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the Tartan Skirt

Volume 7, Number 2
Spring 1999

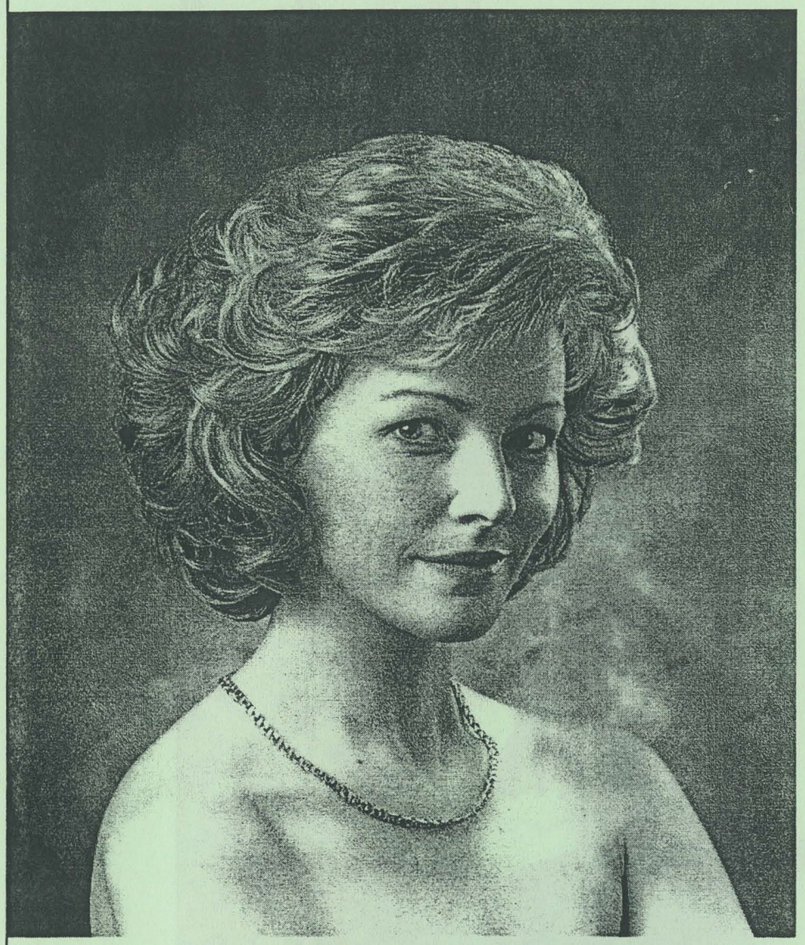
The Magazine Of The Scottish Transgender Community



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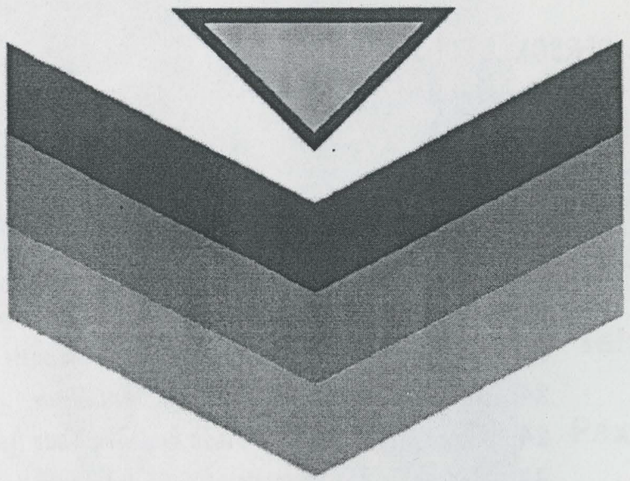
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CALL IN THE STRICTEST CONFIDENCE

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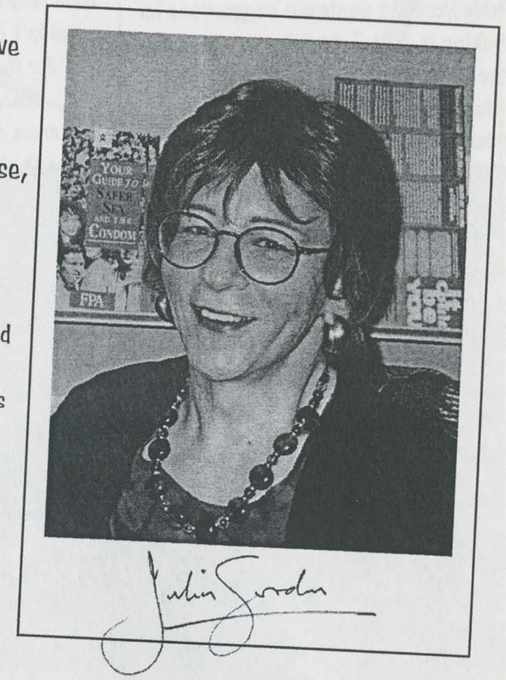
RANK OUTSIDERS ARE PLEASED TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH THE TARTAN SKIRT AND THE TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY

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CALL IN THE STRICTEST CONFIDENCE

Three months have gone by since I introduced myself in the last issue of this magazine. Then I was on the verge of a nervous breakdown, freaking out over the difficulties of putting together the Tartan Skirt.

And now? Well, a visit to the funny farm appears to have receded for the moment, but just for the moment. The next challenge facing me is how to tap into that creative resource that I know exists within each one of you. Suggestions please, on a postcard, in an envelope, e-mailed or faxed to me at the Tartan Skirt, c/o Reach Out Highland ...



It's hard to get the message across to anyone if you stay hidden, out of sight, isn't it? But who in their right mind would willingly climb out of their trench to be shot at! Suppose, however, that a truce prevailed... suppose you were given the chance to be listened to... would you take the opportunity to talk about yourself in front of others? Mairi Damer from BBC Choice is looking for someone from the T-Community to take part in 'Late Flyte', a late night discussion programme. She assures me it is not intrusive and guests are treated sensitively. Her letter appears in 'Speak Out' and if you're interested and want to know more, give her a ring. I'd be interested to know how you get on. I might even be tempted myself - I've noticed my usual audience has been looking somewhat jaded of late.

I'm feeling a bit left out when I hear of the opportunities in Edinburgh these days for welcomed transgender participation in the 'real world' - it sure isn't happening here. Gordon Mackie of the City of Edinburgh Council is looking for T-folk to have input into an initiative called the LGBT Community Safety Partnership. Gordon is appealing for members of the transgender community in Edinburgh to become involved. The organisation brings together representatives of the city of Edinburgh Council, Lothian and Borders Police, and voluntary and community organisations in the city. This has *surely* to be supported. Who's going along? Give Gordon a ring on [redacted] or contact him at the City of Edinburgh Corporate Services Department, 12 Giles Street.

The LGBT Community Safety Partnership is currently putting together a survey on the experiences of violence and harassment of LGBT folk in Edinburgh. Ideally, the consultants would like to hear from 20 - 30 members of the transgender community. Would *someone* make a contribution, please? Even if it's just to let them know we're too afraid to come forward. Speak to Andrew at Spittal Street Centre, tel: 0131-[redacted]. Gender-related hate crimes, from harassment to verbal abuse and physical assault, will continue to be overlooked so long as we do nothing to help ourselves. Here's an opportunity to begin to make a difference.

I just can't believe how much Edinburgh is bending over backwards to help us. Now I hear that the Lord Provost's Commission on Social Exclusion is planning to hold a meeting with representatives of the LGBT communities in Edinburgh to discuss ways in which these are excluded from playing a full part in society. Keith Cowan from the Equality Network is looking for someone who can speak from a transgendered perspective. Come on Edinburgh. Do yourself and the rest of us a favour and give it a go! Phone the Equality Network at 0131-[redacted].

When the management committee of Pride Scotland asked me to say something in the magazine about this year's event, I got to thinking how much ground had been covered since I went walkabout with them in Edinburgh in 1997. I think I was the only person representing the T-Community on the march (if there was someone else out there who was also there that day - *sorry, but I couldn't find you!*), and then in Glasgow, last year, it was so encouraging to see a good handful of us taking part.

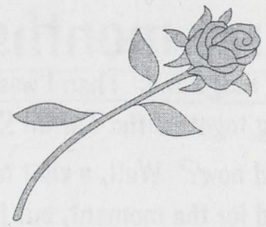
So what about Edinburgh in 1999? On the March, will there be enough of us to stand out in the crowd? How about a banner this year to make folk take notice of us? And as for the festival itself, Pride Scotland wants our suggestions for making it more T-friendly. What facilities do we want on site? How about an information stall? What fringe or satellite events could be of interest? When this came up for discussion last year we really didn't have the structure to organise and fund anything. Will it be any different this time? I hope so, but it takes effort and commitment. Step right up...

Julia Gordon (editor)

PS...

Rasps to Parcel Post
for losing the batch of Tartan Skirts
bound for Edinburgh last November.
As a result, the Scottish TV/TS group
didn't get the magazine in time
for their meeting. I wonder if
there's a closeted group of
cross dressing posties leafing
through the pages of the Tartan Skirt
as I write this...?





And roses to everyone
who told me they enjoyed the first
issue of the new magazine.
Thank you, thank you, thank you
for the encouragement to face
the next (this) issue!

WHAT YOU WANT IS WHAT YOU GET!

('COS YOU HAVE TO COME UP WITH IT!)

In the run-up to the relaunch of the Tartan Skirt, Andrea in Aberdeen was involved in soliciting ... the views of the magazine's potential readership, that is, in an attempt to discover what folk wanted to see between the covers. To this end, she distributed questionnaires the length and breadth of Scotland, which eventually ended up on my desk. A detailed analysis of your top ten answers looks something like this.

1 Top of the list was information about places which welcome the T - community, shops and clubs and support networks, and a calendar of social events.

2 Advice and information on welfare issues is right up there.

3 Features which deal with topics such as hair removal, how to train your voice, choosing bra fillers, etc. and make-up tips and fashion.

4 Current affairs [which kind ? - Ed] and the letters page, personal profiles and interviews.

5 Humour

6 Editorial

7 Adverts

8 Personal Contacts

9 Fiction

10 Agony Aunt and recipe page

The significance of these results for me is that I must attempt to fill the pages of the Tartan Skirt according to your declared wishes. You, on the other hand, have the unenviable task of supplying me with the means with which to do that!

Get busy, girls!

Julia Gordon

CAPTION COMPETITION

win a year's free subscription to the Tartan Skirt!

what to do...

sinply suggest a funny or amusing caption for the photograph and send it to:

The Tartan Skirt (competition)
c/o Reach Out Highland
34 Waterloo Place
Inverness
IV1 1NB

Closing date for entries: 16th April 1999

The winning entry will appear in the next issue of the magazine.

(NB No winner could be chosen for the last competition owing to the lack of response.)





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Transgender Agenda

A Report on the Third International Congress on Sex and Gender

Exeter College, Oxford – 18-20th September 1998

by Susan [redacted]

This year one has been spoilt for choice with two major conferences being held in the UK covering transgender issues. Firstly there was *Gendys '98*, held in Manchester in August (see Tartan Skirt, Winter 1998) followed by Transgender Agenda in September. Having arranged to attend *Gendys,* I had resigned myself to missing Transgender Agenda. However, after returning from Manchester and with no holidays planned, I decided to see if a late booking could be arranged for Oxford. This was the first time the conference had been held in the UK, with previous venues being in the USA and from information obtained from Gendys, Transgender Agenda would be something not to be missed.

The evening prior to departure any journey beyond my bed seemed ill advised, having gone down with a heavy cold. However, I resolved to retire early and see what the morning brought. Up early, if not exactly bright, at 6am and feeling determined to get to the conference, I completed my packing and set off shortly after 8am for the journey of 400 plus miles to Oxford. This time I would be travelling alone, without the company of Sue and Julia who had accompanied me to Manchester.

The journey passed uneventfully enough until my cold returned with a vengeance in Lancashire, whereafter it dogged me all the way. Around this point I encountered the first signs of what appeared to be the *'Coning and Contraflow Layers Convention'*, whose delegates appeared determined to see who could cause the greatest degree of congestion on the M6. Evidently, this was not going to be the least stressful of journeys.

Battling on and hindered further by an accident involving an overturned lorry on the M40 south of Birmingham, I eventually arrived in Oxford shortly after 6pm whereupon I felt I could breathe a sigh of relief. However, Oxford is not the most car friendly of cities and having left my luggage at the Exeter College, I now had to find the pre-arranged car park which was at another college some distance away. This achieved, and having found my way back to the conference venue, I was glad to sit down, somewhat belatedly, to the evening meal provided by the conference organisers.

Once fed and watered I went to register as a delegate. At this point I was disappointed to hear that the key speaker Professor Louis Gooren would not be attending as he had been knocked of his bicycle the previous day in Amsterdam. Whilst not seriously injured, he was not fit to travel to the conference. Once registration was completed, and not feeling up to attending the talk arranged for the evening, I returned to my room, hastily unpacked and retired for the night around 9pm, absolutely exhausted after a rather stressful day.

Saturday morning was upon me all too quickly, although I did feel significantly better and soon I was heading for breakfast. After this there was little time before the day's conference proceedings commenced at 9am. The difficulty was choosing which seminar to attend at any one time, as only in one instance were there less than four possible sessions to choose from. On occasions, depending on the location of seminars, it was necessary to quickly change location, as some of the seminar rooms were a considerable distance apart.

The subjects covered were many and varied and did not solely involve TV&TS issues, exploring in some cases the wider topics of sex and gender and the inter-relationships between individuals and society at large. A flavour of the range of topics is as follows: ***Transgender Activism in the San Francisco Bay Area***; ***New Models of the Trans Self***; ***Issues of Religion***; ***Legal Issues***; ***Issues of Intersex and Androgyny***; ***Trans and Family Matters***; ***Social Construction and the Cross Dresser***; ***The Dutch Experience***; ***NHS Provision***; ***HIV Work***; ***Trans Writing*** and ***Trans Men Studies***.

Inevitably, there was a presentation by a surgeon, in this case Mr Michael Royle who along with another surgeon, Miss Sarah Muirhead-Allwood (who is herself TS) presented a paper on a follow up study on post operative male to female surgery. As expected, this was served up immediately before lunch! A very interesting presentation was made on young people with gender dysphoria. Part of this presentation highlighted work in the Netherlands, where in some specially selected cases, adolescents had been treated before reaching the age of 18 years. By treating at an earlier age, the individual can achieve a more satisfactory physical outcome by comparison with starting later, with consequent positive effects on feelings of well-being and social adaptation.

A Scottish slant was given in two papers. Dr Susan Carr of Glasgow reported the interim results of a study undertaken earlier in the year under the SNAP programme, on the treatment of transsexualism in Scotland. Dr Angus Campbell, of the University of Aberdeen spoke on the Forbes-Sempill case. This involved a court case, where an individual who had successfully re-registered as male in the 1950's on the grounds of being a hermaphrodite, subsequently succeeded to the Baronetcy of Craigievar.

One of the main attractions of attending a conference is the social side and the chance to network with others. Oxford was no exception to this, with individuals from many parts of the world in attendance. Coffee breaks are always taken as opportunities to speak with new people, with the highlight being the Saturday evening's events.

Dinner was served in the beautiful 300 year old hall, an experience all of its own. The after dinner speaker was Dr Lynne Jones MP, who as well as her constituency duties, campaigns for the rights of transgendered people. After dinner there was a late bar, with the option of a piano and organ recital with accompanying soprano. This was held in the magnificent chapel, which is part of the college and was a moving experience. In this respect the conference organisers had really excelled themselves.

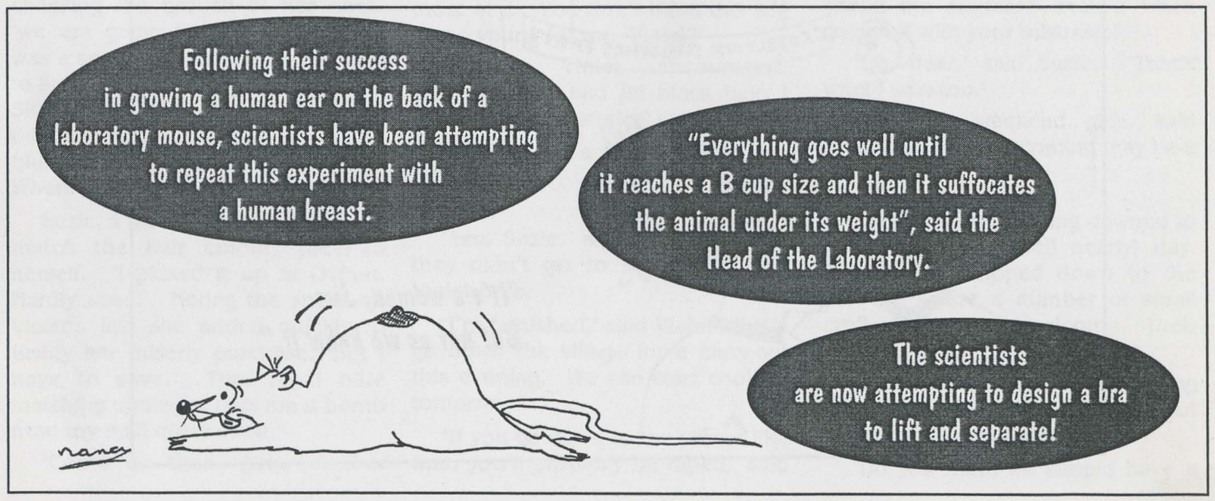
Sunday afternoon arrived all too quickly and the conference was soon drawing to a close. Farewells were hastily said and as I had arranged to stay with an old school friend some distance away I returned to my room to change back into male attire. Soon I was heading the 40 or so miles to my friend's house where I would spend the night, prior to the drive back home.

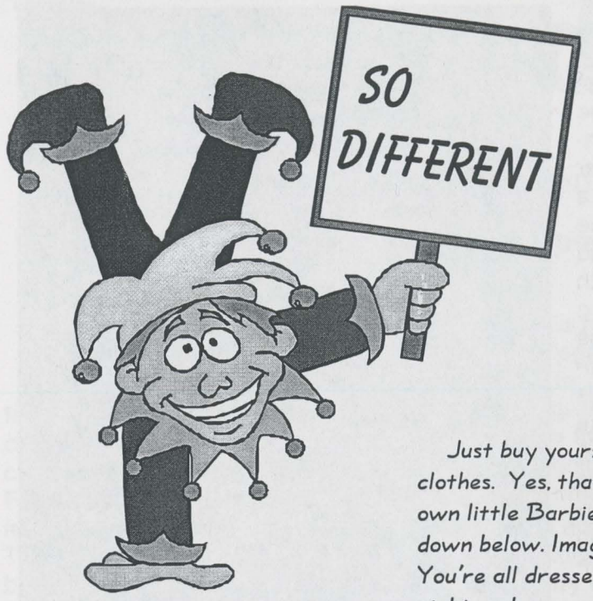
The next Transgender Agenda conference is likely to be held in Sydney, Australia, so if any of you international jetsetters fancy a trip I am sure it will be well worth the expense. (Come to think of it Ed., any chance of an expense account?)

Susan [redacted]



Exeter College
Oxford





As we all know, there are many ways to dress up. So would you like to try something really weird - no I never said that (maybe) - but oh so different? OK it's a bit, a lot off the wall, but try it - you may even like it! Here goes.

Why, oh why, should that little appendage down there (yes that one!) miss out on all the fun? All right, he may be nestling in frilly panties, but is that enough? I don't think so! I think he should be wearing a lovely cocktail dress (get it?). Oops, sorry, I couldn't resist that - I'll repent next time I put on my nun's habit. I promise. (That's another secret out of the bag!)

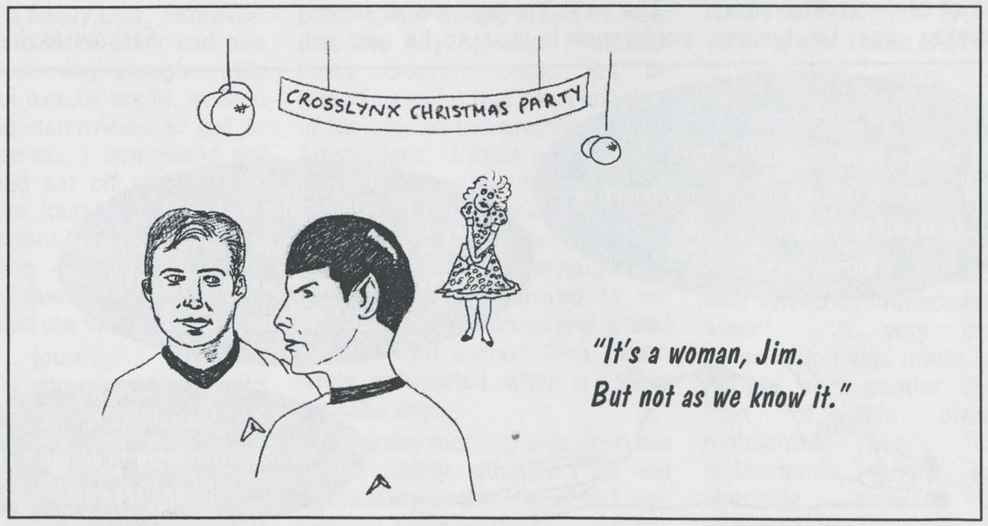
Just buy yourself some Barbie clothes. Yes, that's right, for your own little Barbie boy who lives down below. Imagine the scene. You're all dressed up, it's party night and your rarin' to go. But what about the little guy?

He wants to get dressed up too. Bring him out into the light. He's a little coy. Well, that's understandable, no one likes being bare-assed, so why should he be any different? Anyway, lace him into his little waspie corset. Lace it up, oh so tight. Keep going until he screams - that's just enough. Underskirt, full skirted evening dress, wig, make-up. He's now she, and very, very feminine. The problem is, she wants to go out and boogie all by herself!

So there you have it. Only a couple of problems remain and if anyone reading this can solve them, it would make me so happy I might even invite them for a candle-lit dinner for two. But just remember, I'm the one wearing the dress! Anyway, how does the little lady hang on to her handbag? And how the hell does she wear her high heels, not to mention the pierced earrings? Ouch!

Nancy





A Trio of Trannies by Alexandrina

The dark green Rover slewed off the road and into a clearing in the wood. It came to a halt and three heads peered out cautiously, checking for signs of life. The place was deserted, apart from some crows which were squawking their annoyance at the human disturbance.

'OK fellows,' said the driver, opening his door, 'this is it.'

The passenger in the front seat opened his door hesitantly, uncertain that the location was 'OK'. The back seat passenger was more adventurous and stepped out into the clearing, stretching his legs after the two hour journey.

With a further check to ensure privacy, the driver opened up the boot and the three men soon had bags out and contents displayed.

Quickly, they stripped down to underwear – a bright assortment of claret, royal blue and hot pink. Coupled with further furtive glances to check for intruders, the three quickly dressed for the kill.

'Hm, I see you're still into minis, Violet,' said Amber. 'How do you like my latest outfit?'

'Very nice,' Violet complimented. 'And I see you're still into Victorian costume."

'Well, dear,' Amber said, checking the brooch at her neck, 'we are going to Bodingale which was a spa in the old days. We have to keep up appearances, you know.' She turned to the third member of the party. 'And I see you still favour blue, Suzie. That's a lovely dress. Where did you get it?'

Suzie, a blonde who was dumb to match the hair colour, preened herself. 'I picked it up at Oxfam. Hardly used.' Noting the sneer on Violet's lips she added quickly to justify her miserly purchase, 'But I have to save. That royal blue matching undie set cost me a bomb from my mail order store.'

'Come on then, girls,' Amber commanded, gesturing them into the car. She went back into the driving seat. It's only about five minutes run to the village from here. 'I'll risk wearing stilettos while driving.'

'Do be careful, Amber,' said the cautious Suzie. 'I would hate if we had a bump and a big police officer took down our particulars.' 'We should be so lucky,' laughed Violet, tossing her mass of red curls. 'I wonder what it would be like to spend the night in a woman's prison?'

The car bumped back on to the road.

'Oh, skip it, girls,' said Amber. 'I'm nervous enough just now. Let's get there – without police or anyone else's assistance.'

As Amber had predicted the run into the small coastal village of Bodingdale only took minutes. Soon they were unloading their bags into the cottage which would be theirs for the weekend.

'Isn't it fantastic,' said Suzie, walking into the kitchen. 'I still can't believe we've finally made it. A place all to ourselves, where we can dress every minute of the day.'

Amber straightened her back, checking in a wall mirror that her waist had been suitably constrained by the waist nipper. 'Well, we have it till Monday, girls, so let's make the most of it. You don't think this wig is too young for me, Violet?'

'Never,' Violet encouraged. 'Victorians all had jet black hair; I saw it in a TV historical drama.'

'Were there a lot of TVs in the past, Amber? asked the dumb blonde.

'Yes, Suzie,' sighed Amber, 'but they didn't get to wear minis like Violet here.'

'I'm famished,' said Violet. 'Let's go down the village for a carry-out this evening. We can start cooking tomorrow.'

'If you go down to the village like that, you'll probably be raped,' said Amber.

Violet giggled and started to walk up and down watching her bottom wiggle in the mirror. 'Chance would be a fine thing,' she said. 'But I know what you mean, Amber. So I vote Suzie goes down for the carry out and we can set the table.'

'Agreed,' said Amber, 'for your voice is best of all of us, Suzie.'

Suzie looked coy. 'I'll have to take a handbag with me.'

'Right, off you go then.' Violet gave her an encouraging blown kiss. 'And watch out for the local lads. They're lady killers.'

'We should be so lucky,' chimed Amber and Suzie in unison.

They all laughed as Suzie tripped out with her handbag bouncing at her side.

That Friday evening, three forty-something year old trannies settled down in the comfortable cottage to enjoy a whole weekend of freedom from their wives. Bliss!

'I still don't know how we managed to get away,' said Suzie, as she drained down the last of her glass of Liebfraumilch.

'I must admit I had to say I was going to a trade conference,' said Violet.

Amber raised an eyebrow. 'That's the last thing I would have told the missus. Didn't you know? That's the standard excuse when going off with your mistress.'

'Oh, dear,' said Suzie. 'That's what I said too.'

'Enjoy the weekend, girls,' said Amber. 'The homecoming may be a little warm.'

The Saturday morning dawned to a sun drenched (well nearly) day. The girls all tripped down to the harbour where a number of small craft bobbed a welcome, their prows glistening in the sunlight.

'This used to be a thriving fishing community,' Amber explained, 'but it's reduced to tourism now.'

'Do you think we should have a

trip round the bay?' asked Violet.

'You're not going to catch me trying to get on board one of these things,' Suzie declared.

'You should wear a mini.' Violet sniffed her superiority. 'It doesn't restrict you when you're getting on and off a boat – or a bus.'

'No,' muttered Amber, 'it just restricts the breathing of the fellas.' She gave Violet a nudge. 'See those two blokes over there? They've been eyeing you up for the last ten minutes.'

'Great!' Violet giggled and went over to a bench. 'Let's sit down then. That'll give those eyes a real eyeful.'

'Oh, you are a shocker, Violet,' said Suzie, sitting down between the other two. 'This would be nice for our lunch. Did you bring the sandwiches, Amber?'

'What would you two do without me! Of course. And I've got Fantas as well.'

The girls were soon tucking into the picnic basket while Violet's long legs produced admiring glances from more than just the two 'fellas' on the quayside.

After their lunch the trio were happy just to sit and watch the passers-by for some time. It was Suzie who had the bright idea for a photograph.

'I've got this new camera. It's terrific. Compact and all automatic.'

'Idiot-proof, you mean?' Violet pouted.

'That's not kind,' said Amber. 'We need some help, though – someone to take a shot of the three of us.' She looked along the harbour to the esplanade beyond. 'There's an elderly gent coming.'

'Shouldn't we ask a lady?' asked Suzie, a little worried at approaching any stranger.

'I don't think it matters,' said Violet. 'But I think men are less likely to be upset by a tranny. Anyway, you always sound good to me, Suzie. Ask him nicely and Amber and I'll just smile sweetly.'

The 'elderly gent' was delighted to be of assistance. More than that, he explained that a very good position for the photo was beside an old harbour crane. 'It will add interest to the shots.'

Amber and Violet tried to keep dumb while Suzie chatted with the photo artist, but they found it too difficult. They were soon brought into the conversation.

'My name is Roberto Dalgeli,' he beamed, then added the explanation, 'My father was Italian.'

The girls felt obliged to give their names, all the time wondering if they were 'passing'.

Mr Dalgeli did not take just one shot, but a whole lot of photos, first as a group, then each one individually. Then he asked to be taken with each of the girls in turn. Suzie was hoping she had enough film left in the camera.

'We do not have many visitors yet,' the gentleman explained, 'as it is a little early in the season.' He hesitated, stroking a small pointed beard. 'Could I invite you young ladies to tea and scones? There is an excellent café over the way. I would really like to treat you.'

Amber was a little sceptical and Suzie bit her lip, but Violet, as bubbly as ever, had her arm into the gent's in a thrice. 'Tea and scones! Lead me to them.'

Mr Dalgeli laughed his delight. The girls had made a hit!

As they tucked into the afternoon tea, Mr Dalgeli – 'just call me Roberto' – told them something of the history of the village. He did not say much about himself and he was discreet enough not to question the girls about themselves.

They found his company enchanting. Amber had to admit to herself, for she had been the most sceptical about accepting the invitation, that he was a most mannerly person. His hair was thinning, but was still reasonably coloured, apart from a greying at the temples. That along with the trim beard, gave him a distinguished appearance.

In some ways he reminded Amber of her father. She shuddered a little, remembering how annoyed her father was at her 'deviant behaviour'. She quickly blotted that thought from her mind.

Roberto seemed to have taken a special fancy for Amber. After he had paid the bill and they had all walked outside, he strolled along the esplanade pointing out various features of the town to her. The other two decided to check out the *haute couture* of Bodingale, only to find that the sole shop, which sold clothing, was more concerned with 'sensible' items for women, along with the garb particularly suited to seafaring men. Touring round the interior of the shop, the girls noted that there was not a pair of knickers in sight.

'They must keep them under the counter,' whispered Violet.

'Maybe they don't wear any in Bodingale,' giggled Suzie.

Violet joined in and, with both of them in a fit of giggles, they had to make a hasty retreat.

They met up with Amber, now alone, her face flushed with excitement.

'What a lovely man,' she exclaimed, oblivious to the others' merriment.

'You certainly made an impression,' said Violet, a little piqued, for she really thought that her nifty outfit would bowl any man over.

'Hm,' sighed Amber, still in a dreamy state. 'He's asked me to his house this evening.'

'And you refused, of course,' said Violet.

Amber pouted. 'Refused? Of course not. It was most kind of him.'

'But we were going to hit the high spots tonight,' wailed Suzie.

'Suzie, darling, there are no high spots or even low dens of iniquity in Bodingale.' Amber straightened her back again, pulling down the jacket of her chocolate coloured fitted suit. 'Remember our agreement, girls. Each one of us is free to do her own thing during the weekend. Anyway, you can have the car.'

'Why?' asked Violet. 'Won't you need it?'

'No, Roberto said he will pick me up in his car.' She pushed her head higher and breathed in, allowing her voluptuousness to be evident to all the burgers of the village. 'I shall easily recognise it when he arrives. It's a Rolls.'

Violet's mouth dropped open in astonishment. Suzie clapped her hands in glee. 'You have made a hit, girl. Remember us in your will.'

'There's more than that to remember,' sniffed Violet. 'For one thing, remember he's old enough to be your father.'

'He doesn't look his age,' Amber retorted.

'He's got grey hair.'

'Most distinguished.'

'He had a walking stick.'

'Only for effect.'

They walked on in silence for a few minutes.

'Amber,' said Suzie sheepishly, 'he hasn't asked you to ...er ... stay the night, has he?'

'Of course not. I told you. He's a perfect gentleman.'

'I have met them too,' said Violet. 'Just one word of warning, darling. Don't accept an offer to go up to the bedroom with him.'

Amber snorted. 'Violet, dearest, I am old enough to look after myself. Anyway, his told me his age. He is 68.'

Violet's eyes rolled. 'Told you his age! What next? I hope you didn't tell yours.'

'Of course not.' Amber looked a trifle sheepish. 'Well ... I gave a little hint. Quoted that old one: Life begins at forty.'

'And I suppose you didn't mention that you were married.'

'Heavens no! Why should I want to say that?'

Violet grinned. 'Somehow I thought you wouldn't ... darling.'

Amber was in a swoon. She looked across the table at the elegant Roberto, who had produced a light buffet supper, complete with a sparkling Asti Spumante. The room lighting had been dimmed; two ruby-coloured tall candles gave a flickering illumination to their glasses.

'Do you like Italian wine, Amber?' he asked with a faint smile on his lips.

'Divine,' sighed Amber, then realised that this was an inane remark. The problem was that she was not used to a lot of wine and this had gone to her head. She could not think of a more subtle expression. Somehow 'full-bodied' or 'fruity' did not seem appropriate.

'Do you live alone?' Amber asked, the wine making her audacious.

'Yes, unfortunately.' He played with his wine glass. 'I cannot drink much, as I must drive you home.' He smiled up to her. 'Sorry, I am not trying to evade the question. I was married and I sometimes say that I am a widower, but that is not true. I am divorced.'

'Oh, I'm sorry about that.'

'It was my fault. I was too fond of the ladies.' He smiled again. 'Perhaps I still am.'

Amber decided she had better change the subject. For some time they spoke about opera, a mutual interest, although Roberto was much more enlightened than Amber. 'My father came from Milan where we have a magnificent opera house. He used to take me to the great operas: Verdi, Rossini, Puccini. Those were wonderful times.'

There was a tear in his eye. Amber wondered if he was genuine or if he was doing it for effect again - like his walking stick. Yet she was captivated by this charming man. She could just imagine him seducing females by the dozen in his younger day.

She stood up. 'I really must get back, Roberto. I have enjoyed this evening very much.'

'None more so than I,' he said with a slight bow. 'But before you go, I would like you to come upstairs with me. There is something which might ... interest you.'

Amber hesitated, the admonition of Violet reverberating in her head. Yet surely a gentleman would not ... well, try anything on, to put it bluntly.



The Beaumont Society



The Beaumont Society is a Nationwide based self-help group, for all those who crossdress, with many open social meetings, around the country.

It is a membership organisation, with it's own Magazine and newsletter.

For further details write to the following address, or telephone:

Beaumont Society
27 Old Gloucester Street
London WC1N 3XX

Information telephone no. 01582-[redacted]

'If you say so, Roberto,' she whispered, and allowed him to lead her up the stairs.

Violet was drumming her fingers on the table in impatience, although Suzie was quietly checking over a mail order catalogue when Amber finally floated in. She flopped down on a chair.

'What a heavenly evening, girls.'

'I can just imagine,' sniffed Violet.

'We had Asti Spumante.'

'Is that like ravioli?' asked Suzie.

'No, stupid. It's a sparkling wine.' Amber hugged herself and sighed. 'Sparkling. Just like Roberto.'

'What about upstairs? Was he not quite the perfect gentleman?' asked Violet.

Amber coughed. 'Well ... in fact ... he did invite me upstairs.'

'Did you go?' asked Suzie, all agog.

'Yes.' Amber bit her lip. 'But it was all right. He wants you two to come with me to see him again tomorrow afternoon.'

Violet sneered. 'Sure! And I suppose he wants us all to go upstairs with him.'

'Well, actually he does.'

'Gosh!' Suzie's eyes were wider than ever. 'You mean an orgy, Amber?'

Amber stroked her skirt. 'No. Nothing like that. Anyway, you'll both find out tomorrow.'

'Oh, Amber!' the others exclaimed together.

'No,' Amber pouted. 'I'm not telling. Just you lie and dream about it tonight. I know I will.'

And Amber hugged herself again, closing her eyes in her ecstatic thoughts.

On the Sunday afternoon they all arrived by car - Amber's Rover - at the luxurious home of Mr Roberto Dalgeli. He welcomed them warmly. For once Violet was not wearing a mini; she felt she had to dress decorously when visiting an owner of a Rolls Royce.

After they had sipped *Croft Original* sherry, and nibbled at a few savouries, Roberto gave Amber a knowing look and coughed.

'Well, would you girls like to come upstairs with me?'

Violet and Suzie exchanged anxious glances.

'Did you not tell them, Amber?' Roberto asked. As she shook her head, he tut-tutted. 'You are a naughty girl. Never mind. I'm sure your friends will enjoy our little surprise.'

They all tripped upstairs, Roberto and Amber leading, and into a spacious bedroom. Inside, Roberto turned to Amber.

'Can I leave it to you to explain, my dear. I find it a bit ... difficult.'

Amber, who was standing beside him, squeezed his hand reassuringly. She walked over to a series of louvred doors, stretching the full length of one wall. She started at one end, opening each door along the entire length to reveal a built-in wardrobe.

There, revealed in all its glory, was an array of women's clothing to gladden the heart of any tranny. The complete length of one wall - a good 20 feet of it - was lined by the most bewildering range of garments any of them had seen. The rail was full of dresses, skirts, blouses, suits. At the extreme end was an assortment of fetish gear which made Violet's eyes pop out.

And that was not all! On a shelf, which ran the complete length also, were neat piles of lingerie, wigs and hats of all descriptions. Along the base ran another rail on which were stacked a long line of shoes in every imaginable colour, plus boots - thigh boots, calf boots, ankle boots - in the same bewildering range of colours.

Violet and Suzie could only stare open mouthed.

'Roberto has asked me to tell you about this wardrobe,' said Amber. 'It belonged to Roberto's son Leon.' She glanced up at Roberto, who turned away to look out the window. 'Leon ... sadly died two years ago.'

She went over and put her arm round Roberto's shoulders, giving him a loving hug. She turned back to her two friends.

'Leon was one of us.'

Roberto turned and wiped his hand roughly over his eyes. 'Yes, girls, Leon was a transvestite.' He sighed heavily. 'I did not want to encourage him, yet when you have a son who is so ... loving ...' He choked and Amber again took his hand and pressed it.

'I could deny him nothing.' He looked up and smiled wanly at Violet and Suzie. 'When I met you yesterday, I knew straight away that you were also TVs. You must excuse me for only inviting Amber, but ... but she reminded me so much of Leon.'

'Only I am not nearly so nice looking as your son was,' said Amber.

They both smiled at each other.

Violet looked questioningly at the father. 'Did Leon have a femme name?'

'Yes, he called himself Felicity.'

'Felicity!' Violet shispered. 'We were all shocked when we heard of her death.'

'She was absolutely fabulous,' sighed Suzie.

'Thank you,' Roberto smiled. 'Yes, he was very handsome, but as a girl ... he was exceptional.' He blushed. 'But then, I am a little biased.'

Amber gave Roberto a kiss on the cheek and turned to her friends. 'Roberto has said we could help ourselves, girls, to any of Felicity's clothes.'

Violet and Suzie now realised why Amber had been in a state of euphoria the previous night.

At the door, the girls thanked Roberto for the lovely clothes they were taking away - only a fraction of those in the wardrobe.

'The pleasure was all mine, ladies.' In his delightful, rather old-fashioned manner, he took the hand of each of his guests and kissed it. 'Please, come down again to Bodingale. But next time, stay with me, and enjoy dressing in Felicity's room. She would have liked that.'

A trio of trannies, each carrying a bundle of clothes, floated down the drive as if on a magic carpet.

Equality For All

A REPORT ON THE 1998 EQUALITY NETWORK CONFERENCE

by Susan [redacted]

The 1998 Equality Network conference 'Equality for All' was held in Glasgow and I was fortunate in being advised of it by none other than our very own Julia Gordon.

To allow for the distance and traffic conditions a reasonably early start was called for and I arranged to pick up my travelling companion, a member of the local LGB Switchboard at 8am. This provided company on the journey and helped defray costs. The event, in my view, called for a degree of formality in dress and I was turned out in a smart black skirt and jacket, cream blouse, scarf and in view of the likely walking involved, a comfortable set of heels.

Arriving in Glasgow shortly after 10.00am we took some time to find a parking space. Once parked we set off on foot for a pleasant walk along the banks, then over the Clyde towards the city centre and the conference venue, the Central Hotel, arriving in good time for the start of registration and refreshments at 10.30am. Soon I spotted a well kent face in the person of Ruth Stewart, Chairperson, Crosslynx and went over to speak to her, later Julia Gordon spotted us and came over to join the group.

The conference got under way with a welcome address from Councillor Louise Fyfe of Glasgow City Council, followed by a question and answer session. Following this there were talks by various speakers. Roseanna Cunningham MP, Equality and Justice spokesperson, Scottish National Party; Bill Spiers, General Secretary, STUC; Kate Pickering, Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party; Paul Coleshill, Scottish Liberal Democrats; and Kieran Rose, Gay and Lesbian Equality Network, Dublin. Helen Chambers of the Equality Network ably chaired this session and for those delegates who were hearing impaired a very hard working lady signed the proceedings.

A mouth watering and satisfying buffet lunch was provided and this gave us the chance to revive ourselves and speak to some of the other delegates. Soon it was time for the afternoon proceedings to commence. This involved delegates attending one of six workshops, these being: Parenting, Partnership, Sex Offences, Gender Identity, Anti-discrimination and finally Youth. I chose the one on Gender Identity, after all how could I refuse, Julia was the facilitator!

The workshop on Gender Identity was attended by around a dozen delegates, ranging from individuals who might self identify as heterosexual, gay, lesbian, transvestite, transsexual or otherwise transgendered. By attending, those who were not transgendered showed their open mindedness to issues, which in some cases did not directly concern them.

The discussion was at times wide ranging and covered a variety of topics, concerning transgendered people or affecting other people in their dealings with them. Issues such as the use of public toilets, harassment, or the possibility of a claim being made that a breach of the peace had occurred were covered. It was noted that certain delegates had their eyes opened to the potential problems that a transgendered individual may face and the tortuous path that a transsexual may have to tread in order to be accepted for gender reassignment.

A topic of particular concern was the current position in respect of birth certificates. Whilst there is no problem with an individual changing their name, or obtaining a passport to reflect their new gender (whether or not they choose to undergo surgery or hormone therapy), it is not presently possible in the United Kingdom to have the sex designation changed on the birth certificate. This can lead to all manner of difficulties and embarrassing situations for the individual should there be a

What is the Equality Network?

Our Aims

The Equality Network campaigns for human rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in Scotland. It aims to bring about changes in the laws and institutions of Scotland to remove the inequalities facing LGBT people.

The Network does not seek to represent any community. It's aim is to be part of a broad movement for equal rights for LGBT people. It tries to meet this aim by:

- Consulting as widely as possible throughout Scotland on the planning and execution of campaigns.
- Working with and helping other groups and individuals who are involved in different human rights campaigns.
- Publishing and distributing proposals for change and developing them in response to feedback.
- Lobbying and persuading national and local government, other public and private institutions, the media and the public in order to bring about change.
- Encouraging and facilitating others to lobby and campaign for change.

Our Structure

The Equality Network operates through a supporters network of over 200 groups and individuals. Anyone who supports the aim of equality can join this network.

We convene an annual conference, Equality for All, open to all LGBT people and groups in Scotland, to discuss and develop plans and priorities for campaigns. We also hold quarterly campaign forum meetings to develop more detailed campaign plans.

We work closely with other LGBT organisations in Scotland, with other human rights groups in Scotland, and with UK equality organisations.

Equality Network
58a Broughton Street Edinburgh EH1 3SA
Tel 07020 [redacted]
Fax 07020 [redacted]
Email [redacted]
Web www.diversity.org.uk/equality/

Equality Network campaigns to remove the inequalities facing lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the laws and institutions of Scotland

requirement for the birth certificate to be exhibited. This is most likely to arise when applying for insurance or pensions where the cover is age related in respect of sex designation at birth.

The workshop drew up a charter for the rights of transgendered people which, it was proposed, should be adopted in Scotland.

1. A charter - "The Government of Scotland regards the cultural diversity of the nation's population as a valuable resource."

2. Equal opportunity legislation to be amended to take account of discrimination on the grounds of Gender Identity.

3. Legal definition of transgender based on:
   - a desire to live as a member of your preferred sex
   - you are in the process of 'changing over' into your preferred gender
   - you live as a member of your preferred gender
   - you are Intersex (ie. born with indeterminate sex).

4. Anti-Discrimination Board to be set up, whose remit would be to investigate alleged discrimination against transgender and other individuals. Role of conciliation, promotion of equal treatment in law, in employment, access to services, education, housing, etc.

5. Adoption of the International Bill of Gender Rights, (all clauses 1 to 10), the headings of which are listed below.

1) The Right to Define Gender Identity

2) The Right to Free Expression of Gender Identity

3) The Right to Secure and Retain Employment and to Receive Just Compensation

4) The Right of Access to Gendered Space and Participation in Gendered Activity

5) The Right to Control and Change One's Own Body

6) The Right to Competent Medical and Professional Care

7) The Right to Freedom from Psychiatric Diagnosis or Treatment

8) The Right to Sexual Expression

9) The Right to Form Committed, Loving Relationships and Enter into Marital Contracts

10) The Right to Conceive, Bear, or Adopt Children; The Right to Nurture and have Custody of Children and to Exercise Parental Capacity

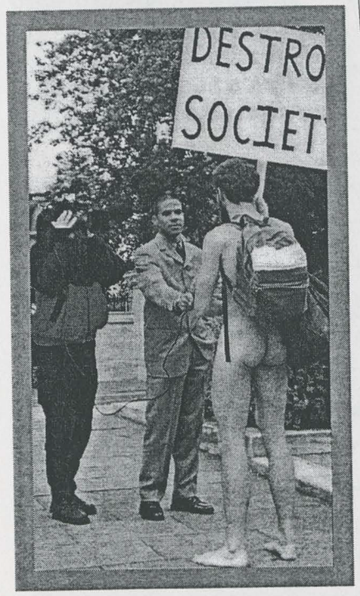
Regrettably, it was necessary to bring the workshop to a close after the allotted hour and a half, at which point there were still many issues worthy of further discussion.

Following the workshops there was a break for refreshments followed by a feedback session on the outcome of each workshop. In each case a representative of the workshop presented a resume of the afternoons deliberations.

This was followed by a summary of the days proceedings and soon it was time for the closing address. Afterwards, there was a reception in the bar, however, I had to forego this pleasure as after saying hasty goodbyes it was necessary to be homeward bound.

Susan [redacted]

Methinks She Doth Protest Too Much...



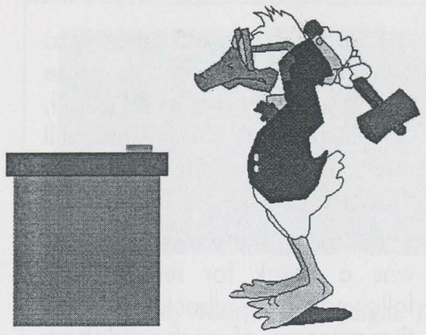
Placard waving Vincent Bethell has been exercising his right to challenge established opinion by parading naked in front of the Houses of Parliament, the London Law Courts, and on 'Richard and Judy'.

His desire to do things differently has brought him into conflict with the police on several occassions. " I wander around naked for about 15 minutes. People seem to enjoy it. It wakes them up. But then the police arrive and chase me through the streets until they catch me."

A crank, an eccentric, a complete nutter - he's been called all of these, and now he's a transvestite arriving in a frock to his naked demonstrations. Asked why the dress ? "Its easier to take of in a hurry".

I should have guessed!





THE BENCH TEST

Twin Peaks!

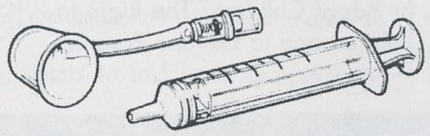
or... My Addiction to Raspberry Nipple!



If you want to stand out in a crowd, or if you would just like a little more to play with, it's quite possible to "grow" your nipples (and have them become more sensitive in the process) without relying on feminising hormones to do this for you.

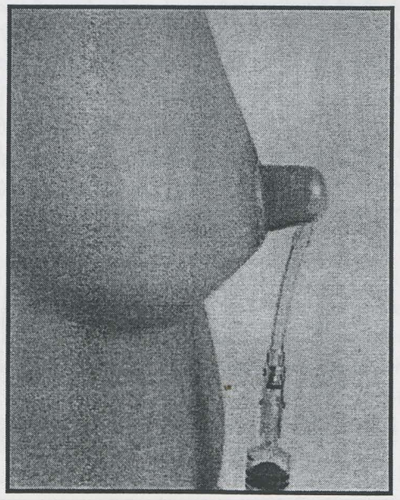
Long before I started on hormones, I purchased a couple of Niplettes. These cunning little devices were developed by Douglas McGeorge, a surgeon at Queen Mary's Hospital, Roehampton. Although primarily intended as an aid to breastfeeding, they have also proved a popular alternative to expensive corrective surgery for flat and inverted nipples.

Niplettes are sold by Avent, manufactured by Canon Babysafe under licence from Niplette Ltd, and cost £29.95 for a "double pack" (single packs are also available). The niplette itself is a thimble-shaped rigid plastic cup designed to fit over the nipple, to which can be attached a small syringe via a thin flexible tube containing a small airtight valve. The Niplette works by using the syringe to create a suction which draws the nipple up into the cup. The syringe is then disconnected. Maintained like this, the nipple is encouraged to assume the size and shape of its plastic shell by stretching the nipple ducts, with subsequent increase in supporting tissue, blood vessels and nerves.



Niplette and syringe

Initially, you can expect some discharge from your nipples, most likely as a result of using too much suction too soon! Be patient. Use only enough suction that is comfortable for you to begin with, and you will soon discover that you can draw up more and more without difficulty.



The Niplette can be worn under loose clothing or inside your bra (soft under-bra pads may offer greater comfort).

Results depend on the overall length of time the Niplette is used. Don't expect permanent enlargement after only a few weeks' use - it may take many months of regular application. I was fortunate enough to be able to wear them all day long, while another girl I know of who could only use them for an hour or two each day was none-the-less thrilled with the eventual results. It just took her longer to get there.

Aileen



AD-DRESSING THE SITUATION

Colette considers the consequences of compliance...

The party season can pose a few problems for many trannies who are not totally 'out' to all their close non-tranny family, friends and acquaintances.

Probably the most difficult scenario is when one is invited to a fancy dress party - or even worse, a theme party where all the males are expected to attend in female attire. Now wouldn't that be horrid? If it's a straightforward fancy dress 'do' then the safest option is to go as a gorilla or Napoleon, or even Peter Mandelson. I know it's most frustrating as you really would like to go as Marilyn Monroe, or similar, but believe me, you would be much too good. The same would apply to being a 'maid', or the like, as the females attending would soon put two and two together and the tongues would start wagging. Now that would be fine if the intention was to give out a few hints as to your hidden preferences and talents - otherwise it would be disaster.

If it was the dreaded theme party and you have to dress up in so-called 'drag' then the problem is compounded by your natural instinct to look and feel good in your best or sexiest gear (depending on your tastes), against the caution of not looking as if you did this every weekend.

There is no easy solution I know of - apart from crying off with a 'headache'! But you'll regret it later as a missed opportunity of showing off before a very different public. You could try dressing up to impress but then make several modifications, alterations and mistakes to deliberately mis-lead. Now that would be soul destroying, knowing that you wouldn't normally be seen dead like that. Personally, I couldn't bear it. Dressing down? - heaven forbid. The very thought of it. Not for me - it would have to be the 'headache'.

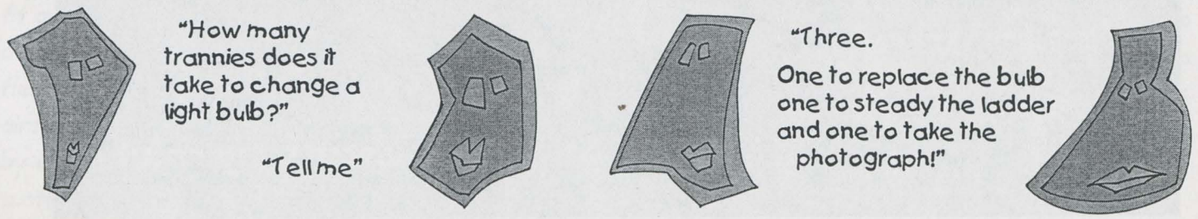
The other problem around Christmas time is the clashing of dates. No - not the ones with stones inside. Company parties and dinners plus invites to family and friends' affairs, etc. frequently coincide with very important tranny events. No, not just as important, more like, more important. Isn't life difficult? For many years now my non-tranny friends have become aware that I am a bit on the unsociable side when it comes to parties, etc. and have come to expect my excuses why I cannot attend. Credibility with these excuses, however, requires



years of practice.

My niece-in-law, who lives within spitting distance - not that I spit of course - has said that we must have a big party on my next birthday, which is a 'milestone' one. She has suggested I invite several of my friends and that it might be 'fancy dress'. Do you think she suspects something???

Colette



THE TARTAN SKIRT INTERVIEW

Alice Purnell Bsc. R.G.N. P.G.C.C. talking to Julia Gordon when they met at the GENDYS 98 Conference last August at Manchester University.

TTS *Alice Purnell, as the moving force behind the GENDYS Conferences on gender dysphoria, the fifth being held here this weekend in the University of Manchester, could you tell us a bit about how all this came about?*

Alice I guess I should answer this question in two parts - why Manchester University? and why Gendys Conferences?

We chose Manchester because it is more or less central for the four British Nations. As someone who lives on the South Coast I hear others complain about having to go North but at least our Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish friends can get there relatively easily since there are good rail, road and air connections - as can our North American and European friends. Also it is a good location in terms of costs, local friendliness and facilities.

In 1996 we were given a visit to the City Hall and drinks with the Mayor of Manchester, when I organised a European conference at Manchester on gender dysphoria - which preceeded Gendys 96. The choice of a University is because a major purpose of these meetings is to validate the client group and enable professionals and TS's, TV's, TG's, parents, partners and researchers to meet on an equal basis. That is why speakers can be Surgeons, Psychiatrists, Counsellors, Speech Therapists, Electrologists, parents, partners and other individuals. Over the years I have believed that it is vital that people are not placed into convenient boxes. I'm anti - labels anti the "I'm God" atitude of some professionals and "I'm a victim" of some sufferers of gender dysphoria.

The first Gender Dysphoria Conference I attended was in the 70's - only those days it was organised by the Beaumont Society and Beaumont Trust. It was held at Leeds, and then another at Leicester. However there were also conferences organised by Charing Cross Hospital (since it hosted a Harry Benjamin Gender Dysphoria Conference) The problem with the Harry Benjamin Gender Dysphoria Association was that, at that time, it excluded transexuals themselves - it was strictly for professionals in the field to liaise, decide on standards of care and various protocols - and to present research findings. Now the HBGDA permits speakers who are not necessarily non-transexual!

In 1990 we held the first Gender Dysphoria Conference at Manchester, and every other year we have held subsequent ones. Speakers have included experts from the States and Europe (especially the Netherlands).

Conference Reports are available from myself via BM Gendys, London, WC1N 3XX.

TTS *I can see the value of conferences which bring together the professionals and the transsexual client group, but what interest might there be for others within the transgender community?*

Alice I agree that these conferences have tended to concentrate more on TS issues - both male to female and female to male. However, it is important that those caring others, the volunteers who operate helplines, organise support groups, people who are transvestite or something else, or who are simply unsure of themselves should, if possible, learn something about the nature of gender dysphoria. For example, they are quite likely to come across the individual who feels guilty about what he does who thinks that if they were treated as transsexual they might feel better about themselves.

I suppose if there is a driving philosophy it is to try to inform people, help them to understand themselves, and others, to get to know where to refer people if they have particular difficulties and to help dispel some of the myth which seems to exist in the TG community. It saddens me that there is sometimes hostility and suspicion between some TV's and TS's.

TTS *How did you become interested in the subject ?*

Alice I came across an American magazine called *Transvestia,* which was produced by Virginia Prince, and I remember thinking, "My goodness, this is about people with some kind of gender confusion." It wasn't pornographic, it was about feelings, about people who were a mixture of male and female and who were attempting to come to terms with that. In those days, Virginia Prince was trying to promote 'Full Personality Expression' (FPE) - the idea that the most important thing was to be yourself, as fully as possible. The thrust of her magazine, and all her other publications, was about creating the inner woman for a while at least, even if it wasn't possible all the time.

She wasn't promoting transsexuality - indeed, the word didn't yet exist. The magazine had a membership organisation called *Chevalier* and it seemed like a good idea to join it. When I then discovered there were four other members living in the British Isles, I wrote to them all and we got together.

By the time we had that initial meeting in a hotel in Southampton in the Spring of 1966, we were joined by others so that our number was around sixteen. We decided to form the Beaumont Society. Alga Campbell became our first president, Sylvia Carter, the vice-president and I was the medical researcher and overseas organiser. It was all very grandiose.

TTS *Why 'Beaumont' Society?*

Alice It was called the Beaumont Society after Chevalier d'Eon de Beaumont who, disguised as a woman, spied in Russia for France - but later settled in England. His military pension was conditional upon his continued role as a woman, otherwise there might have been a scandal since 'she' had nursed a Russian Royal Princess. There are several biographies on this extraordinary person who was probably

intersex.

TTS *For a long time, until fairly recently in fact, the constitution of the Beaumont Society has excluded gays and bisexuals. Why was this decision taken?*

Alice We wanted to make it clear to the public that people who crossdressed or had gender identity problems were not the same as drag queens, were not homosexual, and were not crossdressing to attract men. It was about expressing 'inner femininity'. It wasn't meant to be critical of homosexuals and bisexuals but we felt at that time it was important that should a couple wish to become involved with the Beaumont Society, the wife didn't have to worry about her husband getting into bed with another member. It was to be a safe place where members could bring their wives. Many members were married and their wives had enough to contend with.

In 1969 we had our first properly organised dinner in the Forum Restaurant in London. In preparation for this I explained to the manager what transvestism was and said that all the women who come along wouldn't be women. He carefully briefed his staff, telling them that '*all the women who come wouldn't be women*', but that they had to be respectful, nonetheless. All evening they called absolutely everybody, including the wives, 'Sir'. And as I recall, the commissionaire also recognised someone from his old regiment, the Scots Guards!

The Beaumont Society included TV's and TS's and endeavoured to became a bit respectable - like a rotary club, I suppose!

TTS *And the Beaumont Society flourished?*

Alice The organisation just grew and grew and grew. We produced a monthly bulletin, which at first, was just five or six sheets of paper stapled together.

Around 1970 we had three doctors, two psychiatrists and myself, interested in the medical aspects of gender identity, and an accountant. With a small growing financial surplus we decided to form a charity, a separate organisation with funding guaranteed by the Beaumont Society - the Beaumont Trust.

The Trust's aim of providing support was focused wider than just the Beaumont Society members. It was to deal with enquiries from wives and partners, doctors, and others.

After a while, a few wives decided to get together themselves, to support each other and to offer support to other wives. So WOBS, Women of the Beaumont Society, was founded.

TTS *And then there was support for transsexuals?*

Alice The overwhelming number of Beaumont Society members were transvestite, not transexual. It would have been around 1990 that I first met Judy Cousins, at Charing Cross Hospital. She was a retired Colonel who had served in India, and a champion golfer, and it was she who formed the first support group for transsexuals which, in a totally un-enlightened way, she called SHAFT - Self Help Association For Transsexuals.

She was an interesting character who marched rather than walked and who, rather than put her family through the agony and shame of having a transsexual husband and father, had simply walked out on them disappearing as though she'd died in a climbing accident, while in reality she'd had surgery. She was eventually forgiven by her family when she did decided to return and tell them.

I became the medical advisor for SHAFT, and the organisation grew. Believing it to be a good idea to become a registered charity in order to raise funding for research, etc. we changed the named to the Gender Dysphoria Trust. Shortly after this Judy Cousins retired from the organisation and another shake-up left us with a new name, the Gender Trust, and a membership organisation called GEMS.

The idea was for the Gender Trust to provide counselling and carry out research, and GEMS would be the membership organisation providing the funding for the charity and supporting GEMS NEWS, the membership journal.

Other fractioning started to occur which I consider very, very regrettable. The largest splinter group of GDT was CHANGE. FTM became a group for female to males and, as you know, PRESS FOR CHANGE is a pressure group working for equality before the law.

GENDYS

A network for those troubled by their gender identity, and their loved and loving ones, those who were troubled in the past and who care, and a forum for professional and lay people.

For further information, write to: *Gendys Network*
BM Gendys
London WC1N 3XX

or to the Scottish representative: Sue Robb, [redacted], Strathcarron, Ross-shire IV54 8YR

TTS *It all sounds very incestuous.*

Alice Well, eventually Gender Trust went pear-shaped and my fellow trustees Richard Ekins and Jed Bland, and myself withdrew. We formed GENDYS Network in December 1997 and, in a way, I can now look back and see that something very positive happened out of the disastrous divisions which took place and which I totally deplored at the time. Now, I spend less time in administration and can get on with doing things I feel are important and which help make a difference to people's lives.

TTS *Helping others is clearly something you feel very strongly about, something which has involved you in the medical aspects of transgender life as well as motivated you to encourage tolerance and understanding for each other?*

Alice I suppose, when I look back and recall what a total bloody nightmare my childhood was, and then, when I was older, realising that this was happening to others too…

I can never forget an incident that I came upon as I walked home from my first job after leaving university. I noticed a crowd of people standing around a tree - the police and ambulance services were there - and in this tree was a young lad of about twelve who had hanged himself, dressed in his sister's school clothes. And I thought, 'that kid could be me'. It damned nearly was. And while I was standing there his dad arrived in a police car. The father looked at his son, still hanging in the tree, and said "The little bastard". And I think, 'Yeah, that's how it is, even your mum and dad haven't got a good word to say for you if you're like that.' Somebody has to care. Somebody has to make it clear that it doesn't have to be all pain, that life is good and that difference is OK. It took me a long time to understand that.

Tolerance is something that is all too often the subject of limits and definitions. There are too many subdivisions and labels when what is important is that we see each other as people, not as labels. We don't have to be enemies in any sense. I believe it's really important that minorities help each other and that support groups and other organisations work together.

TTS *And do you feel this has happened at GENDYS 98 this weekend?*

Alice I think Gendys 98 has gone very well. In the early days of these conferences the speakers were exclusively the professionals, psychiatrists and surgeons. When they spoke we listened in silence. Increasingly, however, we too have become professionals in the field. Speaking personally, I did my degree in psychology, I have a post-graduate diploma in counselling psychology, and I work as a psychologist and counsellor. There isn't a 'them and us' feeling between myself and people like Russell Reid, Michel Seghers, Richard Green, Don Montgomery. Even though we may not always agree, there exists a very real respect and friendship. Increasingly, the client group is finding a voice and is being listened to.

My intended pitch for this conference was to give it both a professional and a pastoral flavour. To that end, there are speakers this year who work as volunteers, providing care that isn't on offer from the NHS. People from Mermaids, Tracie O'Keefe, David Horton, myself and others. I think it's important that the professionals don't lose sight of the fact that it's people - the whole thing is about people. It's not about a 'condition' or a 'treatment', it's about people. I have to say I met with some resistance in the past - I don't ever believe it's right in any sense to exclude transvestites - transvestites form the majority, and while acknowledging there is a tradition of mutual suspicion between transvestites and transsexuals, I believe it's important that we acknowledge that it's OK to be a transvestite, and it's OK to be a transsexual, and it's OK to be a don't know. People don't have to stand on opposite sides of a canyon of belief and hurl rocks at each other. They can get on with being different. What can unite us all is the sense of being misunderstood and marginalised. Present at this conference there are people who, I think, would describe themselves as transvestite and others transsexual, who have shown no animosity whatsoever to each other and who are actually getting on exceptionally well. I take that as a hopeful sign. It shows people are growing up, and I'm very pleased about that. In the wider community, gender 'different' people are not treated as equals yet before the law - but it will come to pass.

TTS *Would you ever consider having a gender dysphoria conference north of the border?*

Alice Yes, definitely, although holding it here in Manchester has worked well for us in the past. In a UK context Manchester is fairly central. I'm very aware of an arrogant belief in some quarters that nothing happens north of Watford, certainly nothing north of Hadrian's wall, and if it does it remains unknown. I'm really pleased to see so many Scottish sisters here today.

TTS *As one of them, I'd like to say how pleased I am to be here.*

Alice I'd just like to finish by acknowledging the help I have had from people like Jed Bland and Jean Pepper and so many others - it's been a joint effort. It can feel very lonely at times to be the person who organises things. If you get it wrong, you get it in the back of the neck and if you get it right, nobody says 'thank you'. But I'm not here for accolades, I'm not a goody two-shoes, but I *am* terribly conscious of how much hurt there is, and my way of rationalising what I suffered is to help prevent it happening to others, if I can. That includes partners *and* parents *and* children.

TTS *You're not prepared to exclude anybody?*

Alice No. We've had enough of that in the past.

TTS *Alice Purnell, thank you very much.*

If you would like to advertise your service or product in the Tartan Skirt, call Ronald on 01463-[redacted] for details of our very competitive rates

or fax to: 01463-[redacted]

or write to:

The Tartan Skirt (Advertising)
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34 Waterloo Place
Inverness
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News...News...News...News...

UNITED STATES

Transgender Wins Indiana Primary

Transgendered Democrat Bobbie Kerns has won the Democratic Primary nomination for Indiana's 6th Congressional District. She will face off with incumbant Dan Burton, a prominent Republican Social Conservative. Kerns' win was made even sweeter because she survived a legal challenge to the nomination. Dawn Wilson, a Kentucky transgender activist was enthusiastic. "Until we begin to run for office and use the political system fully, we will always be taken lightly."

New York's Transsexual's Bat Mitzvah

On August 15th in Woodstock, New York, transsexual Kate Pollack celebrated a second bat mitzvah, forty years after her first at the customary age of 13. She was joined in the coming of age ceremony by her family and friends (including transsexual performance artist and author Kate Bornstein), and by the Woodstock Jewish congregation and its folk-singing rabbi, Jonathan Kligler, who said, "We are blessed when special people come to join us, bringing their unique gifts, because we gain and grow from these gifts." After Rachel's surgery in the 1970s it was reported that she recited the traditional Jewish orthodox prayer "Blessed is God, who has not made me a woman", and added ... "Double blessed is Dr Lamaker, who *has*."

Death Row Reprieve for Transsexual

The New York Supreme Court has overturned the death sentence imposed on 40 year old transsexual Leslie Ann Nelson. She pled guilty in May 1997 of killing police officer John Norcross with an assault rifle at her parents' home and of murdering police investigator John McLaughlin and wounding a third officer in the same shootout. The court ruled that prosecutors had withheld evidence that could have swayed jurors in her favour.

BRAZIL

Police Responsible for Death of Transvestite Sex Worker

Brazil's Grupo Gay de Bahia and the local Salvador Transvestites Association have been staging protests against the assault of two transvestite sex workers by four Salvador military police officers. The police reportedly humiliated and tortured the cross dressers, forcing them to strip off their clothes and jump into the sea on August 4th. One of them, Luana, drowned. The other, known as Joyce, along with Salvador Transvestites Association President, Lena Oxxa, believe their lives are in danger, and are said to be under the protection of human rights groups. The demonstrations resulted in the arrest and discharge of four of the perpetrators, but not of their Lieutenant. Grupo Gay de Bahia's continuing documentation of murder of gays and transgendered in Brazil has reached 1,600 for the period 1980 - 1997, with only 5% ever resulting in a trial.

ARGENTINA

Working Girls Protest in Buenos Aires

A crowd of transvestites in high heels and lipstick protested outside City Hall in Buenos Aires as authorities inside voted to clamp down on prostitution near homes, schools and churches. The amendment followed weeks of protest and confrontation involving neighbourhood civic groups and prostitutes, male and female, who started plying their trade on the streets of Buenos Aires since the repeal earlier in March of a police code that had kept prostitution under tight control.

PERU

If At First You Don't Succeed ...

Fulvia Celia, a transsexual, is to run for the office of mayor in Lima, Peru. Should she lose the race to one of the three candidates standing against her, she says she'll run for the National Congress in the year 2000. She has complained of being marginalised by Peruvians' homophobia and ignorance of transgenders.

UNITED KINGDOM

Birth Certificate Changed

More details have emerged about the case of the child who was registered at birth as a boy but has now been officially accepted as a girl. Joella Halliday, who is ten, was born neither fully male nor female. The hospital where she was born missed her true condition and as a result she was registered as male on her birth certificate. For the first year of her life she was treated as a baby boy until specialists at Great Ormond Street Childrens' Hospital in London advised her parents that she was more female than male. So on her first birthday her parents put her in a dress and treated her as a girl. British law doesn't allow people to change their sex on their birth certificate unless they can prove that a mistake has been made. It's taken Joella's parents eight years to convince the Office of National Statistics that a mistake has indeed been made. According to her mother, Julia, it's been an uphill struggle. Joella is due to receive her new birth certificate in a few weeks' time, after which she'll be re-christened.

Conversion of Welsh Minister

Bill Parry, minister to several chapels in South Wales' Aberfan Valley, and ordained by the Union of Welsh Independents, is taking hormones and dressing as a woman. The 59 year old grandfather, who wants to be known as Dian, was quoted as saying "If all goes well I shall be thinking about consulting a surgeon at the end of next year, but I want people to know that I am not a homosexual or a paedophile and I am not mad. I am just hoping that my decision will be accepted and I will be left alone to become a quiet gentle lady". His wife of 38 years is supportive and says "I still love Dian and now we go out shopping for clothes together." However, his congregations do not seem ready to accept him as a female preacher. He plans to set up a website for other Christians with gender problems.

At Her Majesty's Pleasure

John Pilley, serving a life sentence for attempted murder, will be moved from a men's to a women's facility after he undergoes a sex change operation. Although officials say that prisoners are covered by the NHS and have no additional requirements to qualify for treatment, Pilley is believed to be the first to undergo the surgery while in custody. Guards will stand by during his stay in a private clinic, except while the operation is actually in progress. Pilley has had months of counselling, has been crossing dressing in his cell, and will be known as Jane following the surgery.

GERMANY

Mayor's Gender Defection Fails to Win Approval

Residents of an East German village voted to remove their Mayor after he started living a transgendered life. Norbert Lindner, 40, was elected Mayor of Quellendort in 1996 but shocked many villagers last summer when he began wearing women's clothes and calling himself Michaela. When the local council decided to have a ballot on removing him from office, transsexuals from all over Germany and France converged on the village to show solidarity with him. The people voted by 482 to 235 to oust him, however, despite his appeal for tolerance. "I think society as a whole has some catching up to do," he said. Mr Lindner, a father of two children whose wife has left him, is soon to begin gender reassignment.

AUSTRALIA

Australian Transgender Found Hanged in Cell

Belinda, a recognised transgender who presented as female though born male, was remanded in custody at the Metropolitan Reception and Remand Centre (MRRC) at Silverwater, for possession of drugs. In spite of her designated sex, she was placed in the male prison in the strict protection pod at MRRC which contained paedophiles and rapists and others needing to be separated from the male prison population for their own safety. Belinda, breasts and all, was treated and recognised as a male prisoner because of her birth sex, although she was given the option of a single cell, which she accepted. Within three days Belinda had been allegedly raped twice (orally and anally) and hung herself on 27th December. There are two witnesses to the rapes who have made statements to the authorities investigating the suicide.

Australian Transsexual Takes on Conservative Stronghold

New South Wales Australian Democrats have chosen transsexual children's book author, Carmel Morris, as their candidate for what is known as the most conservative seat in the National Parliament. Morris says "I don't want to be judged for what I am. I want to be judged for what I do and what I have to say." And that's just fine with the Democratic Party, which has an anti-discrimination policy.

The Lonesome Road

by Claire [redacted]

From Gordon to Claire see if you dare
How they stand and stare at the person there
Life is no joke when they snigger and poke
At the woman who once was a bloke

Like Lemmings we march to our inevitable end
Where the precipice is high, the Abyss so deep
How in God's name can I make this leap?
I tumble and fall into the darkest deep

Flotsam adrift in a sea of people
Lost in this vast ocean of life
Is there a shore with an open door?
Where Claire can start a new life

What a lonely road I have chosen to tread
With no partner in my empty bed
Show me the light to keep right
On my journey through the stars

My Utopia lies beyond the moon
So Lord above let's get there soon
The sands of time have taken their toll
Is there a hope of reaching my goal?

Mother earth rotates at her normal pace
Yet, there is no place in this human race
For a man with feminine grace
To wear a dress is such a disgrace

Cold winds blow from every compass point
Chilling the heart and freezing the joints
Aliens we watch from societies edge
Never allowed our oath to pledge

No helping hand reaches out to grasp
As this lost soul goes drifting past
Confusion reigns throughout my veins
I have the pain without the gain

The Grim Reaper waits in the blackened sky
Is it time for Gordon to die
What shall we do with this empty shell?
Before it's consumed in the fires of hell

"Where is life going" I stop to ask
What went wrong in my murky past?
Black and white is here to stay
But I will be grey till my dying day

THERE'S MONEY TO BE MADE FLASHING YOUR ASSETS ON THE WEB!

INTERACTIVE, the Web industry magazine, recently estimated that there were about 10,000 independent adult sites, ranging from amateur offerings to slick presentations, to the most explicit hardcore. Profit margins are high – but how to compete in such an overcrowded market?

Lizzie frae Lanark reckons she's found the answer since teaching herself HTML (hypertext markup language – the lexicon of the web page). At one time to be found scribbling her telephone number and services on the walls of telephone kiosks and the like, she now reveals herself in a plethora of uniformed scenarios to netoraks unable to resist the lure of "My brand new screaming SGI origin 200 servers, with RAID tower and NT box running HotBox authorisations."

Her admirers receive a throbbing "40 domain names, 2 gig of content, transferring up to 9.5 megabits/second and logging 100+ hits/day. New Web servers, new mail server, new DNS server".

Her Usenet junkie subscribers fork out serious money for access and admit to being aroused as much by her technical jargon as by the bulge in her frilly maid's knickers. "Let's face it", says Lizzie, "Every man in the world's a wanker – they're just looking for new stimulation."

Pardon me if I log off now - Ed

HEPATITIS - know your A,B & Cs

The word itself means inflammation of the liver. This can be brought about by substances such as alcohol, drugs and other toxic agents, as well as any one of a large family of liver-attacking viruses, the most significant of which are the **hepatitis A, hepatitis B** and **hepatitis C** viruses.

Hepatitis A can be contracted

- in *any* country where hygiene and sewage treatment standards are poor
- in *any* country from eating raw and inadequately cooked food prepared by an infected person with poor personal hygiene
- from salads and fruit washed in contaminated water
- from sexual activities which involve oral/faecal contact such as rimming

Symptoms (headache, nausea, upset stomach, loss of appetite, vomiting, fever, abdominal cramps, jaundice) often begin 2-6 weeks after exposure and may last for a week or two. Some individuals experience no symptoms, while for a small number it can be quite serious. The virus can be spread to others before symptoms appear, mainly as a result of poor hygiene.

Hepatitis A can be diagnosed by a blood test but there is no treatment available once it has been contracted (although boosting the body's immune system with immunoglobulins can help in the more serious cases). It is possible, however, to be vaccinated against the virus and this would be advisable if you are travelling abroad in countries with poor standards of public hygiene and sanitation.

Hepatitis B can be contracted

- by having sexual intercourse without a condom
- by sharing *any* injecting equipment including syringes, needles, filters and water
- from infected blood, for example through an open cut or sore, from accidental injury with a contaminated needle, by sharing razors, toothbrushes or scissors
- through other infected body fluids such as semen, vaginal fluid and saliva, particularly if contaminated with blood

Those most at risk, therefore, are individuals who have unprotected sex, injecting drug users, and healthcare workers. (The hepatitis B virus is particularly infectious, much more so than, for example, the HIV virus.)

There is an incubation period of anything from 6-23 weeks during which those infected with the virus can pass it on unknowingly. When symptoms appear these can be flu-like, and include a cough, sore throat, tiredness, aching joints and loss of appetite, as well as fever, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain and jaundice. Most people make a complete recovery without treatment although some individuals will remain infectious to others for many years and they should be advised not to have unprotected sex, sport (without advising others they are a carrier), to keep all wounds covered, not donate blood, and not share injecting equipment. A small minority will go on to develop chronic inflammation of the liver leading to cirrhosis (scarring) and liver cancer. Some may derive benefit from treatment with immunoglobulins to boost the body's immune system.

Hepatitis B can be diagnosed by a blood test and this can be used to determine how infectious (this can vary) someone might be. There is a safe and effective vaccine available to give protection against hepatitis B, given in three injections over six months. Once vaccinated, it is important to be periodically tested to ensure the body has sufficient levels of antibodies to fight off infection.

Hepatitis C can be contracted

- by sharing *any* injecting equipment including syringes, needles, filters and water
- by sharing personal items such as a razor or toothbrush where dried blood may be present
- from some blood transfusions given

before screening for hepatitis C began in the UK in September 1991
- by having sexual intercourse without a condom, although the risk is thought to be low

Hepatitis C is one of the more recently discovered (1989) viruses which cause inflammation of the liver. It is estimated that in Scotland alone there could be as many as 30,000 people carrying the virus, most without realising it. Like hepatitis B, it is many times more infectious than the HIV virus. High risk groups are injecting drug users and healthcare workers.

Because it can take 20 to 30 years to develop liver disease it is possible that individuals may have contracted the virus in the past and not be aware of it. Only a small percentage of individuals experience symptoms (flu-like, vomiting, fever, jaundice) when they first pick up the infection. Long term, about 75% of all individuals exposed to the virus will go on to develop chronic disease. For about two-thirds of these this will be mainly mild, stable or very slowly progressive. For the remaining third it will assume a more serious form of chronic hepatitis with the risk of cirrhosis and liver cancer.

It can be diagnosed by a blood test but, to date, there is no vaccination against hepatitis C. Treatment tends to be supportive only, although injections of alpha-interferon may be beneficial (expensive and not commonly prescribed). Liver transplantation may be an option for some.

WHERE TO GO FOR INFORMATION AND ADVICE

Vaccination against **hepatitis A** is usually only recommended when travelling abroad in countries with poor standards of public hygiene and sanitation. Your GP will advice and can offer vaccination.

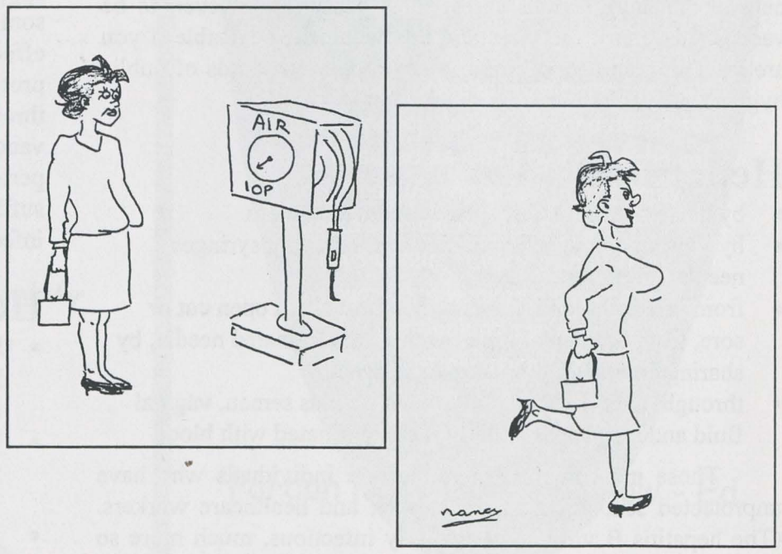
If you are concerned that you may have been, or may be, exposed to the **hepatitis B** virus (perhaps through high risk activity) you may wish to consider a test. Testing and vaccination can be carried out through your GP or, more anonymously, at a genito-urinary medicine (GUM) clinic.

There is, as yet, no vaccination against **hepatitis C**, although you can be tested to see if you have been exposed to the virus in the past.

Julia Gordon

blown up out of all proportion!

The HCI Medical Centre in Glasgow are now offering inflatable breast implants. Ashley Bond has recently spent £20,000 acquiring her awe-inspiring double F breasts. "It's bizarre", commented Professor David Sharpe, President of the British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons, "I think she's crazy". We went to see Big Brenda for a second authoratative opinion. "Go fur it, hen", she advised - but then, Big Brenda's maybe a bit on the bizarre side, herself!



Speak Out



THESE PAGES ARE YOURS TO EXPRESS YOUR VIEWS AND OPINIONS, YOUR ANGER OR FRUSTRATION, OR TO ASK FOR HELP!

Dear Tartan Skirt,

I am writing on behalf of the Grampian Gender Group, in reply to a letter which appeared in the Winter 1998 issue of the Tartan Skirt.

The group was saddened to hear that two support groups had failed to live up to the expectations of the author of the letter. At 3G we endeavour to operate an open policy where everyone is made welcome. This being regardless of how they define their gender, or have resolved to deal with any gender difficulties they may have, or have been experiencing. The letter has, however, caused much soul searching and we have asked ourselves how we can ensure the group welcomes the widest possible audience of T-folk.

It was unfortunate that the author of the letter felt uncomfortable in the environment of 3G, as being a support group it should, if necessary cocoon the individual from the outside world. Obviously, as a newcomer to the support group 'scene' it might have been more reassuring to the author, if all other persons present had been dressed in a similar manner. There is, however, no dress code at 3G. Individuals are free to dress in the manner in which they feel comfortable and which enables them to express their personality.

From my experience of Scottish support groups, whilst they all have an individual character, they mostly have a distinct diversity in the individuals who attend them. This can be considered both a strength and a weakness. It is a strength in that it adds to the topics and experiences available for discussion and allows individuals to develop a wider understanding of the range of gender diversity. However, it can have a down side in that the comfort zone for newcomers may, as reported in this instance, be reduced due to the diversity of T-folk attending. I do accept that on the day in question, there was a discussion of certain topics pertaining to 'gory' TS issues. It has now been put to the group that, to avoid possible offence, such issues should only be discussed away from the main group, or with the consent of all persons present.

The author was concerned regarding the presence of 'real' girls or other outsiders. Any such people attending are either accepting partners, persons doing demonstrations (as in this instance) or some other specially selected individual whose presence is intended to enhance the group meeting. On many occasions the group meeting consists of 'tea and chat' with no special event laid on.

It is always difficult for someone new to the 'scene' to gain confidence. This is especially so if they are closeted (and well I remember my early days all those years ago). Only by attending more often can this confidence be built up. We do hope that the author will come back, give us another chance and get to know us. We all enjoyed meeting her and the contribution she made to the day's events was appreciated.

S.

*****

Dear Tartan Skirt,

I am involved in the production of *'Late Flyte'*, a conversational discussion programme for BBC Choice which takes the form of a presenter and three guests in an informal 'around a table' setting. The programme goes out four nights a week and is recorded during the morning.

We recently chose the topic *'change in life'* and tried unsuccessfully to include a member of the transgender community in the discussion. We try to have guests from different walks of life who can bring their own individual experiences to our

viewing audience and I would ask anyone reading this who might care to take part at some future time to please get in touch with me at 0141-3383129.

I would like to give all assurances necessary that the programme is not intrusive and that the guests and the topics are treated sensitively. Thank you.

Mairi Damer
British Broadcasting Corporation

*****

Dear Tartan Skirt,

There seems to be a lot written on transgender issues about all the bad things that might happen to us. Maybe I'm just naive or got my head in the sand, but this gets me down at times. It makes me defensive and anxious and I for one can't live my life like that.

Sure, bad things can and do happen, but we are not alone in this! Every single person on this planet has crap times and I believe that how fulfilled (rather than happy) [There's a difference? Ed.] we are depends more on how we approach the bad times rather than what actually happens.

I have a (naive, again?) belief that if you're nice to people, they'll be nice back; and if they're not - well, tough, that's their problem - at least I've done my bit. I can't run other people's lives for them, but I can let them know how I feel about things.

For example, when I announced the change into my new female life, I consciously decided to put myself about locally and talk to anyone and everyone, answering *all* their questions - especially the kids' ones. That way, I knew that everyone knew where I was coming from. So far, it's all been very good; and I feel that if it goes bad, I've got a grounding of acceptance to build on.

I guess what I'm saying is: we don't *always* have to worry about what *might* happen to us - if you worry too much, then you'll never do anything. It's more useful to look at what you can really *make* happen in your life.

Some may say: "Yeah, well it's OK for you to say; you're lucky in your job, where you live.." etc. Yes, I *am* lucky in these things and I *do* have advantages, but (subconsciously, perhaps) I *chose* the types of job and place to live that are more supportive and sharing (cos that's the kind of gal I want to be!). Sometimes I feel I have a charmed life that I wander through with an idiotic smile, but that's my way of dealing with the ghastliness of the world.

Things *can* get very stressful and scary (especially on hairy/fat days) but it passes. *Everything* passes - both good and bad, so grab the good and ride out the bad! Pollyanna lives! Or maybe I've been reading to much Cosmo? Is this trite?? Answers please!!

Sheila [redacted]

*****

Dear Tartan Skirt,

May I congratulate you for the excellent job you have done as editor and on the new format of the Tartan Skirt. It has a good mix - something for everyone. The Tartan Skirt has come a long way from a couple of sheets of pink A4 paper.

I'd like to put on my other skirt now and introduce myself as the Scottish Regional Organiser of the Beaumont Society, the oldest and one of the largest TV/TS support groups in the UK. The Beaumont Society has been in existence since 1966, with meetings held around the country and producing two publications, the quarterly Beaumont Magazine and its sister publication the Beaumont Bulletin. I'll be glad to advise anyone further about the organisation if they care to call me on 0141-[redacted].

Ruth Stewart (S3843)
Scottish Regional Officer
Beaumont Society

(Thanks, Ruth. And a big thank you to everyone who wrote, phoned, e-mailed me or stopped me in the street to express their appreciation of my effort in bringing out the Tartan Skirt again, and for it's new format and the content of the first re-issue. I'll take this opportunity, however, to remind everyone that the magazine will only stay afloat if it sails on the tide of readership participation. And I apologise for getting the particulars of the Beaumont Magazine wrong! It's published quarterly, not bi-monthly, as was stated in the Winter 1998 issue - Ed.)



"Listen Doc. A canny take this washin' an cleanin' any mare. Can ye change me back?"



No More Soapy Bubble

Of all the things I thought I might be doing as manager of Reach Out Highland - writing about Coronation Street was not one of them! (I have since learned to expect the unexpected.)

Few of you will be unaware of the transsexual character 'Hailey' in Coronation Street (I only watch it because it sometimes impacts on my work - that's my story and I'm sticking to it!). When it became known at the outset that the part was to be played by a woman, many of you expressed concern. At that time we wrote to Granada, encouraging them to handle the storyline sensitively and sensibly - but received no reply. However, as time went on, it became clear that Hailey was a 'nice' person who soon found herself a 'nice' boyfriend. Eventually the other residents of the street learned of her situation and she and her boyfriend Roy were given a rather hard time. When, at Reach Out Highland, we received a couple of complaints, critical of the scriptwriters' portrayal of this, I phoned Granada. They confirmed they too had received complaints about the episode and apologised for any distress it caused. However, they maintained they had done their research and that was the reaction some individuals receive. On a more upbeat note, while they couldn't really divulge future storylines, they did assure me that the worst is over and Roy and Hailey will become accepted and valued members of the Weatherfield community.

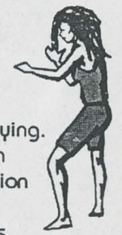
Take the Safe Road...

Talking about Soaps, you know how additctive they are - you catch one episode and you have to watch the next to see what happens. We all know it's sad, it's rubbish, but we can't help it. This, coupled with the success of the Nescafe Gold Blend adversoap, has given us here at Reach out Highland an idea.

Together with Highland Brooke Advisory Service, Highland Sexual Health at Raigmore Hospital, and Moray Firth Radio, we are planning to run a sexual health soap on local radio - a sort of 'Archers' meets 'Sex and the City'. we're hopeful that people will tune in, get hooked, and then we can deal with sexual health issues and impart some awareness on the unsuspecting listener.

So we need your help. At this stage we have nothing but the idea and a possible title. If you've ever wanted to write a scipt, take part in a radio play, or if you just have some wacky ideas for characters, we are desperate to hear from you.

Beat the Bullies!



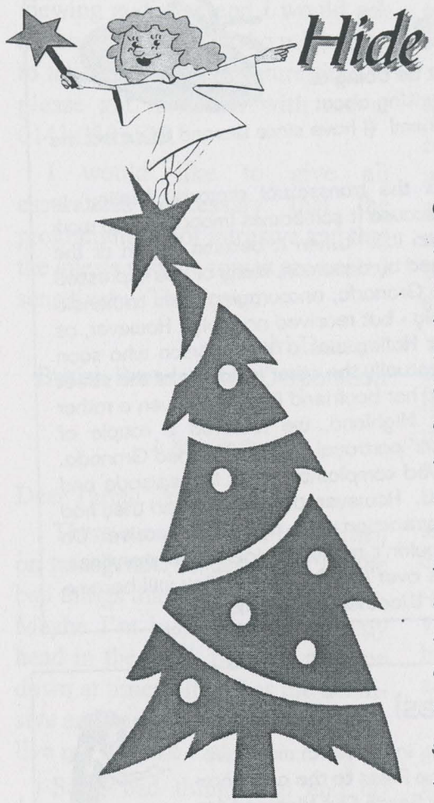
Some of you who live in the North may have seen the reaction of the Press to the announcement at Christmas that Reach Out Highland are planning to make a video about homophobic bullying. I missed it myself but judging from the increase in my mail and phone calls, the newspaper in question went for the 'high on controversy - low on fact' approach. So what's new? Anyway, the reality is that the Highland Gay Youth Group will undertake this project which is being funded by Comic Relief. the video will cover homophobic bullying and gay sex education in schools (or lack of it).

At this point ideas are being bounced around and we would welcome input from anyone and everyone. Your editor pointed out to me that she believes many transgenders suffer bullying at school and that this may be provoked by an unwillingness to participate in sport or other boys' activities, possibly by an outward preference for association with girls or girls' activities. Homophobic bullying is bullying directed at gay persons AND THOSE PERCEIVED TO BE GAY.

If you have a story to tell, we would really like to hear it. The more factual, real-life experiences we can gather then the bigger the impact we will have. Don't worry - you won't have to relate your story on camera, and please be assured of complete confidentiality.

We hope the video will be used by those who work with young people or have contact with them, by PSE (Physical and Social Education) teachers in schools, and maybe even by the kids themselves. Please get in touch/write to me at Reach Out Highland.

Jackie Redding (Manager)



Hide and Sleek's Christmas Bash!

Some time in September, my personal tranny advisor and I were thinking about Christmas and an opportunity to dress up and get together with all our far flung Scottish sisters to have a natter and a laugh, or a bitch and a gossip, depending on your disposition. The previous year's meal at the Blue Moon had been very well attended - if somewhat cramped - but the evening ended all too soon, so this year we wanted a venue that could offer a disco after the meal. There are all too few tranny events north of the border, so we need to "drag" out the evening for as long as humanly possible. I wanted to find an Edinburgh venue - it seems reasonable for most to get to - so I 'phoned Bill, our friendly, helpful taxi driver, for some suggestions. Although he came up with some ideas, his criteria for recommendation is very much based on how good the vodka is. None of the places were suitable or nice enough and, while driving up and down Minto Street looking like kerb crawlers, we saw the Minto Hotel, which looked perfect. I prefer to make initial approaches by 'phone and, after explaining our requirements, I said the group in question would be cross dressers, with some wives and girlfriends ,and asked if this posed any problem. Norma, the hotel manageress, didn't hesitate for a moment and said, "Not at all. If it isn't a problem for you, then it isn't for us."

She went on to explain that, while we would be in the restaurant and lounge bar, their function room would be hosting a party night for over 200 Christmas revellers. My immediate thoughts were how do I stop Tiffany, Nicky or Carolyn floating through there to mesmerise the women and totally confuse the men.

As December drew near, everyone started to think about outfits and I was kept busy with new orders, working well into the night on many occasions - poor me! New for everyone except Ruthie, who had me almost dismantle a beautiful silver jacket to take it in to figure- hugging tightness, and then decided to wear her coat instead!

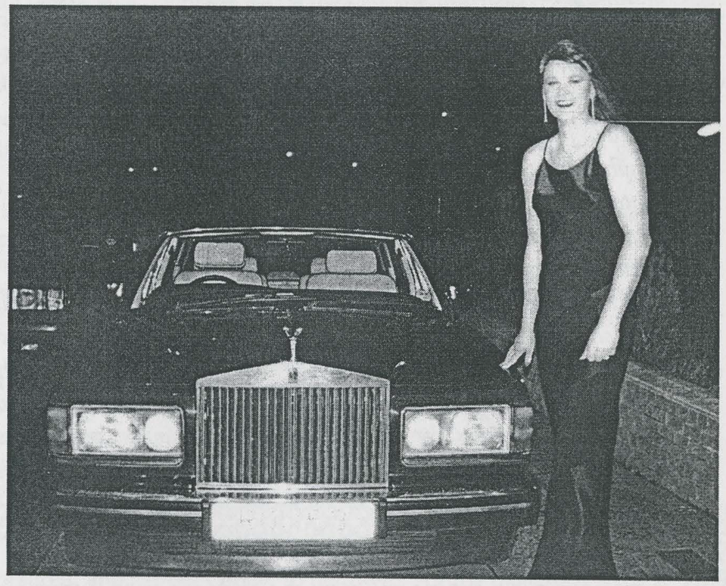
December 12th arrived and we all gathered in the Lounge Bar for pre-dinner drinks and pleasantries with friends not seen for ages. I decided to surprise the man-woman-man in my life by pulling a tranny trick - don a wig and change my make-up. If you can't beat 'em, join 'em. Enlisting the help of Gary - Hide and Sleek's make-up and wig advisor - I went for a short style in a different colour from my own. The result made me look so different, poor Kim walked past me with a nervous smile, Amber didn't know it was me until I spoke to her, and Ruthie asked Catherine "Where's Loraine?" after standing next to me for 5 minutes. A very different look maybe, but still a long way from the transformation you all manage, especially Louise, who went from a big, regular guy to a very shapely vision in a beautifully fitted bias cut dress. I wonder where she got that made!

We all meandered through to the dining room for dinner, which was beautifully laid out and spacious. Dinner went well, with much flashing of cameras, pulling of crackers and splitting of sides, usually laughing at Ruthie. On one occasion she attempted to negotiate half a bread roll dipped in soup into her gob without disturbing the lippy - she managed it, and I have the photo to prove it! Roxy seemed mesmerised by all the dinner table hilarities, but I trust that her chats with Karen and Louise helped bring back a sense of decorum to the proceedings.

After dinner there was a mass stampede through to the lounge for tables - sorry, Tiff, for tripping you up, and Nicky, I didn't mean to stand on your boob and burst it; when you fell I tried to jump over you but Gina pushed me, honest!

'I didn't mean to stand on your boob and burst it'

The D.J. was very good and offered to play any requests, so we were soon all grooving away to our old favourites, except Irene, who was quite annoyed he didn't have anything by Jimmy Shand! Although the music wasn't too loud to kill conversation, some girls enjoyed flinging themselves about on the dance floor - aka Debbie - while the rest of us danced. We had some latecomers who couldn't make it for the meal and Brenda nervously teetered in on strappy stilettos wearing a beautiful black cocktail dress and wafting a black feather boa. In addition to our well established friends and associates, I managed to coax quite a few new girls to come to their first ever event and I know they all had a great time. It was lovely to have lots of R.G.s there as well as a couple of guys. Brian says he is a tranny, but I have never seen him dressed yet! Also someone called David, who seemed quiet and looked a little familiar, did nothing but molest a very tolerant German girl called Marianne.



I am acutely aware of the fun couples can have within the tranny world, but another couple - Joanne and Mary-Anne - highlighted the problem of two people wearing lipstick having a snogging session - red smeary faces for a 2" radius around the mouth. Again, I have the funny photo to prove it.

Now you could be forgiven for thinking "tranny" is just a shortism for "someone posing for a photo", and sure enough when some girls spotted a Rolls Royce right outside the front door, this was too good an opportunity to miss. Louise, Ruthie, Gina, Tiffany and Nicky zoomed in like flies round ..... The hotel staff very kindly allowed them to take photos in the limo and there was much draping of bodies over bonnets - watch those stillies on the paintwork! All this to the amusement of other hotel guests coming and going.



Nicky would insist on playing with the cracker novelties!

On reflection, the evening seemed to have been a huge success. The feedback Louise and I got from everyone we spoke to was very favourable, and the staff couldn't have been nicer. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who attended and look forward to seeing many of you at our next event - hopefully something in the spring - keep in touch to keep informed.

Loraine [redacted]

Continuing Tales of Transgender in Myth and Legend...

Our Forgotton History

Attis, the Divine Shepherd

According to the original Phrygian story, it was said that the gods, in their anger, castrated the hermaphrodite deity Agdistis, whose genitals fell upon the ground and grew into an almond tree. The fruit of this tree chanced to fall into the lap of the river-nymph Nana who became impregnated as a result, and bore a son. This child was abandoned in the reeds by the River Gallos, but was found and reared with goat's milk to become the shepherd known as Attis. Now when Agdistis was castrated he became the female deity called Cybele, and when Cybele saw Attis she fell in love with him so jealously that she could not bear the thought of him marrying. So to prevent this from happening, she made him go out of his mind and castrate himself. But Attis died of his wound. Cybele was overcome with grief and turned him into a pine tree, to be mourned every year[1] She also ordained that, in his memory, only eunuchs could act as priests[2] in her temple.

Other traditions of the myth abound. In one, Cybele bore a child by Attis and that Meion, the king of Phrygia, killed both Attis and the baby. Cybele went wild with remorse and rushed through the countryside lamenting for Attis. When a famine ensued, the Phryians were instructed by an oracle to bury Attis and revere Cybele as a goddess. Cybele then revived her dead lover and the pair were worshipped together throughout Phrygia. In a Lydian version of the myth, Attis is not killed by castration but by a wild boar, like Adonis.

I am indebted to Laura Lansberry for her kind permission to print the following adaptation of the story in which she combines various aspects of the myth, in the spirit of mythology as a living, ever changing reflection of the world around us.

Julia Gordon

The Mythos of Attis and the Secret of the Gallae

(6,000 Years Before the Myth of Jesus)

by Laura Darlene Lansberry

Cybele (pron. Cu-BELL-ay), closely identified with **Rhea, Asherah, Cyprian, Aphrodite, Demeter, Artemis**, and the **Minoan Lady**, was Mother of the Gods, the Magna Mater. Immortal, eldest of the elder gods, **Cybele** came forth from the great black rock of Mount Agdus in Phrygia, it having arrived onto an empty earth from the heavens. Along with the great rock of **Cybele** came many other smaller stones and from these stones the Magna Mater formed **Zeus** and many of the other gods.

After the creation of **Zeus**, he lusted after **Cybele** and made advances toward her. She rejected them. One night, while she lay sleeping, **Zeus** furtively masturbates at her feet spilling his semen over her. Ten months later **Cybele** gives birth to **Agdistis**, an androgyne of immense strength, ferocity, and passion. **Agdistis**, uncontrollable, and by far the most physically powerful of the gods, went about laying waste and violently wrecking everything in his vicinity.

Fed up with his wild rampages the gods gather to discuss what should be done, but arrive at no solution.

Ultimately, **Dionysus**, the god of wine, takes matters into his own hands. After one of his destructive sprees Agdistis returns to drink deeply from a common spring that **Dionysus** has turned to wine. **Agdistis** falls into a deep sleep. **Dionysus**, having formed a rope and noose made from fallen strands of **Cybele's** hair, slips the noose around the genitals of **Agdistis**.

Screaming in a great voice, **Dionysus** suddenly wakens **Agdistis** who, startled, jumps up violently, emasculating himself. A great river of blood pours forth from his wound and is absorbed by the earth from which spring forth all manner of flowers.

Nana, the daughter of the river Sangarius, sees the fruit and finding it beautiful places it on her bosom. **Cybele**, transforming herself into the form of **Agdistis**, changes the fruit to a seed from which **Nana** becomes pregnant. Her father, believing her to have been licentious, locks her away without food or water, attempting to starve her to death. **Cybele** slips into the girl's room secretly each night bringing apples to eat and water to drink. Upon the birth of the child[3] her father orders it taken to the river and left among the reeds to die. However, a shepherd finds the child and takes him home, nurturing him on the milk of a goat that has recently given birth. The Phrygian name for goat is Attagi, and so the child is called **Attis**.

Attis grows into a remarkably beautiful young man, and he is gentle with his adopted father's flock. Thus, his father praises him by calling him "the Gentle Shepherd". **Cybele**, observing that the young lad is more beautiful than any of the gods, loves **Attis** above all others and showers him with gifts and favors. **Attis**, of course, returns her love.

Agdistis also loved **Attis** and seduced the vulnerable young half-god with tales of adventure and the heroic love of men for men, warriors for warriors. He even created lies proclaiming **Zeus** as first among the gods, undermining the love **Attis** had for **Cybele.** Confused, **Attis** succumbs to the seduction.

Meanwhile, **Midas**, king of Phrygia, scandalized by **Attis'** relationship with **Agdistis** wants **Attis** to marry his own daughter. **Attis,** finding the lass comely, eventually agrees to the marriage. To prevent anyone from breaking in on the couple while they are consummating their nuptials, **Midas** closes the city. However, **Cybele**, knowing that **Attis** would never be safe with humans, enters the city by lifting its walls upon her head and rescues him. This explains why she is often depicted with a crown of towers (corona turrita). The towers represent the buildings of the city, Pessinus.

Cybele informs **Attis** that he is only safe so long as he doesn't wed a human. She also tells him of the agony he caused her when he left with **Agdistis**. When the young half-god learns of Cybele's suffering, in a fit of passion he grabs a knife and under a pine tree emasculates himself. As he lay dying (Black Friday, it was called, and it equates to Good Friday in the Christian mythos) he called out, "Oh Great Mother, forgive me. I never sought to cause you grief and I never will again." Violets spring up from drops of his blood, entwining into the boughs of the tree, and therein entered the spirit of **Attis**.

Upon seeing her son was repentant, emasculated, and had commited suicide to atone for hurting her, **Cybele** carries the pine tree, with all its decorations, and her son's body, to her cave. For the three days **Attis** is dead he visits the Underworld. Then, on the third day, **Cybele** brings **Attis** back to life. Providing **Attis** with her most glorious raiment she proclaims the renascent one her daughter and her lover, conferring upon **Attis** gifts of mystery equal to her own. In her own words **Cybele** declares the transformation, "Rejoice, my son is gone and in his place a daughter has arisen. Let all of beauty, strength, power, compassion, honor, mirth, and reverence be at her service. Let all who would do her harm, pay grievous penalty, and to all who do her tribute accrue fitting reward."

The followers of **Cybele** and **Attis** often chanted, "As our Lord was saved, so are we all saved." They called him the Savior of Humanity and the Good Shepherd. 6,000 years later much of the Christ Mythos would be lifted from this myth. However, the Myth of **Attis** endured for at least 6,000 years. The **Jesus** myth is a relative newcomer by comparison.

[1] The festival Arbor intrat, held on 22nd March, was marked by a procession to the sacred pine tree which was adorned with magenta ribbons, violets and images of Cybele and Attis. March 24th, known as the Day of Blood, Sanguem or Dies Sanguinis, commemorated the emasculation and death of Attis beneath a pine tree. It was a day of sacrificial scourging and fasting, ending in a midnight vigil (mesonyctium). It was a day when novices were initiated into the priesthood by the rite of castration.

[2] The practice of castration for priests was not uncommon. It would, however, later become proscribed in accordance with the book of Leviticus, which demands that a priest be sexually intact.

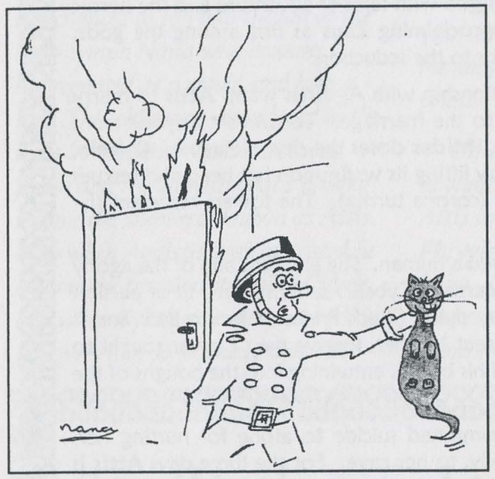
[3] The birth of Attis was celebrated on December 25th. Perhaps not surprisingly, this auspicious date passed into the Christian calendar as the birth date of Jesus Christ.

Scorching the Rumour...

It's just not true!

I did not deliberately start the fire in my flat just to have half a dozen young men from Highland and Island's Fire Brigade parade through my bedroom. or, I might add, to get their opinion on my choice of sleepwear.

The fact of the matter was that as I had been going flat out for weeks to get the Tartan Skirt off the ground, I was so tired on that Sunday in late November that I couldn't be bothered getting out of bed. I decided, therefore, to give myself some time off to relax. I looked forward to spending the day warmly tucked up in bed, catching up on reading and watching television programmes I'd recorded earlier.



...like the Genie eagerly escaping his bottle...

By one o'clock I was starting to get hungry so I went through to the kitchen and made myself some lunch, taking it back through to the bedroom to eat. About ten minutes later I was shaken out of my relaxed state of consciousness by the smoke alarm in the hall trying to tell me something. I immediately tumbled to what had happened (this wasn't the first time!). I'd left the grill on. But when I opened the kitchen door I knew I wasn't going to get away with simply turning it off. Like the Genie eagerly escaping his bottle, clouds of dense, acrid-smelling smoke billowed free from my cooker.

Making a mental note to clean the grill pan more often, I quickly soaked the kitchen towel, threw it over the top of the cooker and retired to the hall to catch my breath. After a minute of two I cautiously peeked round the door. It was no use - this was getting out of control.

Hesitating no longer I dialled 999.

It was infuriating just how calm the receptionist sounded. Couldn't she tell this was urgent? Didn't she realise the situation called for an immediate frantic response?

Apparently not.

"Which service, please?" she enquired, while applying her nail polish - or so it seemed.

As with watched kettles, fire engines appear to travel at speeds having more in common with Laws of Relativity than those of Newton, time assuming an uncomfortable elasticity as I anxiously watched from my window, listening to the sound of the approaching fire engine's siren.

So it was. I watched two brave lads don breathing apparatus and disappear into the black hole that once was my kitchen, I was trying to look totally non-plussed in my flowery Parisian kaftan and flip-flops. "Name please", asked the police constable who appeared from out of nowhere. "How do you spell that?" he asked, unconvinced.

That I could handle but when he asked me my age I began to think the day was becoming altogether too pear-shaped!

Julia Gordon



There is little sense in attempting to change external conditions - you must first change inner beliefs.

Then outer conditions will change accordingly.

Brian Adams
'How to Succeed'

The more you are, the more you can become, and the more you can become, the more you can yet be.

The deepest secret is that life is not a process of discovery, but a process of creation.

You are not discovering yourself, but creating yourself anew.

Seek, therefore, not to find out who you are, seek to determine **Who You Want to Be.**

Neale Donald Walsch
'Conversations with God'

Self-Esteem



by Andrew Hunter

Andrew Hunter was the founder of Reach Out Highland, the Highlands of Scotland's first sexual health charity, and comes from a background in education, training and counselling. An accredited Louise L Hay teacher, he is also qualified in Spiritual Healing, Reiki Healing, hypnotherapy and psychotherapy, Swedish Massage and Neuro Linguistic Programming. In 1997 Andrew left Reach Out Highland to pursue his work as a healing medium, spiritual guide and metaphysical counsellor pursuing an integrated and holistic approach to working with people.

Self-esteem is a bit of a buzz expression these days. In some circles its concept is highly regarded, in others it is treated in a derisory way as if it were some mamby pamby, touchy feely "thing" (this is how it has often been described to me!) Personally I believe it is absolutely fundamental to our being, though I would tend to call it "the essence of love".

In this article I am not writing about or advocating something that is narcissistic - which many associate with self-love. If we cannot truly love and be at peace with ourselves, accept ourselves just the way we are, how can we invite others to love and accept us, how can we ever aspire to a world without hate? Without love we cannot truly touch one another and the life we have been given.

Self-esteem is not something we are born with, it is something we learn. We learn to hold ourselves in high or low regard depending on the way we think, our life's experiences, the positive and negative messages handed down to us by adult figures and society in general, and by our culture. We learn to be as others expect us to be!

Self-esteem is made up of four things -

SELF-WORTH → the value you place on yourself, your relationship with you

COMPETENCE → your beliefs about your ability to cope with the challenges that life offers

BELONGING → your beliefs about how you relate to other people, whether you are included, in with the crowd, or excluded

MEANING → your sense of what fulfils you, why you are here, your purpose in life

Self-esteem impacts on all aspects of your life

Health - stress is the direct or indirect cause of more than 80% of health problems and low self-esteem is behind more than 80% of stress. Most eating disorders* are related to low self-esteem. It is the root of most psychological illness.

Finance & Career - people with low self-esteem always underachieve at work. Income is more closely tied to your self- confidence than your qualifications. Since you can never rise above the level of your self-image, this places a ceiling on your achievements.

Social and relationships - people with low self-esteem always have relationship problems. Their incessant need for reassurance can impose an intolerable strain on any relationship. It's the fundamental cause of marriage breakdown, parent-child friction and most sexual problems. When we cannot be truly who we are, we cannot fully relate.

Leisure and recreation - high self-esteem is vital for full and adventurous living. People who feel good about themselves are more likely to try out new things, to take risks, to meet new people. They are more successful in competitive activities such as sport.

* Read Geenen Roth's book ***"When Food is Love"***.

Spiritual and self-development - people with high self-esteem enjoy improving themselves physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually and are prepared to work at it because they know they're worth it. They believe they deserve?

Without positive self-esteem you'll feel like a victim and play out that role, believing you have few choices, if any, thus creating negative self-fulfilling experiences, which in turn validate your perception of low self worth.

Self-esteem is not just one thing. It comprises your -

Physical self image - your beliefs about your physical appearance

Emotional self-image - feelings about your emotional nature. Do you believe you are an angry person, a worrier, riddled with guilt, governed by fear? If you hold these beliefs then that is how you will be in life. What we believe comes true for us.

Intellectual self-image - your beliefs about your intelligence. Sadly many of us get into comparing our intelligence with others and more often than not place others above ourselves. If this is you, quit the comparing and validate your own worth.

Social self-image - beliefs about what others think of you, liked or disliked, respected or looked down upon, whether you feel comfortable in social situations, whether you feel accepted or approved of, whether you feel you fit in or not. Notice though that these beliefs are based on what others think - in essence they have power over you, they run your life - if your belief system allows that!

Real self-image - the person you think you are, which dictates your behaviour, governs your degree of success in every area of your life. If you think you are a shy retiring, withdrawn person, then those thoughts will govern how you are in the world. Change those thoughts to ones of inner confidence, a right to be and to deserve, and your world will begin to change.

Ideal self-image - the person you would like to be. There is often a large gap between our real self-image and the person we would like to be - but we can work towards the ideal.

Some things you can do to increase your self-esteem

Acceptance

Learn to accept yourself as you are right now, without criticism or blame. Learn to accept the things you cannot change e.g. you've got blue eyes and don't like the colour blue.

Attitude

Develop a positive mental attitude. Practice mindfulness - monitor your thoughts and feelings and convert negative ones to positive ones. Every day write out your positive qualities. Practice conscious thought stopping - get rid of negative and self-pitying thoughts to make room for positive ones. Develop healthy positive self-talk. Notice word power - don't say things like *"Why am I so stupid?"* rather *"How can I avoid doing this again?"*

Affirmations

Practice writing out positive affirmations daily - *"I am confident", "Everything I do is successful", "I am a highly effective, efficient and considerate person"*

Relaxation and auto-suggestion

Develop a facility to guide yourself into a relaxed state, telling different parts of the body to relax. The more relaxed you are, the more able you become to manage life.

Appreciation

Approve of yourself - don't depend on others for approval. Complete a daily appreciation journal. Acknowledge all the good things about you - even the tiniest of things. Put them into your appreciation Bank Account!

Awareness

To gauge how you feel about yourself, try answering the following questions - they may provide some surprising and at times discomforting answers so proceed slowly looking after yourself in the process. Remember, you are fine at this moment; accept yourself as you are at this moment. And make any changes because you want to - not to fit in with others' expectations of how you ought to be. This is *YOUR* life.

- What do I most like about myself?
- What do I most dislike about myself?
- In which situations do I feel most competent?
- In which situations do I feel least competent?
- What am I good at?
- What am I not so good at?
- Do I feel capable of succeeding at anything I set my mind to?
- What would I really like to do if I could only muster enough confidence?
- How good am I at dealing with other people?
- How comfortable do I feel in social situations?
- Do I take responsibility for my own decisions or do I let people push me around?
- Am I over critical of myself? Is my self-talk positive or negative?
- Am I doing what I want with my life?
- Do I have a sense of purpose that benefits others as well as me?
- Am I doing all that I can to fulfil it?
- When I look in the mirror, do I see someone I am proud of?

How to raise the self-esteem of others

- ✓ Praise others - take every opportunity to express gratitude, appreciation, acceptance and encouragement.
- ✓ When they speak, stop, look and listen. Show them you are listening.
- ✓ Keep your word - never promise something you cant do or don't wish to deliver.
- ✓ Avoid blaming, ridiculing, judging - never make others feel guilty.
- ✓ Avoid destructive criticism and sarcasm.
- ✓ If you have to criticise - criticise behaviour - not character.
- ✓ Set a good example.
- ✓ In all your relationships give quality rather than quantity time.

Action

Goal set and take small steps - reward yourself. Model yourself on others effective behaviour. Anchor by reminding yourself of past occasions when you felt confident, effective, successful.

Assertiveness

People with low self-esteem can be recognised through

- Craving for recognition and approval
- Comparing themselves with others
- Being daunted by someone else's success
- Being easily upset by criticism
- Always criticising or blaming others
- Being boastful, rude or bullying
- Gossiping
- Being over-generous

So, learn to say no, handle criticism, and every now and again boast about your good points.

SHIT... THE DEFINITIVE ANSWER

TAOISM - SHIT HAPPENS

BUDDHISM - IF SHIT HAPPENS - IT ISN'T REALLY SHIT

HINDUISM - THIS SHIT HAS HAPPENED BEFORE

ISLAM - IF SHIT HAPPENS IT IS THE WILL OF ALLAH

CATHOLICISM - SHIT HAPPENS BECAUSE YOU DESERVE IT

PROTESTANTISM - LET SHIT HAPPEN TO SOMEONE ELSE

JUDAISM - WHY DOES SHIT ALWAYS HAPPEN TO US?

RASTAFARIANISM - LET'S SMOKE THIS SHIT

An Ill Wind...

Bulgarian Anton Stolkich, 38, who went into hospital to have a bunion removed came out with a new set of breasts. Mr Stolkich's trolley was mixed up with that of a trans-sexual who was having breast augmentation surgery.

As a result, the latter had a completely unnecessary operation on her big toe, while Mr Stolkich became the proud owner of a new pair of 34DD silicone bosoms.

"The doctors were insensitive", recalled the buxom Bulgarian. "They said, *'We've made a bit of a boob'*, and then they all started laughing."

Mr Stolkich is now suing the hospital, although the trans-sexual has decided against legal action. "I don't know what they did to my toe, but it's done wonders for my dancing." she said.



Tiffany's Tit-Bits

If you've wiggled for a giggle or flaunted undaunted c'mon shuggle your chassis and show us yer Tit Bits!

You have been sooo silent, my sweet sugar plums ... *like a painted slut upon a painted motion* ... zilch, nada, nothing ... not a milli-bobbit gobbit of jolly juicy gossip, not a single solitary salami of salacious snippettes , not even a nicely noxious noisome nibble-worthy nugget of naked naughtiness ... has been slipped my way since I last dug the dirt ... EEEEK and apart from our esteemed Editor ***Julia the uber-babe*** ... *who I hear has been prancing around in a pretty pink tutu and storm-trooper boots, mmm, please can I borrow the tutu darling* ... are you all really such blameless and blushless little girls then? Hmmm? **[Whoever told you it was a pink tutu needs to ease up on their nocturnal activities if they want to save what's left of their eyesight. It was *black* ! - Ed]**



It was truly lovely to hear from those sweet, beautiful, wonderful girls who were kind enough to get in tush ...oops ... touch with me! But I just can't believe it darlings ... not one tell-tale amongst you all? I think not! But if you insist on being so nice ... well I will have to take drastic action ... no more ***Mistress Nasty Knickers*** from me ... oh no, from now on it will be ***Miss Pretty Panties!*** Oh yes the gloves are off ... unless you write, phone or email ***Tartan Skirt*** with something truly giggle making and rib ticklingly wicked about yourself or best friend ... then I am going to be really really sweet and nice about everybody ... aha, it's started, I feel a song or perhaps a pretty poem coming on! Oh dear ... I know it will be mind numbingly excruciatingly painful ... but hey don't blame me, you asked for it!

Now first off, as I aim to be fair ... *oops is that my nose growing* ... I will reveal my own depraved descent into sweet sissy sugared niceness! I am having a new dress made by the lovely ***Loraine*** at ***Hide and Sleek***. Now, for reasons I'd rather not go into at this precise point in time, it is an, em, um ... very pretty little frock ... we-ll, ok, I mean, it is an m-mm, um, er, really really, very pretty, very frilly, very short, little frock ... in an um, ohmigosh ...pale lemon satin, with ah er lashings of sissy bits and bows and rosebuds!!! Ah eeeeeek ok ok, you've guessed ... we-ll yes it is a little girl party frock, with full flouncy petticoat and matching frilly panties .....help BLUSH city!!!

I know what you are thinking, Tiff's flipped ...next she'll be telling us she wants to dress like ***Nora Batty*** ... all floral pinny and wrinkled stockings! We-ll now that you mention it ... I think we all know a number of trannie girls who look remarkably like that!!! But, back to my little party frock .... worst of all, I knew I was due a teasing over this sudden interest in regression! And the mirthsome ***Mrs*** [redacted] giggling whilst trying to keep her face straight and sound all matronly ... of course had to go and suggest I might want to .. eeek ... wear a nappy or rubber panties with it ... oh god puh-leese ... NO! Well I was so embarrassed I nearly wet myself ... and believe me in the circumstances that was the last thing I wanted to do !!! Actually, the wonderful truth is ... ***Loraine*** was gently teasing me, deservedly, for all my passed larfs at her expense ...but I realised later she was also genuinely being helpful, discrete and understanding ... and was letting me know that if I had wanted such items, she would make these and not bat an eyelid! Hey quite a wonderful woman that ***Mrs*** [redacted] and definitely not to be sniffed at ... oops or is that my nappy?

Now in this cruel and cynical world it may often seem that true real weepy wonderful romance is dead ... I mean look at the evidence : they put a tit in ***Titanic*** ; ***Robin Cook*** ... is a playboy, I'm baffled ... and scary eerie, strangely strangest of all, ***Seaman Stains*** from ***Pugwash*** is ***President!*** But amidst all this depravity, this adulation of the second rate, the seedy or the downright sordid ... I am delighted to be able to reveal, a dead gen., real life, wondrously romantic occurrence that has transpired! ... *And no that doesn't mean a transvestite who has passed away, sweetie!* No, I mean a real lurve happening , y'know the type of thing ... where two of the nicest people you know, whom you think should really get it together .... actually meet and in authentic silver screen Hollywood style ... *eeeeek, lots of teenage girlie screams* ... really do fall in love with each other!!!



As I think it might be tempting fate to mention exactly who ... I won't ... but if I say he is ***a former fabulous Miss Crosslynx who is also a hungsome hunk*** and she is ***a drop dead gorgeous sexy salsa German girl*** ... then we-ll you will prob guess for yourselves. Now from what I hear ... *as people will go leaving bedroom doors wide open in ... midst noisy lust ...tee hee* ... they are mucho mega a most wonderful match. And a matrimonial match might possibly be considered ... oh gosh yes please, I wish ... fingers crossed! All my love and thoughts to you both however things go!

Gosh talking of hungsome hunks and gorgeous girls ... I was seated demurely in the ***Polo Lounge, Glasgow***, and a bit depressed as my date was late ... when I noticed this very handsome couple I didn't recognise at first ... now either I need glasses ... and if I do I want them filled with strong drink ... or yer man ***Ruth*** as his male himself and yer girl ***Gina*** as his female herself ... looked suberb and totally convincing respectively, I kid u not. Actually yer man also was telling me his dietary system has now enabled him to achieve a mincingly impressive and truly girlish hourglass 26" waist .. WOW! And but for a wicked, nasty, viciously violent and virulent looking facial growth, which I whole heartedly agree would have reduced any self respecting transvestite princess to tears ... he would have paraded as a tiny waisted femme that night! But relax girls, before the fear of a face devouring virus spreads out of all control ... ***Ruth's*** tragic affliction sort of resembled ...what the uninitiated casual observer might call ... *a small spot*!!! But thank god for that plook! I was having a bad hair day! I had a cold, my nose was running, my head ached and I was a complete bag of uncertainties and insecurities as it was, without having two beautiful babes distract my man Ian's attention ... when he eventually arrived, that was! But thanks ***Ruth*** for being fun and supportive. And what of ***Ms Ruth Wonderwaist's*** babe-friend ***Gina*** ... mmm wow, she looked truly gorgeous. I really do love the new hair style honey ... suits you and makes you look great ... pity we couldn't all have gone off dancing but hey was brill to see you both.

Hmmm, had enough yet of me being all ***Julie Andrews***? Oh well, s'up to you girl, suppose we will just have to put up with all this niceness 'til something wicked comes along !!! Now talking of wicked , in the Jamaican London sense that is, what about our very own delightfully delicious de-luscious ***Louise*** in her long black evening dress! She wore it at the ***Glasgow Gay Bash*** ... *oops Ball sorree, I understand it is only a Gay bash when police are involved* ... held at the ***Central Hotel*** ... and girls I tell you true, ***Louise*** was totally stunning. Her long black figure hugging evening dress accentuated her tall slim proportions and made her look an absolutely beautiful young woman. It was wonderful, guys, girls even Gorillas who saw her were



obviously utterly impressed and most excellently, told her so! She admitted this was the first time she had experienced such an ego rush in public from how she was dressed and was delighted at the wonderful reaction. I can honestly tell you, and any who saw her will confirm, she was the star that night! Although ***Louise*** says the brilliant design idea for the dress was hers, it was obviously equally well made and fitted ... amazing what love can do ... tra-la!

Now for you poor girls vainly looking for some degree of sanity and continuity here ... gosh oops sorree ... I will try. So ... ***The news in briefs*** ... *nice frilly ones I hope:*

Ms Nicky [redacted] after weeks pining her little heart for her ***Hungsome Prance*** ... has now been phoned by boyfriend ***George*** ... mmm young love! I hope ***Boy George*** remembers to keep his clothes on next time he plays tennis ... *an in joke* ... but please make sure you ask ***Nicky*** to explain this when you see her ... tum-te-tum-te-tum tee hee mega!

Mmm and happy new hairdo to ***Karen*** she tells me she is now sporting a gorgeous red coiffure with gold streaks ... and the most wonderful news of all ... this one is home grown ... go for it girl! ***Kelly*** too has got a dash of gold in her flowing silken locks ... but girls you have a ways to go yet to match the incomparable ***Ms Trudi*** [redacted]! What a fabby fun girl, great gear, super web page ... and a truly stunning head of hair ... *dying to meet you soon my sweetie for a larf !*

Take care, sweeties! Puh-leese get in touch ... let it all hang out and give us all giggle! Tit -willow ... tit-willow ... tit-willow !!!

Love

Tiffany [redacted] ...

The Tartan Skirt Directory...

Support Groups

CROSSLYNX TV/TS GROUP
Meetings are held in Glasgow on the second Wednesday of the month
Tel: 0141-[redacted] Monday, 7.30 - 9.30
or write to: CROSSLYNX
c/o SLGS
PO Box 38
Glasgow G2 2QF

GRAMPIAN GENDER GROUP
Meetings are held in Aberdeen on the third Saturday of the month
Contact: Gillian
Tel: 01224-[redacted]
Mondays and Tuesdays, 6.30 - 9.30 pm
or write to: Grampian Gender Group
PO Box 18201
Aberdeen AB21 9YF

HIGHLAND T-GROUP
Meetings are held in Inverness on the first Saturday of the month.
Contact: Julia Gordon
Tel: 01463-[redacted]
Fax: 01463-[redacted]
E-mail:[redacted]
or write to: Highland T-Group
c/o Reach Out Highland
34 Waterloo Place
Inverness IV1 1NB

SCOTTISH TV/TS GROUP
Meetings are held in Edinburgh on the last Saturday of the month
Contact: Agnes
Tel: 0131-[redacted]

WEST LOTHIAN TV/TS GROUP
Meetings are held in Livingstone every second and last Saturday of the month
Contact: Donna
Tel: 01506-[redacted]
Monday -Thursday, 6 - 9 pm

Helplines and Support Organisations

BEAUMONT SOCIETY
Tel: 01582-[redacted]

BEAUMONT TRUST
Tel: 07000[redacted](10am - 10pm)

EQUALITY NETWORK
Tel: 07020[redacted]

GENDER TRUST
Tel: 07000-[redacted] (10am - 10pm)

IMPOTENCE ASSOCIATION
Tel: 0181-[redacted]

NATIONAL AIDS HELPLINE
Tel: 0800-[redacted] (24 hour free service)

PRIDE SCOTLAND
Tel: 0131-[redacted]

RANK OUTSIDERS
National Helpline
Tel: 0171[redacted] (Wednesday 7-9pm)
Scotland Coordinator
Tel: 01463-[redacted]

SAMARITANS
Tel: 0345[redacted] (24 hours service)

SCOTTISH MARRIAGE COUNSELLING
Tel: 0131-[redacted] (Monday to Friday)
Tel: 0141[redacted] (Wednesday)

WOMEN OF THE BEAUMONT SOCIETY
Tel: 01389-[redacted] (7 - 11pm)

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Tel & Fax (01309) [redacted]

the Tartan Skirt personal listings...



Attractive TV with varied interests and large wardrobe seeks couples and singles for fun and games.

Box No. 001



Glasgow
Zoe (35), very convincing TV, looking to meet other TVs for friendship or adult fun. I enjoy going out or sharing dress up nights indoors. Correspondence also welcome. Can travel or accommodate. SAE please. Photo appreciated.

Box No 002



Donna, lady artist, seeks to correspond with and meet discreet bi-TV or gent to enjoy occasional fun times.

Box No. 003

TV adores directoire knickers, corsetry and silky apparel, wishes to meet others with same or similar interests

Box No. 004



Inverness
Katy, attractive TV would like to meet singles, couples and other TVs to help her dress up (or down!) in satin and lace. Daytime only. Can accommodate.

Box No. 005

HOW TO ADVERTISE IN THE PERSONAL LISTINGS

Send your details with a photograph (optional) to: The Tartan Skirt (Personals), c/o Reach Out Highland, 34 Waterloo Place, Inverness, IV1 1NB.
or email your text and photo attachment to us at: [redacted]
(use Personals as the subject line.)
Please note the maximum number of words is 40. No sexually explicit wording or photograph will be accepted

ADVERTISING IN THE PERSONAL LISTINGS IS FREE

Your advert will run for four consecutive issues unless otherwise instructed.
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- Place your envelopes in a larger envelope together with your payment, and send to:
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  Inverness IV1 1NB

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the TARTAN SKIRT

CONTRIBUTOR'S GUIDELINES

The Tartan Skirt welcomes letters and articles of interest to the Transgender Community for inclusion in the magazine. Material considered malicious or disrespectful of the views of others, however, will not be accepted for publication.

Please submit material which is clearly legible, typed or stored on a 3.5 inch disk for use with Microsoft Word for Windows 95.

Don't forget to sign your manuscript (can't use it otherwise), but a request for anonymity will be fully respected.

Please enclose photographs with your name and address on the back, and a stamped addressed envelope if you wish them to be returned to you.

All material is sent on the understanding that the Tartan Skirt cannot be held liable for their safe custody or return.

The Editor reserves the right to shorten or modify any letter or article submitted for publication.

No minority interest group associated with the Transgender Community will be denied a voice within the pages of the Tartan Skirt - so illuminate, educate and entertain with your experiences as a unique individual.

Remember, even if you don't get published, writing is great therapy!

The TARTAN SKIRT is the magazine of the Scottish Transgender Community brought to you through the efforts of members of the community and the support and encouragement of Reach Out Highland.

We are proud to acknowledge the generosity of all concerned who selflessly contribute to these pages giving freely of their time, expertise and experience.

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cover: Tiffany [redacted]

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