

Field Notes From Egypt

Dr. Kathryn Best reports
on a Lost Egyptian City ...

OUR STORY begins in the glamorous world of the 1920s when director, producer and actor Cecil B. DeMille launched a public campaign to propose a new idea for his next film. The competition winner succeeded with the following challenge: 'You cannot break the Ten Commandments—they will break you.' DeMille's imagination was suitably captured and work began.

What does this have to do with Egypt, I hear you say?

Massachusetts-born and New York City-bred, Cecil Blount DeMille is considered the founding father of American cinema, key to the success of the Hollywood motion-picture industry and at the time, the most commercially successful producer-director in history.

With *The Ten Commandments*, DeMille envisioned that instead of going to the trouble of setting this religious epic in the deserts of Sinai, he would commission what was to be the biggest and most expensive film at the time—and home-grow it in America. The City of the Pharaoh was built amongst the 22,000 acres of the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes, 175 miles north of Los Angeles.

With a budget of \$1.5 million, the payroll included 1,500 builders, 3,500 actors, and 125 cooks working on a set that was ten stories high. It was in this Californian desert that construction workers built enormous plaster sphinxes, lions, a temple, and a statue of Ramses II. Things soon turned obsessive, and his studio boss tried to bring him back down to earth with the words: 'You have lost your mind. Stop filming and return to Los Angeles at once.'



DeMille of course refused, took out a personal loan to complete filming and waived his rights to future profits to ensure all went ahead. This silent-era epic was, amazingly, completed in three weeks and launched to great acclaim in 1923. At the time the proverbial rug of commercial funding was pulled from under the project, DeMille had the set strapped with dynamite and buried in the sand to stop anyone from trying to reuse it. But reused in small parts it was, by more than twenty other movies, most recently *Pirates of the Caribbean*.

Years later, intrepid filmmaker Peter Bronson came across the story and with his imagination captured, proceeded to seek out the buried set. Once found, Bronson set up a dig site complete with professional archaeologists and began excavating the sixty-year-old remains. Peter began shooting a documentary called *The Lost City* to record the story, however funding eventually dried up, and Peter was forced to give up the dream.

Club members may be intrigued to know that residents of Guadalupe, where filming took place, comment that the area has one of the lowest crime rates around. Could it be due to the influence of ancient Egypt's mighty and long-lasting civilization and the presence of pharaonic order contained within the buried remains of the city? Speculating on the mythology is an addictive pursuit for anyone drawn into the lure of ancient Egypt, as Cecil B. DeMille, Peter Bronson and many more have discovered.



Capitalising on visitor potential, the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Center opened as a museum in 1999 to celebrate the unique qualities and ecosystem of the area. For Peter, the next chapter of the story began again in 2010 when, after reading an article on mysterious buried treasure in the Guadalupe desert, a lady made an anonymous donation to fund the dig. The story—and the making of the documentary—was not over after all, and in 2016 *The Lost City of Cecil B. DeMille* was finally released.

It would seem churlish not to close with a quote from the great showman DeMille's autobiography: 'If, a thousand years from now, archaeologists happen to dig beneath the sands of Guadalupe, I hope they will not rush into print with the amazing news that Egyptian civilization [...] extended all the way to the Pacific Coast.'



Absolutely Mooted: See Page Eight

Club Christmas Party Goes On Despite Union Sabotage!

The annual Christmas party coincided with strike action this year, but despite the difficulties of getting into town, there was still a good showing. Torquil Arbuthnot recounts the facts.

THE New Sheridan Club Christmas party's ('Noël House Party') theme reflected that 2022 was the 100th anniversary of the founding of the BBC. Forty or so souls braved gridlocked roads and iffy Tubes to quaff and party at The Duke, an Art Deco pub near Chancery Lane. Among the BBC-themed costumes were *Come Dancing* contestants, a pupil of Grange Hill, a 'Suits you, sir' tailor and Ralph from *The Fast Show*, Miss Marple, a Cyberman, Pudsey Bear, Ronnie Corbett and Sid Snot. The Chairman provided the soundtrack, a medley of theme tunes, which had the audience foot-tapping along to *Ski Sunday* and *Captain Scarlet and the Mysterons*.

As usual, the Glorious Committee's munificence knew no bounds when it came to the Grand Raffle prizes: numerous DVDs of evergreen classics such as *I, Claudius* and *Allo 'Allo*, CDs of *ITMA* and *Hancock's Half Hour*, a rulebook for *Mornington Crescent*, the actual 'pips' (well, six apple pips), a Reggie Perrin mother-in-law hippopotamus, a *Blue Peter* badge, a Radio Norwich mug, a 1947 wireless licence, and a Dr. Who scarf complete with a bag of jelly babies.

The first game of the evening was a variation on 'Pin the Tail on the Donkey'. Players were given a few seconds to memorise a map showing the shipping forecast areas, then were blindfolded with a New Sheridan Club scarf and tried to pin the trawler on the named shipping area. The winner (and the only person to score a direct hit) was Adie Hess who managed to land her boat smack in the middle of Humber.

The old Club Nerf gun jammed irreparably last year so this was a chance to try out the new Club gun, a four-shot pistol. Contestants had four shots to exterminate four Daleks. The muzzle velocity and flat trajectory of the new gun foxed most people, although four shooters did manage to kill a single Dalek. The Club's own Annie Oakley, Sarah Bowerman, won the shoot-off.

Many thanks to all who came along and did Auntie proud.



Boater Hats

The Earl of Essex graciously illuminated members with a talk on the history of the straw boater hat, at our October meeting. Making his field notes on this important subject available to this publication, it is the pleasure of the Resign! Triannual to record them here for posterity.

THE BOATER is believed to have emanated from the flat-topped caps of French sailors of the nineteenth century and was first adopted as children's wear in Britain in the middle of the same century.

The Boater is typically made from a type of stiff flat straw referred to as Sennit straw and it is typically plaited or braided at angles. The finished Boater is slightly elliptical in shape with a flat brim and a flat crown, also known as a telescope crown. It can be varnished or unvarnished, and typically features a solid or striped grosgrain ribbon headband and an inner cloth or leather sweatband.

In England, the headband has traditionally been black since 1901 as a mark of respect to the death of Queen Victoria. It is traditionally worn sitting atop the head in a horizontal position, but can be worn at a rakish angle; traditionally by vaudeville entertainers, and dare one say, cads.



It is a semi-formal hat and is traditionally worn with blazers, day suits and is traditionally also correct with evening wear. It is often referred to as a 'skimmer', a 'cady' or 'can-can'.

It is generally regarded that the Boater reached the height of its popularity between the years from 1880 to 1930.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Boater was worn for leisure by both men and women, but it was its adoption by English public schools as part of their summer uniform that it truly became popular from the 1880s.

In particular, Harrow School adopted a wide-brim, low-crown Boater that is still part of their uniform today. Eton College traditionally wore top hats, but when the silk used to make them became scarce, they adopted the Boater after the second world war; they now only wear it on Founder's Day, when it is adorned with flowers during a water pageant to celebrate the birthday of King George III, their greatest patron.

As many public schools rowed, the Boater became popular at Henley Royal Regatta, and other sailing events, where it was associated with the colourfully striped school blazers which were adopted by rowing clubs.

It was also popular at other summer sporting events like the tennis Championships at Wimbledon, but also became a popular hat in the City of London for business and particularly so in the United States.

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The Final Curtain

Club-Adjacent Light Opera Company takes final bow



THE King's College London Gilbert & Sullivan Society (KCLG&S), one of the longest-lived of its kind in the United Kingdom, is closing down after nearly forty years.

Determined not to let this sad event past unmarked, around a hundred alumni of the society gathered to say a fond farewell at a ball hosted at Grimm's Dyke, the Norman Shaw-designed country house of w.s. Gilbert. Mourning in a way appropriate to the long-established traditions of the society, there was much drink, food, and singing late into the night in Gilbert's grand music room.

While the society has no formal affiliation to the New Sheridan Club, it will be well known to some members, including those Sheridan regulars who appeared in its productions in recent years including Timothy Williams, Richard Hawker, and Oliver & Ella Lane. It will have been familiar too for the many New Sheridan Club members who kindly supported it and their fellow club members by paying to see the shows in years past—gamely showing up even if they didn't actually like Gilbert & Sullivan at all.

Quite possibly the interval bar, invariably selling £1.50 gin and tonics, had something to do with that.

In a now sadly familiar tale, (KCLG&S) appears to have been a victim of Coronavirus lockdowns. Never a large society in the first place, like clubs at all universities membership levels took a dive when lockdown moved education to a 'work from home' footing, killing off the essential social side of academia.

While larger societies could weather this, the niche interest groups could not. Nevertheless, a fine outlet for creative eccentricity for the university of London has been lost and a little bit of Britain has died. Shame! Shame!

Letter from Tangier

By Giles

*I dream of being Timothy Eyre.
I dream of being the Chairman.
They both share the same postcode.
Alas, I live elsewhere.*

IT WAS with these dreams in mind that I decided to set out for my usual summer holiday ... in October. This year I decided to be adventurous. After hearing that Rotherham was booked up, I decided to look further afield. No, not Doncaster, but Tangier.

Tangier rises in a strange fashion. From the plane, I observed the outskirts consist of a few overtaken farms and many immaculate streets laid out with very few buildings yet to populate them. Then come several miles of blocks of flats before the modern central area and the historic medina comes into view.

Like many cities in Africa, over recent decades there has been considerable expansion thanks to migration from the rurality. Tangier's population now allegedly being around a million. Ten times as many who saw its status as an internationally (French)-run city end in 1956.

I arrived at the compact airport and was struck by the number of French-styled uniforms in situ. Thankfully, no Casablanca interrogation for me after the short passport queue. Then it was off to my hotel in a taxi with a working seatbelt.

Tangier's main roads are French in pattern and well-maintained. The main difference from France is a preference for police whistles and waving at most junctions and roundabouts. Traffic lights are a rare sight in the city.

I stayed at the El Minzah Hotel, built in 1930 at the command of the 4th Marquess of Bute. My room had a tremendous view over much of the city and indeed Spain in the cloudy distance. It was time to explore.

Contrary to popular belief, the ancient medina is not a version of Mecca minus the bingo. It spills down a steep hill adjacent to the sea. Surrounded by walls, it is effectively a concentration of narrow twisting lanes. Parts are immaculate, parts are not, and parts are 'You like carpet?'

The southern end of the medina consists of a number of markets, mosques and small squares. Trading conditions are noisy and crowded, but not chaotic. The fish market which lies at the end of a long and covered arcade, announces itself via ones nostrils.

Market hygiene in Morocco seems to be largely the responsibility of cats. These are not the mollycoddled useless selfish pets found on our own islands (no, she doesn't love you). These cats are a crack troop of mice hunters. When not on exercises, they are to be found sunning themselves or asleep. The one thing they have no need for is human emotions. They are killers, so keep your distance.

South of the medina, the second half of the twentieth century saw a modern concrete-built urban expansion centred on the main shopping street called Tangier Boulevard. It does have a life and charm to it. Though it did rather resemble putting central Slough next to the walls of Chester.

Tangier is big on cafés, but not so big on restaurants or bingo. Eating out is not part of traditional local culture. However, I did find the equivalent of a Harvester around the corner from my hotel. No menu but five compulsory courses: soup, tagine, fish, more fish, pomegranate and honey, all of it delicious.



The Grand Café de Paris is the place to be during the hot afternoons. Here you can sit back in 1920s décor and people watch whilst you murder a cup of tea, murder the French language, murder the Arabic language, murder a passing Maltese spy ... Everything is done with minimum fuss.

I ventured into the hotel's historic Caid's bar. The establishment's faded grandeur was complemented by a pianist competing against piped music. I eventually managed to procure a wine list and keenly ordered a half bottle of Moroccan red. Unfortunately, the wine came straight from the soft drinks fridge and was thus served at five degrees Celsius. Despite my attempts to breathe on the wine and other more drastic methods, the glass took longer to warm up than it did to drink. My review of Moroccan wine will have to wait for another time. Besides, it's cheaper to buy a bottle here.

I managed an enjoyable day trip to the historic and beautiful coastal town of Asilah in the former Spanish zone. It is situated a mere thirty-five minutes from Tangier's sparkling new TGV railway station, albeit on a slower train.

I happily sat down in the increasingly rare experience of a compartment carriage. I enjoyed this environment until my opposite seat number appeared, closing the compartment door behind him. Alas, he had been in such a rush that morning, that he had not managed his ablutions. Thankfully, menthol snuff came to my rescue. Soon, all I could smell was an odour of toothpaste tobacco.

It became time to say farewell to my Moroccan adventure. I ventured to Tangier's old port in a taxi without seat belts or door handles.

At passport control, I was pulled out of the short queue and asked whether it was my first visit to the kingdom. The border guard then insisted on a once-over pat down. Upon completion, having enjoyed the aroma of my menthol snuff,

he decided to make a second pass at my right-side hormone productive centre. Thoughts of T.E. Lawrence's treatment in an Ottoman prison suddenly passed through my mind. Thankfully a colleague appeared, and I was waved away onto the modern and comfortable fast catamaran ready for further adventures in the Andalus.

Hashing: A History and Justification

Mr. Reid elucidates upon his January talk given to the club on the subject—shockingly enough—of physical exercise.

IT'S THE time of year when the festive port starts draining from one's system, and one abandons the winter silk kimono for something that has a waist, and when some of us are wont to pause and consider the damage done by the season's indulgences.

Not entirely different to the thoughts of one Alberto Stefano Ignatius Esteban 'G' Gispert, as he looked around the annexe of the Selangor Club in Kuala Lumpur in 1938.

Gispert had grown up in England to Spanish parents and had found his way to Malaysia via accountancy and the civil service, but he was a man of action. He had joined the local militia, which later became the Selangor battalion. He was on leave in Australia when war broke out and returned too late to join the defence of the Malay peninsula, and was lost in action defending Singapore in '42.

But his untimely death was not before he had planted the seeds of what is now a global, if little-known sport, now with some 1,500 clubs/chapters/kennels/associations/religions, and an unknown number of participants, as it's all so terribly casual, and we don't use our real names.

Gispert saw among his clubmates the signs that physical endeavours were much needed. The club's annexe, the Hash House, may have provided a 'hodgepodge of edible servings being passed off for food' but that didn't mean they weren't consumed with gusto and large quantities of cocktails.



He could also see that these weren't men to be pushed around, unless it was out to the verandah, and unlikely to be cajoled by sporting glory. He needed something louché, yet active, something fun without competition, something a chap could take at his own pace, with the promise of alcoholic refreshment at the end.

There's nothing new under the sun, and Gispert looked back to his school days, and the care-free sport of paperchasing, or hare-and-hounds, where a lead runner, the hare, would leave a trail, to be pursued, ultimately caught, and the runner who caught him would become the hare for the following week. Unfortunately, as it made its way into adult sport, people had started taking it awfully seriously, and lithe men would dominate, often cheating for victory.

Something must be done about lithe men, and Gispert had some ideas. The term FRB, or Front Running Bastard, is still enshrined within the hashing lexicon to this day. We don't despise them, we just do all we can to slow and frustrate them, so those of us with a more Bunteresque physique can still enjoy the event, and not arrive back to the pub hours after the FRBs have finished their lunch. Fast forward to the recent meeting of the Bourne Valley Hash House Harriers in North Hampshire. It's a cold Tuesday night at The Vine in Hannington, and our hare, an ironically bald man of 72, is talking us through what to expect. In his hand is a milk bottle full of flour. Hotlegs, as he's known (if you participate long enough, you'll be given a silly soubriquet) has no interest in being anybody's quarry, so he's laid the trail at a leisurely pace the previous day, with short (3 miles), Medium (4.5 miles) and long (6–7 miles) options. It has rained overnight, but hopefully, most of the flour is still in place.

There are several symbols to look out for. A blob of flour tells you that you're on the trail. A circle or 'check' means that the trail can go in any direction. If you're the first FRB to find where the trail goes, it's good etiquette to shout 'on-on' and the next runner will kick out a section of the circle to indicate the direction of travel. This is largely to send FRBs out in all directions and give the rest of us a chance to catch up.

Then there's a regroup—a circle with a cross through it—where everyone is supposed to stop, and the group reforms to see a spectacular view, receive further instructions and, occasionally, have a drink. Then there's a split, which shows where short, medium and long trails diverge, meaning you can make such decisions on the run according to current state, and the fiendish fish hook, which sends the first few FRBs all the way to the back of the pack. This is the least appreciated, and most entertaining, way of frustrating the FRBs.

Finally, you will come across the 'ON INN', indicating that the end of the hash is nigh, and refreshment is at hand ...



The hash ends, as it began, with the Circle, where all are called to order by the hash's Religious Advisor, Loud 'n' Tasteless, who will pour scorn on the hare, summarise the run and hand out fines for misbehaviour. These inevitably include ignoring fish hooks and wearing any new kit. Hash virgins will also be called forth.

In these days of austerity, moderation, and drink-driving rules, the fines are half-pints of beer, or lemonade for the fully abstemious. Hashing is, after all, a broad church, and one of my favourite things is taking my children along. In the past, this meant that I could run at the front knowing they would be safe among the pack behind me. These days, it's the other way around. It may all seem a little rugby club rules, but it's well-attended by all sorts, including kids (although they do tend to drift away from the embarrassing spectacle in their mid-teens years, only to come back a few years later).

The hash cash of £1 has been paid by all participants, the beer has been downed, a few have dinner in the pub, and the Hare Kaiser has gone around to press-gang some poor soul into choosing the next pub, setting the next run, and probably alerting the local Facebook groups, to minimise the likelihood of someone seeing the flour and assuming it's dog poison, sarin, Semtex or cocaine. After all, hashers have caused the evacuation of several towns, caused panic in Salisbury not long after The Incident, and been arrested for laying a trail around the White House. It's time to go home.

My advice is to bumble along. You'll have a good time whether you're vying for the lead with Sweaty Betty and Spice Boy, or shuffling along at the back with Hamlet, and Polly, who can tell you stories of being part of the original Stonehenge construction crew. You'll meet some lovely eccentrics, some tiresome eccentrics, some normal people, and occasionally, Mike Bushell off of the telly, though he'll be known on the hash as Kate Adie. There is one near you, after all, there are more than three hundred in the UK alone, visit www.hhh.org.uk or drop your faithful correspondent a line. On-on chumrades, on-on.



History at the Bottom of a Pint Pot

Floyd Toussaint is schooled on London history in the way Sheridanites respond to best: with beer. He tells of his day's amble.

THE ROTHERHITHE crawl was a sunny afternoon stroll from Greenwich to London Bridge, taking in various historic pubs, curated by long-standing club member Ian White. In fact, this was a revisit of a pub crawl he organised some ten years ago.

The walk took in some charming riverside views and was in all around six miles on foot. That said, it wouldn't be a pub crawl without some pubs, and the first of them was *The Spanish Galleon* on Church Street, Greenwich.

Designed by important Greenwich architect Joseph Kay in 1834, in the reign of William IV, the Galleon is Grade-II listed today and close to the market and the Cutty Sark.

While the Galleon brought an atmosphere of its own, it is worth noting that Ian obligingly came dressed as a dock worker to add authenticity and gravitas to proceedings. As we left the Galleon en route to the next pub, we noted the statue of Peter the Great.

Members will know his major achievements (Peter the Great's, not Ian's, although they too are many and great) include the founding of St. Petersburg in 1703, the victory against Sweden at the Battle of Poltava in 1709, and the birth of the Russian navy.

It transpired that Frances Mitchell is well versed in Imperial Russian history and I, for one, move that she should give a talk on this fascinating subject at a future club meeting.

Our next stop, along the towpath, was *The Dog and Bell* of Prince Street, Deptford. A traditional pub all the way, with beer mats pinned to the wooden bar, pub carpet of red and gold design, and the chaps behind the bar gave the ready impression of having been in the game all their lives.

Charlie and Eileen Gallagher have been running this pub since 1988. The Bell wears its Irish heritage on its sleeve with Irish accents and Irish slang heard about the bar. They sell their own brand of stout rather than Guinness and Clayton Hartley, much to his surprise, declared that it tasted like chocolate biscuits.

By now the group had grown and a number of walkers decided to take lunch as the alcohol was beginning to cloud the head. Scampi and chips, of course, proved to be a popular choice.

From *The Dog and Bell*, the group took a brief stroll around Rotherhithe and through Surrey Docks farm, a working city farm and charity. They profess to enable the whole community to learn about farming, food production and the natural environment, which is nice.

As part of the Rotherhithe stroll, we took in Greenland Dock, where Ian spoke about the history of the dockyard. From here we visited a mulberry bush said to have been planted by the aforementioned Peter the Great himself. We were overwhelmed with excitement and took a great many photographs.

Co-conspirators Pri Kali and James Rigby set up camp at Rotherhithe's *The Blacksmiths Arms* by reorganising the tables in advance of the group, given by this point our numbers had again swollen.

The Arms claims to be a pub of some antiquity, being recorded as far back as 1793. Unusually, the front entrance faces the street rather than the Thames, suggesting the possibility that it once led to the shipyard. It still maintains the original fittings and styles of a historic old pub and once even served the Queen Mother, God bless her.

It was about this point that the assembled club members started gaining the attention of the local Rotherhitheans, with remarks received on the fine attire and high standards of dress. Naturally, this comes with being a member of the New Sheridan Club ...

Getting on to the evening, we arrived at *The Mayflower*, Rotherhithe where none other than The Chairman himself graced us with his presence. From then on we were both entertained and horrified in equal measure by his tales and confessions from his incredible and extraordinary life. In a process all club members will be familiar with, as he became increasingly fuelled by alcohol, his tales became more and more outrageous.

The *Mayflower* is, naturally, named for the ship that sailed from the nearby steps for the historic journey to New England carrying the Pilgrim Fathers in July 1620. The interior is in the style of a seventeenth-century tavern, and a wooden jetty at the rear offers views of the river.

Rumour has it that Captain Christopher Jones cunningly moored here to avoid paying taxes further down the river, something we can all sympathise with in this day and age.

A commemorative plaque to the voyage of the *Mayflower* now adorns the side of St. Mary's church and a memorial statue, dedicated to the memory of Captain Christopher Jones, sits in the churchyard. The group took a reverent wander over to the graveyard to gaze upon the aforementioned monument.

Heading into the evening, the next watering hole was *The Angel* of Bermondsey Wall. There are fabulous river views from this historic pub. It was here that the chairman was really on form and for those that made the upstairs party, his stories we will keep to ourselves, for the majority of the group this was the end of their journey and many made their way home.

For those with the fortitude to carry on, the final historic pub on this crawl was the *Anchor Tap* on Horselydown Lane. We are led to believe that this establishment was originally owned by John Courage, who is famous in the British brewing circles, and that this was his first pub.

By this point, it is fair to say, it had been a long day with many ales imbibed. Honourable mention must go to Catherine Crawley, who brought the energy levels back up as our last attendee. She arrived with a great spirit of her own, but sadly just as we were calling it a night.

Thank you Ian for organising, again, the best possible way to learn London's history, at the bottom of a pint pot.

Boater Hats

Continued from Page One

It was regularly worn by stockbrokers on Wall Street, but there was an unwritten rule that it should not be worn after September 15th, known as 'Felt Hat Day', to mark the passing of the summer. Wealthy stockbrokers would routinely stomp on their Boaters on this day, but many wearers did not and youths would remind them of their *faux pax* by tipping off their hats and stomping on them.

This became so serious that it culminated in the 'Straw Hat Riot' of New York in 1922 where several Boater-wearing men were hospitalised and many youths were arrested by the police; these events continued until 1925—one man having been killed in 1924—when the Panama replaced the Boater as the fashionable summer hat.

The Boater also became part of the de facto uniform of the FBI, as it was regularly worn by one of its most famous agents, Melvin Purves, or 'little Mel' as he was known, being only 5'4" tall. He was FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover's right-hand man, known for tracking down infamous criminals like 'Baby Face' Nelson, 'Pretty Boy' Floyd and John

Dillinger. Still, he fell out of favour with Hoover, who was jealous of his popularity with the public.

The Boater was also popular in Hollywood, worn by the French singer and entertainer, Maurice Chevalier, and the dancer, Fred Astaire. It was also popular with Royalty, worn by the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Kent.

The Boater was generally waning in popularity by the 1930s anyway, perhaps given it was associated with the boom times and frippery of the 1920s and following the Wall Street Crash of 1929 it was seen as too frivolous and replaced by the more sedate Panama hat.

During the 1950s, the Boater was still worn by supporters of Luton Town F.C., known as 'The Hatters', as Luton was famous for its hat manufacturing. However, by the 1960s it became a hat more associated with vaudeville entertainers and was seen on television worn by Frankie Vaughan, Dickie Henderson and in the prime time *The Black and White Minstrel Show* and films such as *Mary Poppins* with Dick van Dyke. It became a pastiche hat, worn on occasion by The Beatles and Elton John.

Today, the Boater is rarely seen, and even at Henley, it has largely been supplanted by Panamas and rowing caps.

This has not been helped by the recent demise of Britain's largest producer of Boater hats, Olney headwear of Luton.

Olney, a family firm founded by Albert Olney in 1914, supplied branded Boaters to large high street gentlemen's outfitters like Dunn & Co., founded in 1887, and who closed their doors in 1997.

Olney survived until the end of 2020, but could not overcome the effects of the Pandemic when its retail clients were unable to open their doors to the public.

Nevertheless, the Boater still has brief revivals, it featured strongly in the 2013 film remake of *The Great Gatsby*, the lead character being played by Leonardo di Caprio, but it seems destiny to have a niche role worn by those who enjoy wearing vintage menswear and who appreciate a classic hat.

Torquil Arbuthnot's Neglected Authors: Chester Himes

A friend of mine, Phil Lomax, told me this story about a blind man with a pistol shooting at a man who had slapped him on a subway train and killing an innocent bystander peacefully reading his newspaper across the aisle and I thought, damn right, sounds just like today's news, riots in the ghettos, war in Vietnam, masochistic doings in the Middle East. And then I thought of some of our loudmouthed leaders urging our vulnerable soul brothers on to getting themselves killed, and thought further that all unorganized violence is like a blind man with a pistol.

CHESTER HIMES was born in 1909 to a middle-class family in Missouri. His father was a professor of industrial trades at a black college, and his mother a teacher at a local seminary. When he was about 12 years old, his brother was injured in a chemical accident but was refused hospital treatment because of Jim Crow laws. 'That one moment in my life hurt me as much as all the others put together,' Himes wrote in *The Quality of Hurt*.

I loved my brother. I had never been separated from him and that moment was shocking, shattering, and terrifying ... We pulled into the emergency entrance of a white people's hospital. White-clad doctors and attendants appeared. I remember sitting in the back seat with Joe watching the pantomime being enacted in the car's bright lights. A white man was refusing; my father was pleading. Dejectedly my father turned away; he was crying like a baby. My mother was fumbling in her handbag for a handkerchief; I hoped it was for a pistol.

Himes attended Ohio State University on disability income, having fallen down a lift shaft while working as a labourer. He was expelled from the university over a 'prank' and soon became a petty criminal. In 1929, when he was 19 he was jailed at the Ohio State Penitentiary for a 25-year sentence of armed robbery, and while there a prison fire killed 300 inmates.

Himes later said that inspired by the Black Mask writings of Dashiell Hammett and by the grim events he'd witnessed, he bought himself a Remington typewriter and began writing stories of his own. A number of his stories appeared in Esquire and other American magazines. He was paroled after 8 years and upon his release from prison, he worked at numerous odd jobs and joined the Works Progress Administration, eventually serving as a writer with the Ohio Writers' Project. He also came into contact with Langston Hughes, who helped Himes's entry into the world of literature and publishing.

In the 1940s Himes spent time in Los Angeles, working as a screenwriter but also producing two novels, *If He Hollers Let Him Go* (1945) and *The Lonely Crusade* (1947). *If He Hollers* details the fear, anger, and humiliation of a black employee of a racist defence plant during World War Two. *The Lonely Crusade* is a fictional treatment of the conflict between blacks, the labour movement, and the Communist Party. It received scathing reviews from the American left, though its French version was called one of the five best novels published in France during the 1940s. Himes's brief career as a screenwriter for Warner Brothers was abruptly terminated when the studio boss Jack Warner heard he'd unwittingly hired a black writer. Himes later wrote in his autobiography:

Up to the age of thirty-one I had been hurt emotionally, spiritually and physically as much as thirty-one years can bear. I had lived in the South, I had fallen down an elevator shaft, I had been kicked out of college, I had served seven and one-half years in prison, I had survived the humiliating last five years of Depression in Cleveland; and still I was entire, complete, functional; my mind was sharp, my reflexes were good, and I was not bitter. But under the mental corrosion of race prejudice in Los Angeles I became bitter and saturated with hate.

His next two novels, *The Third Generation* and *Cast the First Stone*, were rejected out of hand by his publisher. By the 1950s he had decided to settle permanently in France, a country he liked in part due to his popularity in Parisian literary circles. It was in Paris that he met his second wife Lesley Himes (née Packard) when she went to interview him. She was a journalist at the *Herald Tribune* where she wrote a fashion column, 'Monica'. He also became friends with other American literary exiles such as James Baldwin, Ralph Ellison, and Richard Wright.



A 1957 meeting with Marcel Duhamel (who translated *If He Hollers Let Him Go* into French) changed his life. It began with Himes hoping to publish his novel *Pinktoes* and ended with Himes agreeing to a \$1,000 advance to write a detective novel. His first try was a false start with the unpublished *Spanish Grin*, and then Himes remembered a con game from his criminal days, whereby the con man pretended he'd found a technique for turning ten dollar bills into hundreds. *For Love of Imabelle* (also known as *A Rage in Harlem*), a detective novel set in 1950s New York, was published in 1957 under the famous La Serie Noire imprint and won the Grand Prix de Littérature Policrière for the best detective novel of the year.

Himes's crime novels usually feature two black Harlem police detectives, Coffin Ed Johnson and Grave Digger Jones: 'As far back as Lieutenant Anderson could remember, both of them, his two ace detectives with their identical big hard-shooting, head-whipping pistols, had always looked like two hog farmers on a weekend in the Big Town.' Grave Digger has a lumpy face, reddish-brown eyes that always seem to smoulder, and a big and rugged frame. He is more articulate than Coffin Ed who has one distinct feature—his face, which has been badly scarred by a thrown glass of acid. They drive the streets in a nondescript, battered, supercharged Plymouth and work mainly through sheer presence and chance.

One of Himes's biographers, the crime writer James Sallis, says of these books: 'Critics typically considered the Harlem books potboilers, pandering to excessive violence and grotesque characterisations, and not a few bemoaned the loss of a talented serious writer.'

In 1969 Himes moved to Spain, where he died in 1984 from Parkinson's disease.

Letter from Hawai'i

By E. Tory Laitila, MHHON*

SEPTEMBER 24th saw the return, after a three-year absence, of the Aloha Festivals Floral Parade in all its colorful glory. The Aloha Festivals began in 1946 and is the world's largest Hawaiian cultural celebration. The parade is one of three major events during the month-long Aloha Festivals observance on the island of O'ahu in Hawai'i. Also included are a street fair and the investiture of the Festivals' royal court.

The parade is made up of a variety of bands, and community, cultural, and business units. Some with floats, others with vehicles, all with the stipulation that they are decorated with florals. As an aficionado and supporter of the parade, I volunteered a couple of evenings this year decorating the Royal Court float with the Royal Order of Kamehameha I, a truly excellent group of chaps.

Most stunning among the parade participants are the nine pā'ū units. Pā'ū (translated as skirt in the Hawaiian language) refers to the large overskirts worn by female equestrians to protect their clothing, originating in the nineteenth century. The first equestrian unit is the pā'ū queen, the following eight representing each of the major islands of the Hawaiian archipelago with a page, princess, ladies in waiting, and attendants, all on horseback with each horse and rider festooned with florals in the color of their representative island. The colors of the islands are established by law: red is designated as the official color of the island of Hawai'i; Maui is pink; O'ahu is 'ilima or golden yellow; Kaula is purple; Moloka'i is green; Lāna'i is orange; Ni'ihau is white; and Kaho'olawe is grey.

The parade starts in Ala Moana Regional Park and makes its way for a two and a half miles through the resort area of Waikiki, for a short while

*MHHON stands for Mamo Hawai'i (Honorary), in other words, a member of the Royal Order of Kamehameha, third degree.



A letter from Hawai'i



The Rotherhithe Pub Crawl...



Glorious Goodwood



The Survivors...



It's been cold. Can you tell?



The Earl of Essex's Boater Hat Talk



The RESIGN! Triannual on tour





Church & Chow: now with added tentacles

Sarah illustrates a point in her Facial Reconstruction talk with characteristic gesticulation

The Colonel & German's Visit Coincides With Clubnight

Essex puts the fear of God into the members in December

Some regulars

The Christmas Moot, in glorious technicolour



BBC-Themed Fun at the Club Christmas Bash

A first for everything: talk given not just by internet, but on the subject of physical exertion, too

Dr Timothy Eyre fascinates with a deadly combination of Greenland and radical tailoring

Sheridan-sur-les-Alpes

Walter Bonatti

skirting the beach, ending at Queen Kapi'olani Park. My wife and I are regular attendees of several parades and have our favorite spots. For this parade we stake out a site at about mid-point, along a straight stretch of road with tall buildings on one side. This is favorable for the following reasons: the parade marchers aren't too tired yet and still have some pep in their step, the tall buildings provide a nice echo to the music of the bands, and as it is adjacent to a military reservation so the accumulated crowds are not overwhelming. Further on in the route, which makes its way down Kalākaua Avenue amongst hotels, the crowd can become quite dense. We make an event of parade viewing, donning our hats, and toting our chairs, we set up our own viewing area, which includes a flagpole. As there was a Royal Court in the parade, I chose to fly the Royal Hawaiian Standard at this year's viewing.

'Twas wonderful to see old friends in the parade again. Should you ever make it over to the archipelago during the month of September, I say ... resign yourself to attending the Aloha Festivals.

Prison: How to Enjoy It

David Saxby gave the August club night talk, reflecting on his 2017 incarceration for tax irregularities.

Here he gives further insights into life on the inside ...

AND THEY call us criminals ...' This a phrase often heard in prison, and here is why.

Perhaps you have recently been convicted, or are awaiting sentencing, or just perhaps currently involved in some risky business, which could go the wrong way, not necessarily in your favour. I hope the following diary notes will assist you through your travails ...

Your journey will begin as you are transported from the court to the big house. Those long white vans with little square blacked-out windows are fitted inside with tiny individual cells, a little larger than a man. These cells resemble the inside of a fridge, perfectly smooth, moulded, very slippery plastic. To avoid being catapulted forward every time the bus brakes (there are no seatbelts or handles) you must keep one hand or foot on the wall in front of you at all times, and a journey can be several hours.

It is likely that you will pass very close to your intended destination, but you will not be dropped off there. Prison transport is run by companies like Serco: every misdirected prisoner will have to be transported again to the correct location, at around £1,000 a go. It's a great business, with no competition.

You will eventually arrive at a prison, and almost immediately meet some of society's most corrupt, spiteful, and psychologically damaged ne'er-do-wells ever found in one place, the wardens. Later on, you will meet some actual prisoners.



'If I could just take a look at the wine list before you show me to my chambers ...'

Before being allocated to a 'D' cat open prison, many prisoners will have been in a 'C' first. This means the open prisons end up with a jolly mix of inmates: non-violent white-collar crime on one hand, and murderers, bank robbers, and the like being eased back into normal life before parole on the other.

In 'C' cat, the prisoners are locked up twenty-three hours a day in closed conditions. The cells are around six feet wide by around twelve feet deep. There is a stainless steel wc, and a tiny basin right next to it used for handwashing, shaving, and washing dishes. There was no flat surface on which to rest a plate, meals are eaten on your lap in what is essentially a shared toilet.

The double bunk bed dominates the room: two big chaps would have difficulty passing each other, as the space opposite the bunks is taken up by a broken piece of furniture on which stands your TV. This has to be paid for out of what is called 'Canteen', a weekly payment of around £13.00; this can be used to buy food, stationery and stamps, soap and cosmetics. I kid you not, eyeliner and lippy are on the list.

The system is so mismanaged and chaotic that some prisoners destined for open prison find themselves serving their whole sentence in closed conditions.

But there are ways to make it bearable, not least among them growing tomatoes. Find out more next time: to be continued!

Stocking Up

In honour of the late Pope Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI, The Chairman presents for your entertainment and betterment the inside track on the world's holiest socks ...



I SUPPOSE it all went wrong when I first saw Dave Allen. His irreverence to religious authority always struck a chord with an angry youth wanting to fight back against society, and to some small degree, there is always a part of me which will always be subversive. Nowadays, however, such subversion seems to manifest itself sartorially, which leads to my taste in ecclesiastical hosiery.

Should you wish to embrace the irreverence of the late Dave Allen or channel your inner Father Ted, you will be delighted to know that Gammarelli of Rome (naturally) will be delighted to provide all of the ecclesiastical vestments you could ever require.

Their site tells their story:

Founded in 1798, the family-owned Gammarelli workshop is a small boutique tucked behind the Pantheon in Rome. This tailor is renowned for the quality of their socks and their attention to detail. For six generations the Gammarelli family have faithfully worked at the old wooden counter of their roman boutique, which is always covered with the most lavish fabrics.

Gammarelli specialises in tailoring ecclesiastical clothing and is the official and exclusive supplier to the papacy. When the Pope appoints new cardinals, special red robes are manufactured for each of them. The well-known red socks were made as part of this attire. While papal socks are famously red, the socks worn by the Pope himself are actually white. Gammarelli's socks are not just worn by clergymen, but by a number of famous people as well including François Fillon and Edouard Balladur.

I once approached Gammarelli by email to enquire as to whether they provided a catalogue, only to receive a reply which began 'Dear Father ...'

However, for those whose irreverence only extends as far as hosiery, you will be delighted to learn that ecclesiastical hose is readily available for a price from a company called *Mes Chaussettes Rouges*, which is based on Rue César Franck in Paris. This venerable supplier will supply their wares around the globe for ready money, and are arguably most well known for supplying the Vatican with suitable socks. Black for entry-level priests, purple (violet) for bishops, red for cardinals and white if you happen to be Pope are all stocked under the Gammarelli's brand.

Judging by the ambitions of *Mes Chaussettes Rouges*, Catholic priests must probably be better paid than their Anglican contemporaries. Yours for €23 a pair, and with each order comes a handwritten card from *Mes Chaussettes Rouges*, made out in ink in the colour of your chosen leg attire, complimenting you on your taste, which is a delightful touch.

Happy shopping, and may your God go with you.

The Goodwood Revival

Our Motoring correspondent travels in time to the golden age of motorsport, or the closest thing to it on earth

By Actuaris

MANY OF the New Sheridan Club's members will be aware of Goodwood Revival due to its core principle of recreating the experience of motorsport events from the 1940s to the 1960s. A number will have been to it and some have even become part of the 'Goodwood family' by regularly taking part in the scene-setting events that are a feature of every meeting. The circuit at the centre of it all was one of the most famous in the world between the end of the second world war and 1966, closing then due to rising speeds. Those unfamiliar with the track, but who grew up with Scalextric,

may be interested to know that the trackside buildings they sold were based on Goodwood's, the slot car manufacturer being located in nearby Havant. After a period of steady decline, the circuit was resurrected in 1998 for the first Revival.

Uniquely, having avoided the steady development inflicted on most other venues, Goodwood now provides the perfect environment for historic racing. The eye-watering values of the cars involved seemingly not having any influence on the way they are driven.

This year's event had a personal bonus for me in that Mr. Temple (of *Chap* magazine fame) had been invited to the launch of Goodwood Estate's Levin Down gin, meaning that I got to tag along. Meeting up in bright sunshine at an all but deserted Goodwood House, half a dozen of us were taken to the Downs in classic Land Rovers. Having inspected the local source of juniper berries it was back to the house for canapés and gin-based cocktails. This was a 'motorsport event' like no other I have ever attended but, I must admit, I could get used to it.

Back at the circuit, despite all of the 'am drams' and set dressing that comes with every Revival meeting, it's the racing that is still very much the centre of interest. One of 2022's highlights was seeing the Voiturette single-seaters of ERA and Maserati from the 1930s (qualifying for inclusion due to racing restarting after the war with moth-balled cars) mixing it with the first brand new 'continuation build' BRM V16, a design from 1947. With four camshafts and a displacement of 1.5 litres, its almost mythical supercharged engine really is engineering as jewel-like art. Despite being difficult to drive and unreliable, its hollow-throated howl alone is enough to quicken the pulse of any member of the cognoscenti.

I freely admit that it is the 1960s GT cars that are the big draw for me, with brutish AC Cobras mixing it with Jaguar E Types among a few more esoteric models for honours in the top-billed 'TT' race. This is now so competitive though, and the cars for it so highly developed, that the Moss Trophy has been introduced to entice more delicate, thoroughbred competitors like the Aston Martin DB4GT and Ferrari 250SWB to return to the fray. The most fun is probably to be had with the saloon races where scampering Minis hound huge Ford Galaxies while the purist is catered for with delicate Formula Junior single-seaters and historic Formula One cars.

There is an enjoyable über-fancy dress aspect to milling about away from the track but ultimately it's when you stand at Woodcote as the sun sets, watching a Jaguar C Type with headlights blazing as it slices up the inside of an Aston Martin DB3S, that really makes you feel like you have been transported back sixty years.



Cocktail Class

New Sheridan Club Members supported a good cause on 1st October when they took part in a ticketed cocktail tutorial to raise money for Rotary International's End Polio Now campaign, organised by Sheridanites Stephen and Fiona Mosley. Members of the New Sheridan Club are renowned not only for their sartorial flair and urbane clubbability, but also for their ceaseless charity work about which they do not like to talk. Club Secretary Clayton Hartley agreed to talk about it.

Clayton Hartley writes:

THE FIRST of these cocktail drink-alongs for the Willaston and South Wirral Rotary Club actually took place during lockdown. Because people weren't allowed to meet up physically, the idea was to do a cocktail tutorial by Zoom: participants were sent a list of ingredients ahead of time so that they could, if they wished, make the cocktails as we went along. I myself am based in Greenwich in south London, but our participants were all over the place (though mostly in the Wirral, I believe).

My focus was on making cocktails at home. There is an awful lot that can be said about mixology, and the art form as seen in cocktail bars is now so refined that you can find yourself presented with a drink that has to be retrieved from a flask inside a hollowed-out Bible, or which is served under a glass dome filled with fragrant smoke. (These are both real examples that I have witnessed.) I wanted to reassure participants that, despite all the hype, making cocktails on a domestic scale was both easy and well worth the effort.

For that first talk, I looked at six classic drinks that were all ones I regularly made for myself. I began with the Old Fashioned, which is really the original cocktail: the earliest example of the word 'cocktail' in print goes back to 1796, and it meant a specific drink, a blend of any spirit with any or all of sugar, water and aromatic bitters, e.g., Angostura Bitters. (The use of the word as a generic one for mixed drinks—each of which had their own specific name, such as the Champagne Cocktail or the Vieux Carré Cocktail—came later.) The Old Fashioned is just this, bourbon whiskey with sugar and bitters, plus ice, which cools and dilutes, and it's a good showcase for any fine spirit, not just whiskey.

In modern cocktail terms, the Old Fashioned is really a one-ingredient cocktail, being just a gussied-up spirit. The next two drinks I looked at were the classic two-ingredient cocktails, the Dry Martini (gin and dry vermouth) and the Manhattan (rye whiskey and vermouth, whether sweet, dry or a mix of the two, plus some bitters). These are the two cocktails I make the most at home.

Next, I looked at a class of cocktails that combined two parts spirit with one part sour (almost invariably lemon or lime juice) and one part sweet (usually a liqueur or perhaps a plain sugar syrup or fruit syrup). This sweet-and-sour combination is found in so many recipes it's worth being aware of as a building block, so you can experiment with inventing your own cocktails. In this case I looked at the Margarita (two parts tequila, one part lime juice and one part triple sec, e.g., Cointreau), but the same principles apply to the Daiquiri (rum, lime juice and sugar), the Sidecar (Cognac, lemon juice and triple sec), the White Lady (gin, lemon juice and triple sec, with or without some egg white for texture) and so forth.

My fifth drink was the Aviation, an example of a cocktail that also featured the combination of base spirit, sweet and sour, but in this case with the latter two ingredients in half the proportions as the last category (so four parts gin to one part lemon juice and one part maraschino, a cherry liqueur). This makes for a more delicate cocktail that showcases the base spirit a bit more. The Aviation also includes a teaspoon or so of violet liqueur, which gives the finished drink a sky-blue colour.

Finally I presented the Negroni, a hugely popular three-ingredient drink, made from equal parts gin, sweet red vermouth and the bitter, fruity Italian aperitivo Campari. (If you replace the gin with American whiskey it becomes a Boulevardier.)

These, I felt, were the main foundations for home mixology, requiring a relatively simple collection of ingredients and no special equipment beyond a cocktail shaker and some way of measuring out fluids. So when Stephen and Fiona asked me to give a second talk in October, it raised the question of where to go from there. Apparently the polio campaign's colour is purple, so Fiona at one point suggested a menu entirely of purple cocktails. This idea was abandoned, but I had thought of one, a 1940s blend of tequila, crème de cassis (blackcurrant liqueur), lime and ginger ale. So from this I had the idea of focusing on tequila cocktails.

It was bold gambit, since anyone who fundamentally didn't like tequila might feel a little cheated. However, I figured that this might be my opportunity to introduce people to some of the ways that tequila's earthy, smoky, slightly petroly character can be combined with other flavours—especially since many drinkers might tend to think of the spirit as something to be raucously chucked into the back of their throats on stag nights, rather than something to be savoured.

For the sake of completeness, we began with the Margarita (see above), on the grounds that this is probably the one tequila cocktail that most people have heard of. A survey concluded that it is actually the most popular cocktail in America (a UK survey from last year put it at sixth over here). There are various origin myths about who invented it, mostly dating from the 1940s, involving a famous bartender creating it in honour of some woman called Margarita, but it's worth noting that the *Café Royal Cocktail Book* from 1937 features a drink called the Picador which has identical ingredients in identical proportions.

Also from the *Café Royal Cocktail Book* is the Toreador, essentially the same but using apricot brandy instead of triple sec. Apricot brandy isn't really a brandy but an apricot liqueur and is quite an old cocktail ingredient. We made the Toreador on the night and, while I think it's less successful than the Margarita, at least one person declared it their favourite.

Our next drink was the El Diablo—the aforementioned blend of tequila, crème de cassis, lime juice and ginger ale, dating from the 1940s. (Note that the cassis and the lime juice, present in equal proportions, are another example of that sweet-and-sour building block.) One option is to blend the tequila and ginger ale in a long glass with ice, then add the liqueur, tipping it over the top, so that it sinks down and creates a layered effect. This looks pretty, but I advise stirring it with a long spoon before you drink it. I get the impression that clear, amber-coloured ginger ale was created in the 20th century as a mixer, but nowadays the cloudy, more strongly flavoured ginger beer has had a resurgence and you can try this drink using that instead.

Our remaining two ingredients featured fruit juices. The Matador, from *Trader Vic's Bartending Guide* (1947), blends tequila with pineapple juice, plus the ubiquitous lime. If you're using pineapple juice in a shaken cocktail, then do shake hard, as this produces a silky texture with a delicate foamy mousse. You're more likely to encounter pineapple juice in tropical rum cocktails, but I think this drink shows there is a synergy with tequila as well.

So which cocktail is the one that Mexicans drink their tequila in? None of these. I am reliably informed by the brand ambassador for Olmeca Altos the no.1 way to drink tequila in Mexico is in a Paloma, where it is simply blended with grapefruit soda. Typical brands are Fresca, Squirt and Jarritos—none of which is freely available in the UK. So for our last cocktail we made a makeshift Paloma, combining tequila, fresh grapefruit juice, lime juice and a little sugar or agave nectar (which is readily available in supermarkets these days), topped up with sparkling water. For me this was the stand-out beverage of the night, showing that there is a real harmony between grapefruit and tequila.

If you'd like to try any of these tequila cocktails at home I include the recipes below:

Margarita

- 2 shots tequila
- 1 shot triple sec, such as Cointreau
- 1 shot freshly squeezed lime juice

If desired add a salt rim to your glass by rubbing the squeezed hull of your lime around the lip of the glass then turning the glass upside down on to

a saucer of fine salt. (Try to remember to do this before you pour the cocktail in to the glass, otherwise it'll end in tears.) Then shake the ingredients with ice in a cocktail shaker and pour into the glass (which by this stage is the right way up again.)

Toreador

- 2 shots tequila
- 1 shot apricot brandy
- 1 shot fresh lime or lemon juice
- Preparation is the same as the Margarita

El Diablo

- 2 shots tequila
- ½–¾ shot lime juice
- ½–¾ crème de cassis
- Ginger ale

Add the first three ingredients to an ice-filled tall glass, stir to blend and chill, and top with ginger ale; optionally add the cassis over the top at the end instead.

Matador

- 2 shots tequila
- 2½–3 shots pineapple juice
- 1 shot lime juice
- 1 tsp maraschino

The original recipe actually has a 1:2 balance of tequila to pineapple, but I feel it works better this way. The addition of the maraschino is also my own addition, as its subtle cherry flavour seems to work nicely, though you could leave it out and perhaps use less lime juice.

Makeshift Paloma

- 2 shots tequila
- 2 shots grapefruit juice
- ½ shot lime juice
- ¼–½ shot sugar syrup or agave nectar
- Soda/sparkling water

Shake everything but the soda and strain into an ice-filled highball. Top with soda. Some serve this with a salt rim, or just add a pinch of salt to the mix.

Letter From America

Transatlantic travel isn't all salted peanuts and cramped legroom, as our correspondent attests.

By the Colonel



OH, ARE YOU crossing on the Berengaria? This is one of those offhand questions that I always wish I'd been asked. It evokes so much; old newsreels, the Roaring Twenties, quiet wealth, elegance, and an unhurried pace of Atlantic travel, and yes, life, that barely exists today. Transatlantic ship travel in the 1920s and 1930s on a first-rate ship and in one of the respectable Classes was indeed, 'the only way to travel' (if you had the cash). Steerage is always steerage regardless of the ship.

Poor wretches.

I know there's no point in daydreaming about time travel or a gin-induced late-night swim in the Berengaria's Pompeian swimming bath with Buster Crabbe, but I sometimes can't help playing 'what if'. They must have been wonderful days.

The reality is that now and for most people crossing the Atlantic is an exercise in calculating how much pain and hunger one will endure for six or seven hours in an enclosed aluminium tube zooming through the troposphere elbow to elbow with strangers in exchange for the lowest airfare between New York and London. The amount of pain and hunger usually has a direct and inverse relationship to the amount of airfare.

Is this an efficient method of getting the greatest amount of people from New York to London? Yes. Is it a pleasant method? Usually not. No ... make that definitely not. I won't go into the horrors of modern air travel. Too depressing.

Fortunately, there are alternatives, or I should say, an alternative. Cunard's QM2 is the last and now only transatlantic liner offering regular passenger service between New York and Southampton. Your correspondent, and his aide de camp for life and better half in every way, German, have been lucky enough to sail on her twice, once pre-plague and again in late October of last year.

What can I say? Yes, you should cross on the QM2 if you want to spend seven days staring at the black and grey Atlantic from a wooden deck chair, breathe clean salt air, doze, read, drink good wine and eat three squares a day plus tea. The gentle roll of the ship on the swells or the excitement of outrunning a hurricane is not to be missed. Brisk walks on deck after dinner and a cigar. Shuffleboard, of course.

That is what yours truly does and it is as restful a cure for modern life as one might want. An added bonus is that the Wi-Fi on board the ship is

so awful no one bothers to pay to use it. God love Cunard. My iPhone never works until we dock in Southampton. Bliss.

The first dinner out is informal, of course. A quaint tradition held over from the days when valets and lady's maids were still sorting through steamer trunks in cabins and gowns, dinner jackets, and tailcoats would not have been ready by dinner the first night out.

Now please understand that the QM2 is not the Berengaria. Those days are gone. The ship is beautiful, well-appointed, and a 'dress code' still exists. Yet modern life, especially post-pandemic, has caused a certain informality to creep in, to even the QM2.

In the past and on our first crossing some years ago dinners were formal each night after the first night. Most recently, formal attire is required only on three or four of the remaining nights and sadly many availed themselves of this leniency. Of course, nothing prevents you from indulging in formality every night (unless of course your aide de camp for life and better half in every way forgets to pack your dinner jacket trousers, but that's a different story).

Another thing to note is that a crossing on the QM2 is not a cruise. There are no ports of call where excited passengers swarm ashore like locusts to devour culture in Venice or rot-gut Tequila in Puerto Vallarta for a few hours, returning exhausted, sunburned, and/or drunk.

Now please don't get the impression that there's nothing else to do on this beautiful ship. Quite the contrary. The daily ship's newspaper and events calendar list countless music events, dances, lectures, and informal clubs ranging from flower arranging to rabid bridge players. I just can't tell you much about them because, well, I dislike bridge and generally avoid people on vacation unless I can't help it, or they're very nice.

No, my dear readers, the entire purpose of a crossing is simply to cross the Atlantic in an unhurried way and indulge in whatever you like. Indulgence is the secret to a pleasant crossing. Enjoy.



Ski Someday

Oliver Lane considers whether traditional clothing remains practical on the high-speed, crowded slopes of the 21st-century ski resort.

TWEED. You've just got to, haven't you? Show the polyester, hollow-fill brigade how it's really done...

While skiing—as a practical way to travel, hunt, and fight in steep 'n' snowy places—has been around longer than the Pyramids, the present conception of ski as leisure is a Victorian conceit combining (as the Victorians so often did) consumer goods, disposable income, and railways.

With the laying of iron tracks up certain choice mountains, wealthy Europeans could for the first time travel by specially laid-on ski trains from Paris to a resort like Chamonix in just twelve hours. Frankly, you'd be hard-pressed to do better than that today, demonstrating the really remarkable ability the Victorians had for making things happen when there was money to be made.

But in other regards skiing was very different for your Victorian thrillseeker. The skis were, of course, solid or later laminated wood and held in place with leather thongs. Button lifts were decades away, never mind enclosed telecabins. And the season was considerably shorter: one of the many developments this past century with the democratisation of skiing as a hobby is the proliferation of resorts built with good road access higher and higher than before thought possible.



While in 1890 those intrepid Fin de Siècle daredevils might have expected snow one kilometre above sea level in the French Alps from December through to January, the opening of—for instance—the first Les Arcs resort at 1600 metres (one mile) above sea level in 1968 extended the ski season by weeks. This was extended by weeks again with successive resorts going further up the mountain in following years. With the 'Arc 2000' (one and one-quarter miles above sea level) skiing right into mid-April is possible if the weather and snow machines cooperate.

At this time of year, you'll frequently see folk out in just their shirtsleeves, which really leaves you with the inescapable conclusion that you will not in fact die if you dare eschew the bright plastic clothing that may otherwise seem *de rigueur*.

And why shouldn't you? After all, Good King Charles, who has led the way on good tweeds for so long, ploughed this furrow when he selected an image of himself and the now-Queen skiing in tweed for their 2010 Christmas card.

Which brings us to our experiment. This was inspired in part by the natural British impulse to show the French up, and also in part to preserve the finite supply of beer tokens by wearing things I already own. The resulting outfit was consequently inspired not only by classic British country wear, and traditional skiing, but also by the great mountaineers of the past. Think in particular of the late, great, Walter Bonatti, who scaled K2 in 1954 wearing breeches, a flannel shirt, and what one must simply call a 'natty knit'. They had real style in those days.

The combination I found worked best, consequently, was built up of a few key items. Essential, of course, is the Australian merino underwear, both long-sleeve vest and long-johns as the most effective baselayer one could hope for. On top of that, I was delighted by the comfort, style, and practicality of a Viyella checked shirt—the 'original' technical sporting fabric, if you will, invented in 1893 and being a blend of cotton and wool. The Viyella has been beloved by those whose hobbies find them in the wet and cold ever since—and worn with a tie, of course!

Eschewing the gaudy plastic trousers most common on the slopes, I found a pair of corduroy plus-tows by Bernard Weatherill and braces, with shooting socks and garters kept the below-the-belt region warm and dry. A jolly Edward VIII-type Fair Isle sweater by Oldfield and a tweed cap (yes, finally, some tweed as promised...) finish things off.

Mrs. Lane adopted a similar approach to the slopes, cutting a graceful figure when putting a lifetime's practice on the slopes into hurtling down treacherous runs at frightening speed, clad too in corduroy and a Fair Isle from Scotland's Brora.

Particularly effective, apparently, was the self-made—to a 1940s pattern—'pixie' type cloth helmet, made of sheepskin offcuts and lined with cotton salvaged from one of my old shirts. The underchin tie ribbon is of hand-made pure silk, woven and dyed in England. How's that for bona-fides?

While we're here, I'd like to take a moment to sing the praises of the tatty old Norwegian army surplus daypack I've been abusing for years. Perfect size for carrying a flask of tea and a packet of Tunnocks Caramel Wafers. Turns out the little leather straps dangling off the sides are to carry skis around. Who would have thought it, those clever Nordics...

In conclusion, dear comrades, togs for comfortable and practical skiing may be had for now, assuming you're already tooled up for shootin' or fishin' at home, and the Frogs love it. Can't be many times a ski instructor has waylaid a fellow on the slopes to talk pros and cons on various moustache waxes and scoots off merrily having had a scoop from your tin for his own whiskers.

Good luck out there.
P.S. But what if there was a plastic-fantastic option for the ski-forward Sheridanite? Imagine my surprise when, on my last day before making our way back to fair Albion, I bumped into a rum cove wearing a pair of saloppes in *New Sheridan Colours*. Thinking of this very publication and the club's endless thirst for red-black-silver apparel, I asked the fellow for a photograph.

Naturally, being a proud Gaul he didn't speak a word of English—which left me desperately flapping in sub-GCSE Franglais for the right string of words. In the end, I managed to just about stumble out '*Monsieur, une photo avec your delightful pantalons rouges? C'est la couleur of my fraternité à London, tu vois? Merci-buckets...*'

P.P.S. I believe for those who take life very seriously—not guilty—and who also enjoy throwing themselves down mountains and wearing tweed, there is also once a year the *Alpine Classique*, a weeklong festival of vintage style, skis, and something else. It all looks very earnest. You have been warned!

Greenland

Tim Eyre describes the little-known nation of Greenland, the topic of his February talk.

GREENLAND is situated to the north-east of the North American continent. It is the world's largest island and extends northwards from a latitude comparable to that of the Shetland Isles to the northernmost patches of land on the planet. Greenland is home to 56,466 souls; a similar number of people live in Macclesfield, and the entire population of Greenland would comfortably fit in the Emirates Stadium. This population lives mostly on the west coast towards the south but with settlements extending as far as 77°47' north. The vast uninhabited interior is covered by an ice cap.

Greenland has been inhabited since 2,500 BCE. The first inhabitants are known as Paleo-Inuit and are thought to have migrated from the islands in the north of what is today Canada and to have originated from Siberia. However, the modern-day Inuit who inhabit Greenland are unusual among indigenous groups in that they first settled in Greenland well after the arrival of Europeans.

Around 982 the Icelanders exiled Erik the Red. As a result, he established a colony in Greenland. There were three Norse settlements, totalling several hundred farms and several thousand people. The Norse Greenlanders farmed cattle, sheep and goats, and also hunted and fished. They traded walrus ivory and other goods with Europeans.

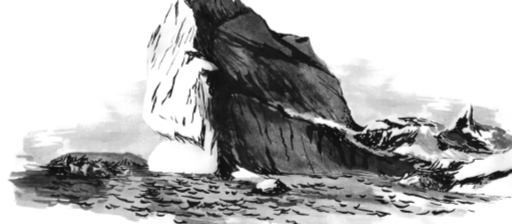
Around 1300, the ancestors of today's Greenlandic Inuit started to arrive in Greenland from Arctic Canada. The Norse Greenlanders called them *skraelings* ('wretches'), which is ironic because the Norse Greenlanders disappeared during the latter half of the fifteenth century, whereas the Inuit thrived. What happened to the Norse Greenlanders after surviving in Greenland for over 450 years is not known with any certainty, but the 'Little Ice Age' may well have had something to do with it.

In 1711, a Norwegian Lutheran cleric by the name of Hans Egede learned of the Norse Greenlanders and that contact with them had been lost for centuries. Fearing that they might have lost their Christian faith, or still worse remained Catholic, he petitioned King Frederik IV of Denmark and Norway to fund a colonial expedition. Egede departed with three ships in 1721, reaching Greenland in July. He found no Norse Greenlanders and so set about converting the Inuit. He was successful in this endeavour, and as a result modern-day Greenlanders predominately belong to the Lutheran faith. Christianity displaced a rich Greenlandic shamanistic tradition, vestiges of which remain today in the form of such traditions as the *qivittoq*, a malign wandering mountain spirit.

Greenland became a Danish colony, with whaling and sealing being important activities. As with so many other colonies, smallpox devastated the Greenlandic population. The fall of Denmark to Germany in 1940 led to the USA taking custody of Greenland, but in 1953 Greenland was fully integrated with Denmark, only to move to home rule in 1979. Greenland continues to become more autonomous as time goes on. However, Denmark continues to send to Greenland a sizeable subsidy of half a billion US dollars each year. This accounts for half of all government spending in Greenland, to the tune of nearly ten thousand dollars per head of population.

The Inuit developed highly skilled adaptations to the harsh climate. Traditionally they wore warm suits made of animal hides that were sewn with considerable skill. In the summer they lived in tents and in the winter sod houses that were partially below ground. Trees do not grow in Greenland, so excepting the occasional piece of driftwood, the Inuit used whale bones for construction. For cooking and warmth, they burned whale oil and whale blubber in lamps made of soapstone. They lived as subsistence hunters and hunting remains an important aspect of Greenlandic life today, to the extent that prisoners are allowed time out of incarceration to go hunting.

Another important aspect of Greenlandic life is dog sledding. Mostly eschewing snowmobiles, Greenlanders keep dogs and use them to pull sleds for leisure and for hunting expeditions. This is only permitted north of the Arctic Circle, where towns typically have large areas given over to kennelling sled dogs. The dogs are not pets and so by law must be kept chained when not working. Such is the importance of dog sledding to Greenlandic culture that images of dog sleds appear on postage stamps and ornamental plates.



Drawn by Samara Leibner

Most Greenlanders speak an Inuit language called Kalaallisut, known in English as Greenlandic. This is the only official language of Greenland. Danish is also spoken. Greenlandic has given us the words *kayak* (*qajaq* in Greenlandic orthography) and *anorak* (*annoraq* in Greenlandic orthography). Greenlandic is a polysynthetic language, meaning that words are formed from many parts and therefore can run to dozens of letters but encapsulate a precise meaning. For example, *pisarimeqartoq* means 'the one which was caught'. There is no letter 'c' in Greenlandic orthography, so schoolchildren learn their ABD. The letter 'q' is used to represent the sound *k* sounded from the back of the throat (as in the nation 'Qatar') and 'll' is used to represent the same sound as *ll* represents in Welsh.

Greenlanders wear traditional costume on special occasions. Men wear a white parka and women wear a broad necklace of intricate beadwork, seal-skin shorts with long stockings and soft leather boots called *kamik*. For details, see my article in issue 168 of *Resign!* In daily life, Greenlanders generally wear practical warm outdoor gear from brands such as Marmot. Some teenagers favour 'gangsta rapper' outfits.

Unfortunately, the modern world has not been kind to the Greenlanders, despite their well-meaning Danish patrons. As with so many other indigenous populations, the destruction of traditional social structures has led to high rates of alcoholism and suicide. Alcohol is now tightly regulated, but Greenland continues to see troubling social problems.

Greenland's biggest area of economic activity is fishing and fish processing. Greenland primarily exports prawns, halibut and cod. Mining is also important, but Greenland lacks the technical know-how for the extractive industries and so must seek help from other countries.

I travelled to Greenland in 2013 and stayed for two weeks. I arrived at the country's sole international airport at Kangerlussuaq (population 508), where I stayed overnight before travelling on to the city of Ilulissat (population 4,670). There are no roads or railways between settlements in Greenland, so I flew from place to place in planes from Greenland's fleet of small aircraft. Ilulissat is famous for its icefjord, a fjord choked with icebergs and a sight of life-changing beauty. In Greenland I was struck by how human settlements looked small and inconsequential next to the huge expanses of wilderness. Those wishing to learn more about my trip are welcome to ask me in real life for a paper copy of my travel diary. I also wrote about a day trip to the town of Aasiat in issue 119 of *Resign!*

Greenland has one of the most fascinating cultures I have ever encountered and easily the most beautiful landscape. I feel immensely privileged to have travelled there.

Church & Chow: A City of London Architecture Walk

Luca JJ recounts the brief bibble among some fine city churches he organised for club members.



ON THE 27th of October, a handful of Neosh Sheridanites met in the City of London for a daytime tour of some fine old churches, followed by a rather self-indulgent luncheon.

Our visit passed via St. Mary Abchurch, which was designed by Wren and, despite a rather plain exterior, can boast a wonderful interior including a large reredos by the great Grinling Gibbons. That was followed by St. Stephen Walbrook, also by Wren and a particularly fine example of Baroque grandeur and playfulness.

We then proceeded to St. Mary Woolnoth. It is mentioned, among other things, in Eliot's *The Wasteland*, in a rather pessimistic take on people with office jobs '... I had not thought death had undone so many...' It was designed by Hawksmoor and, like much of his work, is a very heterodox mannerist composition. Though closed, St. Edmund King, which is dedicated to England's earlier patron saint, has a quietly Palladian exterior. It is the work of Wren's colleague at Gresham's College, Dr. Hooke (better known as a scientist).

Lastly, we snuck through some very atmospheric and narrow old alleys to reach St. Michael Cornhill, a mix of English Baroque and Gothic Revival, medialisng elements. It is worth recalling that all these churches are within a handful of blocks of each other.

The lunch had been booked at the historic and atmospheric Simpson's Tavern but, on the morning of the event, they 'telegraphed' to say they were experiencing a power outage. This proved unfortunate, on one hand, because Simpsons might now close permanently but, on the other hand, we repaired to Luc's Brasserie, in the atmospheric Leadenhall Market, which frankly serves tastier food.

If You Don't Know, Put Berlin

A dissection of the club's monthly virtual meetings, a boozy hangover of the Covid era.

By M'Lord Rigby of Hougou

IF YOU AREN'T there on the third Wednesday of each month, you're frankly only receiving half the value of your membership subscription. It is perhaps a misnomer to call the Third Wednesday Lodge 'A Quiz', as the quizzing element is merely incidental, an excuse if you will, to gather across the miles and across the continents to engage in clubbable activities and 'bon mots'.

It probably had to have a centrepiece around which to arrange a Lodge Meeting; the First Wednesday Lodge has its talks, the Third Wednesday Lodge has its fun and games. It could have been centred around a talk instead, but perhaps there are only so many presentations on historic figures who may have held questionable politics we can take (Hail Spode!), whereas quiz topics are as infinite as the wisdom (but not the mercy) of the Glorious Committee.

It was the ex-association football player, now political Tweetmeister, Mr. Gary Lineker (not a member) who said 'Football is a ball game played be-

tween two teams of eleven people over ninety minutes, and then the Germans win.' Something similar can be said of the New Sheridan Club Third Wednesday Virtual Lodge in that the New Sheridan Club Quiz is a game played among six or more teams, and then Incy (Adrian Prooth) wins.

Although it isn't always just a quiz—there have been rounds involving creating art, wearing hats, finding the oldest thing in the house, and recently the impromptu cocktail-making round. Cocktails that evening included the highly recommended Golden Shower by Actuarious, comprising one part Vodka, one part King's Ginger, ½ part lemon liqueur (Limoncello will do if that's all you have), top up with soda water, pour into Martini glasses and garnish with cocktail cherries. Named for its subtle yet rich yellow tinge. Golden Showers should be served at body temperature.

But back to quizziness. It all began when the physical Lodge was locked up during the Great Plague of 2020, and indeed all other hostleries, speakeasies, and dens of debauchery were shut. Back then it was weekly, but considered such a jolly wheeze that it has continued, post-Plague, on a now monthly basis. And what fun it is! It's as chap as a 'Name the pipe' round as highbrow as 'Identify the classical book cover', and as lowbrow as the round presented by The Chairman (Witham Rowing Club, not the actual New Sheridan Club Chairman), in his round called simply 'Nonces'.

Allow me to take you through a typical Third Wednesday Lodge:

Zoom opens at 19:45. Most people have arrived by 20:05. The quiz element begins at 20:10, ten minutes later than scheduled. The Chairman (Witham) apologises for being late. I get stuck into my cheese and wine. Some questions are asked, answers are given, and everyone except The Chairman (Witham) marks their own scores accurately. There are often shouts of 'I've got a point!', 'I was wrong but I'm giving myself a point anyway', and 'How the Dickens would anyone know that?'

About three quiz rounds and forty minutes later, there is a welcome interval in the quizziness, during which the assembled hold forth on eclectic topics. After this, purely out of politeness to that month's quiz-setter, we decide to continue with it. A further three rounds and a totting up later Incy has won, The Chairman (Witham) complains about something irrelevant, Baron Solf finishes last, whoever came second declares themselves the true winner based on the Incy-Exclusion Principle, Clayton starts cooking dinner and everyone gets back to chap-chatting.

So! Do come along. You're only getting half the New Sheridan Club experience if you stay away. And what better thing is there to do on the third Wednesday evening of each month? A top tip for newcomers: one of the answers to one of the questions must be 'Berlin' for reasons which are now lost to everyone's memory.

Details of the next Virtual Lodge (with incidental quiz), including that all-important and highly-prized Zoom link, will be available on the club's Facebook page a day or so beforehand. I can't recall who agreed to host the next quiz, but it matters not as a good time will be had by all—or your money back! (Entry is free.)

The After-Life of a Re-Built Face

Accompanying her November club talk, Sarah Bowerman offers this examination of the literary and artistic links to Second World War facial reconstructive surgery to the membership for their consideration.

WHEN Richard Hope Hillary died aged 24—already a war hero and famous author—his face was only three years old. It had been burned along with his hands in 1940 and gradually re-built from the hairless parts of his arms and legs by Archibald McIndoe at his specialist unit at East Grinstead.

Hillary had been a handsome cad at Oxford, known as well for his rowing as his womanising. He left Trinity College in 1939 to join the RAF without taking his degree. After training, he was sent to 603 Squadron to fly Spitfires and enjoyed a remarkable, and remarkably brief time flying on the front lines.

Flying just seven hours in his first week before he was near-fatally shot down, Hillary got five confirmed kills in that time, earning him a reputation in the Royal Air Force in record-quick time. Shot down by a Messerschmitt Bf109, he plunged burning into the sea and was rescued by the Margate Lifeboat Service. He recorded all of this and his interesting, sometimes traumatic experiences in hospital in his book, *The Last Enemy* (1942—published in the USA as *Falling Through Space*).

His account of his life in the RAF until his crash, and his time being re-built are a treat to read while his fantasy passages—fictitious accounts of the Blitz—are obvious and clunky. The jarring parts do not negate the value of the volume; it is still a worthwhile read and its continuing popularity is thoroughly justified.

In 1942, after the publication of his book, Hillary sat for a portrait. He had been photographed regularly as a medical record for McIndoe and other surgeons, and formally for his American publishers. His post-surgery image—heavily edited—was

used on the back of his book, but the brief sitting needed for a photograph is a very different experience to sitting stared by an artist for hours.



In this case, the artist was an imposing figure himself, sporting large moustachios and well known for recording famous military figures. Among his works by this point were T.E. Lawrence, chief figures of the Great War, and more recently the RAF top brass and Aces. Indeed, it was most likely that it was Eric Henri Kennington's work with those senior officers, and the publication of his *Drawing the RAF* that led Hillary to commission him—for the sum of £30.

Kennington's War Portraits (not limited to the RAF) were paid for by the Government as part of their War Artists Advisory Committee (WAAC) but Hillary commissioned his portrait—in the same format and medium, pastel on paper—privately. At the time he was trying earnestly to return to active service so he could be back with those he had grown to feel close to, his RAF comrades. In commissioning Kennington perhaps he was re-joining them, if only in pastel.

Hillary visited Kennington at his home in Oxford for two days in October 1942 and wrote of the experience in revelatory terms to his girlfriend Mary Booker: 'I have quite lost my heart to Kennington. He has the most extraordinary magnetism of anyone I have ever met—a great man, I think.'

Hillary, like many young men of his generation, venerated T.E. Lawrence and being in Kennington's Lawrence memorabilia-filled studio made a great impression on him. Clearly so too did being given the manuscript to *The Mint*, the as-yet-unpublished memoir of Lawrence's time in the RAF that Kennington gave Hillary to read.

Kennington's portrait is a delicate and sensitively constructed work. The viewer knows there is something 'other' about this face but the skill with which it is rendered leaves the details of how it is 'different' unresolved. When I initially saw the work—in a book at age thirteen—I assumed the artist had not been very good at drawing the nexus of brow and inner eye, but closer study convinced me that the heavy 'wrinkle' of brow and pull of eye must be a considered choice given the subtlety with which the jaw is described.

When I finally read the description that accompanied the image, I could not equate a burned man with this face, until that little click-pop of realisation happened (far too late perhaps) that here, in this brow and eye, were the site of trauma.

The work received mixed responses from Hillary's friends, most of whom did not think it 'like'. It is true this image does not describe how his eyelids and his top lip were paler and smoother than the rest of his once heavily tanned face, having been made of skin hidden from the sun. Nor is not clear that his mismatched brows were made of hair from his temples. (Hillary chose to have a hairless top lip, so he would not have to shave).

Hillary thought it 'good' and exclaimed 'At last I have a face!' (according to an early, and somewhat er, smoky biography by his publisher Horatio 'Rache' Lovat Dickson). In his 'will', an informal and un-witnessed document that was taken seriously by his family, he left the portrait to his girlfriend Mary Booker. Unlike Kennington's other RAF works it did not go on public display in the National Gallery and was not used as publicity for Hillary's book or the war effort generally—Kennington's other works had been sent as far as Canada and Russia as propaganda.

After Hillary's death in January 1943, Booker lent the work to his parents Michael and Edwyna until their deaths, and Kennington created a (frankly execrable) allegorical work called *The Heart of England* (1943, pastel on paper, sold at auction in 2018 for £37,000 to a private collection) as a consolation for Hillary's mother. The image is of an RAF officer with bandaged eyes and hands, laying a rose on the Sceptred Isle while walking into the dark unknown. It perfectly chimed with Edwyna's Spiritualist beliefs and was highly lauded at the time. It went on display at the National Gallery where gushing critics described it as 'wholly engendered by war emotion ... a passionate appeal from the very centre of the war world to the world outside'. Beyond reminding this jaded writer of the Milk Tray Man after a chip pan fire, my greatest dislike of this work is the execution. Kennington's portrait of Hillary is extremely careful. It is not the work of six hours—it is the final, revised work, of six hours. He must have edited and edited before creating this final work. The touch is light and so careful, and the limited colours are used expertly and sparingly, allowing the tint and texture of the paper to do a great deal of work. *The Heart of England* is flat and dull in its surface, broad in its treatment and completely unexciting—but it was easy to reproduce and was very popular.

Hillary's father wrote to Kennington asking for him to make two copies of the portrait—one to be given to Trinity, Oxford and one to his old school—Shrewsbury. The Hillary family had kept all of Richard's 'notices'—articles about his book, reviews and the many many letters of appreciation received for it and his radio performances, from the general public and from public figures including H.G. Wells and Alfred Duff Cooper. Mary Booker had kept all of Hillary's letters to her.

While Edwyna Hillary had her son's reviews bound in a blue leather tome, Mary had the letters bound in red, a page for each page of writing, including notes on receipts and the telegram that let her know he had died. Together they wanted Hillary's memory to live on and wished to found a prize in his name at Oxford.

Kennington completed one copy of the portrait. It is far less subtle than the original: smoother, brighter, flatter, more dense in colour and different in light. Definitely an apotheosis rather than a direct portrait, closer to *The Heart of England* and Kennington's London Underground posters than the picture now in the National Portrait Gallery. After this, Kennington wrote to Michael Hillary that he was, 'Taking a necessary complete rest from ART'. He would not draw another RAF portrait, he never made a second copy.

The Hillaries established a trust fund in Richard's name, using the money from his book to fund a prize for fiction at Trinity and presenting the college with the second portrait. When Michael Hillary died, thirty-four years after his son, his widow Christine was left the Kennington portrait. She had been informed that it must go to the National Gallery.

After some redirection, she offered it to the National Portrait Gallery. By this time—1977—*The Last Enemy* had been surpassed in the national consciousness by war memoirs, particularly RAF memoirs, that had been turned into films; and Hillary by flyers who had lived longer and lost limbs. In fact, he had largely been forgotten everywhere but Shrewsbury School and Oxford, who both had archives devoted to him—the latter containing both the Blue and Red books of Edwyna and Mary.

There had been a biography of Hillary written by his publisher Lovat Dickson in 1950, which played up the import of the author's life in making Hillary, gave certain moments a great dramatic flourish, and suggested his death was suicide, rather than loss of control due to ice on his wings and a lack of working fingers on his fire-damaged hands. After her death, Mary Booker's widower discovered her Red book and in 1988 duly published the letters it contained, contextualizing them. Michael Burns had been a great fan of Richard Hillary and married Mary Booker in 1947, so it was perfectly normal that he publish the letters from the lover. The proceeds from this book went to the Richard Hillary Trust.

The National Portrait Gallery took the widow Hillary's offer to its Trustees to consider. They accepted the small pastel noting the reason: 'NPG has no portrait of 2nd World War Writers'—though they already had four Kenningtons—this one had been described by Monuments Man, and Deputy Director of the National Gallery Cecil Gould as, 'One of the best works, if not the very best, of that uneven portraitist'.

They did not have an image of Sir Archibald McIndoe and would take a further ten years to rectify that. Hillary did not immediately go on display, as new acquisitions do now. Indeed, he languished on top of a cupboard in the store room, his condition regularly checked and noted on an index card and was once loaned out to an exhibition. He only met his Oxford counterpart once, when the Trinity portrait was brought to London for comparison, though a photo of the Oxford copy was not made and added to the National Portrait Gallery archive, so little valued was this work.

It wasn't until the late 1980s that Hillary got a place on the wall of the Twentieth Century Gallery, near Anna Zinkeisen's 1944 painting of McIndoe. By 1993 he'd risen in the estimation of the National Portrait Gallery and was included in their publication *Master Drawings from the National Portrait Gallery*—where I saw him.

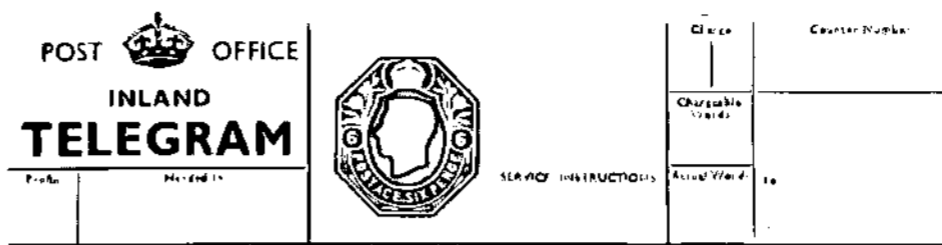
The Oxford copy featured in Sebastian Faulks's excellent 1996 telling of Hillary's life in *The Fatal Englishman: Three Short Lives*, the most compelling account of his life beyond his own. The original was included in the exhibition (and accompanying book, by our own Jonathan Black) *The Face of Courage: Eric Kennington and the Second World War* at the RAF Museum in 2011. He was still on the wall of the National Portrait Gallery when it closed for its refurbishment in 2020, and I hope he will be there when it opens in June this year.

Kennington's image has not, as far as I am aware, been used on the cover of Hillary's book. When Penguin re-issued the book as part of its celebration of the RAF's centenary in 2018, the cover was a polychrome watercolour of Hillary's RAF photograph, with a very clumsy ear.

But all is not lost. When Trinity College opened its new building—complete with archive and library—in May 2022—its Kennington copy was fixed firmly to the wall (admittedly on a staircase so it's really difficult to spend any time looking at it) for people to see, while the Hillary Prize for creative writing is still going strong. When in 2014 the Old Salopians of Shrewsbury decided to create the Hillary Medal—a gold token given for essay writing—they ignored Hillary's new face, his last face, and chose his RAF photograph as the basis for their graven image. Perhaps understandable, since all they received, in the end, was a photo of the National Portrait Gallery drawing ...

Well & Truly Mooted

The Club's most disaffected and disloyal servant, Craigho, somehow still a member despite having been told to resign constantly for some twelve years, recounts the Christmas Moot.



CLUB RUMP MEETS FOR ANNUAL XMAS MOOT AT SALOON BAR IN THE CITY (THE RISING SUN, NEAR BARBICAN / SMITHFIELD)

TIES WORN GIN, WINE, & ALES CONSUMED. CHIPS, LIKEWISE WITTICISMS TRADED, SALUTATIONS MADE, TOASTS PROPOSED, AND DREGS DRAINED

USUAL STUFF AND NONSENSE CARRIAGES AT 11. STOP.

Please write on the back of this form: the telephone number, or name and address of the sender. If not to be telegraphed

AND, THERE, in a nutshell, dear reader, is a fair summary of the evening. But as the Editor of *Resign!* has asked your humble correspondent to file a report of the proceedings of the Christmas Moot, he supposes he had better go into a bit more detail.

However, as the Duke of Wellington said in a letter following the Battle of Waterloo: 'The history of a battle, is not unlike the history of a ball. Some individuals may recollect all the little events of which the great result is the battle won or lost, but no individual can recollect the order in which, or the exact moment at which, they occurred, which makes all the difference as to their value or importance.' Your writer feels an account of a night at the pub falls into similar territory.

Nonetheless, he shall endeavour to provide a brief sketch of proceedings. As to the 'winner' of the evening, we would say that the Landlord welcomed our custom. Or, if not quite welcoming our presence, the Guv'nor did at least appear to welcome our currency.

First, a short history of the Moot ...

The Moot is the New Sheridan Club's annual and now traditional final gathering of the year, convened just before Christmas. Often held on a Friday, but not exclusively so, it's a chance for members to fortify themselves with as much drink and like-minded merry tweedy companionship as may reasonably be wished for, in a Central London hostelry in the early twenty-first century.

The idea is to use the occasion to fortify oneself against the vicissitudes of the festive season, such as setting off the next day to the Provinces to be suffocatingly enclosed with the in-laws, or slinking back to freezing garret and a super-market-ready-meal-for-one in front of the *Muppet Christmas Carol* on the telly box. Here, among one's peers, one can anaesthetise oneself against the season's forced saccharine tinsel cheer, drown sorrowful recent memories of one's doings at the office Christmas party, and see for oneself whether the noble Lord Mendrick is still alive.

Yes. Club member Lord Mendrick is a peripatetic gentleman who has spent much of his professional life teaching the virtues of tweed and leather-on-willow out in the Far East, returning each year to home and hearth, stopping en route at the Moot to down an ale or three with his fellow clubmen and women. The Moot began, in part, for this very purpose. The fact that Mendrick sometimes isn't able to attend the Moot for a few years is neither here nor there. (Apparently, he hopes to put his head round the door, this year, i.e., December 2023).

One other tradition of the Moot remains: it is not typically held in the Club's usual monthly haunt (currently that would be The Wheatsheaf in Fitzrovia). But the Glorious Committee (peace be upon them), choose as venue a suitably Dickensian public house down the back alley of an obscurely fusty corner of Central London. Such as, on this occasion, The Rising Sun, near the Barbican, a Samuel Smith's hostelry. Another Sam Smith's joint, The Dover Castle, found down the back of a mews, in behind the BBC, served us well for some years prior to the switch to the current venue. The Dover Castle is now a wine bar called the Jackalope. Make of that what thou wilt.

Thus, it came to pass, the many diverse members of Ye Olde Sheridan Club did meet downstairs in this goodly hostelry Ye Rising Sunne, on Thursday 22 December, occupying half the downstairs bar. By the time your correspondent arrived with his darling wife, approximately twenty persons of the tweedy and pin-stripe persuasion were engaged in traditional and modern acts of pub-going such as consuming ale at London prices, and not-so-subtly stealing their neighbours' chips. The action spread over two tables and a few well-oiled (or even well-heeled) punters bought rounds of ale and aforementioned fried potatoes to fuel the evening's conversation.

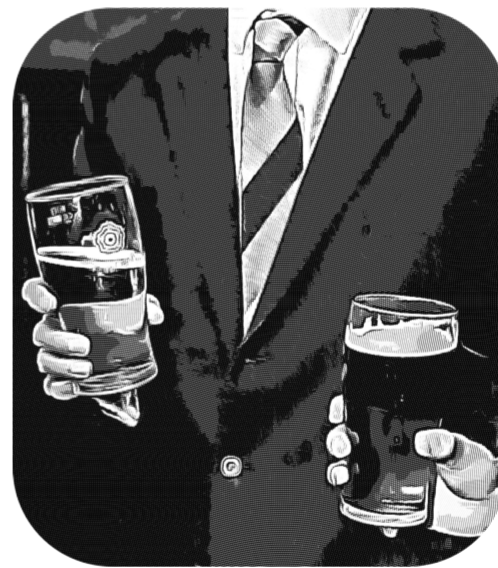
The photograph heading page one of this edition, taken by Mr. Hartley of the Most Serene Committee, shows the evening's attendees gathered for posterity. Much of the Committee was there (alas, minus Torquill), along with Sheridan

stalwarts such as the noble Earl of Essex, Sir Adrian Prooth B.T., Luca J.J., Robert Beckwith, Chuckles, Ed Marlowe, the Curé, the Mitchells (with the club lobster), Adie Hess, Ian White, Stewart 'Richard Branson' Lister Vickers, and Josie Thomas. 'Affability' Hollander even made an appearance after many years of absence. Apologies were sent in from Pandora Harrison, Rachel Effeny, Minerva Minna, Sarah Bowerman, Ridade Stardust, Priya Kali, Suzanne Coles, Sue George, Mark Christopher, and Marcus Walters. The rest of you either didn't R.S.V.P., or didn't appear.

Tsk, tsk, tsk.

One gauche and louche attendee, having newly arrived from the Home Counties, was even spotted wearing brown boots, a woollen woven approximation of the club tie, and a loud tweed jacket in this built-up area of London Town. But immodesty forbids him from revealing his true identity. Alright. It was your humble correspondent. How very clever of you. Now, Resign! It only remains to be said that our club members were of course the very last to leave the victualing establishment, and we were easy to distinguish from City bankers, as none of them wears a tie anymore, let alone bowler hats and watch fobs. Oh, and none of us was barred.

We shall have to do better next year.



Exposé: South Herts Pâtisserie in Vulgar Cutlery Shame

Our reporter reveals the shocking truth of the contemporary baker and proves the age-old adage 'be prepared'.

THE GLORIOUS Committee For Life were recently concerned to hear unconfirmed but troubling reports of a pâtisserie in south Hertfordshire that provided its dine-in customers with unsuitable cutlery. Mindful that standards must be maintained, they dispatched an undercover agent to investigate.

On visiting the pâtisserie (which cannot be named for legal reasons), the brave investigator did his best to impersonate a normal customer by wearing his hat at an angle less rakish than usual and by donning a pair of brogues with relatively flexible soles. He ordered a raspberry cheesecake for his good lady wife and a tiramisu for himself. With trepidation, they sat at a table and waited to examine the forks that would be provided for the degustation of these confections.

When the plates arrived, our investigator was horrified to find that the rumours, if anything, understated the vulgarity of the cutlery. Alongside each delectable, the server dropped a heavy dinner fork. Each landed with a sickening clunk. These large and cumbersome tools were suited to tackling a mighty slab of gammon, not the graceful consumption of a sweet delicacy.

Fortunately, our man on the scene had secreted a proper Sophie Conran pastry fork upon his person, so was able to eat his tiramisu without imitating Gargantua. He also provided his wife with a hidden left-handed pastry fork, these special implements being a mark of both refinement and inclusiveness.

We must hope that Glorious Committee For Life will use its full authority and power to enforce proper cutlery standards upon this wayward pâtisserie *pour encourager les autres*. Meanwhile, at the *Resign! Triannual* we can only recommend that Sheridanites carry their own suitably-handed pastry forks at all times.

Letters to the Editor

SIR—

Whilst entrenched in lockdown 32 I whiled away the long dark nights watching films from the 1950s and started a database of bicycles spotted therein. This is because I have an affinity with ancient bicycles. What intrigued me the most was their appearance on film was often serenaded by the use of a bicycle bell.

Often, on closer inspection, no bell appeared to be mounted on the handlebar of that particular bicycle, not usually anyway. Accordingly, I put this down to the enthusiasm of Elstree Studios Sound Effects department who may have been on a pay bonus scheme that rewarded them after each and every addition or use.

Likewise, no Western was complete without a horse entering the scene either neighing or snuffing, and no moor could be traversed without the presence of howling wind no matter how bright the sun may shine and still those trees remained.

A recent purchase landed me a BBC Sound Effects record, 33RPM but 7" in diameter. I was attracted by the specific Raleigh nature of this disc. My delight soon turned to horror as each track demonstrated a Raleigh roadster being beaten into submission, obviously with a noisy chain case, poorly lubricated chain and over-eager rider stamping hard on the pedals.

Various 'ride-by' extracts had the added delights of birdsong in the background to increase the veracity of it all but I wonder if the bosses of Raleigh held their heads in their hands as they heard their 'silent roadsters' howling in protest.

My angst was lessened, however, when on a certain track an arriving bicycle was heralded by the trill of one of M. Luca's finest—the bell.

I now need to work out why saloon furniture breaks anytime a chair is used over a gringo's head, why pianos stop playing anytime a wrong'un walks into the bar and why six shooters seem to hold eight bullets without the need to reload.

My cycle of choice is a Pedant.

—DICK VAN BIKE, *Loamshire*

SIR—

I am writing a short letter to greet all the members of the NSC, and also to thank the many mentions I have received in the newsletters. I have had occasion to greet or say goodbye to most of the noble members of this association, but for those whom I have failed to see in my fleeting stay in London, an extra thought is needed.

Moreover, I am here to send an invitation to visit Italy. In case it happens, letting me know in time would allow me to organize a proper welcome. I am working to expand the Club here in the 'Italian Peninsula', and to spread the philosophy of the Club so that the bond that exists with all of you is not lost.

Yours Faithfully,
—LUIGI SBAFFI, *Italy*

Club Dates

CLUB NIGHT

Wednesday, 1st March, from 7:00pm
The Wheatsheaf, Fitzrovia

Speaker is author Sandra Lawrence.

CLUB PUB CRAWL

Saturday, 11th March, 5:00pm
Meet at the Red Lion by Parliament.

CLUB NIGHT

Wednesday, 5th April, from 7:00pm

The Wheatsheaf, Fitzrovia
Speaker is the Chairman of the Society for Army Historical Research Ewan Carmichael on the 1759 Battle of Minden.

ANNUAL OXFORD PUNTING TRIP

Saturday, 22nd April, noon
Magdalen Bridge Boathouse
Look for the jolly pipe-smoking fellows and lusciously draped ladies. Bring paper money for the punt hire and a quid for the dunking sweepstake.

CLUB NIGHT

Wednesday, 3rd May, from 7:00pm

The Wheatsheaf, Fitzrovia
Speaker is club member Sarah Bowerman on the subject of Royal Iconography.

SHERIDAN CHILDREN'S WEEKEND AT THE BEACH

Mersea Island from May 12th. Pester Jessie Lakin for the deets.

CLUB NIGHT

Wednesday, 7th June, from 7:00pm

The Wheatsheaf, Fitzrovia

CLUB TIES

Club ties in 100% silk are available to members only at the supremely reasonable price of £22 posted to the UK from mrhartley@newsheridanclub.co.uk.

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