

# EMERALD CITY #S6

The Emerald City Guide to Glasgow

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## Introduction

So it is traditional (meaning I have done it at least once before) that when I am involved in running a Worldcon I produce a special issue of *Emerald City* that is a guide to the local area. What I had actually intended for this was to do a restaurant guide, because Interaction can't afford to do much more than list and categorize restaurants. However, I don't live in Glasgow, and have had to rely on local experts. Much to my delight, this has turned into a much wider survey of Glasgow's attractions: everything from deep-fried Mars Bars to second hand bookstores to gay clubs to Internet cafes. Here's hoping you find this useful.

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## Kelvinbridge and Hillhead - the University area

By Ken MacLeod

Take the Underground - you'll see why it's called the Clockwork Orange when the

first train pulls in – to Kelvinbridge. Go up the escalator to Great Western Road. Stay on that side of the road. If you head to the right, you'll find various trendy clothes shops and sari shops. If you head left, across the green bridge over the Kelvin, you'll find as you go up the slight rise after the bridge a very fine second-hand bookshop. Recent stuff at reasonable prices, and some real finds.

For older and/or more obscure stuff, turn left immediately after the bridge into Otago Street, and look (off down to the left of that) for Otago Lane. Or you can walk up to the next corner and turn left onto Bank Street. From there (not omitting another nice second-hand bookshop, on the left as you walk along) you can take the misleadingly titled Great George Street down into Otago Street, and proceed. (I always get lost. Ask.) What you'll find, down at the bottom of the cobbled lane, is the immense and ancient vault of books called Voltaire and Rousseau. If you have any interest in, say, history, or war, or philosophy, or politics, or religion, or photography, you are unlikely to leave empty-handed.

You can now go back to Kelvinbridge and take one stop more, to Hillhead. Or you can walk, taking a right from the next corner of Otago St, up Gibson Street and left into University Avenue, which curves up and over Gilmorehill through the university. As you toil up the hill you'll see to the left the old buildings of the university. It has a nice museum and art gallery, the Hunterian.

Onward. Down the long slope to Byres Road. The Zoology and Medical departments are on your left, the tower of the Boyd Orr Building on your right. Ignore them. Well, maybe not – in the back alley in the shadow of the Boyd Orr

is the famous Ubiquitous Chip, favourite restaurant of the Scottish media mafia.

But anyway. Head to the right along Byres Road, and you'll shortly find yourself at Hillhead Underground Station. (Or, if you've taken the Underground, you're there already.) On the opposite side of Byres Road, almost but not quite directly across from the station, is a little alleyway called Dowanside Lane. A short distance down it is a vintage clothes shop called Starry Starry Night, which mostly has the tea-gown and tuxedo sort of thing, and is worth a look.

Blink away the sequin-dazzle and continue down the lane. Near the end, on the right, is a door that opens on to corridor of shops. One of them is a bookshop (which also sells old toys and gadgets), one is a comics shop, and one is a second-hand-but-not-quite-vintage clothes shop.

You can do the whole tour in a couple of hours. You know you can.

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## The One About the Deep Fried Mars Bar

By Jamie Scott

The deep-fried Mars Bar. Does it actually exist then? Two researchers working for the Glasgow Health Board were sceptical, having never seen such a beast for sale, and after hearing Jay Leno (he of the Tonight Show) mention the existence of same, wondered if the whole thing might be an urban myth. They resolved to do a survey [1] to find out the facts, so they started phoning up chip shops to find out what they offered. To make it a proper

scientific study, they phoned a lot of chip shops (488 to be exact). From the 303 responses they got, it transpired that 22% did indeed offer such a delicacy, and a further 17% used to. 76% were sold to children. It is perhaps not a coincidence that Glasgow is one of the leading centres for cardiovascular research in the world.

Naturally, a nation that thinks that chocolate and caramel confectionary can be improved with some batter and lard is not going to stop there. Oh no sirree. Haggis, Creme eggs, pineapple rings, all are fair game. However, there is one comment in the paper that should be thoroughly debunked:

*Encouragingly, we did also find some evidence of the penetrance [sic] of the Mediterranean diet into Scotland, albeit in the form of deep-fried pizza.*

This is a vicious and unwarranted slur upon the good fast food emporia of Scotland. We do have some standards, and would never sully a proper Neapolitan or Sicilian with hot pig fat.

That's what the cheap supermarket versions are for.

On the other hand, if you don't fancy hearing your arteries clang shut, there are some places in Glasgow that sell (whisper it) proper food. Some even cook stuff in ovens! As many regular congoers will know, in the last decade or so there has been an explosion of decent restaurants in town. Admittedly the hotel this time is a bit further away from the city centre, but it's still only 5 minutes away by taxi. And it means we are closer to the West End as well.

[1] "Deep and crisp and eaten: Scotland's deep-fried Mars bar", *The Lancet*, Vol. 364, Issue 9452, pp 2180, 18 Dec 2004

[This article first appeared in Progress Report #2 of Concussion, the 2006 Eastercon, which will take place in Glasgow on 14-17 April 2006 at the Moat House.]

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## A Motorway Runs Through It

By Gary Gibson

### The Barras

Found at the east end of the city centre, just off the High Street, which in previous centuries stood near the city centre (since moved about a mile west). Its worth making the distinction between The Barrowlands and The Barras as the former is the venue for the majority of visiting rock and pop acts in Glasgow, and the latter is the weekend market that takes place around it.

At the Barras, its possible to pick up anything from fresh fruit and veg to an unholy quantity of tat as well as genuine rarities: within a few blocks you can find TVs, used clothes, broken cassette recorders, bootleg software, music and DVDs, smuggled tobacco, furniture, antiques, rare vinyl, posters, more bootlegs, cameras, Betamax video players, carpets, eight track stereos, dodgy paintings of Elvis, and local bands filming cheap videos with their mates from the Art School in order to look more street. To get a flavour of the Barras, think: what your weekend shopping might be like if the Cold War had gone nuclear sometime in the mid-Eighties.

Across the road from the Barrowlands music venue, can be found the

famous/notorious Saracens Head drinking establishment, originally built to cater for the executioners who used to ply their trade nearby (the Necropolis graveyard being conveniently located just up the road). Visiting the Head is not necessarily recommended to visitors from the States, despite it having supposedly cleaned up its act in recent years (unless you really want to risk re-enacting the "mugging a tourist" scene from *Trainspotting*).

On a similar note, the Barrowlands music venue is also notorious as being the 1960s stalking ground of Scotland's most infamous serial killer, Bible John.

It's also worth noting the nearby Paddy's Market: in some ways, Paddy's represents the true nature of the Barras, which like Paddy's started out primarily as a gathering point not only for local farmers but also rag-and-bone men who would bring other people's detritus to market on barrows.

To get a flavour of Paddy's, think: your weekend shopping after a nuclear exchange, but followed by irreversible nuclear winter.

Open: weekends, from about 9 to 4. Getting there: train from station opposite SECC, to Argyle St. station, then ten minute walk or two minutes by taxi. Also plenty of buses.

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### **(Some) Rock pubs**

Some of Glasgow's bars have become quite famous due to their associations with the drinking and social habits of various bands who've come to prominence in recent years (Franz Ferdinand, etc). Prominent amongst these is King Tut's Wah Wah Hut, (Oasis were

discovered here, playing to an audience of barely a dozen, by a less than sober Alan McGee). For up-and-coming bands, it's the first stop on arrival in the city: it's split into two halves, the bar area on the ground floor, with the rowdy noise-making taking place upstairs.

A few blocks away on Sauchiehall Street is Nice n Sleazy, which caters mostly to old punks and students from the nearby Glasgow School of Art. Features faux-retro décor and paintings of slightly sinister-looking green-skinned women in turbans, courtesy of local artist Ronnie Heeps. Expect to find indie bands gathered in alcoves, discussing how to break it big.

King Tut's: 272a St. Vincent Street  
[www.kingtuts.co.uk](http://www.kingtuts.co.uk)

Nice n Sleazy: 421 Sauchiehall Street

Ronnie Heeps:  
[www.painfulcreatures.com/collheeps.htm](http://www.painfulcreatures.com/collheeps.htm)  
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### **Bars also worth mentioning**

For those seeking a quiet drink and maybe a meal, The Goat is worth considering: a short (fifteen minute) walk from the front entrance of the SECC, The Goat also features free wi-fi if you decide to bring your laptop with you (they also have a computer you can use if you don't). A mixture of old found furniture and the stylishly modern but comfortable.

The Goat, 1287 Argyle Street,  
[www.thegoat.co.uk](http://www.thegoat.co.uk)

If you're looking for something approximating a genuine, old-fashioned Scottish bar, this place is worth a shot: very much a dog sleeping in the corner, couple of people playing traditional music on fiddles kind of place, it's hardly lacking

in atmosphere. Also situated conveniently very close to the SECC. Be warned: as pubs go, it's very small. I've been in bathrooms that were bigger.

Ben Nevis, 1147 Argyle Street

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## The West End

Like many cities, Glasgow has its own bohemian quarter, or – more accurately – student district, centred around the axis of Great Western Road and Byres Road in the West End.

Your best route through this area is to come up the orange tunnel next to the entrance to the SECC, keep walking up Minerva Street (car dealership on your left), then turn left onto St. Vincent Crescent, turn right at Cecil Street, which leads directly onto Argyle Street.

(Alternatively, catch the train into Central Station, walk a block to the St. Enoch subway station, and catch a ride to Kelvingrove Subway, which will deposit you directly onto Great Western Road).

This part of Argyle Street which runs right through the city has enjoyed a transformation over the past several years as rocketing property prices in the West End have forced both new house owners and students to look increasingly farther afield from Byres Road/Great Western Road for places to live. As a result, some of the trendiest as well as the nicest bars can also be found here, a few minutes walk from the SECC.

Once on Argyle Street, turn to your left and walk for a minute or so until you reach Kelvinhaugh Street, where Stereo can be found, a bar catering primarily to an audience hungry for live indie bands (the aforementioned The Goat, as well as Ben Nevis, are literally seconds away on

Argyle Street). A few blocks further along, Argyle Street merges with Sauchiehall Street to become Dumbarton Road: here you'll find the Art Galleries, unfortunately still closed for renovation.

Best bet is to keep along Argyle Street to where you'll see the road split in two with a garage stuck in the middle: go down the right fork and immediately turn the corner you'll see the Kelvin Way, a road which cuts straight past the Art Galleries (on your left) and on into the West End, along with Kelvingrove Park (on your right).

At the end of the Kelvin Way you'll find Gibson Street cutting down to your right: it features the excellent and highly recommended Stravaigins bar, as well as a very agreeable coffee house a few doors further down. Keep going along Kelvin Way and it becomes Bank Street, which is where the West End really begins. Keep going until Great Western Road: if you turn right here, you're heading into town. Turn left, and you're heading into the University district.

Turn towards town (to your right), and you'll find several bars, restaurants and cafes within a block or two (all generally pretty good: The Liquid Ship has a good reputation), along with an Apple Macintosh shop (Scotsys, if you're in desperate needs of parts or supplies), and further along a bicycle shop (Alpine Bikes, who also rent bikes out: [www.alpinebikes.co.uk/ourshops/goe.aspx](http://www.alpinebikes.co.uk/ourshops/goe.aspx)).

You'll also find Caledonia Books, a well-known second-hand bookstore (Voltaire and Rousseau is just around the corner in Otago Street) Walk further up Great Western Road away from town (ie turn to your left), and you'll find: health food stores, record shops, furniture, and many, many charity shops. A busy, popular area.

Walk several blocks along Great Western Road away from the city centre, and you'll reach the point where Great Western Road meets Byres Road. Here you'll find Oran Mor, a church recently converted into an enormous bar with ceiling paintings by local literary light Alisdair Gray: it's already got an excellent reputation, both as a bar and as a venue for the arts (it puts on plays almost daily). Be warned, however, it's almost always very, very busy. In this area, you'll also find one or two shops catering to the art market, good to know if you're at all thinking about taking the work of Scottish artists home with you.

The Botanics are across the road, on your left stop here for a moment or two to enjoy the shade in the giant greenhouses, particularly good if you're caught in the occasionally chilly Scottish summer. Otherwise, more of the same down Byres Road: record shops particularly the dirt-cheap and highly regarded Fopp!, which also sells mucho cheap paperbacks as well as CDs and DVDs. Keep going and you'll also find the Oxfam charity bookshop, also good for a browse.

Walk past the Hillhead subway station and turn immediately into the lane on your left for several excellent bars (including The Scotia, which often has live music of a more traditional variety) and restaurants (The Loft, as well as the very famous but not inexpensive Ubiquitous Chip, almost entirely populated by assistant producers from the BBC and out of work actors), as well as a small cinema. This is as close to the spiritual heart of the West End as you can get. Also here can be found DeCourcy's Arcade, a large building filled with many small shops selling everything from locally made jewelry to video games to second hand vinyl.

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## Museums and Galleries (and some pubs)

By Duncan Lunan

### The Cultural Bit

Glasgow's main Art Gallery and Museum at Kelvingrove is closed for renovations and these are being delayed due to technical problems with a new lift. However many of its exhibits are currently on show at the MacLellan Galleries on Sauchiehall Street. The Burrell Museum in Pollock Park remains a major international attraction, with Pollok House nearby, and the Glasgow Museum of Modern Art is in Royal Exchange Square in the city centre. The Museum of Transport at Kelvin Hall, across from Kelvingrove, is very well worth a visit, likewise the People's Palace Museum on Glasgow Green, and so is the Museum of Religion, near the Cathedral, and the Cathedral itself. The Episcopal Cathedral is on Great Western Road, recently decorated with new ceiling murals, the Roman Catholic Cathedral is on the Broomielaw, near Customs House Quay, and the Glasgow Mosque is on the south side of the river near the Nautical College and the law courts.

The Centre for Contemporary Art on Sauchiehall Street has an ongoing exhibitions programme, and there are many smaller galleries, advertising in the Glasgow Galleries Guide. Lesser museums include the Lighthouse in the city centre (architecture and design), the oldest house in Glasgow, Provand's Lordship, on High Street near the Cathedral, the Tenement House Museum in Garnethill, the Strathclyde Police Black Museum on Pitt Street, and the Fossil Grove in Victoria

Park. The Charles Rennie MacIntosh Building at Glasgow School of Art is partly open to the public and more of it is to be made accessible. Other highlights on the Mackintosh trail include Scotland Street school, which now houses the Museum of Education, the Willow Tea Rooms on Sauchiehall Street (above a jewellers) and the Hunterian Art Gallery at Glasgow University. The University's 19th century complex includes older buildings and features transplanted from the original College on the High Street, and the main Hunterian Museum with its prehistoric exhibits. The University's Visitor Centre conducts tours of the campus, and there are haunted Glasgow tours starting from the pedestrian precinct in Buchanan /Street. Open-topped tour buses go round the city and you can join them or dismount at any stage. There's also an aquabus going down the river Clyde to Renfrew and back, with commentary on the historic shipyards etc. The city claims to have more park land per head of population than any other city in Britain if not in Europe, and the Botanic Gardens at the top of Byres Road are well worth seeing.

The Glasgow Science Centre, across the river from the SECC, is mainly for children but includes a planetarium and an IMAX theatre giving daily shows. At the time of writing Interaction is talking with the museum about discounted entrance to the museum for convention members, though nothing has been announced yet.

The University Observatory in the Science Park on Maryhill Road is not open to the public but organised visits can be arranged. I am a curator of the Public Observatory in Airdrie, 15 miles east of Glasgow, and can arrange visits; I also built Britain's first astronomically aligned stone circle for 3000 years, in Sighthill

Park due north of the city centre, and can take anyone interested up there.

The Glasgow Science Fiction Writers circle meets on alternate Tuesdays in the Glasgow Film Theatre on Rose Street, off Sauchiehall Street. The SF bookshops are Forbidden Planet on Buchanan Street and Futureshock on Woodlands Road. ASTRA, the Scottish spaceflight society, meets weekly in Airdrie Arts Centre, running the Public Observatory nearby, and meets monthly at least in Glasgow contact me for details.

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## **The Pubs**

Glasgow has many pubs worth visiting; the major Real Ale one is the Bon Accord on North Street, near the Mitchell Library (the largest public reference library in Europe). It's my local and it has ten traditional hand-pulled beers at any time; it's won Glasgow Pub of the Month and the Year many times as well as Scottish annual awards for both beer and whisky. It also prides itself on its wine selection and does meals till 7 p.m. Its chief rival is the Three Judges, at Partick Cross. The oldest continuously open pub in Glasgow is the Scotia Inn on Stockwell Street; it and the Victoria Bar across the street are the principal pubs for folk music. The pub claiming the longest history, though not on the same site, is the Saracen's Head where Dr. Johnson stayed on his visit to Glasgow; but it has little character nowadays. The Horseshoe Bar, on Drury Street Lane in the city centre, claims that its unique Edwardian format makes it the longest continuous bar in Europe.

There are frequent events at the Royal Concert Hall and the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Dance. The Star Folk Club meets on Thursdays in St.

Andrews in the Square, a beautiful converted church east of the city centre. There are a number of regular jazz venues including Blackfriars Bar in Candleriggs, Bloc on Bath Street (early Saturday evening), Archie's on Waterloo St. (Saturday afternoon and evening) and Cottier's Theatre in the West End (early Sunday evening). There's a free publication called The Gig Guide (formerly The Live Scene) which lists all music events on a monthly basis and that can probably be obtained from the Information Centre off George Square, and most of the live music pubs stock it.

I know an expert on Victorian and Edwardian pubs who offered a tour to the last Worldcon, but it wasn't taken up. If a group of people were interested I could probably arrange something privately with him. Some restaurants worth mentioning are the May Flower, the Noodle Bar and the Canton Express, all on Sauchiehall Street at or near Charing Cross, with higher class and more expensive Chinese restaurants nearer the centre. There are many fine Indian restaurants around Charing Cross including Mother India and the Shish Mahal on Elderslie Street, the Panjea on Kent Road, Koh-i-Noor and India on North Street, and the Karisma on Sauchiehall Street, going west from Charing Cross.

[Since writing this article, Duncan has been lucky enough to land a job teaching astronomy in Turkey. He does still intend to be at Interaction, but he may be difficult to contact so if you want to follow up on any of the above please write to me and I'll pass the message on. - Cheryl]

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## A Guzzler's Guide to Glasgow

By Hal Duncan

### Argyle Street – Elbo Room / Stereo

This is where I'll be doing a lot of my drinking during the con, I suspect. Sitting on Argyle Street virtually straight across the road from the covered walkway into the SECC, this pub opened fairly recently so I can't speak for the food. But, designed to catch the punters going to and coming from the gigs at the SECC, this is a pub soundtracked by and for the indie kids. Stylish without being too trendy and phony, it's one of those bars of solid tables and leather booths now typical of modern Glasgow, a far-cry from the spit-and-sawdust, No Mean City image of "lounges" that are anything but relaxing and "saloons" which belong in the Wild West.

If you're an indie music junkie like half the student residents of this area, you'll fit right in either here or just along the road at Stereo on Kelvinhaugh Street, which also has a pub grub menu and where the music tends to be live. Stereo – along with its sister in the City Centre, Mono – is an outgrowth of one of Glasgow's indie scene keystones, the Thirteenth Note pub – where Alex Kapranos of Franz Ferdinand was once a lowly barman – and as such it's one of those small-scale venues where a lot of bands get their first gigs. As well as being a hipster's hangout, the organic/vegan menu should suit anyone who likes their food to come with ethics.

If it's food you're interested in, though, there's one name you have to sear into your memory...



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## **Gibson Street – Stravaigin**

Think Aromatic Thai Orange & Lime Leaf Broth with Seared Scottish Fishes, Mussels, Ho Fan Noodles and Crispy Greens. Think Garlic Chicken Schnitzel on Sauerkraut with Caper Lemon Butter & Salad. Think Chargrilled “Gillespie” Pork, Fennel and Leek Sausages, Melted Onion Stovies, Buttered Savoy Cabbage, Rich Merlot Gravy.

And that’s just the bar food.

If you think Glasgow food is all fish suppers and deep-fried Mars bar, take a wee walk from the SECC, westward along Argyle Street (you’ll pass both Elbo Room and Stereo this way), and cut up through along Kelvin Way (or through Kelvingrove Park if it’s a sunny day) to Gibson Street, where Stravaigin Restaurant and Caf/Bar will show you what it’s really all about. Stravaigin – which takes its name from the Scottish word for “wandering” – specialises in Scottish fusion, taking the most traditional local ingredients fresh from the farms and fisheries and turning them into cordon bleu cuisine with influences from round the world. The menus change with the seasons but there are certain old favourites you’ll always be able to get: big fearties can play it safe with the Aberdeen Angus beef steak; or if you have the guts – the sheep guts, that is – there’s always that most traditional of Scottish dishes, haggis, tatties (mashed potatoes) and neeps (turnip / swede).

Whatever your tastes, you’re certain to find something on the A La Carte or daily specials menus that will pique your interest, and the best of all is that the same kitchen which caters to the restaurant downstairs also serves the less formal

upstairs bar/caf, where cocktail specialist James will mix you a dry gin martini to die for. Downstairs may be a bit expensive, especially for visitors unused to British prices, but upstairs what you get is top quality nosh for just a wee bit more than regular bar food prices and a friendly, laid-back ambience that will show you Scottish pub culture at its best. Five stars? Stravaigin gets a sodding supernova.

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## **Ashton Lane / Cresswell Lane**

From Stravaigin, a five-ten minute walk along University Avenue – which comes off Gibson Street and curves up and over the hill – will take you past the mock-Gothic splendour of the University Tower, the neo-classical solemnity of Alexander “Greek” Thomson’s Wellington Church and the Art Deco stylings of the Reading Rooms. The Hunterian Museum, which adjoins the University Library has all sorts of goodies for art-lovers – a collection of Whistler, a whole bundle of paintings by the Glasgow Boys and the Scottish Colourists, and a full-scale recreation of a Glasgow tenement, furnished completely in Mackintosh designs.

As the road curves round and down towards Byres Road you’ll then find yourself heading into the heart of the trendy, studenty, bohemian area of Glasgow. If you fancy a night out in the pub for a wee break from the room parties, you’ll feel safer and more snug in this part of town than you might in the City Centre; the West End is Glasgow’s East Village, and on either Ashton Lane or Cresswell Lane (which both run parallel to Byres Road) there’s something to suit everyone’s tastes. On Ashton Lane, Jinty McGinty’s will do you a good Guinness and may well have some live folk music in

the background and a crowd spilling into the street outside – good craic but refreshingly free of faux-Irish tat – while Bar Brel has an excellent selection of European beers. You’ll get more typical “locals” pubs like Tennent’s or Jock Tamson’s Barins just round the corner on Byres Road; or trendier folks may find Vodka Vodka or Bar Budda on Cresswell Lane more to their liking. The latter also has Caf Andaluz for the foodies, a great wee tapas place with superb boquerones and my personal favourite, chorizo y bottifera negra – chorizo with black pudding (or blood sausage, for the uninitiated).

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### **Anywhere and Everywhere**

Of course, if you want to sample Glasgow food in all its heart-stopping, artery-clogging, salty goodness then all you have to do is pop into any fish ‘n’ chip shop – and you won’t have to walk far to find one, trust me – and ask for a black pudding supper – black pudding deep-fried in batter, with big fat greasy chips (not fries, remember, chips). Wash it down with a bottle of Irn Bru and you have a guaranteed cure for any hangover the Con can throw at you. You may also have a guaranteed heart attack, but, hey, you can’t make an omelet without breaking eggs. And frying them. In lard preferably.

Mmmm, fat.

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## **Gay Glasgow**

By Paul Cockburn

With Scotland's largest concentration of people, it's no surprise that Glasgow has the biggest single "gay scene" in Scotland; that said, it is still incredibly small compared with the likes of London or major American cities. In the UK, most "gay villages" are found east of their respective city centres as these were, at least originally, the less fashionable and cheaper part of town. Glasgow is no different in this; many of Glasgow's gay venues are found grouped together in the area known as the Merchant City, where former warehouses have been transformed into luxury apartments and old banking and insurance buildings have become classy designer boutiques and quality drinking establishments.

That said, the city's – and indeed Scotland's – oldest, continually open gay bar, remains to the West of Central Station. The Waterloo (306 Argyle Street) is a busy, down-to-earth place quite popular with an older crowd but also sees youngsters stepping out on the grand gay adventure.

Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered visitors to the city can do much worse than visiting the Glasgow LGBT Centre (GGLC, 11 Dixon Street), close to St Enoch Square. This community-based institution includes a cafe bar (offering all-day breakfasts), information on health and local events, along with free newspapers and a Garden of Reflection if you're seeking some quiet moment. GGLC is home for almost twenty of the city's user groups and organisations.

Most of the city's gay bars and clubs are found within the Merchant City district. Bennets (80-90 Glassford Street) is the

city's longest-running (20 years plus) 7-days-a-week gay club and has recently emerged – phoenix-like – after a major fire in a neighbouring building. Tends to play the latest dance and gay anthems, and stays open to at least 3:00am.

Club Devotion (18 Jamaica Street) is open until 3:00am and has two main areas; relaxing seated area and dancefloor.

Further choice is offered by a number of weekly or monthly “one nighters” in other (often non-gay but “Pink Pound”-chasing venues. Burly, for instance, is a monthly event at The Arches nightclub (30 Midland Street), which caters for people who like wearing rubber, leather, uniform, industrial, sportswear, kilts & denim. Violate, meantime, is a monthly event for those who are into SM / general pervery, usually held in the Big Joint (South Street).

Cube (34 & 44 Queen Street) has distinct gay nights on Mondays and Tuesdays, while The Tunnel (84 Mitchell Street) offers gay-targeted fun on Wednesdays.

Club Eros (1-3 Bridge Street) is the city's biggest licenced sauna and gym for gay and bi-men, set over three floors. The Lane (60 Robertson Street Lane, off Argyle Street) is smaller, with private cabins, and is not as busy as it once was. Relax Central (3<sup>rd</sup> floor, 27 Union Street) is another established sauna, right in the centre of the city. Entry fee for all of these tends to be around 8.

Three of the city's most prominent bars are on the same block. Delmonica's (68 Virginia Street) claims to be the city's biggest and busiest, and has DJs nightly from 9:00pm. Popular with a young crowd, and great if your face fits with the bar staff. Just along a bit is Moda (58 Virginia Street), a fashionable pub/club for those into shorts (of the drinks

variety), cocktails and clubbing; it's actually physically linked with The Polo Lounge (84 Wilson Street), a well-established bar with the atmosphere (at least upstairs) of an early 20th century gentleman's club – downstairs, it's all modern dance beats and being careful not to hit your head on the ceiling!

The Merchant Pride (20 Candleriggs) is an upmarket bar slightly deeper into the Merchant City and has regular live music and cabaret events. It is the only Glasgow gay bar which I would describe as fully wheelchair accessible.

Revolver Bar (6a John Street) is the city's lone gay basement bar and markets itself as a “refreshing antidote” to the standard gay scene, with pool table, state of the art free jukebox with hardly any crap pop on it, and some of the most reasonable drink prices in the city. Although it has a quiz on Saturday afternoons, there's definitely no karaoke!

That said, another alternative is offered by the Court Bar (69 Hutcheson Street), close to Bennets. It's very much a typical Glasgow Bar, and indeed, only becomes “gay” in the evening!

For those wishing to experience some queer retail therapy, Silks and Secrets (308 Argyle Street) offers clothes and toys catering for gay, transvestite and fetish tastes – including those of us who are slightly larger than slim disco bunnies. Alternatively, you can head for the most northern outpost (so far) of the UK's Clone Zone retail chain, which stocks a range of books, American and UK magazines, club clothes and sex toys.

## Internet Access in Glasgow

By Richard Mosses and Cheryl Morgan

An article about Internet access in the convention hotels is available on the Interaction web site at <http://www.interaction.worldcon.org.uk/internet.htm>.

At the time of writing the SECC has issued prices for its wi-fi service, and they are so absurdly high that it is unlikely anyone will want to use them.

A number of establishments in the university district offer wi-fi hot spots. Those we have identified are:

Curlers on Byres Road

The Hall on Sauchiehall Street

Starbucks on Byres Road

Beanscene in Cresswell Lane

78 St Vincent Street (the name of the bar is its location)

Aragon Bar on Byres Road

Sauchiehall Street and St Vincent Street are in the City Centre, while Byres Road is in the West End.

See also Gary Gibson's recommendation of The Goat in Argyle Street, which offers free wi-fi.

A more comprehensive list of hot spots in Glasgow, including details of the providers, is available online at <http://cnet.jiwire.com/browse-hotspot-united-kingdom-gb-glasgow-2128563.htm>.

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## An Eating Opportunity

By Cheryl Morgan

One of the more interesting things that will be happening in Glasgow during Worldcon is a food promotion called Gourmet Glasgow. We'll miss the main event, but there should be promotions in a number of restaurants. Details are currently vague, so keep watching the web site: <http://www.gourmetglasgow.com/>.

If this year is anything like the 2004 event then you'll probably be wanting to go to dinner with some helpful Brit who happens to have a Marks & Spencer & More card and can get 10% off in the participating restaurants. Guess who has one of those?

The whole thing is run by the Glasgow Restaurateurs Association, and if you are looking for somewhere good to eat out you might try their list of members, which can be found here: <http://www.bestglasgowrestaurants.com/restaurants.php>. The above-mentioned Stravaigin and Ubiquitous Chip are both listed.

Another of the restaurants listed is Yen. This is an oriental restaurant, and the reason it is important is that it is only a few minutes walk away from the convention site. It is situated in an old dockside building called The Rotunda, which is helpfully obviously shaped. You can't miss it. Kevin and I ate there one night while we were in Glasgow for a committee meeting.

When I say the Yen is oriental, what I mean is that it does a whole bunch of stuff. Downstairs is a Teppanyaki restaurant which, when we were there, was either hosting a hen party or was providing very good entertainment. Upstairs was more

sedate, and had three menus: Chinese, Japanese and Thai. We were a little suspicious of this. Could a restaurant really do all three well? So Kevin ordered Chinese and I ordered Thai, and we were both very happy with the food. This place could do very well during the convention. But be warned, it is very popular. We barely got in the night we went. Booking in advance is probably wise.

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## Maritime Glasgow

By Cheryl Morgan

The River Clyde has long been a busy maritime thoroughfare. In ancient times, Viking raiders would use the river as an easy route to rich inland Scottish settlements, but it was not until the previous millennium that Glasgow came into its own as a power in the shipbuilding world. Initially this was with the perfection of the sailing ship. Glasgow's *Cutty Sark*, the last and fastest of the tea clippers, was able to outpace any contemporary steamer on the run to the Far East or Australia.

The presence of good local supplies of coal and iron ore, and a skilled local work force, led to Glasgow becoming a major industrial centre in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Europe's first successful commercial steamboat, *Comet*, was built in Glasgow and operated a passenger service up and down the river from 1812. Glasgow also pioneered the building of iron-hulled vessels, and by the 1860s some 80% of all British shipping was built on the Clyde.

Two World Wars kept Glasgow's shipyards busy through most of the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. In addition

prestigious cruise liners such as Cunard's *Queen Mary* and *Queen Elizabeth II* were built in Glasgow as was Queen Elizabeth's personal ship, the Royal Yacht *Britannia*. However, in the latter part of the century globalization saw a decline in shipbuilding throughout Europe and Glasgow's industry suffered accordingly. The focus of the city turned to preservation of history, and to economic regeneration. Visitors to Glasgow can still enjoy a taste of the city's past by visiting the Clyde Maritime Centre and the two preserved vessels, the barque *sv Glenlee* and the paddle steamer *Waverley*.

With the decline in marine traffic, large parts of Glasgow's docklands were put to new uses. The area known as Pacific Quay was particularly successful in this regard, becoming home to the Glasgow Science Centre, the Glasgow Tower, an iMax cinema and offices for BBC Scotland. Across the river you could find the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre (SECC), home to many prestigious international events.

Economic cycles come and go, and with the work done by Glasgow University on the development of starship drives Glasgow once more became famous for building ships. These vessels, however, sailed very different seas. Following the Scottish Declaration of Independence in 2165, President MacLeod laid the first stone in what was to become Spaceport Glasgow, the thriving inter-planetary terminal so well known to both human and alien spacefarers. Located on the site of the former SECC, Spaceport Glasgow is Earth's busiest travel hub. The spaceport has also seen the launch of many famous starships, including the giant cruise liners built in Glasgow for White Star Federated Spacelines.

Today Glasgow's shipbuilding industry is once again under threat. Alien-owned corporations such as Davros Industries are producing cheap copies of Glasgow-designed spacecraft (although in the case of Davros sales are affected by persistent rumours of the use of slave labour in their Skaro shipyards). However, for now Glasgow-built spacecraft are still acknowledged to be the best in the galaxy.

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## Glasgow Online

By Cheryl Morgan

### Music Tour

While Liverpool might be the city in Britain most famous for its popular music, the current rock capital of the UK is Glasgow. Bands such as Belle and Sebastian and Franz Ferdinand have put the city on the music map. Thankfully the City Council is very proud of this. So the Glasgow City Marketing Bureau have produced a downloadable MP3 file that can take you on a guided tour of the city's notable music locations. You can download it at: <http://www.visititours.com/tennentsitour.htm>.

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### Tourism links

The Glasgow City Marketing Bureau's own web site <<http://www.seeglasgow.com/>> contains a lot of useful information about the city.

There is a list of tourism links on Interaction's web site here:

<http://www.interaction.worldcon.org.uk/area.htm>.

And there are rather more tourism links on the Concussion web site here: <http://www.eastercon2006.org/site.php>.

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## Contributors

**Gary Gibson's** second novel, *Against Gravity*, has just been published by Tor UK.

**Ken MacLeod** once lived in Glasgow's university area for about a year, and has often returned to it. It appears in two of his nine novels, but not in his latest, *Learning the World*, which should be available at Worldcon and which he will be very happy to sign there.

**Duncan Lunan** is a Glasgow-based full-time writer on science and science fiction with four books published, contributions to 15 others, 30 short stories and about 600 articles, including 14 years as SF critic for the *Glasgow Herald*. At Worldcon he will be giving an update on the mediaeval mystery of the Green Children of Woolpit, on which he spoke at the 1995 Worldcon, and for which he is currently seeking a publisher.

**Hal Duncan** is 33 and lives in Glasgow's bohemian West End. His first novel, *Vellum*, will be available in the UK from Macmillan as of 5th August 2005 and is due to be released in the US by Del Rey sometime in 2006. He also has stories in the *Nova Scotia* anthology and Issue #9 of *Electric Velocipede*, both available at WorldCon.

**Paul Cockburn** is a writer / journalist who works for a Glasgow-based magazine

publisher, but is now getting back into fiction writing again. His work has appeared in publications ranging from *The Scotsman* (newspaper) and *Scottish Book Collector* to *Dreamwatch* and *Star Trek* magazine.

**Richard Mosses** graduated with a PhD in Physics from Strathclyde University in 1999. He works as a Senior Scientist for a small R&D company based near Glasgow in Scotland. Richard is participant in the Glasgow Science Fiction Writers Circle and has completed his first novel *Enoch's Vault* <[www.khaibit.com/vault.html](http://www.khaibit.com/vault.html)>.

**Jamie Scott** is a member of the committee of Concussion, the 2006 Eastercon. He lives in Glasgow. More information about the convention is available at: <http://www.eastercon2006.org/>.

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## Footnote

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to this Guide. Obviously it is by no means comprehensive, but hopefully it will help visitors to Glasgow enjoy the city more. And don't forget that the 2006 Eastercon, Concussion, will be taking place in Glasgow. I'll be producing an updated version of this Guide for that. So if you find a particularly good restaurant, pub or other attraction during Interaction, please send me a write-up.

A number of the contributors to this special issue are published authors. Strangely enough, lots of them seem to have books out around this time. And by some strange and bizarre coincidence that will probably result in Scotland disappearing in a Singularity Event any

day now, the July 2005 issue of *Emerald City* will feature reviews of those books.

And maybe a haggis or two.

But no tartan tat.

Ciao,

Love 'n' hugs,

Cheryl