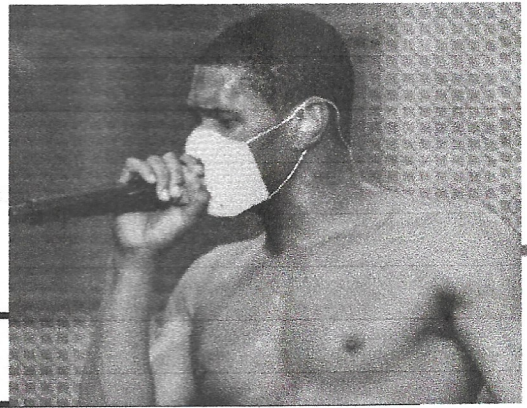


The Usher

JUNE 2ND

#5

FREE



Taps Aff

Apparently last month broke sunshine records in Scotland. We had 212 hours of it. There's been ongoing discussion in *The Usher* "press office" about whether we'd prefer the weather of our lockdown summer to be extra good to cheer us up, or extra dismal so that nothing goes to waste. We'd love to know what you think. Now it's here, we can't deny we're glad the Chief has taken matters in hand and is laying down the rays. Why wait forever in hope of a better summer in a resort far away, when wherever we go and whatever we do, nothing will beat the impossibly hot summers of our childhood?

Use all that outdoors time to spend with that Special Household you've been itching to see. Survey the 2-metre network of picnic clusters and decide who you fancy, then confess all in 'Who Fancies Who'.

And do it while you can, the forecast is rain later this week, so you might be reading this slightly soggy copy, smiling glumly to yourself that it's just as well, we're saving up for May 2021.

Skip Henshaw & Saoirse Hammer

XX

THE BALLAD OF DAVID LLOYD

PT. 2

10. Coincidentally, David has the same name as a chain of gyms, one of which is near to his Newhaven luxury apartment. When he first got his membership, every time he went in, he made a joke to the receptionist about how it was nice that they'd named the place after him, or words to that effect.

11. The last time David visited the gym was the 22nd April 2019. He does however have 'going to the gym' listed as one of his interests on Tinder, alongside 'good films, good food, good wine, and good company'. He follows this sentence with a wine glass emoji and a winking emoji.

12. David spends £14 a month on a shampoo that is said to have been clinically proven to promote hair growth.

13. David looked up his ex-wife's new boyfriend on Facebook and accidentally liked his profile picture. He unliked it, but he's not sure if Jeremy still received a notification.

14. David has four framed pictures in the Newhaven luxury apartment: two are of his children, one is of him and four other men clinking tankards on a stag do in Prague (they asked the waitress to take the photo), and one is a photo of when David met Rory McIlroy, pro-golfer.

15. David bought his 10 year old son a smartphone at Christmas so that they could speak to each other more often. His son often doesn't respond to David's messages, even when David can see he's online.

16. When it is warm outside and he's not working, David typically wears a white polo shirt, khaki shorts, boat shoes, and blue wraparound reflective sunglasses that he bought in 2016 when he thought he might do a triathlon. (Continued overleaf)

WHO FANCIES WHO

It's a run-down in brief this week as everyone gets close to being in briefs. Who's top of your list for the one-household-a-day-outdoors-meetup?

Floral shirt Albert Street gardener - you're a cutie and you've done an amazing job in the back green. Maybe we should all have a barbecue!
- **Everybody needs good neighbours**

To the Fred Durst lookalike on Halmyre Street - with me, your Bizkit will never be Limp.
- **If you can't handle me at my Durst you don't deserve me at my Fredst**

THE DIFFICULTIES OF KEEPING STIMULATED DURING LOCKDOWN: SURVEILLANCE

COLIN SCERNID

After recent events, I have decided I have to keep tabs on those living in my building, just to make sure there is no further silliness. In Flat 2A, Charlie Waddingham-Proze dropped some scrambled egg on his shoes, inspiring me to write this ditty:

*Egg on thy shoes, nothing to do
Do I hit the booze, or go for a snooze
This lockdown is bad news*

Meanwhile in 3B, Elizabeth Orwell-Jones-Keppel is almost certainly having visitors, using the toilet and everything. I am planning to obtain samples for Test 'n' Trace when she next (illegally) goes out. Feel free to send Q-tips and pipette bottle squeezers to aid this vital work.

Tonight I am going to monitor the elderly couple upstairs, who I am sure haven't been clapping for heroes. They don't want a wage increase - all they need is our meaningless platitudes.

Stay alert, be a Grass. Make this difficult time even worse for someone near you.

(Continued from overleaf)

17. When David's boss reprimanded him for watching porn on his work laptop while on a business trip, David said he must have been hacked. He said he remembers opening a dodgy email which must have been from the hackers who then were able to control his laptop as a result. David expressed concern at anyone else falling victim to the hackers and sent an email, Ccing in everyone at the firm, to warn them against the perils of opening suspicious looking emails, lest the same thing happen to them.

18. David has a framed print of a Banksy piece - the one of the small girl with the heart shaped balloon - on his bathroom wall. He bought it on ukposters.co.uk.

CLOCKFACE

LAURA HIRSCH

In week eleven I found a lump in my breast. Don't worry, this isn't a sad story - not yet, at least. So far, it's a sexy story. It's *the* sexy story, the story of the most sexual contact I have had since lockdown began. If you're like me, and haven't had another human being touch you for the last few months, I cannot recommend enough doing an over-the-phone breast examination with an awkward male doctor. There you are, at your dining table-cum-workdesk, one hand pressing your phone to your hot ear, the other under your top, fondling your right breast. You haven't worn a bra in weeks so there was no awkward fumbling about; you could cut right to the chase.

'Now,' he says, 'imagine the breast is a clockface.'

Momentarily dumbfounded, your brain then makes strides in this direction but inverts his proposal - instead of imagining your tit as a timepiece you instead envisage the face of Big Ben being replaced by a boob. You close your eyes. Focus.

'At what hour on the clock is the lump?' he asks.

'Um.' you say. 'As in, like, if I'm looking down at my breast, like I would a wristwatch? Like 12 is at the bit where my boob meets my torso?' Or, like, is it if you are looking at my boob face-on, and telling the time?'

'Yes it's as if I'm look-, yes, faace- well no not, yes the latter. 12 o'clock is at the top of the breast, the upper half of the chest.'

'So if you're looking at my boobs face-on, it's my right boob, and the lump is about an inch or so to the right of the nipple, and slightly above.'

'So....about 2 o'clock then?'

'....yes.'

I noticed my nipple had started to harden. Is this really all it took these days? Had I inadvertently turned this remote consultation into a sex hotline? I was going to have to clap extra hard at 8pm on Thursday to make up for this.

Anyway, me and my lump have an appointment at the breast clinic this week. It's unlikely to be anything sinister. I'm just furious that I'm this flat-chested and still have to deal with the downside of having breasts.

RAINBOW FLAG EMOJI (X5)

SKIP HENSHAW

It's now June. My work and social media feed have reminded me that means #PrideMonth. Skittles will withdraw their claim to the rainbow, and Barclays will follow behind, picking it up.

There's been an awful lot of it about lately. Every street is splashed with rainbow, often combined with words of love and encouragement to the NHS. Over the last three months, the rainbow has become the health service's unofficial livery.

This has disquieted some of my fellow members of the LGBT+ community. The rainbow is meant to be ours. A signal of welcome, a rallying standard, a badge of identity. The NHS is all well and good, but sorry lads, the rainbow is taken - please find some other colouring exercise for when maths homework is over (as for Noah, nobody's asked him, although as sea levels rise, maybe we will).

I say let the NHS have it. Good luck to them. I'd like to say it's a 'higher cause' (it isn't) or that it's an act of queer solidarity (perhaps it could have been, once). It's simply not worth much to us anymore.

This month of pride, you'll see what it's worth, when housing providers maintain a system of widespread LGBT+ homelessness, waving a rainbow flag. When the Home Office departs LGBT+ asylum seekers back to prisons and lynch mobs, waving a rainbow flag. When the Health Secretary Matt Hancock tweets, as he did today: 'Happy Pride Month.' followed by five rainbow flag emojis. *Five?* As if he was somewhere in the Mediterranean, trying to remember how many kisses on the cheek were appropriate. It will be good practice for July, when he has to get back to tweeting how much he loves the NHS. Maybe then we can get back to our struggle, flag or no flag, rain or shine.

NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, MISCELL

LITTLE FITZROY IS OPEN AND ABSOLUTELY DELICIOUS

MAN ON DALMENY STREET TEXTS WOMAN HE HAD THREE BUMBLE DATES WITH LAST YEAR WITH 'HEY, HAVE YOU WATCHED NORMAL PEOPLE?'; RECEIVES NO REPLY

31 YEAR OLD WOMAN STILL HASN'T LEARNED THAT SHE NEEDS SUN CREAM

TREE POLLEN HAS LITTLE REGARD FOR CURRENT COLLECTIVE MOOD TOWARDS PEOPLE WHO SNEEZE IN THE STREET

SAOIRSE IS WATCHING YOUTUBE VIDEOS OF CELEBRITIES ON SESAME STREET; READING OLIVIA LAING'S FUNNY WEATHER
SKIP IS WATCHING BOJACK HORSEMAN SEASON 5 - LOOK I'M SLOW; READING DAPHNE DU MAURIER'S REBECCA