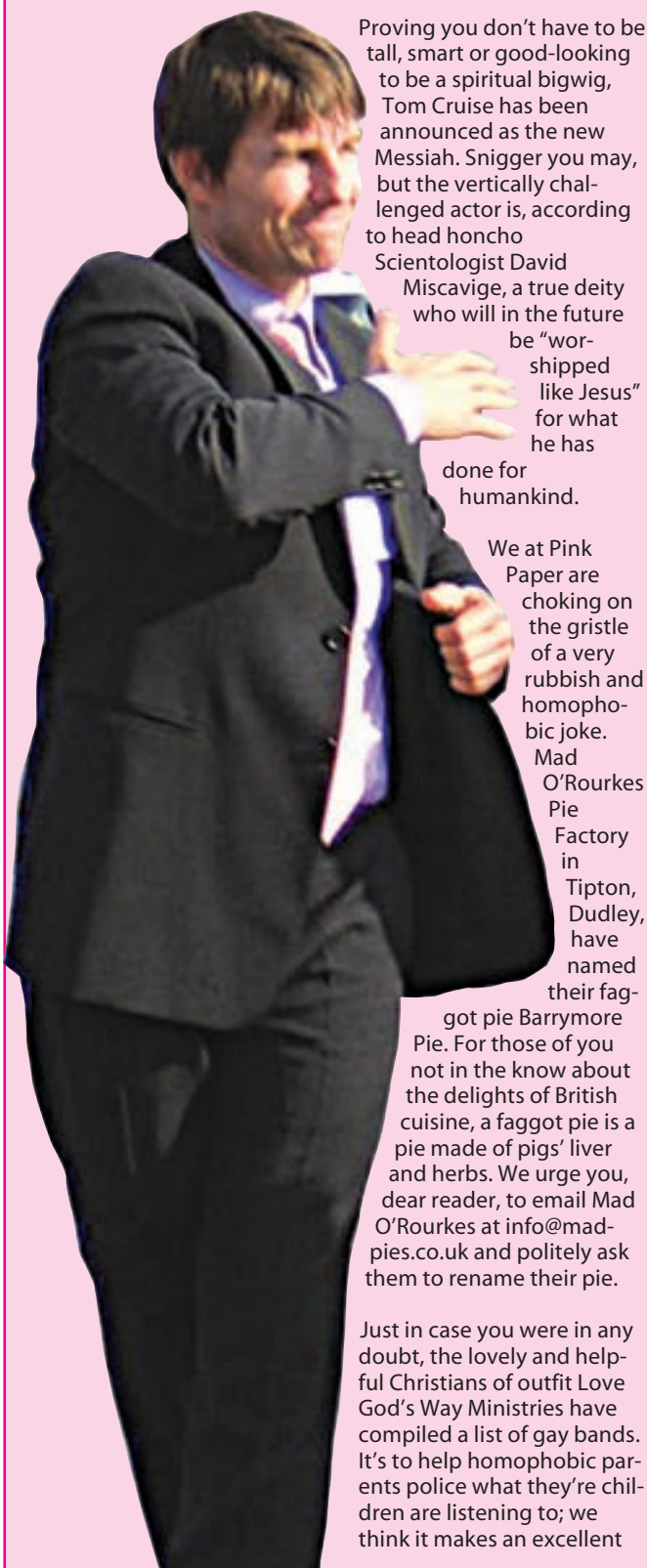
The event takes place in St Ethelbuga's Centre, 78



Baron will celebrate 10 years of Amnesty's gay work.

Bishopsgate, London, EC2, on 27 February at 7pm. To attend email lsw05@tiscali.co.uk.

Things to talk about in the pub...



Proving you don't have to be tall, smart or good-looking to be a spiritual bigwig,

Tom Cruise has been announced as the new Messiah. Snigger you may, but the vertically challenged actor is, according to head honcho

Scientologist David Miscavige, a true deity who will in the future be "worshipped like Jesus" for what he has

done for humankind.

We at Pink Paper are choking on the gristle of a very rubbish and homophobic joke.

Mad O'Rourkes Pie Factory in Tipton, Dudley, have named their faggot pie Barrymore Pie. For those of you not in the know about the delights of British cuisine, a faggot pie is a pie made of pigs' liver and herbs. We urge you, dear reader, to email Mad O'Rourkes at info@madpies.co.uk and politely ask them to rename their pie.

Just in case you were in any doubt, the lovely and helpful Christians of outfit Love God's Way Ministries have compiled a list of gay bands. It's to help homophobic parents police what they're children are listening to; we think it makes an excellent

resource for newly out queers who want to know what's cool in musical Gayland. Some of the bands they think will corrupt you include Barry Manilow, Cole Porter, and, quelle surprise, Elton John - who they list as "really gay". No shit, Sherlock. Their "Safe Bands" list, oddly, includes Cyndi Lauper. Visit lovegodsway.org/GayBands for a giggle.

Here's one I made earlier: Stuart Miles, cherubic-faced ex-Blue Peter presenter, has a drag alter-ego, Stella Ratner - whose claim to fame is that she's Croydon's premier personal shopper. She's going to be opening a night of character comedy at Soho's Barcode on 14 March - Stella's Cellar.

Never Say Never (Again) - except when you're talking about a gay Bond; James Bond, that is. Speaking about Rupert Everett, Sharon Stone told veteran New York

Post gossip columnist and dyke icon Liz Smith, "Oh, I love him. What a fantastic talent. You know, a top movie executive told me a few years ago that if Rupert wasn't openly gay, he'd definitely have landed James Bond. Isn't that shitty?" Yes, Sharon, it is. We think there'd be nothing better than to see semi-naked boys cavorting in the next film's opening title sequence, and to see Rupert wrap his sexy smackers around a shaken, not stirred, martini.



A Snickers advert shown in the American Super Bowl ad break has been pulled by Mars Inc after complaints about its homophobic content. In the ad two mechanics accidentally kiss then need to "do something manly" to prove they're not gay. Alternate endings on

the internet showed the men drinking anti-freeze and one beating the other up. It seems a little much to go to such extreme lengths to prove their manliness, but if two homophobes need to beat each other up on TV because they are so scared of being gay, do we really need to stop them?

Torchwood's gay star John Barrowman has revealed he would love to have kids with partner Scott Gill. The couple, who have been together

for 16 years, were married in a civil partnership ceremony in Cardiff in December. John, aged 39, who plays Captain Jack in the sci-fi drama, said: "We'd either have a child with somebody, or our other option is to adopt. There are so many out there who need opportunities. It should make no difference if a couple bringing up a child is gay. "If people think of a family unit as being something from the past, then I'm happy to get the

Doctor to take them back to the dark ages in the

Tardis. We don't need them in our future."



New club closed after opening night problems



Students from 18 universities descended on Brighton last weekend for a meet and mingle clubbing experience organised by Student Pride. The universities, all from the south east, met up at Charles Street bar before partying at Envy into the small hours. Photos by Max Ward.

By Haydn Price
WALES AND SOUTH
WEST CORRESPONDENT

Bristol's newest gay venue, Flamingos night club, has remained closed since its opening night almost three weeks ago.

Although no official statement has been given, the Flamingos website says the club was closed "due to an error in licensing".

Owners will use the period to finish work on the club.

"During this period of closure we will be utilising the time to put right certain things that were not completed on the opening night.

"It is unfortunate these things happened, but we have now made every effort to right all of the wrongs ready for our re-launch in March," the site says.

"However, compliments far outweighed the complaints. We are pleased that to say that so many of you found the music to be what they had been waiting for."

The website then goes on to outline some of the praise-filled emails it received but gives no further mention of the complaints.

One customer said: "I was at

Flamingos Night-club in Bristol on both Saturday and Sunday, I was on a visit from Newcastle and had a blast. It was obvious the team had been working their socks off to get it going. There were some opening night glitches, but that didn't make a difference to the brilliant atmosphere."

Another customer says: "Myself and my partner attended your opening night on Saturday after a long anticipated wait for the club opening. All night we heard comments from friends and others focusing on the negative things about the place, which I am sure you have heard yourselves, but people seem to forget how much you have done to the place. Personally I was impressed with the extra space you opened up within the club. It was clean and the interior rooms were well decorated. Especially the bubbles in the wall."

Flamingos is due to reopen on 2 March - the management was unavailable for comment.



Flamingos opening night was a big hit but punters will have to wait until March for it to re-open.

COMPASS SHOWS THE DIRECTION WITH PRICE GUARANTEES

By Erica Roberts

Gay financial advisers Compass has launched a series of price guarantees for its clients.

The company is offering guaranteed lower premiums on life assurance, and lower broker fees than its competitors on mortgages.

Customers are also to get higher fund values on pension illustrations and no initial product charges on investment bonds.

Chris Morgan, managing direc-

tor of Compass, said: "We are confident that customers taking advantage of our price guarantees won't get a better deal elsewhere."

"Our price promises are underpinned by a commitment to sacrifice commissions and to lower our advice fees. Our market leading position ensures that we transact a high volume of business, which allows us to reduce charges and fees."

For more information, call 0800 783 8629.

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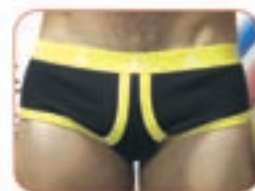


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Around Britain

Researcher seeks parents

SOUTHAMPTON

Gay parents of kids aged between one and 16, and living in the Southampton area, are needed for a new piece of research. The study, commissioned by Southampton City Council's Early Years Development and Childcare Department, aims to find out whether the council is meeting the needs of lesbian and gay parents. Interviews will be telephone or face-to-face at a venue of your choice. Participants can choose to remain anonymous. Call 01454 610 620.

Library web resources

WOLVERHAMPTON

People looking for queer resources in Wolverhampton should check out the new web pages of Wolverhampton City Libraries – launched for this year's LGBT History Month. Online visitors can check the library's catalogue, recommend a book or DVD for the library to stock, and take part in a mystery gay celebrity quiz. Visit wolverhampton.gov.uk/lgbt.

New weekly night

LONDON

Queer people in Enfield are invited to Enfield LGBT Network's new weekly gay night, upstairs at Bar Ten on Silver Street, every Monday, 8.30pm onwards. For more information, visit enfieldlgbt.org.uk.

Celeb couple hit stage

ABERDEEN

Celebrity couple Colin McAllister and Justin Ryan are to appear in the Scottish leg of the UK tour of *The Play What I Wrote*. Following a successful stage debut in Aberdeen, the duo will don the famous frocks and wigs once more at the Kings Theatre on Leven Street in Edinburgh from 27 March.

Venue has makeover

SHEFFIELD

Dempsey's nightclub on Hereford Street has renovated its lower bar at the cost of over £25,000. New features include 13 widescreen LCD TV screens, ambient lighting and new décor. This is the second makeover Dempsey's has had in the last 18 months, and the club has recently accepted its 10,000th member.

Gay bar turns gospel

ASHTON UNDER LYNE

Legendary former gay club Blues on Stamford Street in Ashton under Lyne, Lancashire, is being converted into a community centre, ironically called the Rainbow Community Centre, by volunteers from the nearby Church of the Nazarene. The centre will be used for drama, concerts and dance – and will be open to the whole community. Blues had been the town's only gay club for almost 20 years but finally closed its doors to the gay community in 2006.

Canal Street website

MANCHESTER

Manchester's Canal Street has been given its own website, which officially launched last month. Promising an up-to-date stream of news, views, competitions and culture, the website is aimed at those who want to eat, drink, think, or connect with the past, present and future in the village. Visit canal-st.co.uk.

Women's health session

PORTSMOUTH

Portsmouth's Rainbow Café is to host a session aiming to educate lesbian and bisexual women about sexual health. Called "Mary, Mary quite contrary, how does your lady garden grow?" the event is on 24 February at 11am, and will cover all aspects of GU Medicine as well as breast examination tips.

Manto bar changes owners

MANCHESTER

After 16 years of trading, Manchester's Manto bar has had a recent change of ownership – with the new owners planning upgrades. Immediate plans include a new club space – to be called The Lounge – using the existing top floor. This floor will have its own entrance between Manto and Spirit. There will be a launch party on 10 March. Visit manto.com.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF, PAGE 13

POLICE TALK TO CRUISERS AFTER ALLEGATIONS OF INTIMIDATION

By Steve Bustin
SOUTH COAST
CORRESPONDENT

Police in Kent are to hold a public forum to address criticisms of their policing of local cruising grounds.

The meeting on 5 March, part of a regular series of quarterly meetings, aims to address allegations of heavy-handedness, intimidation and bullying by police officers at a number of popular cruising grounds around the county.

The allegations were made by users of a discussion board on website thecruisingground.co.uk, in response to an initial posting by Kent Police warning users against visiting cruising grounds.

Users of the discussion boards accuse Kent Police of harassment including taking down number plates of cars parked at cruising grounds, intimidating cruisers by parking very close to them or turning their headlights and searchlights on cruisers at night.

Kent Police have, however, addressed many of the complaints via the discussion boards, accepted some of the criticisms and pledged to tackle the problems highlighted and have provided links to online methods of reporting homophobic crime and other sources of information.

Inspector Sonia Lassnig, part of the Kent Police Diversity Support Team told the Pink Paper

this week that the debate on the website has been a positive move: "The original web posting came about through our community liaison officers, whose primary role is to build bridges with minority groups.

"They started to populate the website as part of moves to try to build trust and confidence with the LGB community. I think we anticipated some but not all of the responses to our posting and the on-going debate has helped us to realise that we need to do more to build those bridges. This online debate and our regular meetings are all part of communicating with the LGB community.

"From a police point of view

we're trying to balance the needs of those who use these cruising areas with other members of the community, who will sometimes report that they are offended by the activities at those sites.

"We do not, however, support any intimidating or aggressive policing tactics and everybody needs to be treated with respect. If someone has been on the receiving end of treatment they feel is unacceptable there is a complaints procedure they can access."

The Kent Police LGBT Forum meeting takes place on 5 March from 6pm at Strood Civic Centre in Rochester. For more details call 01622 652 444 or email diversity.team@kent.pnn.police.uk.



豬
This year is the Year of the Pig, according to Chinese horoscopes. Brace yourselves, warn wizened old men hunched over papyrus scrolls, for international conflicts and disharmony – think regional warfare, uprising and unrest. For individuals, stressed out drama queens should tone things down this year – we're all to watch out for our mental and pig health, apparently. People born in the year of the pig dislike discord, illegal behaviour and not having anything to eat. Famous pigs include Julie Andrews, Farrah Fawcett, Barry Gibb, Elton John, and Arnold Schwarzenegger. Don't despair if you're not famous, though – pigs apparently make very good caterers and department store personnel, so all is not lost.

Mags return after long break

By Darren Scott
SCOTLAND
CORRESPONDENT

Two popular Scottish gay magazines have returned after a long absence, enjoying launch parties in both Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Cock Tales, published by Healthy Gay Scotland, is a free comic book format publication that provides information on safer sex and the experiences of younger gay and bisexual men interjected with Scottish gay humour.

Last published for Pride Scotia in July 2006, the publishers have hinted that this fourth issue could be the last in the popular series, with the possibility of a Cock Tales website not being ruled out.

Re-launched as part of LGBT

History Month, Cock Tales has been read all over the world, and can be viewed online at healthygayscotland.com.

Another free publication from Healthy Gay Scotland in conjunction with Gay Men's Health, Base, has returned for a fifth issue after last being seen in autumn 2006.

Base, which launched in September 2005, focuses on lifestyle as well as health issues.

Editor Brian Houston said: "Base is unique in that it's the only magazine specifically for gay and bisexual men in Scotland. And, because of the online content, it's also read globally."

Houston said that there were "big plans" for the development of the magazine in the near future. See basemag.co.uk.

It may be the year of the pig, but dragons were out in force as LYC London, a club for gay Oriental men and their friends, held a fireworks party extravaganza at The Edge on 18 February. The event was to celebrate the Chinese New Year, and the launch of Chinatown Arts Space, a new centre featuring the best of British East Asian performing and visual arts. Chris Stranson from LYC said: "I hope that CAS will enable any talented LGBT East Asian artist to find a space for self-expression, in the same way we intend for anyone else." Visit chinatownartspace.com and lyclondon.com for more information.
Photo by Scott Nunn

Payout for sex graffiti victim

A gay man from West Yorkshire has been told this month he will get £17,000 in compensation after winning an employment tribunal in Leeds last October.

Chris Martin, 32, took his employer Parkham Foods to court after homophobic discrimination forced him to resign.

Quality assurance officer Martin was suspended in November 2005 after he complained about persistent harassment and offensive graffiti that depicted him engaged in sexual acts.

When the case was brought to the tribunal it was decided that Parkham Foods had not properly dealt with the incident and that the company was "inbuilt with prejudice".

Martin was paid £10,000 for personal injury and a further £5,000 for mistreatment by his employers.






The tribunal has been heralded as a landmark one as it is one of the first cases of constructive dismissal under the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003.

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CAPITALS UNITE TO HELP PRIDE FEST BEAT MOBS

Queer communities in London and Riga, Latvia, are to unite in a unique twinning partnership to support equality and partnership in both capital cities – and later this month, Pride London representatives will go to Latvia to sign a statement of unity with Riga Pride.

Last year saw half a million party-goers celebrate the largest Pride parade ever seen in London – and at the same time, the queer community in Riga was banned from celebrating Pride, and suffered violent attacks from homophobic mobs.

Paul Birrell, chair of Pride, said: “The brave men and women of Latvia’s gay and lesbian community, our fellow European Union citizens, were subjected to brutality and an appalling breach of their human rights in scenes that shocked the world. The new twinning partnership is the first step to bringing this unacceptable situation to an end.”

Kristine Garina, chair of Riga Pride, said: “We are delighted to twin with London and hope that this will have a real impact on the overt homophobia in our city. We hope that as many people as possible will travel from the UK to the beautiful city of Riga to help us celebrate our Pride festival, 30 May to 2 June, and join the fledgling Pride parade on 2 June.”

POLICE BATTER VICTIM OF HOMOPHOBIC MOB

By Tris Reid-Smith

Four men narrowly escaped being lynched by a homophobic mob in Kingston, Jamaica, on Valentine’s Day.

A crowd of around 200 people besieged the men in a pharmacy on 14 February in the Tropical Plaza shopping centre, abusing them with anti-gay taunts and threats to kill them.

Fearing a possible massacre, the pharmacy staff called the police. But when officers arrived they joined in the abuse.

Eye-witness, Gareth of Jamaica’s gay rights group J-Flag, whose full

name can not be used to protect his safety, happened to be in the store. He said: “Three guys were followed by an angry, homophobic woman into the pharmacy. She cursed and called them names, saying that battymen [queers] must be killed. She attracted the attention of other shoppers in the plaza, who quickly gathered at the door. This homophobic mob began shouting abuse and violent threats.

“I was already in the pharmacy purchasing items. I recognised the three men and went over and spoke to them, asking them to calm down.

“Because I had intervened to calm the situation, I was pointed at and

referred to as a friend of the three guys. People said that I must be gay too. The crowd demanded that I come outside, so they could beat me. After hearing these threats, I decided to wait until the police arrived to escort the three guys out. I thought it would be safer for me to leave with them.

“The three men were supported by the store staff but verbally abused by the police and by the store’s private security personnel.

“I was violently abused by members of the police team. They slapped me in the face, hit me on the head, and the handle of a M16 gun was used to strike me in the

lower abdomen. These injuries are deemed serious by the doctor who later examined me.

“I was the only one injured inside the pharmacy. But one of the three guys was hit on the head with an object when he went outside to get into the police car.”

The police led the men away from the mob but continued a barrage of verbal abuse in the police car and at the police station.

Now J-Flag is calling for an investigation into the police’s own misconduct. Their demand is backed by British queer group Outrage.

Brett Lock of Outrage said: “In the past, the Jamaican police have been

accused of allowing gay men to be battered and killed by homophobic mobs. The abuse of these men by officers who are supposed to uphold the law is totally unacceptable.”

Outrage wants British gays to call on the Jamaican government to prosecute the officers in this case, create hate crime laws to protect all Jamaicans and introduce police training in human rights issues.

You can email your protest to the Jamaican High Commissioner in London, His Excellency, Burchell Whiteman, at hc@jhucuk.com, fax it to 020 7589 5154 or write to Jamaican High Commission, 1-2 Prince Consort Road, London. SW7 2BZ.

Building plans go ahead despite local anger

By Marc Robinson

Property developer West Properties has been granted approval for its plans to re-energise a near-derelect car park adjacent to Manchester’s gay Canal Street despite fierce opposition by local councillors and residents.

In just two years, pending further discussion of the final height of the development, the users of the area should expect to see independent shops and an art gallery occupy the first few floors of three new buildings which will include office space and a hotel which will all sit on an underground car park on the Whitworth Street and Princess Street area of the city.

Chris Speck, lead spokesperson

for the Save Our Village campaign said: “It’s a disgrace. It’s not democracy in action. Hundreds of residents were against this, but they have just been ignored.”

Francis Hilton of West Properties commented: “We are very passionate about what we do. It’s an opportunity for regeneration and it’s an opportunity to rekindle and restart this particular area.

“We’re very pleased with the outcome today as it’s the culmination of 18 months work and we’ve tried to incorporate ideas and work with members from the local community, the surrounding businesses and other interested parties. We’ve still got a lot of work to do and we are just looking forward to getting on site and starting this development.”



Canal Street protesters were against the development of the carpark next to the famous gay village in Manchester.

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MINISTERS ARE BACKING DEATH SQUADS IN IRAQ

By Erica Roberts

Some ministers in the US and UK-backed Iraqi government are colluding with death squads responsible for murdering gay people in Iraq, according to a leading Iraqi gay rights activist.

Ali Hili, leader of underground gay rights group Iraqi LGBT and Middle East Affairs spokesman for UK-based gay rights group Outrage, made the claims at Faith, Homophobia and Human Rights, a multi-faith conference in London on 17 February.

Hili, himself a gay refugee from Iraq, told the conference that what is happening in Iraq today is "one of the most organised and systematic sexual cleansings in the history of the world".

He said that queer people in Iraq face the everyday risk of execution by the Shia death squads of the Badr and Sadr militias – and that members of these militias have infiltrated Iraqi police, abusing their positions of authority to pursue a plan to eliminate all homosexuals in Iraq. These two militias, according to Hili, are the armed wings of the two main Shia parties that control Iraq's government.

He added: "These governing parties – particularly the Supreme Council of Islamic Revolu-



Cllr Brian Coleman, chair of the Greater London Assembly and Lord Chris Smith were among the delegates. Photo by Scott Nunn.

tion in Iraq – are complicit in the widespread execution of Iraqi LGBTs."

Last November, five members of Hili's group were abducted by death squads in Baghdad and are presumed murdered.

Hili said: "These activists had been documenting the killings of

lesbians and gays, and relaying details of homophobic executions to our office in London. I have no doubt that they were targeted – not just because they were gay – but also to stop them exposing to the outside world the anti-gay pogrom that is happening in Iraq today."

Hili condemned the refusal of

the British and US governments to grant asylum to many refugees from the homophobic and sectarian violence in Iraq – and blamed the West for causing much of the current chaos in Iraq.

Hili received a standing ovation from the conference's 250 delegates.

BIGOT BISHOP GIVES WAY TO WORSHIPERS

Queer Catholics are to shift their masses to a Catholic church on the recommendation of homophobic cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor's own advisors.

The major breakthrough will see the Soho Masses Pastoral Council move the gay services on 4 March

to one of London's most historic Catholic churches, Our Lady of the Assumption and St Gregory in Warwick Street, W1.

Westminster Diocese officials refused to say how much of a role the cardinal, who is also Archbishop of Westminster, had to play in the decision but it was signed off by his council, which he heads.

It is a sharp contrast from the cardinal's opposition to gays being given access to Catholic adoption agencies which led him to an embarrassing political defeat earlier this year.

But although it represents a victory for church liberals, the official Catholic position, that gays are "disordered", has not changed. And worshipers attending the masses have been ordered not to use them to campaign for a change in that policy or even to question it.

The masses have been relocated from St Anne's Anglican Church, in Soho's Dean Street. To find out more, email sohomasses@btinternet.com.



Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor.

HAIRDRESSER'S PRIDE PLAN WINS SUPPORT

By Andrew Gilliver and Jeni Quirke
NORTH WEST
CORRESPONDENTS

A Hyndburn hairdresser says he has been inundated with support for his plans for an annual gay Pride march through the town of Accrington in Lancashire.

Paul Freely said that he has been "overwhelmed" with people offering help for the event and that he was determined to make the proposal happen.

The 40-year-old, who runs his business in Cross Street, in the centre of Accrington, said that an annual gay march through the town could be something for the whole community to enjoy.

Freely says he believes the idea would be a "huge boost" to the area and he believes there should be an annual gay march through Accrington and that money should be ploughed into the town's Cross Street to make it a mini rival to

Manchester's gay scene.

After first mentioning the idea in the Lancashire Telegraph Freely says he has received a lot of letters and phone calls with people offering help and now is keen to speak to event planners who would like to get involved in planning the event.

The idea has so far received support from Hyndburn Council and The Lesbian and Gay Foundation.

Darren Knight, 26, works for LGF in Manchester and is from Accrington.

He said: "There is absolutely nothing for the gay community in this part of Lancashire and nowhere to go for most people who need support on coming out issues or sexual health information and access to social groups.

"An event like Pride would be great for the local LGBT community and the area in general as it would highlight a much needed drive for awareness and inclusivity."

Manager's outburst was ill-advised

By Tris Reid-Smith

The Market Harborough Building Society has tried to distance itself from a board member who spoke out against gay rights.

Paul Beardsmore, general manager and secretary of Market Harborough, used his company email to respond to a story that appeared

on BestAdvice.net about gay campaign group Stonewall's list of the most gay-friendly employers in Britain.

Beardsmore told BestAdvice.net: "I think it is important to bear in mind that 'freedom' for homosexual and transgender groups equals discrimination against Christianity."

And he warned: "There is serious trouble ahead."

The building society tried to distance itself from his remarks but colleagues elsewhere in the industry were highly critical.

Commenting in Niche Mortgage Magazine, Ruth Whitehead, whose firm Ruth Whitehead Associates works in the gay market, asked:

"Who is this horrendous old fart and what sort of a time-warp is he living in?"

Meanwhile, other industry experts suggested it would damage the society's reputation and Stonewall called on any gay people who felt they had been discriminated against by Market Harborough to seek legal advice.

Around the world

Making babies

MOSCOW

Russian President Vladimir Putin has made his first public remarks about gays. Responding to Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov's recent denunciation of gay-pride parades as "satanic," Putin said: "I respect freedom of people in all their manifestations." But he said he was worried about Russia's declining birthrate. Moscow Pride organiser Nikolai Alekseev called Putin's remarks "a great breakthrough... the first serious reward for all our efforts to give input into the development of [a] free and democratic Russia, [although] we were expecting slightly more from him."

Sperm bank ban

ONTARIO

The Ontario Court of Appeal in Canada ruled on 29 January that regulations requiring sperm banks to reject donations from men who had sex with a man since 1977 do not violate the nation's Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The case was filed by a Toronto lesbian who wanted to use a gay friend's sperm, had been unable to get pregnant via self-insemination, and sought a clinic's help. The court called the ban a "rational and health-based" approach to minimising the possibility of HIV and hepatitis transmission. Men who want to donate sperm have to have their ejaculate quarantined for six months and then tested.

Happy couple

JERUSALEM

Two Jerusalem men who got married in Canada were officially registered as married in Israel's Population Registry on 29 January. Binyamin and Avi Rose were allowed to record their marriage following last November's ruling by the Israeli High Court of Justice that same-sex couples who marry in a place where it is allowed – Belgium, Canada, Massachusetts, the Netherlands, South Africa or Spain – are considered married in Israel. The case was brought by five Israeli same-sex couples who married in Canada.

Unions quashed again

CANBERRA

Australia's federal government has again shot down an effort by the Australian Capital Territory to legalize same-sex civil unions. Members of the ACT Legislative Assembly had reformulated their bill, thinking they addressed the federal government's objections to the first version, but attorney general Philip Ruddock said the revised measure still violates the Marriage Act, which says marriage is between a man and a woman. Ruddock again vowed he would instruct the queen's representative, governor general Michael Jeffery, to override the law if it were passed. The governor general possesses such power only in regard to laws passed by the Capital Territory. The ACT government will set the bill aside for now, with plans to move it forward if prime minister John Howard's conservative Liberal Party is ousted in the next federal election later this year.

Six months for sex

ABUJA

A gay Nigerian has been sentenced to six months in prison for demanding sex from another man. Francis Chima told Abuja magistrate court that it was "the work of Satan" and promised not to do it again. Chief magistrate, Ajoke Adepoju, said in her judgement that the accused had admitted that he committed the offence and he did not show any good reason why he should not be convicted.

Cruise gang didn't commit murders

MUMBAI

Indian police have arrested a suspect who is thought to have murdered seven people in south Mumbai – a series of crimes they at one stage tried to pin on "a gang of frustrated homosexuals". Their accusations came after around-the-clock police patrolling drove queers and drug addicts away from cruising grounds. But now Ravindra Kantrolle, aka Rahim Mallick, aged 36, has been arrested for the killings.

Paper celebrates

JOHANNESBURG

The South African gay newspaper Exit held a party at Johannesburg's chic Oh Bar on 2 February to celebrate its 200th issue. Publisher and editor Gavin Hayward told the South African Press Association, "Exit will never make me a millionaire, but I earn a living out of it." The monthly, free publication is 12 years old.

Pink Paper

Mob rule

Our report today on the broad-daylight mob attack on gay people in Jamaica's capital illustrates the very real dangers gays, lesbians and bisexuals face in this country.

Most of the time these incidents go unreported and that probably would have been the case this time too if a member of J-Flag, the Jamaican queer rights group, hadn't been involved.

This incident seems to be typical of the other attacks we have heard about, however, not least because the police often seem to side with the thugs.

It is particularly frustrating for British campaigners to see this happening in a country which is part of the Commonwealth and which has Queen Elizabeth as its head of state. And yet the UK authorities have little or no interest in helping Jamaican gays secure their human rights.

In this sense there is a parallel with the situation in Iraq. The US and UK-backed government has now been accused of supporting the death squads which are targeting gay people there.

The ill-conceived invasion and the poorly executed so-called "peace keeping" which has followed it have made things far worse for many Iraqis, particularly the country's gays.

And in both Iraq and Jamaica, the fact that police-backed mob rule, albeit in two very different formats, now has a footing is highly disturbing for all good citizens, not just queers. The British government needs to make sure this problem is on the agenda for any dealings they have with those two governments.

Fair cops

We are pleased to learn that police in Kent are addressing allegations of harassment by police at cruising grounds.

Over a number of years Kent has developed a reputation as one of Britain's most homophobic counties and there are surely a lot of bridges to be built between the local gay community and the authorities – be that the police, the local council or others.

Heavy handed policing and intimidation at cruising grounds is absolutely the wrong way to deal with problems there and can only create distrust. That could be disastrous if any serious crime happens in the area. Let's hope that cruisers themselves engage with police to find a constructive solution.

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Homophobic chants on the terraces have been banned in a new move that aims to stamp out anti-gay abuse in the beautiful game. But can the FA really beat the footy yobs?

Brilliant cleaning results every time with the all-new GT mag

Anyway, Heraclitus and I were locked in deep conversation at the bar again, he muttered something along the lines of: "change is the only constant in life," while sagely rubbing his big grey beard. He's cleverer than me, and soberer, so I nodded into my whisky chaser slurring, "true, true".

This led me to thinking about the massive changes we've had at Gay Times in the up coming issue. We've spent a good six months talking about what we are going to do (it's all been very hush hush you understand, we wouldn't want the neighbours to hear). And people will be surprised with the issue; pleasantly I hope.

Gay Times has always been the broad church, the grand dame. We have always been around, and you often don't see something until it's changed. Well, we've evolved – actually, we've taken a massive evolutionary leap so open your mind and take another look.

We've gone through the magazine with a fine toothcomb. We have cracking new writers and columnists, new style and real life sections and a whole new range of features. It's a nourishment packed treat. Heraclitus sighed at me through his beard and said, "You're sounding like a Daz advert again." And asked the barman for some nuts. He often accuses me of that, but what does he know, with those terrible stains down his front?

When we sent our fab new columnist Bruce LaBruce to Baltimore to spend the evening chez John Waters they ended up at the inauguration of the governor of Maryland. Afterwards, Bruce left a super gift at John Water's house – though I'm not going to tell you what, you'll have to just buy the magazine to find out. All I'll say is Sharon Osbourne and Tiffany box.



Gay Times editor Joe Galliano on stylish changes for an old friend

Without a change like this on the cover, people might not find out that there are changes inside

The name change on the front of the magazine, to GT, may generate a certain amount of disquiet but I think it's time. Without a change like this on the cover, people might not find out that there are changes inside. It was important for several other reasons too. All the staff refer to the mag as GT, most of the letters I receive are addressed 'dear GT.' And our designer has come up with such a beautiful, crisp new logo that it seems a shame to leave it on the drawing board.

A new style section was the only way I was ever going to get my wardrobe sorted. It's great to have a personal shopper and stylist in the family. Our guru Ian Brown made me throw away my moth eaten but much loved rayon anorak. I wore it around Dartmoor as a boy scout and now it is no more. I suffered, I wailed but I'm feeling much better now. It's true – fashion hurts.

It was great to see The Daily Star with their finger on the pulse of the nation as ever. Last Thursday they splashed another gay Carrie kiss across the front page. "Corrie Gay Snog Storm" they shouted.

The storm it seems was from the cadaverous family campaigner, "Dr" Adrian Rogers, (why is it the word "family" so often seems to be code for "we want to kill your young with our deeply mean-spirited ideas?"). He said people were afraid to speak their minds these days – political correctness gone mad. He, however, never seems to have been afraid to say what he thinks, describing homos as "sterile, disease-ridden and God-forsaken". Does that homophobic shit still really sell papers? I hope not.

■ The new look GT is out now.



"I'd much rather have a boyfriend than a girlfriend"

Richard Fairbrass of Right Said Fred on settling down, pages 22 and 27.

Life etc

Giving you something different to do

A RIGHT OLD PAIR



Gilbert Proesch and George Passmore, who opened their largest retrospective yet at London's Tate Modern, began their careers over 40 years ago. Since then the pair, who describe themselves as "two people and one artist", have become an institution.

Tate Modern curator Ben Borthwick explained why they are so important to British art. "They haven't been tagged to a greater art movement, they are their own movement. Their approach to the idea of Britishness inspired the themes of many of the late 80s and early 90s British artists.

"A younger generation won't have seen the full spread of Gilbert and George in a gallery large enough to show it. So that made it the right time and the Tate the right venue."

Borthwick described what it was like working with them. "They are in a unique situation. Most collaborators leave the studio separately. With Gilbert and George there is never a moment when they are not living sculptures. They are always making art, in the studio or out in the streets."

Their controversial work explores religion, nakedness, homophobia, hoodies and racial identity. With past exhibition titles such as *Was Jesus Heterosexual?* they haven't pleased everyone.

This exhibition will shock. But as Gilbert explained, "Each of our pictures is a kind of visual love letter to the viewer", and it's partly that tenderness which makes the experience of this exhibition one that should not be missed.

Gilbert and George is the Tate Modern, Bankside, London SE1, until 7 May. £10-£8. Sunday to Thursday, 10am-6pm, Friday and Saturday, 10am-10pm. For more information call 020 7887 8888.

L i a m O'Driscoll. Photos by Scott Nunn.



YOU'VE GOT MALE

A new exhibition of erotic watercolours is a dramatic departure for its artist discovers **Liam O'Driscoll**.

Artist Stephen B Whatley is perhaps more famous for his paintings of historic palaces – he painted Buckingham Palace for the Royal Collection and produced 30 paintings for the Tower of London.

His list of celebrity sitters who have lined up to have their portrait painted include Dame Judi Dench, Sir Ian McKellen, Barbara Windsor and Ivan Massow.

His new exhibition at the Adonis Art Gallery promises to be his most exciting to date and some-

thing of a departure from his usual work.

Whatley will be publicly pursuing a new direction in his art by unveiling an exhibition of homoerotic watercolours.

"All my work is about feeling and passion and I approach every subject in the same way. These paintings were a very erotic acumination of energy that explodes on to the canvas. Some are inspired by memory, fantasy or imagination," he said.

Even Whatley's pieces for the Historic Royal Palaces

hung in the Tower have the same fury of passionate colour and frantic energy as his latest collection.

His new works are as explicit as their titles: Two Sicilian Youths, Spartan Prince, Posing Pouch and Pees and Menage a Trois.

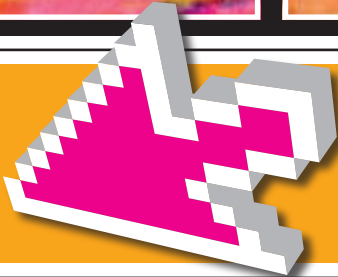
But this is the first time Whatley says he has "expressed his homosexual identity" through his art.

"I am waiting to see if I am seen differently as an artist after this collection. It feels like a brave step but I just thought, Why not?"

The Iconic Male exhibition is on at the Adonis Art Gallery, 1B Coleherne Road, London, SW10 until 2 March. For more information call 020 7460 3888.



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Film

By Milo Wakelin


The History Boys ★★★★★
 £19.99, released 5 March

Grange Hill was never like this. Set in 1983, Alan Bennett's *The History Boys* follows a group of working-class boys in a Sheffield Grammar school as they are groomed for Oxford. To ensure his students' success, the school's ambitious head recruits Irwin, a brilliant young history teacher, who provokes the boys to use sharp quotations, look sideways at facts, and strive for originality.

His style contrasts with that of Hector (Richard Griffiths), the boys' avuncular and beloved general studies teacher, who teaches them to love knowledge and appreciate the beauty of truth. The lads themselves, intelligent, confident and rebellious, shift back and forth between the easy success promised by Irwin, and Hector's attempts to stimulate their minds (as they tacitly tolerate his attempts to lay his hands on their bodies).

Directed by Nicholas Hytner, who also helmed the play, the film sticks closely to Bennett's original script, and includes the original production's award-winning cast.

Whilst it makes no attempt to surpass the stage play, *History Boys* remains a finely honed piece, with career-best performances from Frances de la Tour and Griffiths, supported by strong debuts from the (not-unattractive) younger players.

Square eyes

What we're watching this week

Early Hitchcock Box Set,
 £34.99

Nine early films from the master of suspense, including several silent classics never before seen in the UK. If you are tired of Hitch, it's time to gouge your eyes out, 'cause it's clear you don't deserve them.

Camp Classics Collection,
 £29.99

Includes *Some Like it Hot*, *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, *La Cage Aux Folles* and *The Birdcage*. A perfect post-Valentines crash course in gay cinema for the film novice in your life.

Norman McLaren - The Masters Edition,
 £79.99

Seven solid discs of liquid cinema from one of animations unsung greats. Like *Fantasia on acid*, only better, and with none of those fuck-awful centaurs.

Pasolini Volume One Box Set,
 £39.99

Includes three early movies by the renowned Italian homo-sexual, *Accatone*, *RoGoPaG* and *Love Meetings*. Experience his early realism before he went all weird with *Salò* et al.

Maid Marian and her Merry Men Series Four,
 £12.99

Enjoy a fat slice of some of the best kids' telly ever. Seven episodes of *Marian and the gang*, featuring Tony Robinson and Danny John Jules.

The Journey ★★★★★
 £19.99, out now

The Journey is the story of two young women, the quiet and reserved Kiran and the effervescent Delilah, as they grow from childhood friends to lovers in rural India.

There's a lack of overt girl-on-girl action but the focus is on intimacy, not sex.

Director Ligy J Pullapally has clearly set out to articulate village life, not pillory it; there are no real villains in the piece, only the dead weights of tradition and parental expectation.

The cinematography is intimate and unobtrusive – marred only by an indifferent DVD transfer – beautifully capturing the colour and tempo of village life.


Unveiled ★★★★★

£19.99, Released 19 February

Persecuted in Iran for being a lesbian, Fariba flees to Germany. As her plane leaves Iranian airspace, she slips into the toilets, tears off her chador, and wraps it round the smoke alarm and enjoys a crafty cigarette. Having divested herself of one veil, Fariba spends the rest of the film looking for new ways to hide herself.

When her asylum application is rejected, Fariba adopts the identity of a male friend and works illegally to buy forged identity papers. All is going well, until she starts to fall for Anne, a female colleague. Can Fariba keep her clothes on, or should she wait for Anne to see

through them?

With strong performances all round, *Unveiled* is a relevant, unashamedly political tale, which gives a fascinating glimpse into life in a German working class community, as seen through the eyes of a young Muslim immigrant.

Though writer-director Angelina Maccarone could have afforded to linger more on the comedic potential of certain story elements (such as when Fariba is taken to a lap-dancing club by her workmates), *Unveiled* remains a gripping, frequently erotic, testament to the power of forbidden love.


The Host ★★★★★

£17.99, released 5 March

Just when you thought the monster movie genre had run its web-footed course, *The Host*, a cracking South Korean effort from director Joon-ho Bong, jumps out of the water and swallows you whole.

Billed as *The Royal Tenenbaums* versus *Godzilla*, *Little Miss Sunshine* versus *Tremors*, or (my personal favourite), *The Royle Family* versus *Pulgasari*, *Bane of Koryo*, *The Host* dispenses with shock scares or knowing camp to focus on a family of misfits as they defy the authorities to pursue the mutant tadpole that abducted their little girl.

The result is a bittersweet comedy as black as undisturbed water;

thrilling, gruesome, moving, funny and sad.

Of course, none of this would matter if the creature itself was a wash-out. Fortunately, it's a triumph of cold-blooded, gimlet-eyed menace. As rain and mist descend, the beast lurks contentedly in the bone-chilling concrete of the Han River sewer system while its warm-blooded victims huddle together for warmth.

Marred only by a pointless anti-American subplot, *The Host* is a genre-defying effort that will, doubtless, spark numerous inferior imitators. A Hollywood remake is on the cards, but you should catch this fish while it's still fresh.

Music

By Darren Scott



Patrick Wolf The Magic Position

★★★★☆
Universal, 26 February

Another week, another good-looking 23-year-old pop star. He was blond on debut album *Lycanthropy*, brown for 2005's *The Wind in the Wire* but is sporting flame-red hair on *The Magic Position*, with a fetching line in kooky clothing that fits his (musical) package perfectly.

A blend of electronica and folk dubbed "folktronica" (see what they did there?), this is pop with just enough of a hint of misery and a fabulous flamboyant poke in the eye to everyone who's forgotten to put the fun and excitement into music.

There are sexually ambiguous lyrics, dashes of anger and bitterness, a wonderful duet with Marianne Faithful and an ever so subtle nod towards what was so fantastic about the 80s.

Last year's single *Accident and Emergency* is a standout, along with the title track, which receives a single release later in March.

The Magic Position is a grand production that's sweeping at times and stomping at others, leaving most of Wolf's contemporaries far behind.

Tracey Thorn Out Of The Woods

★★★★☆
Virgin, 5 March

The long-overdue return of the not-very-smiley-one from *Everything But The Girl* offers something of a surprise, with *Out of the Woods* covering all bases from ballads to electro-pop and 80s sounding dance tracks. Again, the blending of electronic sounds with folk – very popular this issue – works by taking traditional territories and making them even more accessible and interesting to new fans as well as old. A lot of this is down to producer Ewan Pearson, who's recently worked with Goldfrapp and Pet Shop Boys. Even Pete Tong got behind the lead single, the disco-tastic *It's All True*, and – for younger readers – this collection could be described as Thorn's "Ray of Light". Surprisingly, it's been 24 years since her last solo album.

Sure to be a success in that you'll hear some songs in clubs and others in cafes. An unexpected gem that appeared from nowhere and is a joy to listen to.



Yoko Ono Yes, I'm A Witch

★★★★☆
Parlophone, out now

"Yoko? Oh no!" cried Bubble in (another) classic Ab Fab moment, and the sentiment may have been shared when her remix album landed on this particular reviewer's desk.

Each track has been given a modern day overhaul by a different artist, including Peaches, Antony and the Johnsons, The Flaming Lips and Craig Armstrong. And, once you've gotten past that Margarita Pracatan feeling, it's madcap, barmy and absolutely brilliant.

Some people may accuse Ono of not exactly being the best singer around, but you're unlikely to see a tear in her eye – mainly because of the giant sunglasses admittedly – but also because, frankly, who cares when the production is this good?

Some numbers don't quite hit the mark (bottom of the class, *Polyphonic Spree*) and at 17 tracks it's slightly longer than needs be.

Who comes up with these genius ideas? And can we have a Grace Jones one next? (But for God's sake, don't tell Lulu and Cilla.)

Belinda Carlisle – Voila

★★★★☆
Ryko Records, out now

Former Go-Go's singer and 80s icon Belinda Carlisle moved to France and fell in love with the country. In fact, she loved it so much she's recorded a French album. Let's just be grateful she didn't move to Germany.

Carlisle's recognisable voice lends itself perfectly to songs such as *La Vie en Rose* and *Bonnie and Clyde*, but despite being a good album, it's unlikely to have mainstream appeal. This is perhaps the greatest strength of *Voila* in that

it's a project borne from the artist's desire rather than contractual demands.

The special edition offers a bonus English version disc, but sadly this only includes four tracks. While everyone deserves to indulge themselves from time-to-time, perhaps one album mixing the two concepts would have worked better. An oddity, albeit a pleasant one.



Klaxons – Myths of the Near Future

★★★★☆
Universal, out now

The current darlings of indie media release the first in a series of three albums chronicling past, present and future.

Klaxons are at the top of the "new rave" scene – which means anything fluorescent goes, so get raking through your old clothes now. Unsurprisingly then, a lot

of their inspiration comes from the 90s rave scene, depicted most obviously in their cover version of *Oakenfold and Grace's Not Over Yet*. However, they do tend to blend in elements of what is current, but just seem that bit cooler.

To many, Klaxons are the messiahs of music, to others they are "just noise". However you feel, they recently stated that they'd like to work with Stock Aitken and Waterman, so they obviously have taste.

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There was a disco inferno raging at Camden's Black Cap as the famous London institution dedicated a night to the memory of legendary 70s drag queen Sylvester James.

Erasure singer Andy Bell and drag star Sandra hosted a night called Sylvester and the Disco Divas as part of gay history month.

James was a scene legend who worked with Aretha Franklin and Bette Midler and had disco hits with You Make Me Feel (Mighty Real) and Dance (Disco Heat).

The crowd were worked up into a frenzy by Sandra, the self proclaimed Whore of Hampstead Heath, who handed over to Andy Bell for a DJ set of musical madness.

Photos by Scott Nunn.



Simply Sandras

Sandra is on every Sunday at the Black Cap, 171 Camden High Street, London, NW1 between 11.30pm and 12.30am, £3.

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Contact Tel:0151 707 4450, outsidersfilmfestival.com

What **Priscilla Queen of the Desert**
Who LGBT Glasgow chronicle queer movies through the decades as part of History Month
Where LGBT Centre, 11 Dixon Street, Glasgow
When 25 February, 7pm
Cost TBC
Contact 0141 221 7203

What **TransQueer Short Film Night**
Who Tomboy and Louis B discuss screenings of XXBOYZ, Generation CSD and Gendinals
Where The Basement Social Centre, 24 Lever Street, Northern Quarter, Manchester
When 26 February, 9pm-11pm
Cost Free
Contact transyouthmcr@queer.org.uk

What **Eugene Onegin, live from The Metropolitan Opera**
Where Duke of York's Picturehouse, Preston Circus, Brighton
Who Renée Fleming leads the cast in this live high-definition broadcast from New York
When 24 February, 6.30pm
Cost £25-£20
Contact 08708 505 703 or picturehouses.co.uk

Theatre and exhibitions



Janet Street-Porter
What **Hayfever**
Who Coward's classic comedy starring Stephanie Beacham and Christopher Timothy
Where Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Lichfield Street, Wolverhampton
When 26 March – 31 March, 7.30pm
Cost From £5.50
Contact 01902 429 212

What **Hello Sailor!**
Who A fascinating exhibition looking at crew life on ships between the 1950s and 1980s
Where Merseyside Maritime Museum, Albert Dock, Liverpool
When Until 1 March 2007
Cost Free
Contact 0151 478 4499

What **An Evening With Janet-Street Porter**
Who Professional grumpy old woman, Street-Porter doesn't mince her words
Where Gardner Arts Centre, Sussex University, Brighton
When 28 February, 8pm
Cost £14-£10
Contact gardnerarts.co.uk or 01273 685 861

What **Exhibition from upcoming artist and stylist**
Who Ian Tod
Where Stripped Art Gallery, St Stephen St, Edinburgh
When Monday-Saturday, 10am-6pm, Sunday, 12-5pm
Cost Free
Contact 0131 226 1222

Who **Gay Art**
What An exhibition of homoerotic paintings by gay artist Christopher Lucas Fuminger
Where Littleborough Gallery, 88 Church Street, Littleborough, Lancashire
When Until 28 February, Thu – Sat, 10am-5pm
Cost Free
Contact littleboroughgallery.co.uk

Comedy and cabaret



Alan Carr
What **The Comedy Collective**
Who The Gale unveils its brand new laugh fest, hosted by the lovely Barbara Nice
Where B5 Bar, The Nightingale Club, Kent Street, Birmingham
When 4 March, doors open 7.30pm
Cost £6
Contact 0121 622 1718

What **Signs of a Diva – captioned dialogue and signed songs**
Who Caroline Parker, the UK's fave deaf diva interprets Judy, Aretha and Dusty
Where Contact Theatre, Oxford Road, Manchester
When 24 February, 7.30pm
Cost £10-£6
Contact 0161 274 0600

What **Caledonian Thebans quiz night**
Who Gay and bisexual rugby club charity event, in Edinburgh's newest scene bar
Where Deep Blue, 1 Barony Street, Edinburgh
When 27 February, 7pm
Cost £2
Contact 0131 556 2788

What **Alan Carr**
Who From The Friday Night Project to a stage near you on his new tour
Where Kings Theatre, 297 Bath Street, Glasgow
When 17 March, 8pm
Cost £14.50-£18.50
Contact 0870 060 6648

What **Bent Double, top gay and lesbian comedy**
Who Zoe Lyons introduces Jo Caulfield, Gina Ryan and Ninia Benjamin
Where Komedia, Gardener Street, Brighton
When 4 March, 7.30pm
Cost £9.50-£7.50
Contact komedia.co.uk or 01273 647 100

Bars and clubs



Brighton
What **C:21**
Who Top gay party night at trendy Shrewsbury venue
Where C:21, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury
When Every Monday, 5pm-3am
Cost Free
Contact 01743 271 821

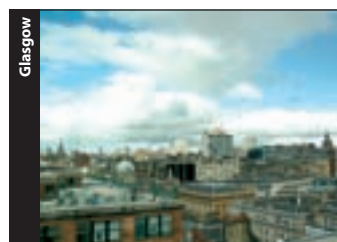
What **Foundation's first birthday party**
Who Liverpool's pioneering gay venue celebrates with a fashion show and band
Where 4-6 Victoria Street, Liverpool
When 24 February, 10pm
Cost Free
Contact 0151 255 0502

What **Whoop! at Legends**
Where Legends Club, Marine Parade, Brighton
Who DJ Steve Lush spins commercial sounds at this regular Wednesday nighter
When Every Wednesday, 11pm – 4am
Cost Free
Contact legendsbrighton.com

What **Disco Inferno**
Who Queen of the disco Wynnie la Freak entertains
Where The Abbey, 77 West Street, Oldham
When Every Saturday, 11pm
Cost £1-£2
Contact 07756 077 062

Who **Dempsey's**
What One of Sheffield's hottest gay venues, now with a massively expensive refurb
Where 1 Hereford street, Sheffield
When Sunday-Thursday, 12pm-3am, Friday-Saturday, 12pm-4am
Cost £3-£6
Contact 0114 375 4616

Community



Glasgow
What **LGBT alcohol support**
Who Charitable group HGL offer support for those with alcohol related problems
Where Centre 146, 146 Bromsgrove St, Birmingham
When Every first Tuesday of the month
Cost Free
Contact 0121 440 6161

What **Writing Our History**
Who Come and write Liverpool's gay history with local writer and performer Joe Standerline
Where Parr St Studios, Parr Street, Liverpool
When 24 February, 11am - 4pm
Cost Free
Contact info@ourstoryliverpool.co.uk, 07840 759 467

What **Hidden Histories, Lesbian Lives**
Who Glasgow Women's Library
Where 2nd Floor, 81 Parnie Street, Glasgow
When 27 February, 6.30pm
Cost Free
Contact 0141 552 8345

What **Sugar and Spice**
Who Lesbian and bisexual women's event and conference aiming to find out what women want in the 21st century
Where The Lesbian and Gay Foundation, Princess House, 105-107 Princess Street, Manchester
When 3 March, 12pm - 6pm
Cost Free
Contact judith@lgf.org.uk or 0161 235 8022

What **LGBT Yoga class**
Who Drop-in Kundalini yoga class for LGBT people
Where Anahata Health Clinic, 119-120 Edward Street, Brighton
When Every Monday, 7.45pm
Cost £5-£4
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"IF YOU WANT SOAP BABY, COME TO ME"

An advert for Daz washing powder has given 90s pop sensation **Right Said Fred** a new lease of life. **Erica Roberts** speaks to lead singer **Richard Fairbrass** about soap-suds, Germany and, er, cock.



"We started to be known as Dead Said Fred," sighs Richard Fairbrass. "Certain parts of the British media decided that our career had gone tits up."

Fairbrass, now 53, is reflecting on why Right Said Fred never continued the success in the UK of their hits *I'm Too Sexy*, *Don't Talk Just Kiss*, and *Deeply Dippy*.

"It was partly," he says, "because the UK was going through the whole Britpop thing, and we were

so not Britpop!"

The band is firmly on the comeback trail with *I'm Too Sexy* set for a re-release thanks to a Daz washing powder advert.

Fairbrass is adamant that it wasn't a lack of public support that meant that the pop trio found themselves overshadowed by young hairy lads from up North:

"In the UK, we didn't have a problem with the punters at all. It wasn't so much the 18-year-

old bands that pissed me off; I mean, everyone's just trying to make a living. But the thing that really irritated me was that people I'd never met, and who didn't know us at all, were determining whether or not we should even be heard, let alone whether we could make a living.

"It was one or two people who'd moved into positions of authority at Radio One at that time. And we were just finished, as far as they

were concerned."

He laughs uproariously. "Actually, what made me cross was the lack of accountability that those people had when they were working for a state-funded station to which I was paying my taxes! I mean, if I want to own my own radio station, and I want to play 24-hour Frank Sinatra, that's up to me. But if they're running a state-funded station, I think they should bloody well play everybody, so I had a real fucking

problem with it."

But it wasn't just radio types who were making the bald brothers' lives a misery. Tabloid newspapers, ever hungry for a schadenfreude story, pursued the pair.

"My partner at the time was long-term HIV-positive, and we had lots of press sniffing round our house when he was ill; and my brother Fred was going through a divorce," he says.

(Continued on page 27)

"My partner at the time was long-term HIV-positive, and we had lots of press sniffing round our house when he was ill"

GT

YOUR SPECIAL INTRODUCTION

GAYTIMES GLITTERING TRANSFORMATION

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Are You Up For It?





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A Limo, a hustler and a chauffeur with a camcorder



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Welcome to your exclusive sneak preview of March's *Gay Times*. We've taken the plunge and become *GT*, and we bring with us a whole slew of exciting new features. As well as a gorgeous new design palette, we have new writers and columnists, new sections and a hot "noo atitood". Gay porno art-flick shockster Bruce LaBruce is our new film columnist, and for this issue he spent the night at John Waters' house and documented the whole weird trip for us. This is the first column Bruce has ever done for a gay magazine: Quite a coup. We have also introduced a "Real Life" section, with a Readers'

CFRIENDS

How We Met:
Paul Dawson & PJ DeBoy

The undoubted stars of last year's controversial cinematic indie-smash, *Shortbus*, the deftly described musical-comedy-porno-drama, are real-life couple Paul Dawson and PJ DeBoy. Having first met in 1995, timing and circumstance prevented them from hooking up for eight years, during which PJ moved to Canada and hosted a sports show, *Locker Room*, for gay cable channel *PrideVision*. Paul stayed in New York, splitting his professional time between theatre and TV, including a guest-villain slot in the long-running popular export, *Law & Order*. They've been together since 2003, and PJ returned to New York permanently a year later.

Paul as PJ Prior to meeting her, I wasn't aware of her as an actor. Then, we were both in the same boat, trying to get out careers off the ground, going to auditions to try plays off-off-OFF Broadway. I'll be that. Our paths didn't cross professionally or personally until '95. When we finally met, he was kinda grungy. He had blonde dreadlocks, very pretty and those '90s hair. What went through my head when I saw her for the first time was that I'd been waiting to meet another guy who had hair who was like this. Someone who wasn't following the rules of what a guy you were supposed to be, but making it up for himself. That was very sexy and attractive to me.

I had forward a few years, Christmas 2001. We were both in New York City and went out - separately - to meet mutual friends at some party far to my Christmas songs... and we saw each other again, and we were both suddenly like, "Oh my god! You've gotten even cooler that you were back then. I please wanted to get with you!" Because we'd been apart and hadn't even seen each other for so long while PJ was in Toronto, we'd never become close as friends. It was like five years of being super buffed, and here we were, back to back. It was incredibly powerful.

It's like a puzzle. He then to get up and his anatomy - independently - to make them feel loved, make people laugh, make them smile. His greatest quality is the sense of humour. Oh, and his greatly sense.

When my skin met her, she said he "had the look of a Cleopatra". That's funny, so some often mistaken for Cleopatra!

Honesty and open-mindedness are very important to her. The values people who respect others, who don't think they know how other people should live or think. He looks crazy people who like to get wild, but are sensitive and at ease with themselves.

He does a pretty good Tim Turner impression and after the show he does a lot of things guaranteed to get her laughing his butt! We're both big fans of *Good Friends*. PJ loves that Michael the most - he secretly thinks of himself as a bit of a tough guy. If I were to describe him in five words, I'd say generous, affectionate, adorable, brave and funny.

It's the guy I want to spend the rest of my life with. His place in my life is right next to me.

PJ as Paul PJ recently seen Paul in the Sam Shepard play *Circle of the Burning Cross* he walked out onto the stage briefly naked, and I'm like, "What? Huh? What? Oh, Oh, Oh!" Soon after he was walking along the street just underneath the fire escape of the building I was living in, and I called down to talk to him. Years later, when we'd been together for about a year and a half, I had gone back home in Baltimore, and he'd come with me. We went downstairs to the basement and I watched my journal from that time. Sure enough, we



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Lives feature (if anyone has a story of triumph over adversity or love lost and found, etc, please e-mail reallife@gaytimes.co.uk). For the first time in its history, *GT* has caught the fashion bug, and will be offering a practical and sleek Style section and a new grooming section, "Skin Deep".

This is the future for *GT*, and its theme is the future, exploring where we may be heading through finding out about male pregnancy, nanotechnology and the saucy art of haptics. There's plenty more going on in the issue, but you'll have to buy it to find out what. ■



Get the look...

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- 62 **Turd-terrorists**
Bruce LaBruce visits the trash-tastic John Waters and they hang with the Governor of Maryland
- 102 **News Feature**
Robin Brady, Crusaid's chief executive, predicts a bleak future of HIV and Aids in the UK
- 135 **Get the look**
Catwalk cool at half the price/ deep-skin luxury facials



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When we flew deviant film-maker and *GT* columnist Bruce LaBruce to Baltimore to visit his spiritual godfather, the Pope of Trash, John Waters, we knew reality was going to get twisted

I had a student once in prison who killed his wife and their infant son. I asked him, "Why did you rape her?" and he replied, "I was off my nut!" It was the best line, and I never asked another dumb question in jail!

This is a classic anecdote from the great American filmmaker John Waters, who used to teach film-making to rapists and murderers in prison. But to hear him tell it to me personally — a few weeks ago at a private backstage party for the inauguration of the Governor of Baltimore — gave me an extra-special thrill.

Let me provide a little context: (On exclusive assignment recently for *GT*, I was flown to New York and provided with a train ticket to Baltimore to spend an evening with my friend John Waters. He'd called me a couple of weeks earlier while in Toronto, my hometown, where he'd been directing the new Court TV show he hosts, *The Court TV: On the Spot* a series of hour-long stories based on criminal exploits whose mainline wife in murder. We confirmed the date of my pending visit to his hometown, but he confessed he didn't know what we could possibly do on a Wednesday night in Baltimore. "Maybe we'll go to the Governor's Inauguration Ball," he said. "Bring a suit just in case!" Not wanting to appear over-eager, I casually assumed how I would.

The train to Baltimore from New York's Penn Station is a bit of hell on wheels. A general conductor punches your ticket as you sit in a comfortable seat and roll back from the front and baggage car. Because of its proximity to New York, it's easy to forget that Baltimore is south of the original Mason-Dixon line. Southern manners and a certain continuity with the past are quietly preserved. The landscape, however, is distinctly modern: a wasteland of industrial smoke stacks and sprawling subdivisions.

A member of John's staff picks me up at the train station and shows me to his home in a well-appointed neighborhood of the city. It's a beautiful, large four-story Tudor-style house with dark-wood interiors built in the 1920s, nestled snugly into the side of a hill. As I'm stepping

Turd-Terrorists:
John Waters & Bruce La Bruce

www.gaytimes.co.uk



Guys Together, Gorgeous
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Transcending, Genius Team,
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Right Said Fred in the Daz campaign which is set to make their song I'm Too Sexy a hit all over again. It will be re-released in April.

(Continued from page 22)

"We just found it was getting claustrophobic."

Richard and his younger brother Fred decided to base themselves professionally in Germany in 2000 – although, he chuckles with only a hint of resentment, they were still living and paying taxes here in the UK.

After going to a dance convention in Amsterdam and schmoozing with label moguls, the band was signed to BMG record label, and

"I can only remember one or two people I interviewed who were more interesting than me"

promptly started building on their already existent fan base in the land of autobahns and bratwurst.

"It's a very vibrant music scene over there. They're very motivated by live music; they go to gigs. Bands who want to make a living and have a good time, and who aren't too worried initially about the fashion aspect of it, come to the continent generally, not just Germany."

Keeping his fingers in a few UK pies, Richard branched out into television – appearing several times on *Never Mind the Buzzcocks*, and becoming a presenter for *Gaytime TV*.

He holds no ambitions to continue that career, though: "I can only remember one or two people I interviewed who were more interesting than me. Well, it's trueeee! I'm sorry, but most of them were so fucking boring. There was Ian McKellen, who was fantastic; and there was Antony Sher, who was great; so was Stephen Fry. But then you get a guy like Adam Rickitt, who is gorgeous. But not the most interesting of people.

"I found a lot of it quite boring,

I have to say. I don't know how Michael Parkinson does it. He must be on Mogadon, to enjoy the show. I would just kill myself, having to talk to some of those people."

He's also scathing about the reality TV circuit: "I've been asked to do lots of celebrity stuff, which I've turned down – because it's just shite. I've been approached by I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here about three or four times, and Big Brother once.

"It's the television equivalent of the giant casino which is going up in Manchester. It's utterly indefensible, absolutely ghastly. I saw some clips of that Jade thing with Shilpa Shetty. I was ashamed to be English. I found it absolutely mortifying to watch. Don't get me started."

Despite this, the brothers have of late been itching to do something in the UK.

"Towards the end of last year, we were very aware that our career was very European, and it was also affecting the music. We were known in Germany for being a good-time band, and we weren't progressing musically; and that's when we started talking to our old label."

They were also approached to appear in the TV advert for Daz washing powder, currently screening till June.

"If you want soap, baby," roars Richard with laughter, "you come to me! Abso-fucking-lutely. We did it because we thought it would be fun; and because at the time when the opportunity came up, we weren't signed in the UK, so we weren't planning to release any records on the back of it at all.

"And," he adds, "because Daz is an iconic brand, like Pepsi or Heinz. I mean, Daz has been around since the war. And we thought it would be good for us to be connected to a brand that was so recognisable. The guy who directed it did all the Harry Enfield stuff, and some of Mr Bean – so he had a very good comic eye."

The ad uses a re-write of I'm Too Sexy, and Right Said Fred's old label has decided to release a remix of the song in the UK. The band is currently halfway through

recording a new album, due to be released in the UK towards the end of summer.

On a personal level, Richard's been wrestling with some demons. He's said that he's had both homosexual and heterosexual periods in his life – but seems of late to have made some choices.

"My period is definitely cock-driven now! I've been in therapy about it. I mean, I like women. I know that there are some guys, like my ex-partner, who couldn't possibly bear the thought of 69-ing with a woman. I actually find that quite easy. I used to think I was bisexual.

"For me, I can fancy women; I can fancy guys. But I actually only really relate to guys emotionally. And it's taken me quite a long time to get to that point. I've had therapy about it, because I've had very muddled feelings about the whole thing. But finally – if I'm honest, I don't see me settling with a woman. I'm single at the moment, but I'd much rather have a boyfriend than a girlfriend."

He's been single for the last three years, but dreams of having a civil partnership.

"I've been to the sex clubs, and the saunas – which is all right once in a blue moon. I'm a great defender of them. I think straight people should have that option as well. But if you're not careful it's bad for your spirit, I think. You lose the art of relating to people on an emotional level.

"When I saw Elton John get married, it made me feel cosy. It was nice, to watch two people make a commitment. For a long time, I had a real problem visualising myself growing older with another man and being in that kind of partnership. But that's changing – in the last six months. So, if I met the right guy, I would definitely get married. I'd have a big old bash – I'd love to! Honeymoon and the whole thing."

Should we consider that as an advert for Pink Paper readers?

"Go on then!" he adds.

Sexy thing

Right Said Fred release I'm Too Sexy on 9 April.

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Quote this back

"For flavour, Instant Sex will never supcede the stuff you had to peel and cook."

Quentin Crisp, in *Cosmopolitan*, October 1984

Hollyoaks horror

I just wanted to bring something to your attention. I've made a complaint about the strong homophobic content in the episode of Hollyoaks on 7 February.

Words such as "poof" and "bender" were used. I am offended to see these terms used so freely.

What example does this set to children and teens watching this programme? It re-enforces the idea that its fine to use these terms and that homosexuality is wrong.

Normally when a show deals with "big" issues they have useful number and so on where people can seek advice. Yet there was none of this at the end of the show. If Channel Four is going to use these issues to gain ratings, then they should also be ready to supply support to those who are affected by it.

After the Big Brother issues I'm surprised they are not being more aware of their programming and its effects.

It makes me so annoyed to see this stuff on mainstream TV. I suffered homophobic bullying at school and I know how much TV shows can affect this. Homophobic bullying and homophobic terms are never seen in the same light as racism and sexism. This just helps re-enforce that idea.

I have already called in to Channel Four to complain and felt very fobbed off with a "Thank you for your comments. They will be passed on". So I will be contacting Ofcom.

Alex Christie, address supplied

Swatting at flies

It was good to see Hugh Stevenson highlight climate change and aviation (PP 918). I admired his article for having the insight in raising the issue towards the LGBT sector of society.

As he rightly says, the power of the pink pound is quite prominent in terms of the tourism industry and going on holiday, (especially by plane). One return flight to Florida produces the same amount of CO2 as your average car mileage in a year.

His suggestion of banning internal domestic flights within mainland UK is exactly the sort of policy that is needed in order to tackle the UK's growing carbon emissions. The current absurdity of cheap flights that make it more economic sense to travel, for example, from London to Edinburgh by plane (emitting 193kg of CO2) than by train (emitting 23.8kg of CO2) illustrates this point.

Readers may like to know that the Green Party has fought long and hard to bring the climate change issue up the political agenda. There is an LGBT Green Party website at lgbt-greens.org.uk.

Name and address supplied

Opt-out

I'm fed up with all this invoking of religion! Quite suddenly everybody has moral qualms! Judges never said they couldn't send people

to the gallows because it was contrary to their religion, did they? As far as I know Christianity teaches forgiveness, not capital punishment, but judges never felt prevented by this from applying the law of the country.

Now, for some obscure reason, a lot of people seem not to be able to carry out their professional duties because of conflict with their religion.

Up to now it has been mainly Christians asking to "opt-out" and expecting to be excused. Those Christians have a very selective view of their religion, totally ignoring what is at the very core of it, the New Testament, in which their Christ is said to have preached "Love your neighbour", and "Do not do to others that which you do not wish to be done to you".

What next? Supermarkets turning away customers? Banks opting-out of the pink pound profits? No, when money is involved, hypocrisy comes to the rescue of these Christians!

Name and address supplied

Big bother

I do not feel that all the attention that Jo O'Meara (PP 918) has received lately because of alleged bullying is entirely justified.

Here are some things that seem to have been forgotten by the media.

The whole race issue was first raised by Mr Jackson. He was the chap, who first put it into

Shilpa's head that the whole incompatibility thing was race related. Not surprising really, considering that he is a black man from America, which has its own racial issues.

Then you have the whole Jade Goody phenomenon. The idea of putting her back in the house was obviously to upset the apple-cart... and it worked. Jo and Danielle changed when she entered the house... yes, but I believe that Danielle was the only bully.

What exactly did Jo actually do? Ok, so she laughed along, but considering that she had already bonded with Danielle in the house, and then the two-some became a threesome without any real effort. Should Jo really be guilty through association?

Then there is the Davina element. God knows, I am a Davina fan, however I was totally disgusted in the way she handled Jo's interview compared to Jade, Jack and Danielle who got of a lot lighter... is it really a coincidence that they all have the same agent?

I do not think



Jo O-Meara appeared on Big Brother.





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THE GREAT OUTDOORS



Train conductor **Gary Colville**, 39, didn't like sports, but found a new way to stay healthy, make friends and get off his armchair with **Outdoor Lads**.

"I can't think what I'd be doing if I wasn't involved with Outdoor Lads. I sort of retired from clubbing a few years ago and it left a bit of a hole in my life. Now I've found a great way to make friends and get off my arse.

"Outdoor Lads organises activities for guys to attend. From caving, fishing, archery and trips in Scotland to sleep in a lighthouse, there is something for everyone.

"The guys are mainly in their 20s to early 40s and most are single. But this isn't a place for coping off. It's about likeminded

people getting out of their armchairs and getting out there.

"You find out about what's going on through the internet and forum. Then experienced and inexperienced people, like me, meet up and take part in an event. But don't worry, a leader takes charge. Some of the leaders have done amazing things like climb K2. I feel really lucky to be out with them.

"I've stayed at hostels for a couple of weekends and gone walking in the day. I've been climbing and am soon going caving. There are generally have different options for hard activities

so you can choose one depending on your ability.

"Two or three events take place throughout the country every weekend. I've only been a member a few months but it's already a really important part of my calendar.

"I feel like Outdoor Lads is part of a new healthy life style for me. I was always looking for something to do but all those sports like football, rugby and swimming just don't appeal.

"It's so good I've already got three of my mates to join up."

■ See outdoorlads.com for details of membership and future events.

Are you a Groupie? Call us on 020 7424 7414

Number crunching

2004 saw 36 per cent of Fortune 100 companies advertising directly to the lesbian and gay market in the USA with \$212 million being spent annually on gay print media by American corporations.

Source: Gay Press Report from Rivendell Marketing and Prime Access.



A group of you all wearing the same outfit will make you stand out from the crowd.

Simon Johnson offers some tips on surviving and thriving on a gay cruise, page 35

that Jo should be getting the treatment that she is getting, and I would like the Pink Paper to support her a little more. Jo isn't apologising because she didn't really do anything wrong. **Tracey Smith, Suffolk**

Pep talk

I was disappointed by Ben Roma's letter (PP letters 918) blaming THT and GMFA for promoting PEP.

Surely PEP has the potential to prevent some HIV infections and that's got to be a good thing.

Anyway, I haven't noticed THT or GMFA ditching safe sex campaigns to promote PEP - it's not an either/or thing.

Ironically, in Ben's situation where his partner deliberately lied to him about using a condom, a safe sex campaign

would have been useless while a PEP campaign might help someone keep himself negative.

It's unfortunate some people react badly to PEP, but I gather not everyone does. Of course, it was Ben's choice to stop taking PEP but some people, even those experiencing side effects, still choose a month of feeling ill to a lifetime of HIV.

Finally, I know both THT and GMFA welcome volunteers to help develop campaigns and ensure they are relevant and meaningful to gay men. I'm sure they would welcome Ben to make a contribution.

Michael Casey, London SE11

Get your allowance

I am writing about the letter in Pink Paper (918), from Jay Bowen in Brighton who went to

claim jobseekers allowance and was refused as he lives with his partner.

In his letter Jay stated that he had worked since the age of 15 years old.

I work for the DWP and would suggest Jay goes back to the Job Centre and claims jobseekers allowance contribution-based, this would mean that if he has paid enough contributions he will qualify for jobseekers allowance regardless of who he lives with or if his partner works or not.

I reckon the staff were either being ignorant or thought he wanted to claim jobseekers allowance income-based, which is means tested and if a claimant lives with their partner (gay or straight) and the partner works then JSA is not usually awarded.

Mike Fitzsimmons, address supplied

Word on the Street



Kate, 20

"I drink to cheer myself up, what with the work load at university. A bit of retail therapy helps, but I have just spent £100 on fabrics for college so I'm having a drink."

Smile!

Already this year we have had the biggest sickie day and the official most depressing day of the year, so we asked you how you have been cheering yourself up?



Tom, 25

"I'm looking forward to the warmer weather, so I can rid of the scarf and jumpers. There's not a lot I can do to pamper myself. I don't have a disposable income, as I'm not working."



Simon, 37

"I'm not depressed, I'm very happy at moment, I've got a new boyfriend and totally in love. I've just spent the week in Oxford with him so there is a lot of sex."



Matcho, 23

"I'm looking forward to my trip with my boyfriend in the summer. We are spending two weeks going to France, Spain, Greece and other places. There's going to be a lot of sex."



Martin, 22

"To cheer myself up when I'm down, I go out into Soho, to G-A-Y bar. Or I will have a nice Chinese meal with my boyfriend and a walk at the end to work it off."



Bill, 34

"I'm going to be having a nice relaxing weekend with the boy' away from the scene and the madness of gaydom. Loads of sex, most of the toy draws will be coming with us."



Jo, 32

"I think February blues are worse than January, people are paying off their credit cards Christmas and New Year has been and gone. I pamper myself with a nice massage."



Mark, 27

"I go out, get pissed and get a good shag at the end of it. I'm working on that geezer at the bar. Oh yeah a bit of porn as well. My flat mate has a great one at the moment."

also on the web

PinkPaper.com

I would like to support the work of Michael Quinn and Out-Side-In, I work with gay men in a local prison who used to look forward to reading their copy of the Pink Paper. That is until a straight prisoner made an official complaint that he found the wording of one of the adverts offensive, which lead to the paper being withdrawn. An action which I am hoping to get reversed. It is interesting to note that the straight prisoners are allowed to have magazines which what can only be classed as pornography which I as a woman find offensive, yet the same liberty is not afforded to the gay prisoners. True equality indeed!
Sharron

Just writing about my experience which just could be paranoia. I have recently been applying for jobs and I've noticed that most of the jobs, which ask on the equal opportunity forms for sexuality don't reply when I put gay, while probably every job that doesn't ask about sexuality replies with interview offers. I

think equal opportunity forms should be abolished, because the person receiving the forms could be against certain people in our society. This would mean that people would be excepted on the grounds of the strength of their application. Maybe for some jobs a person's way of life could be beneficial, although that could be part of the job description. Maybe being too PC allows people to discriminate.
Dave

From the forums

We asked if you were doing anything for LGBT History Month.

I'm going to a talk at a library - I think there are quite a few events on, actually they're all a bit uninspired. Next year I might host a murder mystery dinner party but you have to come as a famous dead gay person.
Pat 99

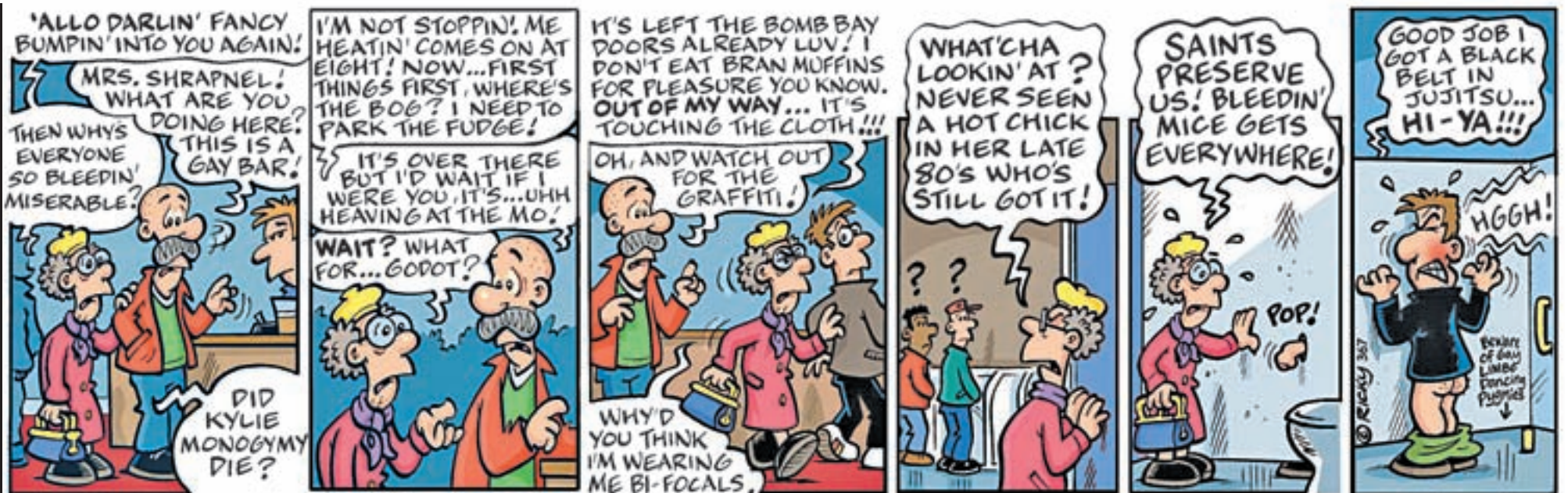
I'm not doing anything - there doesn't seem to be any-

thing on at my local bars and clubs. I'd like to go to a fancy dress party as Oscar Wilde though. Anyone having a fancy dress party?
Graham

I used to work at the Museum of London and they have a really good record of doing exhibitions and events around LGBT life. Here are the details of this year's event: Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender Study day, 24 February, 11.30am to 5pm. London's queer history has been obscured from the public for too long. The study day will provide insights into histories which have either been overlooked or deliberately concealed. The event will end with music performed by the Gay Men's Chorus. To book a free place call 0870 444 3855.
Friend of the museum

The V&A museum held a great night with Duckie as hosts not long ago. I think something like that would really set the tone for the month.
Cheeky boy

Up Queer Street



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CRUISE SURVIVAL GUIDE

Sun kissed **Simon Johnson** came back from the largest gay cruise in history on Royal Caribbean's Freedom of the Seas – chartered for the first time by Atlantis Events. Eight days and seven nights floating, 3,600 gay men and him. Hell or heaven? The stereotypes of old people and dinner jackets were chummed up and fed to the sharks. Here are his top tips for all you would be seamen surviving the fastest growing travel industry.

■ Before you set sail, make up your own business cards. Include your name, email address and stateroom number (cabin number) and add a glamorous image of yourself to it. Dish them out to people you're into.

■ If you find your pristine white t-shirts and board shorts are creased and you can't wait for the laundry service, hang them up in the bathroom, take a hot shower and let the steam take out a few of the lines.

■ Sea sick? Make sure you've packed sea sickness tablets or plasters that stick like nicotine patches to your arm or behind your ear.

■ Navigate your way around your ship. When the parties kick in you'll need to remember how to get to your stateroom fast when you pick up on the dance floor.

■ If you're sharing with a mate, buy a mini whiteboard that you can stick to your stateroom door with magnets. If you're busy inside leave your mate a note and tell him or her when they can come back without walking in on your action. (Unless you want them to join in). You could also dress your door up with anything else you can think of. Photos of yourself, pictures of whatever you're into, business cards, your national flag, or anything else you can easily pull off when you disembark.

■ Don't be afraid to dress up. It may feel like a fool on your own but a group

of you all wearing the same outfit will make you stand out from the crowd. The great thing about being onboard is as soon as you're over one costume you can pop back to your stateroom and change. I found as the hot nights went on, shorts would get shorter and outfits were about lookin' sexy and comfortable, rather than outrageous and colourful.

■ If you grab yourself a "cruise boyfriend" on the first night and you're destined to be together at sea, make sure you set out some easy to follow guidelines – after all you're on holiday. Whose bed will you be sleeping in? Can you hook up with other people?

■ Be territorial, find your spot on the dance floor. That way even if you shuffle towards the aft of the ship, you and your friends can regroup. You might want to find a special spot for you and your "cruise boyfriend" to find your feet and have a sneaky kiss.

■ Leave your attitude on shore. Everybody is onboard to have an amazing time, don't be afraid to sit with new people at dinner or during a show and make new friends. It's the people that make your cruise.

■ When you're home upload all your images to your favourite photo sharing site like Yahoo or BT's new Digital Vault. Collect up all your business cards and email your new friends.



Fishing nets
 Royal Caribbean – royalcaribbean.com
 Atlantis Events – atlantisevents.com
 RSVP Vacations – rsvpvacations.com
 The Big Cruise – thebigcruise.com
 Yahoo Photos – photos.yahoo.com

River views and city skyline give apartments extra appeal



By Liam O'Driscoll

Modern living with a river view is on offer at Bellway's riverside apartments at Lamda Court in Manchester.

As well as contemporary architecture, the Salford apartments have views of the River Irwell and beyond.

Having a river as a natural feature of a property makes it even more attractive and the current regeneration of the Ordsall and Pomona area is due to transform the neighbourhood into an ideal place to invest or to live. Properties are being snapped up and currently, there are only four, three bedroom duplex apartments left in

the Lamda Court development.

In the apartments, floor to ceiling windows flood the L-shaped kitchens with light and set the tone of the light and airy properties. The en-suite master bedroom is on the first floor, along with a large second bedroom and a third which cleverly overlooks the lounge. This third bedroom would also make an

ideal study.

Entertaining guests has been taken into consideration in the design which features a downstairs WC and cloakroom. All properties also have secure parking places.

For potential buyers who want to have a look at the duplexes, an evening visit is recommended as the penthouses offer a fantastic Manchester skyline from their very own balconies.

Sales advisor, Sandra Rogerson, said: "It's a great time to invest in one of these duplexes, which I can only describe as a 'window on the world' of the renaissance of the area.

"The specification and design of the apartments is also absolutely second to none and I'd recommend any interested purchasers to come and have a look around to really appreciate the build quality, design and location."

When the development is complete the properties will also offer a sense of community. It is hoped central landscaped courtyard garden will become a focal point for residents. And the courtyard will include a centrepiece contemporary styled pavilion to complete the atmosphere of the riverside apartments.

Prices start from £224,500 for the duplex apartments and from £147,000 for the two bedroom apartments. For more information call 0161 873 8584.

ENJOY SEEING YOUR CAPITAL GROW

When looking for an investment opportunity one of the main things for buyers who will be living in their investment homes is to make sure they will enjoy the experience.

With this in mind the Loretto housing development offers a good chance for buyers to gain good capital growth on their investments whilst living within five minutes of Manchester's vibrant city centre and local motorway.

The 2004 New Hulme Village development caters for varied needs with over

27 properties to choose from. Different features include balconies, integral garages and gardens.

This development provides an ideal opportunity to view many

properties in a good area to find the one that suits you.

Prices start from £192,950. For more information call 0161 227 9048.



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WHEN IT COMES TO LIFE ASSURANCE DON'T BANK ON IT, SHOP AROUND

Are you shopping around for life assurance? **Chris Morgan** advises a group of gay business men, who are about to insure each others lives.



Larry, Oscar and Quentin (names changed for privacy) have been business partners for over 10 years. They have built a chain of popular hairdressing and beauty salons, which specialise in looking after bored and lonely housewives.

Larry and Oscar said: "We have been working together as a three-some for over a decade and have built a chain of five salons. We're planning on expanding our business to over 10 branches in the next year and our bank is asking us to take life assurance on each other for one and a half million pounds."

It's not unusual for high street banks to request life assurance, when lending such a high sum of money. Most have their own "in house" financial adviser, conveniently able to provide the policy at the same time as you sign up for the borrowing.

Banks are widely known for over charging on their life assurance policies, with many of them only offering their own brand of policies. There can be significant savings made by shopping around, especially on large amounts of life

assurance.

Quentin continued: "The bank quoted premiums of £428 a month for each of Larry and Oscar, but my premium was higher. They said that we have to pay more for my insurance, due to being 10 years older and smoking 20 a day."

Here's some advice for those

"The bank quoted premiums of £428 a month for each of Larry and Oscar, but my premium was higher"

looking to save money on their life assurance.

If you are taking a large amount of life assurance, you should shop around for the best deal. Independent financial advisers are likely to offer the best value for money, be-

cause they have some flexibility in the premiums that they charge.

Banks are likely to offer you only one type of insurance policy through their in-house insurance company. An IFA will look at the whole marketplace, and consider all available types of insurance for you personal or business needs.

There is no longer any gay question on life assurance applications and you should not be asked for any HIV test below £1 million of cover. However, if you apply for cover above £1 million then you should seek advice about taking a HIV test.

And our boys? We arranged £1.5 million of life assurance for each of our stylists at reduced premiums of £364 per month. The commission was reduced by 50 per cent, under our "life assurance guarantee", which promises to beat any quote for a policy above £1 million.

■ Chris Morgan is managing director of Compass, financial advisers to the gay community (compassifa.co.uk) and editor of Pink Finance, the gay finance magazine (pinkfinance.com).

INTERIOR DESIGN GIVES YOU SOMETHING TO SHOW OFF

Buyer's who want top interior design can snap it up as a show apartment goes on sale in Manchester.

An advantage of purchasing a fully furnished former show apartment is that buyers can relax in the knowledge that top designers will have created a home ready for use, with the latest trends and newest ideas in home decoration. Saving time and leaving the interior decoration to professionals will allow busy professionals to move straight in or provide an excellent

investment opportunity for those who are buying to rent.

Bellway's two bedroom former show apartment in the City Gate development on Blantyre Street offers a retro design scheme in shades of black, scarlet and.

The open plan charcoal grey kitchen features a stainless steel oven, hob and extractor fan. The master bedroom has an en suite and a utility room provides essential storage space. The property also features an entrance hall,

second bathroom and second bedroom.

The flat is a stylish city base in a popular Manchester neighbourhood close to bars and restaurants on Castlefield. And if the idea of a furnished apartment doesn't appeal, a range of one and two bedroom apartments are available in the same development.

The show apartment is priced at £223,250. Other properties begin at £188,950. For more information call 0161 832 2077.



Have you got Issues?

"Does your life feel *out of control*?"

"*Fed up* with having bad relationships?"

"Tired of *hiding* your gay life?"

Check out these free **PACE workshops for gay men in London**

Positive Hub
25 Feb, 25 March

Positive Hub is a different space for positive men, created by us, where we can talk and engage in a new type of positive community. A place for connection, laughter, honesty & exploration, not for invited speakers & dead end conversations. All positive men welcome.

Masti - residential
16/17/18 March

In association with The Naz Project London. Masti is central to men connecting and playing together. Do you want to meet other Asian men to talk about masti in your life? Masti will be a fun and confidential weekend workshop providing a safe space to explore sex and relationships. Free of charge. Asian food will be served.

The Black Connection
18 March

The Black Connection is a monthly group where Black gay and bisexual men come together to meet, talk, socialise and share experiences. There will be opportunities for you to network and connect with other Black men, exploring the challenges we face and celebrating our lives. All Black African, Black British and Black Caribbean men are welcome.

When Positive meets Negative

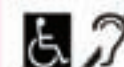
30/31 March & 1 April
What happens when positive meets negative or untested? When Positive Meets Negative is a residential workshop for HIV positive, negative and untested men to talk about their experiences of mixed status sex and relationships and develop strategies for managing any difficulties or concerns.



Lots of us have issues that are difficult to deal with. Talking things through with other gay men can make a difference.

All men who have sex with men are welcome. Book a place on: 020 7700 1323.

If you would rather talk about your sexual and relationship 'issues' one-to-one or as a couple, PACE offers free counselling to gay men who live in London. For more information and to book an appointment ring 020 7700 1323 or email counselling@pace.dircon.co.uk



www.pacehealth.org.uk

Pink Appointments

IT'S TIME WE ALL WORKED TOGETHER



Over the next three months we want to know all about you and your workplace for our recruitment survey.

We're launching our biggest online recruitment survey and we want to know about your working life.

We'll be asking you if you chose your current employer because it's a gay friendly company or whether you've been harassed at work because of your sexuality – and if so what you would do about it.

Your answers will help us build up a picture of gay Britain in the workplace.

Just visit pinkpaper.com, answer the questions and we'll enter you into our prize draw to win one of 10 cases of wine thanks to Barramundi wine. Everyone who takes part will also get a £5 voucher for prowlerdirect.co.uk and divadirect.co.uk.

You have until 24 May to take part. After that we'll add up your responses and reveal them exclusively in the Pink Paper.

barramundi



Have you faced discrimination at work because of your sexuality?

- Yes, from my boss
- Yes, from my co-workers
- Yes, from a customer or supplier
- Not than I'm aware of

Are you out in the workplace?

- Yes, I'm out to all my colleagues
- No, I'm not out to my colleagues
- I'm only out to a few people at work

Does having a policy for equal opportunities or diversity in the workplace, influence where you chose to work?

- Yes, it is very important to me
- It is one of many factors that influence my choice of potential employer
- I haven't considered this before
- It is not really important to me

Does your company have a gay networking group?

- Yes, I'm a member
- Yes, but I don't go
- No

If you faced discrimination at work because of your sexuality would you take legal action?

- Yes, I would take action
- No, I would ignore it
- No, I would leave
- I don't know

How important is Stonewall's Equality Index to you when looking for a new job?

- Very important
- Important
- Not important
- I've never heard of it

In what sector do you work?

- Public sector/local government
- Registered Charity
- Private Sector
- Voluntary Sector
- Unemployed/seeking work
- Other

What is your yearly salary?

- Less than £10,000
- £10,000-£20,000
- £21,000-£30,000
- £31,000-£40,000
- Higher than £40,000

What best describes your employment status:

- In full-time employment
- In part-time employment (30 hours or less)
- Self-employed,
- Unemployed
- Retired
- Student
- Other

Did you choose your current job because it was with a gay friendly company?

- Yes
- No

Have you ever boycotted a company because you knew it did not have gay friendly policies?

- Yes
- No

Do you know where to find help if you were facing anti-gay discrimination at work?

- Yes
- No

Are you happy in your current job?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

How long have you worked for your present employer?

- Less than a year
- 1-2 years
- 3-5 years
- 5-10 years
- Over 10 years

If you work in the public sector tell us which area you work in?

- Healthcare
- Social services
- Housing
- Civil Service
- Emergency services (Police, Fire, Ambulance services)
- Prison service
- Community services
- Other
- No, I don't work in the public sector

If you work in the private sector, tell us which industry?

- Finance/banking
- Media, marketing or communications
- Travel/Leisure
- Retail or Wholesale
- Manufacturing/production
- Other
- No, I don't work in the private sector

When looking for a new job or keeping an eye on the jobs market, what is your preferred source of job advertisements?

- The Guardian
- The Times
- Local Newspaper
- Local job centre
- Pink Paper and pinkpaper.com
- Specialist professional press
- Internet search engines
- Other

Which of the following best describes your level of education?

- GCSE or equivalent
- NVQ or equivalent
- A Level or equivalent
- First degree
- Post graduate degree
- Chartered professional qualification
- None of the above

Pink Appointments

HOW TO LAND YOUR DREAM JOB

For our special recruitment edition **Rory Michael Smith** asks employment experts to dish out some timely career guidance for anyone who feels that they've yet to fulfil their potential in the world of work.

"It has been my experience that one cannot, in any shape or form, depend on human relations for lasting reward. It is only work that truly satisfies." So said Bette Davis and in the 21st century those words still ring true for many.

How many of us made half hearted, drink-induced New Year's resolutions on the first of January? "This is the year I get my career going". "2007 is the year I'll get that promotion". And how many of us have actually achieved those goals?

For most climbing the career ladder can appear a Her-

culean task best left to high fliers. Add to this the extra hurdle that dogs gay employees – the disclosure of one's sexuality.

But never fear for more and more employers are now actually encouraging diversity in the workplace and are keen to demonstrate that they value their gay employees.

And to help you on the way to the top we've gathered a wealth of advice on how to improve your prospects as well as first hand experiences from employees on the frontline of career success.

■ For a bit of top-notch career advice we caught up with Julian Smith of Charity People, a recruitment agency specialising in not for profit agencies (charitypeople.com).

What advice would you give to prospective employees who wish to get on the career ladder?

"First jobbers need to try not to jump at the first thing that's offered, unless the role seems perfect. Work out practical consid-

erations such as minimum salary requirements and location. Then think to yourself - 'can I see myself doing this for a year at least?' If the answer is no, work out why not and try to hold out for a better opportunity.

"Another positive step you can take is to think about volunteering in your spare time. Future employers often look for commitment to the sector and for competitive roles voluntary experience may well tip the balance in your favour!"

How do you improve your career prospects?

"When it comes to moving on don't wait till you're desperate to leave. By then it's too late. Employers can see through desperation just as clearly as people in a singles bar do!"

"It's hard but try to work out what sort of path you envisage taking, and then think seriously about what future options will take you there. Also, think about the aspects of your current role

that you enjoy and see if your next proposed step will offer you more of the same.

"Remember you spend more time at work with your colleagues than you do with loved ones and friends. So this, as well as salary and location, are serious considerations.

"If your current job offers you training courses, take them! Nothing is more attractive than a ready trained, highly skilled professional. Remember that 'acting up' in an unpaid role could well have positive repercussions for your future career, so jump at any opportunities offered.

"You can either coast along at work and make 85 per cent of



Pink Appointments

your work take up 100 per cent of your time – like many people. Or, why not invest in your future by finishing all of your work in 85 per cent of your time? This will leave you with a chance to work on something different, perhaps gaining skill sets in different areas.

“More senior candidates may like to think about volunteering as a trustee for a charity of their choice. Whether you are interested in working in the charity sector or not, it’s a great way of contributing to society and will cost you nothing apart from an evening or so every couple of months. It also looks perfect on the CV since it offers an extra side to your personality or skill set and most companies encourage corporate social responsibilities anyway.”

Do you have any practical advice with regards to CVs and interview techniques?

“Always target your CV or application to each specific role, rather than think that a generic CV will do the trick. If you’re applying for an operational role, don’t stress unnecessary qualifications, or have a profile which says that you are ‘hungry to succeed in my next marketing role’, or suchlike.

“I know it’s boring, but pay attention to spelling and grammar. CVs claiming ‘excellent attention to detail’ go straight in the bin. As do PAs with ‘dairy management’ or people who have been a ‘manger of three’. Everybody has spell check software – and why not pass it to a friend to read before submitting that all-important application.

“When it comes to application forms, always read the accompanying notes on how to fill them in. If they ask you to address



the person specification in your supporting statement, then copy over each of the points and fill in the answers one by one, offering practical work-based examples of how you meet each of the short listing criteria.

“Finally for interviews, always make an effort and dress as smartly as you can, even if met by somebody in jeans and a T-shirt. Candidates get turned down for jobs simply for not looking the part.

“Remember that only seven per cent of what determines your success at interview is based on what you actually say, whilst the other 93 per cent is based on your appearance, body language, attitude and general demeanour. Insecurity is often hidden under a mask

which comes across as arrogance – but remember that nobody wants to work with an arrogant colleague, so don’t try it!”

■ Sally Wright of Terrence Higgins Trust had more tips on how to get ahead. (To find out more about jobs with THT log on to tth.org.uk.)

What advice would you give to somebody who wants to improve their career prospects?

“Maintaining your continuous professional development in your chosen field is really important. You can do this by attending relevant training courses or conferences and briefing seminars, reading professional journals,

broadening your skills through undertaking new projects, shadowing other colleagues, undertaking a secondment in another team or organisation and networking with others in your field of work.

“Be aware of what’s available in the labour market and read job adverts to get an idea of what employers are looking for in case you need to gain that sort of experience.

Any tips on job applications?

“At THT, we ask prospective candidates to complete application forms rather than submit CVs. This is fairly common because it means candidates are measured (anonymously) against the cri-

teria in the person specification, which makes the process more objective, and means all candidates are treated fairly.

“In your application it is important to use specific examples of your experience to demonstrate your ability to do the job. If you’re invited to an interview, research the organisation, know the job role and be prepared. This will help you feel confident in what some people consider to be a scary situation.

“If your enthusiasm, commitment and genuine desire for landing the job come across to the interview panel together with evidence of your experience and ability you’ll stand an excellent chance of being successful. Always listen carefully to the ques-

tions and ask them to repeat them if you are unclear. Don’t rush in to or ramble your answers.”

■ One of the big trends in recent years has been the growth of gay staff networks at many big companies. And one of the selling points of these networks is that they help employees get a step closer to the executive wash-room.

We asked John Fraser, chair of Barclays Bank’s Spectrum Network how access to such a group can help workers in the world of finance. (For further information on careers with Barclays log on to, Barclays.co.uk.)

Why should employees use their gay staff network?

“It provides an environment to meet other like-minded people who have shared experiences. They have the opportunity to give back to their community through sponsored events like Pride floats and charity fund raising events, knowing that their employer fully supports them both financially and through time given off. They are encouraged to provide direct feedback to the organisation through the network as to how it feels to be LGBT in Barclays, so that if any issue arises, it can be addressed promptly. It is also fun!”

What contacts can these services provide?

“The ability to network with colleagues across the bank and other organisations through sponsored events. They also have access to senior executives of Barclays which they wouldn’t normally have through their day to day job.

“There is also the opportunity to meet colleagues from different parts of the organisation and tap

Stonewall works it out



Larry Hirst, chief executive of IBM in Britain, picking up the award for topping this year’s Workplace Equality Index from Stonewall boss Ben Summerskill.

In recent years gay lobby group Stonewall has started to make in-roads into making Britain’s workplaces appreciate their gay and lesbian staff. A number of schemes created by the campaigners have been credited with moving employers forward – changing policies and procedures and trying to make sure these are put into action.

The most famous of these is the Diversity Champions programme. Here is what some DC members have to say about it:

“Bedfordshire Police is committed to ensuring that we have a culture in which all our people are valued for themselves. Working with Stonewall has significantly helped us to work towards achieving this goal,” states Jane Owens, diversity manager of Bedfordshire Police.

And Sarah Turner, diversity manager at city firm KPMG, adds: “Stonewall’s Diversity Champions programme will help us to raise KPMG’s profile as an employer of choice to the LGB community in order to attract, retain and motivate people of all sexual orientations.”

And for several years an annual survey, the Workplace Equality Index, has seen Stonewall attempt

to rank Britain’s top 100 most gay-friendly employers. More recently the group has put its muscle behind a new project that aims to empower high profile gay workers enabling them to benefit the community and workplace as a whole. The Stonewall Leadership programme 2006 was designed to help future lesbian and gay leaders to maximise their potential and recognise the unique leadership challenge faced by gay staff in all career paths.

The programme not only benefits the individual but also ensures the future success of their company or organisation as well as making headway for other gay employees.

Last year the programme took place over two days and aimed to challenge candidate’s preconceptions of leadership whilst helping them to acquire new skills to increase their abilities as gay employees and leaders. The ultimate goal of the scheme was to help to improve the level of diversity in the workplace as many employers still cite a lack of employee’s skills as the main barrier to transforming their organisation. Long term benefits enjoyed by companies taking part are an increase in productivity and an upturn in positive PR, says Stonewall.

Pink Appointments

into their experience and knowledge from junior staff to very senior people.”

How can these services help to advance an employee's career?

“Networking is an important aspect of any career development as well as mentoring or coaching from other senior gay or lesbian staff. Consequently meeting people across the organisation, especially senior people can raise their profile in a way that may be more difficult outside of the network.

“The network also helps our gay staff feel valued by the organisation which aids confidence and therefore career aspirations.”

Does this actively encourage career goals or simply provide practical advice and support?

“We have senior people who are gay or lesbian role models who talk about how they are successful in their chosen field and out at work. We also encourage people to attend seminars, conferences and leadership programmes through the network.”

■ And when you're ready to take that next step up the career ladder, Pink Paper is here to help. Each week we have the latest vacancies in the biggest appointments section in the gay and lesbian media. And our regular articles on employment, including profiles of firms which want to recruit gay staff, mean that you can stay informed. So keep an eye on our appointments pages and check out pinkpaper.com/jobs.

Case study



West Midlands Police's PC James Field-Evans was also happy to help us with our enquiries into what makes the force's Rainbow Network, for gay staff, so successful.

“We are the best police network in the country! We take part each year in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index and have raised our ranking from 59th in 2005-6 to 15th in 2006-7. This year Stonewall also published the top five employee networks in the country and Rainbow came fifth, the only police network to be in the top five.

“West Midlands Police LGBT Forum, or Rainbow Network for short, was set up seven years ago specifically to assist employees who may be having any sort of ‘problems’, be that at work, or in relation to issues such as coming out, not coming out, counseling, dealing with managers, and really anything and everything in between.

“Rainbow have confidential links into all areas of West Midlands Police so that any member of staff who doesn't want to ‘out’ themselves can still obtain any of the range of services that West Midlands Police can offer.

“Some people choose not to be open about their sexual orientation and Rainbow actively assists them to ensure that they don't have to. You don't need to be a ‘member’

of Rainbow in order to use our services. A lot of people don't feel the need to join a staff network but may still want some advice. We are here to do that and have done so on many occasions.

“We work very closely with our corporate or HQ personnel colleagues so that we can get them to help us by acting on our behalf. If the chairman of the gay network contacts a personnel manager about a member of staff then that in itself may ‘out’ that person. By using our confidential contacts we can ensure that we protect people's confidentiality.

“There is also a range of ‘other things’ that we can do. We have worked closely with our finance department over the issue of civil partnerships and pensions and have made sure that LGBT staff can talk to one point of contact, in confidence, about anything. Likewise we can put people in touch with representatives from our unions, the Police Federation and all of our other staff associations in total confidence if they have problems that might need legal advice or financial assistance.

“Basically if someone has any sort of concern, problem or question, then we have access to someone who can assist.”

To find out more about the West Midlands Police LGBT forum contact 0121 626 8005.

Stonewall Diversity Champions Members

Stonewall's Diversity Champions programme brings together organisations committed to tackling sexual orientation discrimination, and to sharing good practice, developing ideas and promoting diversity in the workplace.



If you are a Diversity Head at an organisation that is a member of the Diversity Champions scheme but you are not listed, please email rob@pinkpaper.com

- | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|--|
| Abbey | BT | East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service | Hull City Council | Mersey Care NHS Trust | Sefton Equalities Partnership |
| Aberdeen City Council | Cabinet Office | Eastlands Homes | IBM | Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service | Servite Houses |
| ABN AMRO Bank NV | Cambridge City Council | eBay UK Ltd | Identity and Passport Service | Merseyside Police | Shaw Trust |
| Accenture | Cambridgeshire County Council | Employee Advisory Resource | IKEA Ltd | Metropolitan Housing Partnership | Sheffield City Council |
| Allen & Overy LLP | Camden & Islington Mental Health & S C Trust | Environment Agency | Imperial College London | Metropolitan Police Authority | Shell |
| Alliance & Leicester plc | Cardiff County Council | Equal Opportunities Commission | ITV plc | Metropolitan Police Service | Shepherds Bush Housing Group |
| American Express | Cardiff University | Ernst & Young | JPMorgan | Millvires Prowler Group | Shropshire County Council |
| Anglia Ruskin University | Central Scotland Fire & Rescue Service | Essex Fire and Rescue Service | Kent County Council | Ministry of Defence | Simmons & Simmons |
| AOL UK Ltd | Centre for Excellence in Leadership | Essex Police | Kent Fire and Rescue Service | Ministry of Defence Police & Guarding Agency | Skilset Sector Skills Council |
| Arts Council England | CENTREX | Ford Motor Company | Kent Police | Morgan Stanley | South Wales Fire & Rescue |
| Assembly Parliamentary Service | Centrica plc | Foreign & Commonwealth Office | King's College London | Nacro | South Wales Police |
| Audit Commission | Citigroup | Gallions Housing Association | Kirklees Metropolitan Council | National Grid | Southdown Housing Association |
| The Avenues Trust | Citizens Advice | Genesis Housing Group | KPMG | Nationwide Building Society | Staffordshire Moorlands District Council |
| Aviva plc | City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council | GlaxoSmithKline Services Unlimited | Labour Party | NCH | Staffordshire Police |
| Avon and Somerset Constabulary | City of Edinburgh Council | Glasgow Caledonian University | Land Registry | Newham College of Further Education | Standard Life |
| Avon and Somerset Probation Service | City of London Police | Gloucestershire County Council | The Law Society | Newcastle City Council | Stoke-on-Trent College |
| Avon Fire and Rescue Service | Cleveland Fire and Rescue Service | Goldman Sachs | Leeds City Council | Nike UK | Strathclyde Fire and Rescue |
| B&Q | Clifford Chance | Government Offices (RCU) | Lehman Brothers | Nottinghamshire County Council | Suffolk County Council & Customer S Direct Ltd |
| BAA | Conservative Party | Grampian Fire & Rescue Service | Leicester City Council | Ofcom | Sunderland Housing Group |
| Baker & McKenzie LLP | The Co-operative Group | Grampian Police | Leicestershire Contabulary | Office for National Statistics | Tayside Fire and Rescue |
| Bank of Scotland Corporate | Co-operative Financial Services | Granta Housing Society Ltd. | Link Group | Office of Fair Trading | Thames Valley Police |
| Barclays Bank plc | Coca-Cola Enterprises Ltd | Greater London Authority | Linklaters | The Open University | Threshold Housing |
| Barclays Capital | Commission for Social Care Inspection | Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service | Liverpool John Moores University | PA Consulting Group | Time Warner |
| Barnardo's | Coventry Teaching PCT | Greater Manchester Police | Lloyds TSB Group | Pearson plc | Tower Hamlets PCT |
| Bath & North East Somerset Council | Credit Suisse | Greenwich Community College | London Borough of Barnet | Pfizer Limited | Transport for London |
| BBC | Crown Prosecution Service | Guardian Newspapers UK Limited | London Borough of Greenwich | Pinsent Masons | Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue Service |
| Bedfordshire & Luton Combined Fire Auth | Dept for Constitutional Affairs | Gwent Police | London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham | PricewaterhouseCoopers | UBS Investment Bank |
| Bedfordshire Police | Dept for Culture, Media and Sport | Hampshire Constabulary | London Borough of Hounslow | Procter & Gamble UK | UK Sport |
| Berneslai Homes | Dept for Education and Skills | Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service | London Borough of Lewisham | Rolls-Royce plc | University College London |
| Birmingham City Council | Dept for Environment, Food & Rural Aff | HBOS plc | London Borough of Tower Hamlets | Royal Air Force | University of Birmingham |
| Blackpool and the Fylde College | Dept for International Development | Herbert Smith LLP | London Borough of Waltham Forest | Royal Bank of Scotland Group | University of Glasgow |
| The BOC Group plc | Dept for Communities and Local Gov | Heritage Care | London Development Agency | Royal College of Nursing | University of Sunderland |
| BP plc | Dept for Transport | Hertfordshire Constabulary | London Fire & Emergency Planning Auth | Royal Mail Group | UnumProvident |
| Brighton & Hove City Council | Dept for Work and Pensions | Hertfordshire County Council | London South Bank University | Royal Mencap Society | Victim Support |
| Bristol City Council | Dept of Health | HM Prison Service | L'Oréal | Royal Navy | The Walt Disney Company Ltd |
| Britannia Building Society | Dept of Trade & Industry | HM Revenue & Customs | Lothian & Borders Fire and Rescue Service | Sainsbury's | Warwickshire Police |
| British Airways | Deutsche Bank | HM Treasury | Lothian and Borders Police | St Mungo's | Welsh Assembly Government |
| British Council | Devon & Cornwall Constabulary | Hewlett Packard | Manchester City Council | Scottish Court Service | West Midlands Police |
| British Red Cross | Devon County Council | Home Office | Manchester City Football Club | Scottish Crown Office & Procurator Fiscal Serv | West Midlands SHA Wide Cluster |
| British Transport Police | Disability Rights Commission | Home Office - Police Human Resources Unit | Mayer, Brown, Rowe & Maw LLP | Scottish Enterprise | West Sussex County Council |
| Bromley PCT | Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) | Homes for Islington | McKinsey & Company | Scottish Executive | West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service |
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Please initially apply in writing enclosing a full CV to Web Designer Vacancy, O & C Entertainment Ltd, Suite 004, Loyds Court, 1 Goodmans Yard, London E1 6AF Applications close on March 14th, 2007



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We are looking for a
MARKETING ASSISTANT

Millivres Prowler Group is the UK's leading gay publishing and multimedia business, offering a wide range of information, entertainment and shopping products and services, for and about the lesbian and gay market.

The candidate will be working in our busy marketing department, based at our Head Office (Kentish Town/Gospel Oak). You will be assisting with a wide range of marketing activities across all media business areas. The right candidate will have at least 12 months experience working in sales or marketing, with good administration, written and verbal communication skills, must be computer literate in windows applications (Word and Excel essential). You will be enthusiastic, able to work to tight deadlines and work under your own initiative.

The post is ideally suited to someone who wishes to develop or further a career in marketing and would suit a marketing graduate as a first job or a marketing trainee looking to move on.

Salary package basic £16,000 pa

Please send a CV and covering letter to raj@millivres.co.uk or post to:

Raj Rai (Ms), Head of MMM and Group Marketing Manager, Millivres Prowler Group, Unit M, Spectrum House, 32-34 Gordon House Road, London NW5 1LP

Closing Date: 15/03/07

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Closing date for applications 00 March 2007

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For an application pack call 0116 254 7412 or email info@lgbc.com
Closing date for applications 23rd March 5pm
Interview date 3rd April

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We wish to appoint a sales executive with experience in recruitment advertising to manage our new lesbian and gay recruitment channel.

The position will be based in central London.

For more details visit <http://uk.gay.com/jobs>

To apply please send your CV with covering letter to Mark Watson (mark.watson@planetoutinc.com).

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We are looking for a

Junior Designer

To work in our Design & Production Department

You will be responsible for assisting in design, layout and production of MPG products, working to briefs from internal and external clients to produce material for magazines, newspapers, websites, product packaging, promotional, and advertising purposes.

The ideal candidate will have experience of working in a publishing environment working to tight deadlines. They will be familiar with the latest versions of Mac OS X, Quark Xpress and Adobe Photoshop. Experience of producing print-ready files and use of Adobe Illustrator and In Design would also be beneficial. We are looking for a creative, organised team player who works well under pressure while retaining a great eye for detail.

Salary: circa £16,000

Please send CV and a covering letter to: alexander@millivres.co.uk

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As you would expect, the Greater London Authority actively promotes lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) equality, challenges homophobia and celebrates the contribution of the LGBT community to the rich and varied life of the capital. This year we were awarded third place in Stonewall's annual Workplace Equality Index, highlighting the UK's top 100 employers. That's something to think about when you're considering your next career move.

We positively want LGBT people working for us at all levels and are working hard to make sure that we get rid of barriers so you can achieve your maximum potential

All GLA vacancies are advertised on our website. Alternatively you can call us for a current vacancy list on 020 7983 4143 or 4157 (textphone).

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Applicants must have current and valid permission to reside and work in the United Kingdom. We are committed to equality of opportunity in service provision and employment and welcome applications from all sections of the community.



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We are looking for a

RETAIL DESIGNER (PRINT AND ONLINE)

to work closely with retail and marketing managers as part of the retail group.

The ideal candidate will be responsible for:

- the development of all promotional material – in store, windows, print and online catalogues and advertising for our brands
- consistency of brands cross channel

This role is a key our exciting plans for growth for our retail operations. Accordingly, the successful candidate will show experience in designing point of sale material, print adverts, paper catalogues, online adverts and e-newsletters, ideally within a retail/online environment. With a good understanding of the customer groups, the candidate will demonstrate creative flair, initiative and the ability to work as a as part of a team to deliver retail goals.

A personal development program will ensure that you develop strongly into the next stage in your career.

Salary: £18,000 to 20,000 pa (based on experience)

Please e-mail CV and a covering letter to bav@millivres.co.uk or apply in writing to:

Bav Shah, Millivres Prowler Group, Spectrum House, Unit M 32-34 Gordon House Road, London NW5 1LP

Closing date: 15/03/07

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We are looking for a

MARKETING EXECUTIVE

RETAIL DEPARTMENT, GOSPEL OAK, LONDON NW5

Retail is changing at MPG and this is a great opportunity for an ambitious Marketer to bring strong experience and develop new skills in an exciting new retail focused role.

The successful candidate will be a key member of the team who will focus on building sales and brand profile through the development and delivery of the retail marketing strategy and plans. With a good knowledge of the customer groups and what gets customers shopping in-store and online, the candidate will be responsible for the delivery of PR, Advertising, Promotional activity, window and in-store signage and events for Prowler stores, Hot Planet and Libertas. In addition the candidate will also provide a marketing support role to Prowler Direct, DIVA Direct and Expectations.

The successful candidate will have experience in the broad mix of marketing activities, ideally within a retail/online environment. The candidate will demonstrate creative flair, initiative and the ability to work as part of a team to deliver retail goals.

This is a permanent position, with a personal development program.

Salary: £20,000 pa
Please send CV and a covering letter to Jocelyn McConnachie, Director of Retail Operations, at the postal address below or email Jocelyn@millivres.co.uk

Closing date: 15/03/07

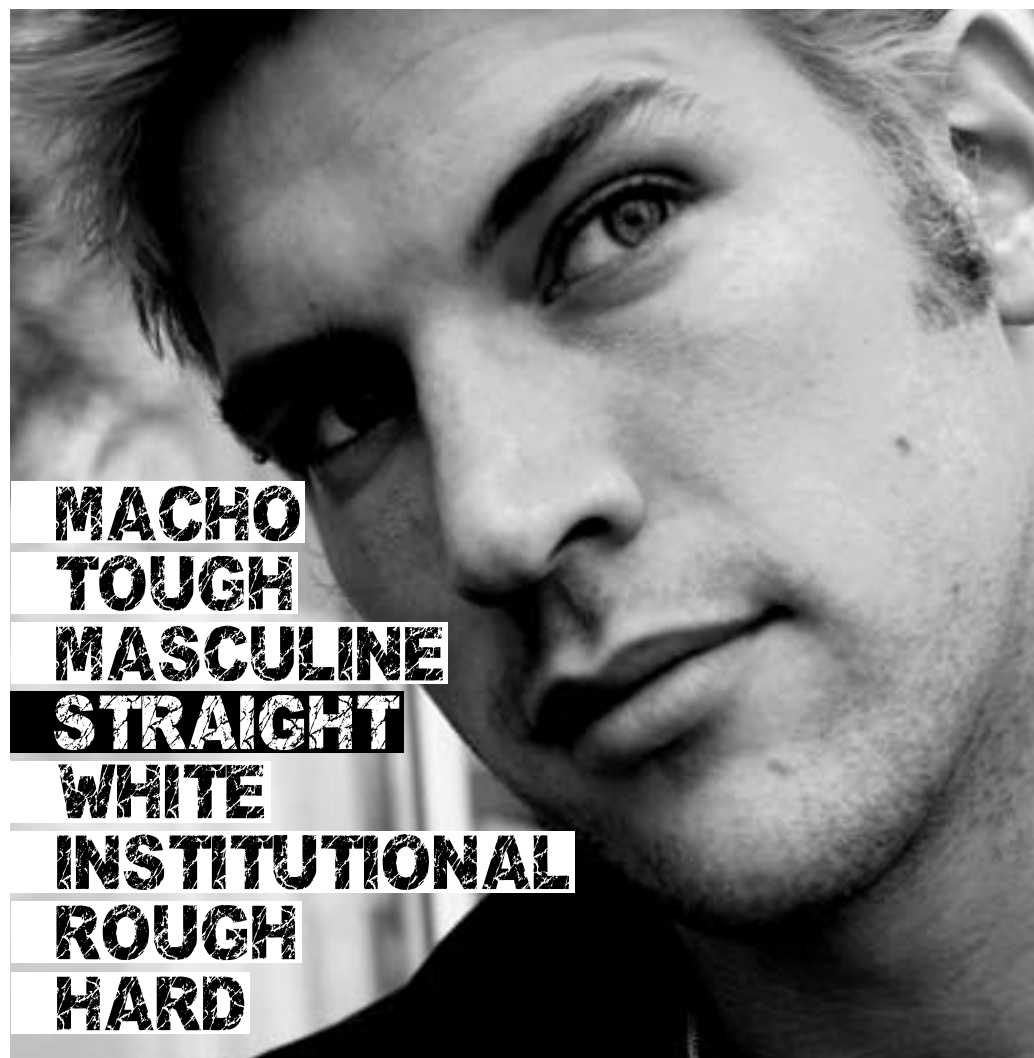
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We're reaching out to all corners of the community.

Diversity is at the heart of our organisation as we continue to reshape and refocus the way we do business and provide services in Walsall. Our continuing success depends on the diverse talents of our workforce - individuals who reflect the variety of ages, cultures and beliefs that make up our community.

If you want to find out more about the kind of opportunities we can offer you, then visit our website at www.walsall.gov.uk/jobshop which is updated weekly.

Alternatively, for your first free copy of our Job Shop Weekly vacancy bulletin, which can be provided in various formats, call **01922 652064** or textphone **0845 111 2910** or SMS Text: send 'Walsall Jobs' (followed by your name and address) to **60003**.

Please quote 'diversity in action'.



Walsall Council



Diversity in Action - Not Words



DYNAMOS DISCO DOWN FOR BIRTHDAY BASH



Volleyball players turned disco divas as the Dynamo Dykes celebrated its 15th birthday at the Minorities on 17 February. The club has competed in tournaments all over Europe, and in the Gay Games in New York, Sydney and Amsterdam. It has also been the breeding ground for many long-standing romances, including one civil partnership. Club founder Kahya Engler said: "It felt very moving to see that one little ad put up in Peckham Women's Centre 15 years ago had such a fantastic result - a lesbian volleyball club going strong after all this time." The club is playing in Iceland this Easter in the annual European Lesbian Volleyball Tournament.

Pictures by Scott Nunn.



TENNIS CHAMP FOLLOWS IN FOOTSTEPS OF HEROES

By Andrew Gilliver and Jeni Quirke
NORTH WEST CORRESPONDENTS

Bolton boy Ian Kay beat 200 other tennis players to triumph in last month's Miami Art Deco Open.

Kay won the trophy on centre court where his heroes including Roger Federer and Pete Sampras have clocked up famous victories.

Kay said: "In the first round I beat Rick Smetana from New York, 6-2 6-1.

"I then went through the rounds without dropping a set and got to the final. I found my self up against Jamar Wright from Florida and 4-1 down in the first set but then I relaxed and won the next five games taking the set 6-4. The second set was a little closer as he started to play a little more consistently hitting a lot more balls back into court and seemed to be chasing down everything I hit at him. The set went to a tiebreak which I won 7-0 so I won the A tournament 6-4 7-6."

The Art Deco Tennis championships organised by Miami Mavericks Tennis Club is part of the Gay and Lesbian Tennis Alliance, which host over 50 tennis tournaments around the world.

The tournaments are divided into divisions of standard from A through to D based on skill level catering for all abilities from county players to beginners.

Kay was presented with his prize, an inscribed glass bowl at the Four Ambassadors Hotel in downtown Miami but that wasn't the only thrill of the tournament.

"For me the tournament was made even better as the final was played on the centre court where all my favourite players had played like Federer and Sampras," he added.

"The tournament is something that I would recommend to anyone who has an interest in tennis," said Kay. "It's a great way meet people who share a com-



Ian Kay (right) with Miami's Pablo Núñez.

mon interest from all around the world. I had the best time and met some friends who I intend to stay in touch with and I would recommend everybody of any playing ability to go along."

Details of tournaments are on the web site: gla.net.

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It is sadly true that not every relationship will be a loving and lasting one. And when it ends, to add to the emotional turmoil, there are possible financial consequences.

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For more information contact either Sian Jones, E: sianjones@bdb-law.co.uk or John Darnton, E: johndarnton@bdb-law.co.uk
Bircham Dyson Bell LLP 50 Broadway, London SW1H 0BL T: 020 7227 7000 W: www.bdb-law.co.uk

