



SWEET TRANSVESTITES

A brief history of
cross-dressing

Africa Deco

The mysterious
Modernist city in the
heart of Eritrea

The Final Programme

Camp, stylish sci-fi at
our April Film Night

A light, breakfast cocktail?

David Smith makes
cocktails with breakfast
cereal. Don't ask why

RESIGN!

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW SHERIDAN CLUB • ISSUE 102 APRIL 2015



The New Sheridan Club traditionally meets in the upstairs room of The Wheatsheaf, just off Oxford Street. The Wheatsheaf is one of Fitzrovia's historic pubs, a one-time haunt of Dylan Thomas, George Orwell, Augustus John and Julian Maclaren-Ross. In fact Thomas met his wife Caitlin in The Wheatsheaf and, legend has it, he was known to flash at women there as well. Fitzrovia's associations with literature go back to the eighteenth century. In the twentieth century both Woolf and Shaw lived in Fitzroy Square; Pound and Lewis launched *Blast!* at the Restaurant de la Tour Eiffel in Percy Street. John Buchan lived in Portland Place and in *The Thirty-Nine Steps* Richard Hannay has a flat there. Both Lawrences (D.H. and T.E.) took rooms there, as did Aleister Crowley, Wilfred Owen, Rupert Brooke and Katherine Mansfield.

The Next Meeting

The next Club Meeting will take place on Wednesday 1st April in the upstairs room at The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB, from 7pm until 11pm, when Simon Pile will tell us all about "his" fort, Fort Burgoyne, a coastal fortification built in the 1860s and now owned by the charity The Land Trust, for whom Simon works. Later in the month Simon is hoping to be able to arrange a NSC group visit.

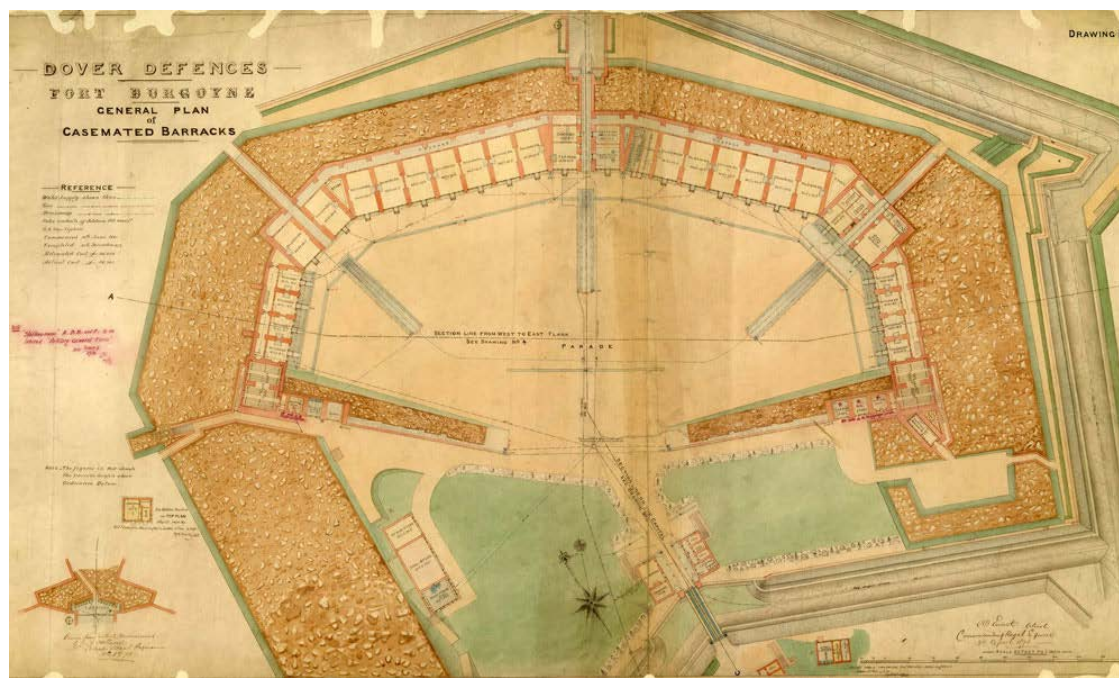
The Last Meeting

At our March Club Night the speaker was Eugenie Rhodes whose subject was "What a Drag!", a history of cross-dressing (Anyone who thinks the NSC are a bunch of staid killjoys would do well to note that the subjects of our talks for the last three meetings have been swearing, fist-fighting and transvestism.)

Eugenie observed how, throughout history, people have dressed in the clothing of the opposite sex for reasons of safety or subterfuge. An obvious Classical example is Achilles, but she also mentioned examples of women who dressed as men to travel without harassment

or suspicion. In fact many of the cross-dressers were women who wanted to do all kinds of things, from fighting to practising medicine, which were only allowed for those who appeared to be men. But we were equally treated to the likes of Fanny and Stella, Victorian men who dressed as women (much to the horror of the Establishment) as well as the Chevalier D'Eon and the notorious Abbé de Choisy who seems to have used his guise as a woman as a way to pray on real women. Many thanks to Eugenie for her talk, an essay version of which begins on page 4.

This meeting was also graced by a number of visitors, as Member Mark Gidman was using it as a de facto 40th birthday party; I'm pleased to say that by and large his guests made a pretty good effort on the sartorial front. Happy birthday, Mark!



(Left) Birthday boy Mark and elegant chum; (far left) a picture of affability: Dave Hollander (r) and Robert Beckwith; (below) Priya Kali and Harrison Goldman



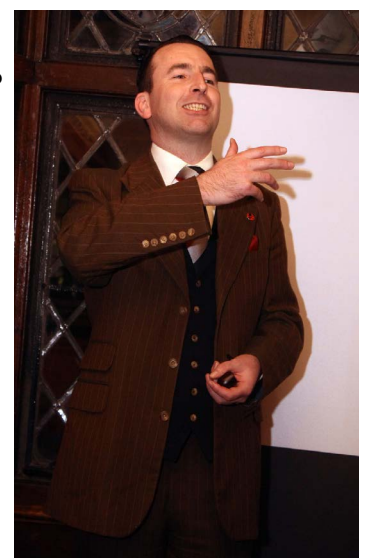
(Left) Our speaker, Eugenie Rhodes; (far left) two of Mark's dapper party guests; (below) we don't normally do group shots at Club Nights, but perhaps this one felt more than usually deserving of a "survivors' photo"



(Left) Paul Gunn declaims from his own flyer for his chappist band Worsted; (below left) pipe action in Smoker's Alley, with Scarheart (l) and Gary Grønnestad



Buoyed by drink, Mark first tries to kiss Giles Culpepper (left) then delivers a long, dictatorial oration, to which no one was listening (right)



What a Drag!

Eugenie Rhodes considers a selection of famous cross-dressers through history



Eugenie with one of her heroes, the character Frank N. Furter from *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*

THE ABBÉ DE CHOISY (1644–1724)

François Timoléon de Choisy was born in Paris in 1644.

He was of middle-class origins on his father's side and of aristocratic ones on his mother's. His mother Jeanne-Olympe had had a liaison with the philandering favourite of Louis XIII, the Marquis de Cinq-Mars, and had been a childhood friend of one of the early mistresses of Louis XIV, Louise de la Vallière, immortalised by Alexandre Dumas. François became his mother's favourite son. She was in her forties when she gave birth to him, and she must have had a forceful character to get away with this. In fact she was clearly eccentric: a cousin of Louis XIV said, "Quoique j'ai toujours traité Mme

de Choisy de folle" (I always regarded Mme de Choisy as bonkers). Jeanne-Olympe was a keen social climber, pushing her son to cultivate the "right" (i.e. most influential) people.

On a whim of his mother's François was dressed in female clothing until the age of 18, when he passed his degree in theology and was given the abbey of Saint-Seine. He also spent five months on stage as a woman. He granted superficial favours to male suitors. "My modest behaviour was common knowledge," he wrote. When he was 22 his mother died and de Choisy gave himself up to full-time drag, calling himself Madame de Sancy. He blamed his strange tastes on his strange upbringing, as people do, but was quite without regret. He gave a logical explanation for his compulsion for cross-dressing, nicely mixing it up with religion, good

theologian that he was: "The attribute of God is to be loved, adored. Man ... wishes for the same, but since it's beauty that kindles love and since [it usually falls to women to be beautiful], when it happens that men have traits of beauty they try to enhance them by the same methods that women use which are most becoming." He also acknowledged that "men, once they think they are beautiful, are far more besotted with their appearance than women are".

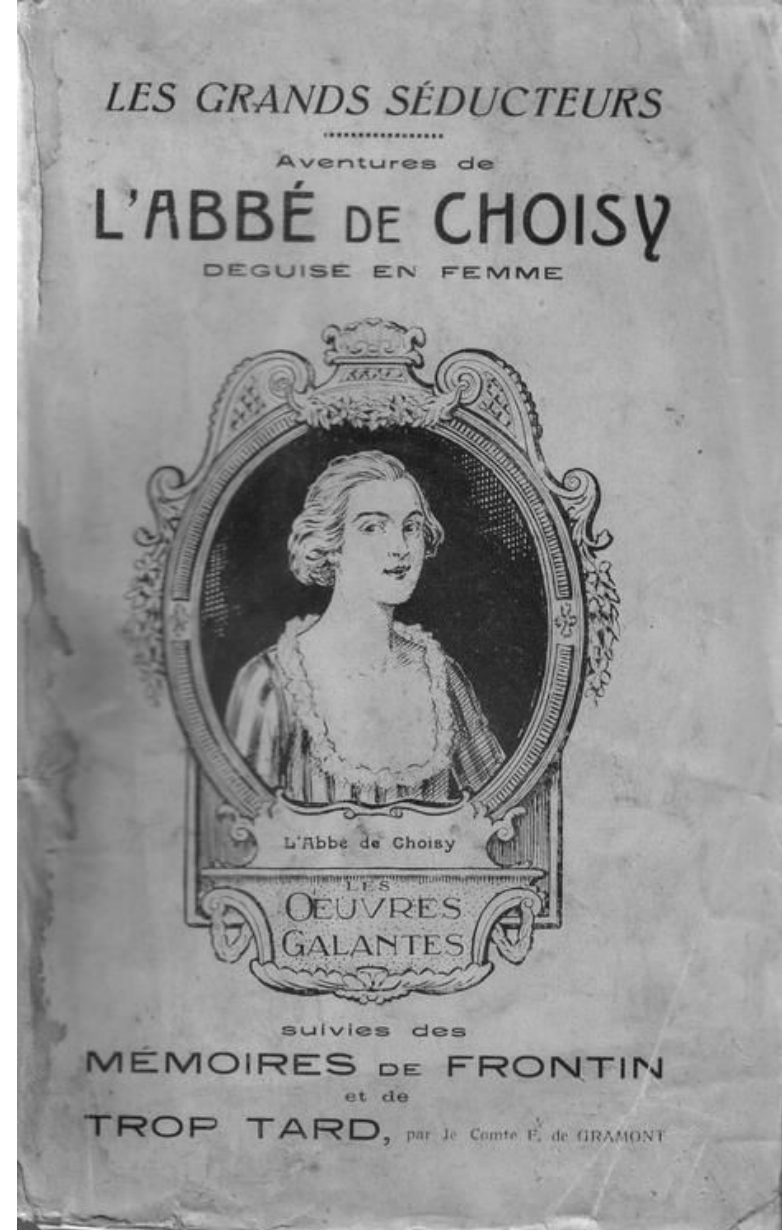
Even in the Ancien Régime, with its many loopholes for maverick behaviour, de Choisy's unorthodox dressing raised eyebrows. After being publicly humiliated by the Duc de Montausier, a grim old soldier, de Choisy retreated to a provincial town, passing himself off as Mme le Comtesse de Barre, a rich widow. He had a keen eye for the ladies and used his disguise to further his seductions—a wolf not in sheep's clothing but in women's clothing. One of his ruses to advance his acquaintance with appealing maidens would be to say to their mothers, "Madame, let your daughter come to stay with me for a few days and I shall teach her how to dress her hair properly." He would teach these attractive girls other things besides...

De Choisy was cheerful, good natured, friendly and charming. Even the Duc de Montausier was captivated by his engaging personality and sighed, "It annoys me not to be able to give this hermaphrodite a sign of friendship." But, irrepressible though he was, even de Choisy eventually succumbed



Heliogabalus

to his family's disapproval and departed for a drag-free exile of sorts in Italy, where he indulged in his other addiction, gambling. He lost all his money and returned to France where he resumed dressing in women's clothes and continued on his merry path of seduction. A biographer wrote



primly, "There is something ludicrous about a man fornicating in curl papers."

In 1683, when he was 39, de Choisy fell gravely ill. He and his physicians thought he was going to die. He had delirious visions of a hell populated by ne'er-do-wells dressed as women and sceptical ecclesiastics. This so alarmed him that he resolved to live devoutly should he recover. He did recover and he kept his promise, becoming a true believer, a fully ordained priest and a church historian.

That, however, is not the end of the story. Alongside being a priest, a writer, a diplomat and a club man, he continued to refresh his spirit with gambling, cross-dressing and love affairs, so that in true de Choisy style there was a twist to his conversion.

Heliogabalus (203–222)

Heliogabalus was proclaimed Emperor of Rome at the age of 14 as a result of political manoeuvring by his maternal aunt. In early



The Roses of Heliogabalus painted in 1888 by Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema

youth he had been a priest of the sun god, after whom he was named, and when emperor he replaced the worship of Jupiter as head of the Pantheon with that of Heliogabalus. On the strait-laced, tight-lipped senators he inflicted the sight of his cavorting to drums and cymbals while he honoured his chosen deity.

Heliogabalus married five times in his short life, including forcing a Vestal Virgin to be his bride. This was sacrilegious, as the Vestal Virgins were supposed to remain chaste on pain of death. He had male lovers too; in fact his most stable relationship was with his charioteer. Omnisexual and insatiable, Heliogabalus reputedly had a sideline working as a prostitute in taverns, brothels and even the imperial palace itself. He wore makeup and wigs and made extravagant offers of money to any doctor who could perform surgery to make him biologically female. At one banquet he showered his guests with so many thousands of flower petals that some were smothered to death. After just four years of rule, having alienated almost everyone, Heliogabalus was

unsurprisingly murdered and his religious edicts were reversed.

Queen Christina of Sweden (1626–1689)

Christina was born under a rare astrological conjunction, which made soothsayers hold their breaths as they pondered what impact she might have on the world stage. Her father, Gustav II, died when she was six and she became fully (as opposed to nominally) Queen at 18. Her father had given her a masculine upbringing with the intention of making her strong enough for her future position, and this style of education continued after his death. She was a blue stocking who was happy to study ten hours a day and her interests were wide-ranging. Her tutor said approvingly of his brilliant pupil, “She is not at all like a female.” She talked, walked, sat and rode like a man and wore men’s shoes.

After her coronation Christina was placed under increasing pressure to marry and produce an heir—but she was adamant she would do neither. She was hard-



Queen Christina of Sweden



Queen Christina as played by Greta Garbo in the 1933 movie of the same name

working and conscientious and had a dream of making Stockholm “The Athens of the North”, but she was also high-handed, capricious and wasteful. In 1654, aged 28, she realised her dream of abdicating. She left her homeland to settle in Rome, where she (a) converted to Catholicism and (b) was given a special dispensation to dress in men’s clothes. There has been speculation that she was a lesbian, but speculation is the operative word. She apparently had, in what in her era would have been early middle age, a crush on a cardinal and, under the influence of this spangle, reverted for an interlude to female dress, even to the extent of provoking a rebuke from the supreme pontiff himself for her scandalously revealing décolletage.

The Chevalier d’Éon (1728–1810)

Charles d’Éon de Beaumont spent 49 years of his life in male guise and 33 years as a woman. Born into an impoverished noble family, d’Éon was a brilliant scholar and trained in law. Then in 1756, aged

28, he became a spy for “Le secret du Roi”, Louis XV’s clandestine—and completely illegal—personal secret service that was so independent of the government it sometimes promoted courses of action that contradicted official policies and treaties. D’Éon was sent to Russia to incite aggression towards Austria and went disguised as a woman to slip through England’s embargo on French men crossing the border into Russia. With his androgynous features and gift for mimicry he was plausible, becoming the maid of honour to the empress, as Mlle de Beaumont.

When d’Éon returned to France he became a dragoon, fighting in the later stages of the Seven Years War. He was sent to London to participate in the drafting of the peace treaty and/or its ratification and was rewarded for his services by being created Chevalier d’Éon.

He later returned to London, ostensibly working for the foreign office but privately spying for the king to provide him with information for his pet project—which even Louis’s ministers did not know about—an invasion of Britain. Meanwhile the official French embassy split into warring factions and, caught in the crossfire, d’Éon spilled the beans in a publication. This breach of diplomatic



Portrait of the Chevalier d’Eon by Thomas Stuart (1792). Note the NSC colours on his ribbon...

discretion was scandalous to the point of being unheard of. However, d'Éon had an ace up his sleeve, papers from the king concerning his sub rosa plan to invade Britain and with this tool for blackmail he could pretty much do as he chose.

D'Éon spent several years in London where, despite his regularly dressing in military uniform, rumours began to spread that he was really a woman. A betting pool was even started on the London Stock Exchange over his true gender.

When Louis XV died d'Éon returned to France, having negotiated a pension and clothes allowance in exchange for handing over the compromising royal documents. Now he demanded recognition as a woman, claiming he had been obliged to pretend to be male due to inheritance laws. Louis XVI agreed but required in turn that he dress appropriately as a woman all the time. His "dress" allowance was exactly that.

The French revolution saw an end to his stipend and the confiscation of his estates. In 1792 d'Éon offered to lead a division of female soldiers against the Hapsburgs but the Assemblée nationale was not interested. At a loose end, he returned to England. His last years were sad; he died impoverished and bedridden.

Dr James Barry (1789–1865)

James Miranda Barry was born Margaret Ann Bulkley. Her aunt was married to a professor at the Royal Academy in London but, due to financial mismanagement, her family was in a precarious position. It may have been as much due to the need to bring in a good income as to having a calling that made Margaret Ann resolve to become a surgeon. At the time only men were allowed to be doctors, so Margaret had to assume male identity when she left her native Ireland to study at medical school in Edinburgh. She was aided and abetted by



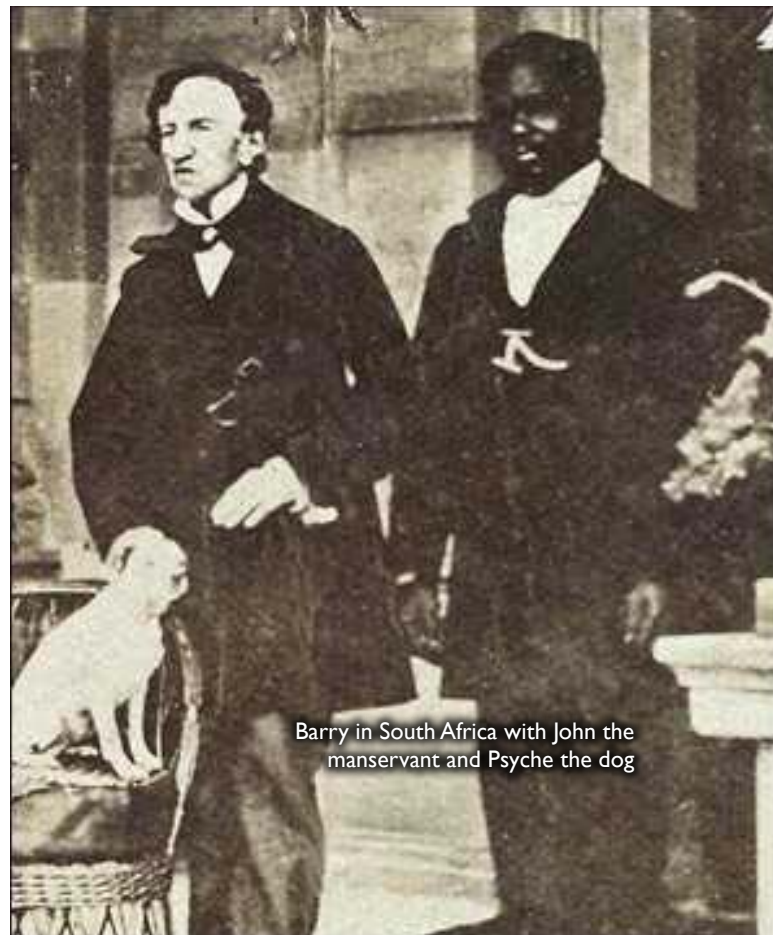
Dr James Barry

influential and liberal-minded friends of her uncle. Then she completed her training in London and was serving as a surgeon by the close of the Napoleonic Wars. She worked in India and South Africa and performed the first successful Caesarean operation recorded in Cape Town. She rose from medical inspector to Inspector General and travelled the world in this capacity as a surgeon.

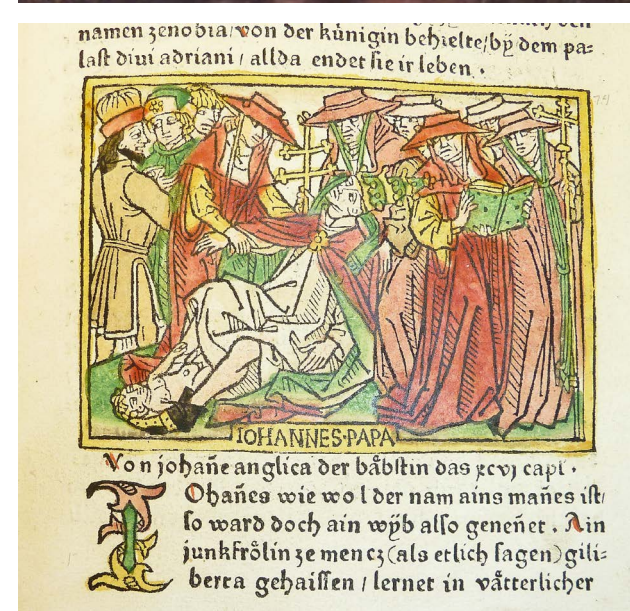
Barry was tactless, irascible, impatient and opinionated. She

fought duels when she felt her honour had been slighted and was often punished for insubordinate behaviour. She was also brave, brilliant and far-sighted, with a keen sense of social justice. She improved sanitation wherever she went, ameliorated the diet of the common soldier and championed better living standards for the poor and outcast.

Barry retired in 1864 and died in England the following year. On her death Dr James Barry was discovered to have been a woman and it was alleged she had born a child. The British Army



Barry in South Africa with John the manservant and Psyche the dog



(Clockwise from above) Some of the other cross-dressers mentioned in Eugenie's talk: Pope Joan, who (allegedly) only gave away her womanhood by accidentally giving birth during a procession; Achilles, disguised as a woman by his mother to protect him, but who gives away his identity by being drawn to weapons; lady pirates Anne Bonny and Mary Read; gents Ernest Boulton and Frederick Park who scandalised Victorian society by adopting the identities of "Fanny and Stella"



The Modernist Architecture of Eritrea

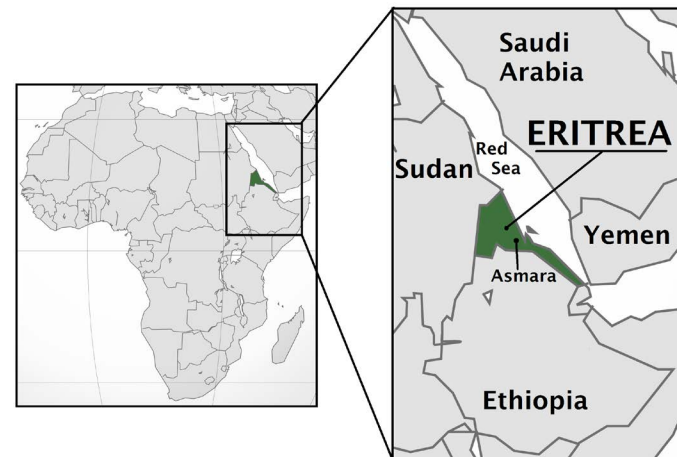
Dr Timothy Eyre on the Art Deco legacy of Mussolini's lost imperial city



The Fiat Tagliero building

that started in 1961. This war, exacerbated by weapons pumped in by both the Soviets and the Americans, led to the terrible famine of 1983–5 and hence the legendary Live Aid concert. The war ended in 1991 and Eritrea voted for independence in 1993. From then on the nation rapidly deteriorated from the Communist utopia the secessionists imagined they had fought for into one of the world's most repressive nations. Freedom House ranks Eritrea alongside North Korea and Turkmenistan for both

political rights and civil liberties. As if this were not enough of a burden for



“WHAT'S IN ERITREA?” people asked when I announced that I was to visit this little-known African nation. I must admit that I came to choose Eritrea as a holiday destination in a fairly arbitrary way: I took a list of the world's nations ordered by GDP per capita and chose the poorest where there was no risk of malaria. Eritrea's capital city of Asmara stands at 7,600 feet above sea level, thus putting itself beyond the reach of the malaria-carrying Anopheles mosquito. It is also terribly poor.

I started to read up on this nation of some six million souls. I learned that it was the product of a war of secession from Ethiopia

the people of Eritrea, in 1998 a border war broke out between Eritrea and Ethiopia over a tiny desert border town called Badme. The war ended in 2000 but tensions have remained high ever since. The conflict is so pointless that it has been likened to two bald men fighting over a comb. Whatever the rights and wrongs of the dispute, Eritrea suffers more as a nation because its population is less than a tenth that of Ethiopia's.

Benighted by war, Eritrea has had scant opportunity for economic development since colonial times. Most of the population is involved in agriculture but it contributes only about 12% of the economy. The country has a long coastline but fishing isn't all that big either. They have minerals and have some light industry, but to survive the population relies heavily on remittances from relatives abroad—which make up a whopping 32% of GDP. The borders with Ethiopia, Sudan and the tiny state of Djibouti are unsafe so Eritrea is a fly-in, fly-out destination (with few regular flights) firmly off the African overland tourist trail.

Eritrea was colonised by Italy from 1890 until British soldiers liberated the country in 1941. The Fascist dictator Mussolini envisioned a “new Roman Empire” with Asmara as its capital. Eritrea became the industrial centre of Italian East Africa; by 1940 there were over 2,000 Italian factories in Eritrea. It was this period of Italian colonisation that formed the basis of Eritrea's claim for independent statehood.

In order to facilitate the rapid industrialisation of Eritrea in the years leading up to the Second World War, Mussolini granted the Italian architects of



(Above) This building continues to operate as a cinema today; (below) a Modernist apartment block





(Above) The IRGA building, actually more recent, dating from 1961; (left) Bar Zilli, with porthole and horizontal lancet windows; (bottom) even the railings add a Deco touch to this elaborate Modernist building

the time a free hand to design and build as they wished in this corner of Africa. Anyone with a passing knowledge of twentieth-century architecture will recognise this period as one where Modernism was in vogue. With few buildings in place before the Italians started work and little opportunity for economic development since, Asmara became a sort of time capsule of radical 1930s Italian Modernist architecture.

So it was that my primary guidebook to Asmara was not the trusty Lonely Planet (although I took that too) but a bulky coffee-table book called *Asmara: Africa's Secret Modernist City*. I spent a week lugging it around the streets of the capital to locate and admire notable buildings. I was not disappointed.

Most famous of all Asmara's buildings is the Fiat Tagliero petrol station. The Italian architect Giuseppe Pettazzi designed this edifice to resemble an aeroplane in an audacious Futuristic flourish. The building



is painted brilliant white and sports a pair of cantilevered wings, each extending fifty feet from the central tower without any sort of columns, props or supports. Motorists may shelter from the sun beneath the wings, but aesthetes are more likely to stand back from them to admire the building as a whole.

Less feted but also of considerable note is the building occupied by the World Bank. Built in a mixture of Modernist and Art Deco styles and kept in impeccable condition, it is a joy to behold. However, the prudent observer will not linger long because it is kept under heavy armed guard.

Another controversial tenant that takes good care of its digs is British American Tobacco. Their building is in an Art Deco style and sports a pair of large rounded bays that are cantilevered out from the front of the structure in a way that makes them resemble turrets. This building would turn heads even in Miami Beach.



(Above) A Modernist tower graces an apartment block; (left) an audacious use of angles on a building formerly occupied by Lancia; (below) cafés and palm trees line Harnet Avenue—note the absence of traffic

Buildings such as these, along with a hundred or more others, kept me interested for a full week of architectural sight-seeing. The Modernist buildings are sufficient in number and density to provide the sense of architectural unity that is found only in cities such as Bath and Napier in New Zealand. Despite the nation's straightened circumstances, the Eritrean government manages to restore and

maintain some of the buildings in recognition of their historical and architectural importance.

My visit was greatly enhanced by the fact that Asmara is, by any standards, an especially pleasant city to visit—at least this was the case during my stay in 2005. The nation's poverty means that there is little traffic, even in the centre of the capital. The main drag of Harnet Avenue is





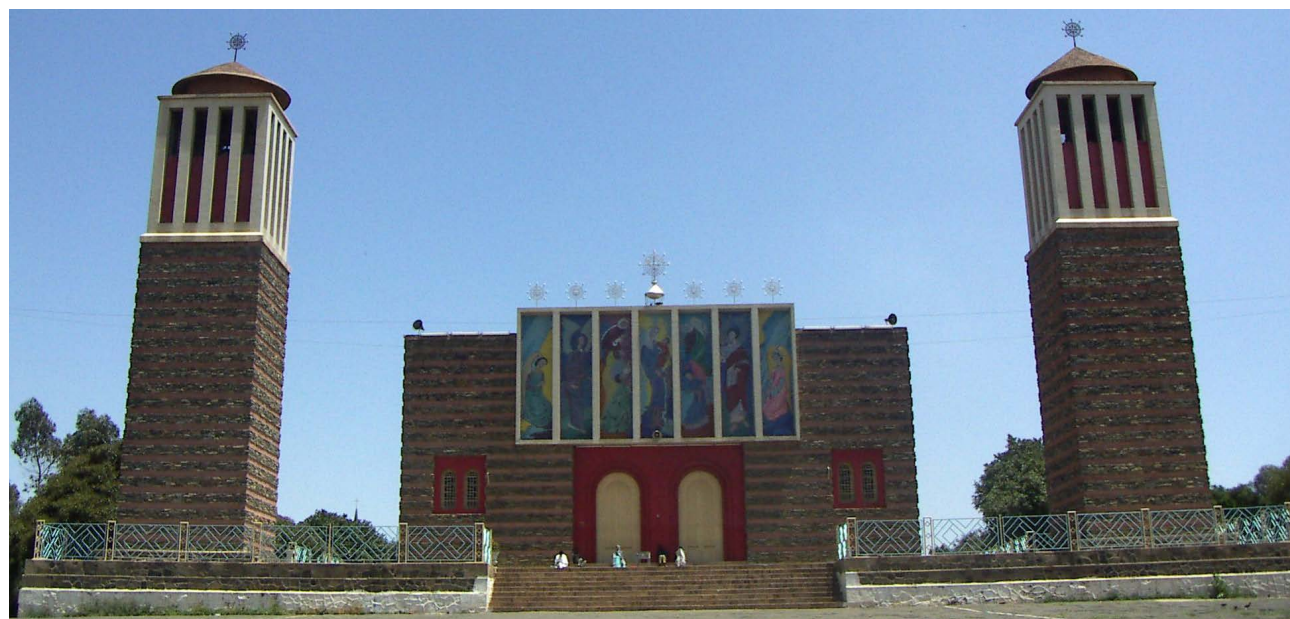
shaded by large palm trees and is well-provisioned with cafés that serve delicious coffee from elderly Italian espresso machines. Coffee forms an important part of Eritrean culture: just as Japan has a tea ceremony, Eritrea has a coffee ceremony.

Asmara also has numerous bars, all of which seem to serve a single local brew that goes by the name of Asmara Beer. Fortunately the beer is tasty, rather like the national cuisine, which has as its staple a spongy flatbread called *injera*, baked from a grain called *teff*. Personal safety is good in Asmara because the local culture and repressive government strongly discourage crime and the absence of tourists means that there are no hustlers or touts. I wandered freely in complete safety without ever being harassed or feeling threatened. At one point I found I had wandered into a disused railway yard where I was surrounded by antique Italian steam locomotives.

One day during my visit I took a bus to the nearby town of Dekemhare. Dekemhare



(Top) A Futurist building influenced by the shape of an ocean liner; (above) the tower on Asmara's silicon factory, formerly a Lancia workshop; (right) a restored Italian steam locomotive; (below) the large Enda Mariam Orthodox church, built in 1938 in a fusion of Italian and Eritrean styles



was another Italian industrial town and, sure enough, here I found the war-scarred shells of a few factories built in the Modernist style. On the short journey there I saw little motorised traffic but I did see a peleton of cyclists. As a result of the Italian influence, road race cycling is almost as popular as football in Eritrea and the national cycling team is one of the strongest on the African continent, regularly beating even South Africa at the sport.

The means by which I chose to visit Asmara could have scarcely been more whimsical but I ended up loving the place; it certainly ranks as one of my favourite destinations worldwide. That war and famine in a small, poverty-stricken nation on the Horn of Africa should lead to the emergence of a living museum of Modernist Italian architecture just goes to show that geopolitics works in very strange ways indeed.

Bibliography:

Asmara: Africa's Secret Modernist City by Edward Denison (2006)

I Didn't Do It For You: How the World Used and Abused a Small African Nation by Michela Wrong (2005)

Eritrea: Even The Stones Are Burning by Roy Pateman (1998)



(Clockwise from above) Another Art Deco cinema, this one showing a classical influence; the World Bank, formerly a colonial mansion; the offices of British American Tobacco; a petrol station in Dekemhare; a ruined Modernist factory in Dekemhare



THE BROGUES GALLERY

WITH ARTEMIS SCARHEART



In which a Member of the New Sheridan Club is asked to introduce themselves to other Members so that those at Home and Across the Seas may all get to know fellow Club Members. No part of this interview may be used in court or bankruptcy proceedings.



Eugenie Rhodes

"Hasten slowly"

Name or preferred name?

Eugenie Emily Rhodes; also "The Queen of Elfland". I believe in and identify with the faeries.

Where do you hail from?

The Great Metropolis.

Favourite Cocktail?

I like looking at cocktails but I enjoy drinking

whisky.

Personal Motto?

Festina lente (hasten slowly). Not surprisingly, I long to own a pet tortoise.

Favourite Quotes?

"A man must make his opportunities as often as find them." Sir Francis Bacon.

Not a lot of people know this about me, but...

I have walked on hot coals without getting burnt.

How long have you been involved with the NSC?

Several years.

How did you hear about the Club to begin with?

My darling friends Sylvia and Richard handed me a New Sheridan Club card, saying they thought I might like it. I went to my first meeting and found a room full of elegantly dressed women and men wearing ties and even (swoon!) waistcoats—I thought I had died and gone to heaven.

What one thing would you recommend to fellow Members and why (cocktail, night out, tailor, watchmaker, public house, etc.)?

Re-enactments at the royal palaces; history

without tears.

Your three chosen dinner party guests from history or fiction and why?

Lily Langtry for her beauty and shrewdness, Richard II—I have a crush on him—and Richard III, to discover what he was really like.

Favourite Member of the Glorious Committee?

I should hate to have to choose between the four mighty gods of the NSC committee.

Answer: Artemis Scarheart.

Have you done a Turn yet?

If so what was it on, if not what are you planning to do?

I spoke about transvestites on 4th March [see write-up in this issue—Ed] and before that my last talk was on "Robert Fortune, hero of the British Cuppa".

Thank you for allowing yourself to be interviewed in the palatial surroundings of the NSC Club House. On behalf of the Members may I respectfully ask you to resign.

Working it at an NSC Club Night



At her first NSC talk, on the subject of faeries



Winning a pharaonic duck at the NSC 2014 summer party



AUTOCORRECT

Our March film featured typing, filing and a bit of light sado-masochism



DOUTBLESS AS A RESPONSE to the release last month of the film version of *Fifty Shades of Grey*, Miss Minna chose *Secretary* (2002) for her Film Night offering.

The film concerns Lee (Maggie Gyllenhaal in her break-out role), a young woman who has just returned from a psychiatric hospital after overdoing her latest bout of self-harm. Confronted with her dysfunctional parents, her sister's wedding day and her own uninspiring boyfriend, she quickly retrieves her carefully assembled self-harm kit and is clearly in no better place than before. Her mother keeps the kitchen knives under lock and key.

Things change when she takes a job as a secretary to local lawyer Edward Grey (James Spader). Why is the last secretary leaving in tears? Why does Grey hide when his domineering ex-wife arrives? And why does he hire Lee when she's clearly not that good at the job? He is clearly drawn to her submissive demeanour—but when he learns her secret he tells her emphatically that she is not to cut herself ever again. And that is all it takes: suddenly her drive to take control by hurting herself is replaced by an urge to be controlled by Grey, to the point where she deliberately mistypes letters in expectation of the punishment she'll receive. She even rings him in the evenings so he can instruct her exactly how much dinner she is allowed to eat.

But Grey himself is much less comfortable

with the state of affairs, wracked by self-loathing. Determining that the games must end, he symbolically sweeps into the bin the sheaf of red pens that he uses to mark all Lee's mistakes.

Lee, however, is not going to give up that easily. Aggressive in her determination to be submissive, she forces Grey's hand—literally, as spanking is on the agenda—by sealing an earthworm in one letter (the worm has turned?).

As you can see, the film deals with S&M playfully and Lee is as much in charge as Grey. In fact the film's happy ending is rather implausible, as is the denouement where Lee proves her determination by following his instructions to sit at a desk and not move—for days on end. Friends and family visit her and even local TV crews arrive to cover the story. But rather than locking her up again, everyone is terribly understanding, which probably wouldn't happen in real life.

Minna pointed out just how much the film, directed by Steven Shainberg, seems a stylistic homage to David Lynch—the eerie greenish colour palette, the exotic Oriental interior of Grey's office, even the soundtrack, scored by long-time Lynch accomplice Angelo Badalamenti. Interesting, designer Amy Danger reveals that the office sets deliberately used only natural materials—wood, bamboo—natural colours and wallpaper with botanical designs, while everything in the outside world was synthetic and plastic. The idea was to make the world of Lee and Edward feel natural. Shainberg says he wanted the film to normalise BDSM in the same way that he feels *My Beautiful Laundrette* (1985) normalised gay relationships.



by Michael Moorcock (the first in a series featuring Jerry Cornelius). Moorcock has said that he originally envisioned space-rock band Hawkwind (with whom Moorcock has performed) as providing the music for the entire film, and also appearing in a scene with nuns playing fruit machines while Jerry is trying to buy napalm. Hawkwind, and Moorcock himself, can in fact be glimpsed briefly in this scene right at the back of the set. Director Robert Fuest, however, did not like Hawkwind and had music with a jazzy feel placed into the film. Moorcock has also commented that it was only when he told the actors it was supposed to be funny that they delivered lines with more

of his intended black humour.

On the film's DVD/Blu-ray release in the UK in 2013, *The Guardian* wrote: "Director Robert Fuest was responsible for the pop-surrealism of *The Avengers* and the twisted Art Deco of Vincent Price's *Dr Phibes* movies, and here he makes sure every frame looks stunning, throwing so much in to please and confuse the eye, often at the cost of narrative coherence. But who cares when the movie is full of cryptic, sly humour and endlessly inventive imagery?"

NSC FILM NIGHT

The Final Programme (1973)

Wednesday 8th April

7.30pm–11pm

The Tea House Theatre, 139 Vauxhall Walk, London SE11 5HL (020 7207 4585)

Admission: Free

For our April Film Night Darcy Sullivan presents this stylish but dark British sci-fi flick. In a futuristic world where war and famine rage, a group of British scientists led by programmer Miss Brunner (Jenny Runacre) plan to create an immortal, self-replicating human being using a super computer. Jerry Cornelius (Jon Finch), a playboy physicist whose late father devised this "final programme", is key to the project's success. But first he must retrieve the formula from his family's isolated mansion, which is laden with deadly traps and guarded by his drug-fuelled psycho brother.

The film, released in the US as *The Last Days of Man on Earth*, is based on a novel



The Cocktail Cabinet

Wherein Members tinker with drink

April is the gruellest month

By David Bridgman-Smith

April brings out the beast in me, or rather it inspires acts of imagination and creativity that no other month can match. So this month's Cocktail Cabinet is a little off the wall.

Any child (or adult) who has ever had the breakfast cereal Coco Pops knows that it "turns the milk chocolatey", but is this of any use when mixing libations? Here's a little experiment.

Coco Monkey Punch

30ml dark rum
10ml amaretto
50ml chilled milk
3 tsp Coco Pops

Shake without ice. The milk certainly turns chocolatey and the cereal adds some flavour, too. The subtle, not too sweet, chocolate flavour works well with the burnt sugar flavours of the rum and sweet nuttiness of the Amaretto, resulting in a very pleasant drink.

Not content with making a Coco Pops cocktail, I extended my idea to the whole Variety Pack and here are the results. Note that many of these cocktails use the cereals in the shaker; so as to avoid soggy slush in your drink, I suggest you fine strain the drink, i.e. pass it through a tea strainer as well as the cocktail strainer.



Alexander Kellogg

30ml gin
20ml crème de cacao
25ml Cornflake-infused milk
10ml cream

Shake. A cocktail created by the bar Calloo Callay in London, this variation adds a cereal element to the classic Alexander and the corn really comes through. One big plus is that it takes the edge off of what is usually quite a sweet, almost sickly, cocktail. Unusual, but a drink that really works.



Frosties Margarita

45ml tequila
30ml Cointreau
20ml lime juice
1½–2 tsp simple syrup

Rub the rim with a lime wedge then dip it into crushed Frosties. This is a relatively standard, but nonetheless delicious, Margarita—it's my go-to recipe from Dale De Groff's *Essential Cocktails*—with the difference being the rim of pulverised Frosties, as opposed to the usual salt.

I was surprised at how well it actually works; there is a little sweetness that contrasts the lime juice, but it is the crunchy texture that really adds something to the drink. It's grrreat!



Banana-rama

25ml vodka or white rum
2 tsp Rice Krispies
75ml banana milk

Shake spirit and Crispies without ice, pour into a glass and top up with banana milk. A clean drink, with the Krispies having a subtle, but detectable influence. The drink works best with either a barley- or rye-based vodka (adding a little creaminess), or a white rum. The drink is reminiscent of the old Kellogg's breakfast cereal, Banana Bubbles, a cousin of Coco Pops that turned the milk banana-y, rather than chocolatey. (Incidentally, the name of this cocktail



makes me think of another potential drink, "Banana-ramen", which would be a mix of bananas and noodles—perhaps one to try next time?)

Oh! So Toddy (makes two)

50ml of Scotch whisky
3 tsp raw oats
2 tsp honey (I like orange blossom)
25ml fresh lemon juice
150ml English breakfast tea or boiling water

I tried this in two versions: one with black tea and one with boiling water. The tea version was warming; a hearty cocktail with the oats adding a cosy aspect that works well with the oak and vanilla notes of the whisky, along with the lemon juice and honey. With boiling water,

the flavours of the whisky were much more noticeable.

Louisville Loop

50ml bourbon
3 tsp Honey Nut Loops
1 tsp white sugar
3 drops Angostura Bitters

This variation on the Old Fashioned is made by first shaking the bourbon, without ice, with the Honey Loops. Then put sugar and bitters into a glass with a little water and stir until the sugar has mostly dissolved, before adding the infused bourbon and ice. Stir and strain into a chilled glass. All of the standard Old Fashioned notes are present in this drink—vanilla, oak, and warm sweetness—but they seem softened by the addition of the cereal. This is most noticeable on the nose and then the finish, which is of light honey, sweet cereal, and echoes of the bourbon.

In conclusion

Some of these drinks were surprisingly good. The best match was the flavours of oats and scotch and I think there is good potential from that pairing. The use of Frosties to rim the Margarita glass and the textures this adds to the drink were also a nice surprise. When it

came to the Banana-rama, though, I don't think I'd be a "cereal" drinker.

For more cocktail recipes, reviews, group tests and musings on booze, see the New Sheridan Club's fabled **Institute for Alcoholic Experimentation**



Creeping the Boards

In which **Mark** **Gidman** drops titbits of tittle-tattle from his stellar career in the movie business

ONE OF THE intriguing aspects of working in film is the almost limitless venues that producers can choose from for backdrops and sets. One such place is Wrotham Park, Barnet, which played host to four weeks of filming for *Great Expectations* directed by Mike Newell. The beautiful Palladian mansion set the scene for the ball where Jeremy Irvine and Holliday Grainger were preparing to waltz in a wonderfully restored room with, surprisingly, a Titian adorning one of the walls. (This was a

delightful contrast to standing next to a bed with Lenny Henry at 8pm by the River Thames on a freezing January. He is a lovely guy—“Everybody having a wonderful time, having a lovely time, cor, it is nippy, isn’t it?” Too right it was nippy but while the producers gave him a big “moon jacket”, we froze.)

I was lucky to get cast twice in this production, once as a soldier and once as a “finch”, a sort of 19th-century idle rich character.

First there was the tricky matter of getting into a 19th-century costume and having a wig fitted. There is the perception that a wig is simply fitted and held together with pins with some light application of hair product. Not so in my case. I sat for about 90 minutes in a costume while this elaborate wig was fixed with special



glue to my scalp and hair; “Does this stuff wash out of your hair easily then”? I meekly inquired. “Looks quite tricky to fit too.” I should have guessed by their answers that this was going to be a tough day in costume.

“Oh, it should be fine—we do this sort of stuff all the time. You’re fantastic in your wardrobe, by the way...” Hmm, what a completely evasive and parsimonious answer. I should have guessed that this was a trick by the costumiers to placate me, finding out only later what their game was really about. By the time the

end of filming came and we had to file back to costume and disrobe I said, “I can’t wait to get this wig out of my hair!”

“Er, yeah about that wig, Mark—it is Mark, isn’t it?—erm, well would it be possible for you to sleep wearing it? And when you have a shower try not to get it wet.” Sneaky blighters. For the next four nights I would have to sleep with this wig uncomfortably glued to my head—certainly not in the job description.

So on the first day of having it fitted I get changed leaving the wig on, get signed out and proceed to hop on to the shuttle bus to take me to Barnet Underground Station. Let it be said that for most people taking your work home with you does not mean wearing a 19th-century wig on the southbound train for Highgate. I got thoroughly stared at; one person getting on at



Totteridge and Whetstone looked at me and sat right at the other end of the carriage with a sort of discreet yet meaningful avoidance strategy.

The production moved to Bedford to a small house specially loaned out for filming. It was a grand, lovely red brick building built sometime in the late 19th century with a charming fireplace and decor in a mix of Stuart and Arts and Crafts style. This was an agonising early start. Not only did I have to come from North London, but call time was 5.30am to ensure we got through costume in good time, with my head feeling like an oily rag from this blasted wig. They sprayed it with some gloss gel too.

After going through preparation we were asked to sit around a

magnificent table laid out with a varied selection of fresh fish on silver trays including one very large turbot. Now, I don’t know if the producers realised this but at first the fish looked beautiful nestling with parsley and other culinary delicacies, but as the hours went by under the hot studio lights the fish underwent steady stinking putrefaction. Filming was in August too, so you can best imagine the heat as this giant turbot, sea bass and pike were giving of the worst smell that not even a person working on a fish processing plant would countenance. I was sitting next to Jeremy Irvine and he remarked, “This is unbearable—I might just pop out for a breath of fresh air.” Lucky him. As our starring lead he had the ear of the director, but the rest of us had to “suck it up and cope”. As Mike Newell kept remarking, “Not long to go now... Just a few more scenes...”

Oh, hell. What did I sign up for?

Next time: I was a minister in the Third Reich.





CLUB NOTES

Club Tie Corner

A MODEST HAUL of tie spots this month, but not without heft. We have John James to thank for the observation that Albert Hoffman, the Swiss chemist known as the “Father of LSD” after he accidentally discovered first-hand the compound’s hallucinogenic properties in 1943, clearly preferred the sober, manly colours of his NSC tie rather than any rainbow-spangled hippy gear. Meanwhile, following our revelation about the man in the senate hearing scene of *The Godfather, Part II* in issue 100 of *Resign!*, C.W. Westinghouse now points out that in the same film Frankie “Five Angels” Pentangeli is also a Clubman. Is Coppola trying to tell us something?



Franke Pentangeli



Albert Hoffman

Toast of the Town

CONGRATULATIONS TO recent joiner Floyd Toussaint who represented his employer in a competition hosted by Toastmasters International last month and won—despite never having done any public speaking before. “My speech was entitled *The Pursuit of Normality*,” he says, “though I cannot give too much away at this stage as I now have to deliver this same speech at the

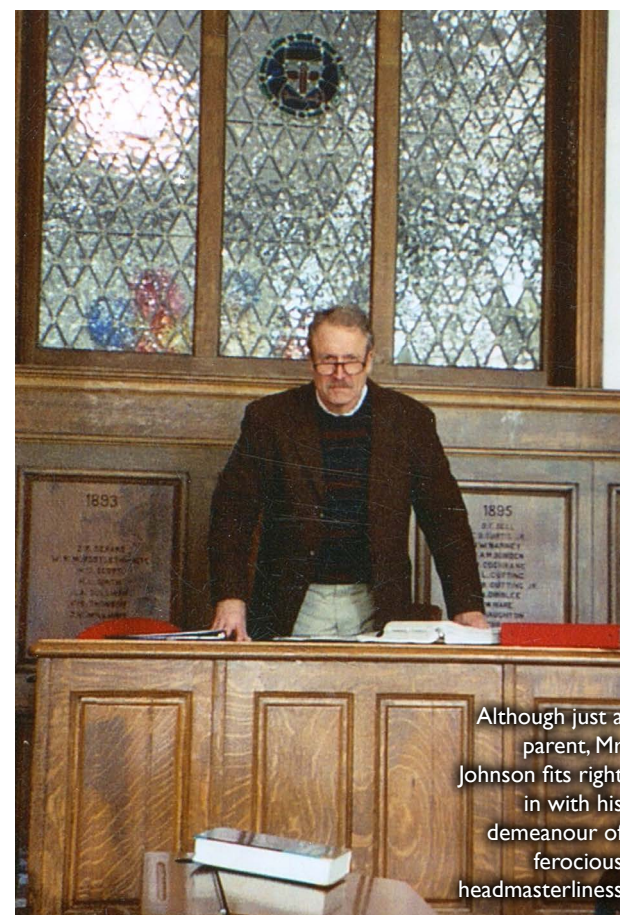
regional finals on 18th April. If successful I then go on to the nationals and could represent England for the winning speech of the year. In the speech I question if being normal is an aspiration of any merit and suggest that people should strive for both individuality and greatness rather than being one of the crowd. Neurodiversity has shown that the quirky and eccentric are the people that move us along as a species and neurotypical behaviour actually halts progression rather than enhancing it.”

New Member

JUST ONE THIS time, Robert E. Bell, though Dwight Johnson, who joined last month, sends a snap of himself at an open day at Groton School, Massachusetts.



Robert E. Bell



Although just a parent, Mr Johnson fits right in with his demeanour of ferocious headmasterliness



Floyd Toussaint



Forthcoming Events



BOTH OFFICIAL NSC JAUNTS (🍷) AND THIRD-PARTY WHEEZES WE THINK YOU MIGHT ENJOY

FOR THE LATEST developments, see the Events page at www.newsheridanclub.co.uk plus our Facebook page and the web forum.

🍷 NSC Club Night

Wednesday 1st April,
7pm–11pm
Upstairs, The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB
Members: Free
Non-Members: £2 (first visit free)
See page 2.

Cakewalk Café

Every Wednesday
7pm–1am
Passing Clouds, 1 Richmond Road, Dalston, London E8 4AA
Admission: Free before 9pm, £5 after that
Dress: 1920s/1930s preferred
Live swing jazz every Wednesday, on 1st April featuring the insalubrious charms of the Top Shelf Band.

The Golden Era of Jazz

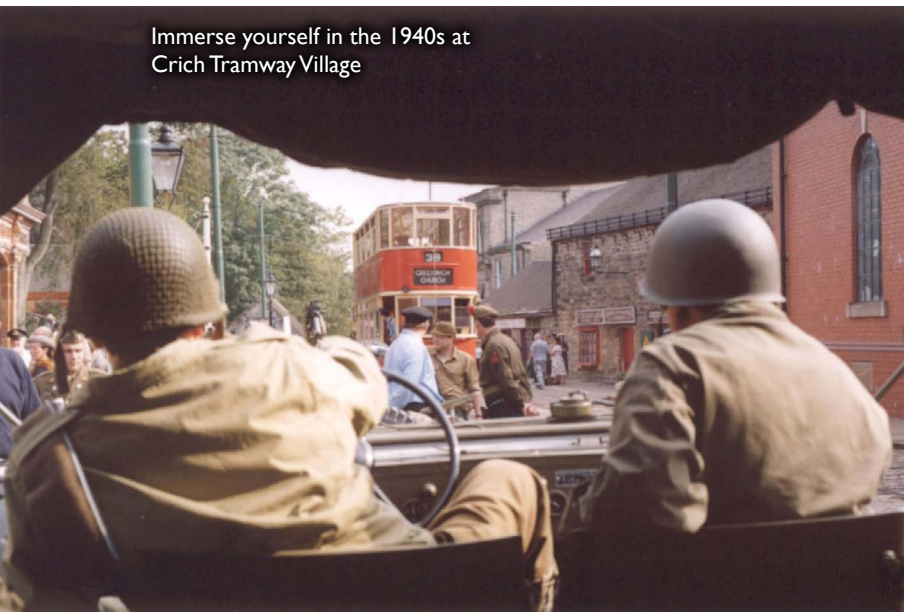
Every Thursday
7pm
Jamboree, 566 Cable Street, London E1W 3HB
Admission: Free before 8pm, £4 between 8 and 9.30, £5 after that
A weekly night of 1920s jazz and 1930s swing presented by clarinetist Ewan Bleach with various guests.

Festival of Sins presents

Rehab is Fab

Saturday 4th April
8pm
Resistance Gallery, 265 Poyser Street, Bethnal

Immerse yourself in the 1940s at Crich Tramway Village



Green, London E2 9RF

Admission: £12.50 in advance, £15 on the door

Dress: "From fetish through to vintage; from alternative through to steampunk, through to nothing at all"

David De Vynél's fetish/vintage Festival of Sins returns from a five-year hiatus with Rehab is Fab, a celebration of everything debauched. For one night only FoS brings its classic line up of bands, DJs, fashion shows and alternative performances to Resistance Gallery in gritty Bethnal Green. Expect to see The Top Shelf Band, Frank Sanazi, Professor Elemental, SHH, GuyT, Simon Iridium, David de Vynél, Kate Way, Dead Lotus Couture latex fashion show from TheFetishistas, Mynxie Munroe

WW2 Home Front

Sunday 5th–Monday 6th April

The National Tramway Museum, Crich Tramway Village, near Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 5DP

Admission: £14 for an adult: see www.tramway.co.uk

This open-air museum of bygone public transport offers a special 1940s-themed event. You can expect air-raid warnings and the sound of low flying aircraft in a taste of life on the home front during the Second World War. Policemen and members of the Home Guard will be patrolling the period streets and visitors must always be ready to show their identity card or risk being arrested as a spy! Beware the spivs selling black market goods and watch out for unexploded bombs. However the trusty

ARP will be on hand. Some trams will have blackout masks fitted along with anti-blast netting on the windows, blue coloured lamps and white steps. The indicator blinds will be blacked out too to confuse any enemy spies. Historic wartime road vehicles will be on show and on the move, mingling with a range of vintage trams which visitors will be able to ride on as often as they like. Wartime songs will be belted out by an authentic concert party throughout the event.

Lucky Dog Picture House

Tuesday 7th April

7.30–9.10pm including interval

Wilton's Music Hall, Graces Alley,

London E1 8JB

Admission: £10 from wiltons.org.uk

A film night with a difference: Lucky Dog only show silent movies, presented with a live musical accompaniment by their in-house band (featuring music from the era in which the films were made, I believe. Nothing by Georgio Moroder). This time it's "British Silent Comedy Legends", featuring Stan Laurel (with Oliver Hardy, natch) and Charlie Chaplin, in *The Lucky Dog* (1921), *A Dog's Life* (1918) and *Liberty* (1929).

NSC Film Night

The Final Programme (1973)

Fontaine's
176 Stoke Newington Road
N16 7UY

Saturday
11th April

with GINGER FIZZ

ONE ROOM PARADISE

9pm-1am

£5

all vinyl!

'50s & '60s
rhythm & blues
rock'n'roll • doo wop



The Candlelight Club goes a bit Japanese this month

Wednesday 8th April

7pm–11pm

The Tea House Theatre, 139 Vauxhall Walk, London SE11 5HL (020 7207 4585)

Admission: Free

See page 17.

The Aviator Club

Thursday 9th April

7pm–1am

Passing Clouds, 1 Richmond Road, Dalston, London E8 4AA

Admission: Free before 9pm, £3 after

Foul-mouthed swing outfit the Top Shelf Band take over Passing Clouds with their Indy-Vaudeville Ram-Raid—songs of debauchery and unabashed wrongness—joined by guest performers and DJs.

The Candlelight Club: Sakura in Old Tokyo

Friday 10th and Saturday 11th April

7pm–12am

A secret central London location

Admission: £20 in advance

Dress: 1920s dandies and swells, gangsters and molls, degenerate aristos and decadent aesthetes, corrupt politicians and the Smart Set In the Know

A pop-up 1920s speakeasy, in a secret London venue. Each event offers cocktails and dinner options, plus live period jazz bands and vintage vinylism (usually from the NSC's own Auntie Maureen). Ticket holders get an email two days before revealing the location.

This time, in recognition of *sakura*, the

Japanese April cherry blossom festival, we present a dinner menu of dishes specially prepared by a guest chef with 18 years experience at Nobu, plus a cocktail list created for us by David Hamilton-Boyd of Organic Spirit, featuring flavours evocative of the Land of the Rising Sun. Japan in the 1920s was a heady fusion of Jazz Age modernism and ancient tradition, a strange coexistence that is captured in movies made there at the time, some of which we'll be screening at our parties. With live jazz from the Shirt Tail Stompers on Friday night and Doolally Tap on Saturday.

Brighton's Genuine Vintage Monthly Swing Dance

Saturday 11th April

7.30–11pm

Patcham Memorial Hall, Old London Road, Brighton, Sussex BN1 8XR

Admission: £7

Strange name, but the concept seems simple enough: "Tony & Jackie of Bal-Swing Jive present an evening of vintage music from the 1930s and 1940s chosen with care by resident DJs Rick's Community Swing and The Swinging Detective for all period dance styles. Admission £7 to include refreshments. For more information call 07522339392/07588806654."

One Room Paradise

Saturday 11th April

9pm–1am

Fontaine's, 176 Stoke Newington Road, London N16 7UY

Admission: £5

Ginger Fizz has moved to London and set up shop at the gorgeous Bamboo Lounge at Fontaine's offering the best of rhythm & blues, rock 'n' roll, doo wop, British beat, sleaze and northern soul, all played on 45s. So come on down for an evening of delicious cocktails, South Pacific décor and a selection of the best records the 1950s and 1960s have to offer.

Auntie Maureen presents

Vintage-a-Fair

Sunday 12th April

11am–5pm

Orford House Social Club and Institute, 73 Orford Road, Walthamstow Village, London E17 9QR

Admission: £2 on the door (£1 concs), under-15s free

Our own Auntie Maureen presents her own vintage fair. The stalls will be accompanied by a tea room run by Aura Rose Cakes & Patisseries and vintage beauty parlour by Ruth Coutinho, plus a bar, a real flea circus and gramophone music. If you would like to trade at the fair email Maureen at ask@auntieaureen.info.

Clerkenwell Vintage Fashion Fair

Sunday 12th April

11am–5pm (trade from 10.30am)

The Old Finsbury Town Hall, Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4RP

Admission: £4 (£5 trade before 11am)

Some 45 stalls offering vintage clothes, shoes, handbags, hats, gloves, textiles and jewellery from the 1800s to the 1980s. There is also a tea room, alterations booth plus sometimes live entertainment too. More details at www.clerkenwellvintagefashionfair.co.uk.

Vintage Hair Academy

12th April

11am–4pm

Rosemary Branch Theatre, 2 Shepperton Road, London N1 3DT

Admission: £120

Just 14 places are available for this workshop from Lipstick

& Curls. For details of exactly what is covered see the Facebook event, and to book or make an enquiry email info@lipstickandcurls.net.

Cigar Walk with Nic Wing

Saturday 18th April

From 9.30am

Begins at the Churchill and Roosevelt statue on Bond Street

Admission: £20–25, depending on numbers

Cigar expert Nic Wing will take us on a walking tour (a good two hours or more) of various shops, hotels and historic sites connected with the world of cigars. We'll need at least eight takers for it to go ahead, and if we can muster 15 then the price will drop to £20 a head. All welcome. For more info and the latest developments, have a butcher's at the Facebook event.

The Candlelight Club

Friday 24th and Saturday 25th April

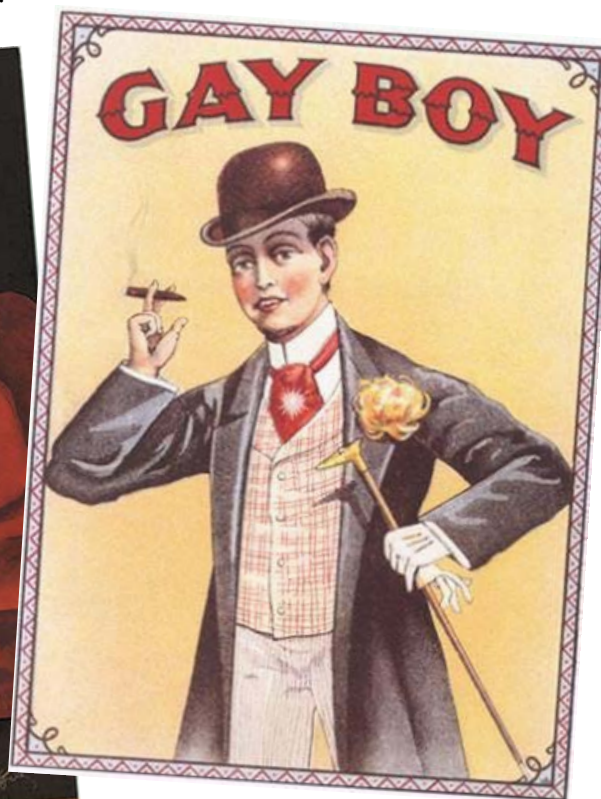
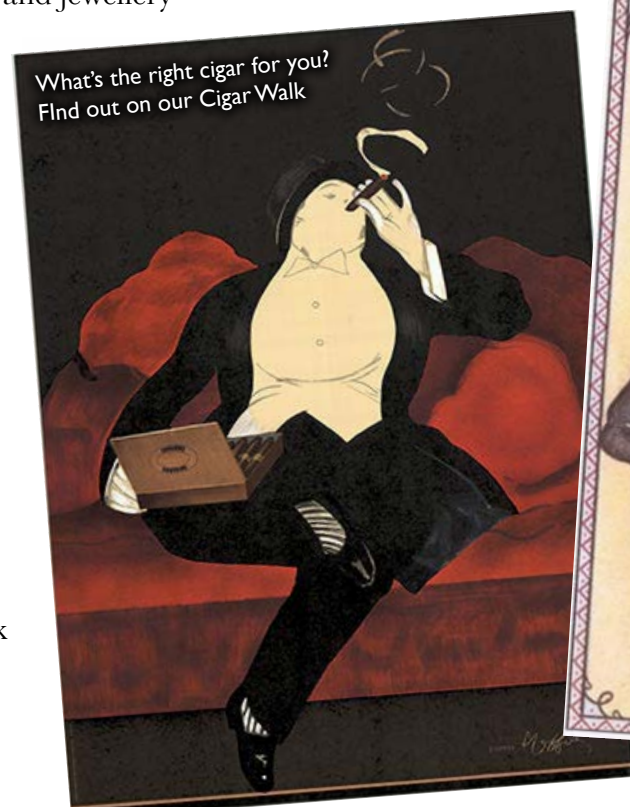
7pm–12am

A secret central London location

Admission: £20 in advance

Dress: 1920s dandies and swells, gangsters and molls, degenerate aristos and decadent aesthetes, corrupt politicians and the Smart Set In the Know

A pop-up 1920s speakeasy, in a secret London venue. Each event offers cocktails and dinner options, plus live period jazz bands and vintage vinylism (usually from the NSC's own Auntie Maureen).



Ticket holders get an email two days before revealing the location.

St George's Day Punting Trip

Saturday 25th April

11am till closing time

Oxford

Admission: A contribution to the punt hire, around £20

The annual Sheridan punting jaunt, as near to St George's Day as we can get. Traditionally we meet at 11am at the Turf Tavern, 4–5 Bath Place, for a sharpener before heading to the Magdalen Bridge Boathouse at midday to pick up a flotilla of punts, then battling through the waves to our usual picnic spot by the High Bridge (a.k.a. the Rainbow Bridge) in the University Parks. After lunch the survivors limp back to return the boats before repairing to an alehouse. Another tradition is that every year at least one person falls in... To keep up to speed with developments see the Facebook event.

St George's Festival

Saturday 25th April

Midday

Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens (opposite the The Tea House Theatre, 139 Vauxhall Walk, London SE11 5HL (020 7207 4585)

Admission: Free

Come celebrate England's Patron Saint at the third annual St George's Festival in the Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens on the South bank of the River Thames. The festival plays host to the inaugural London Tournament: international fighters from "Battle of the

Nations" will congregate on the Queen Anne Field for a tourney of medieval combat. In a full-contact, armoured, singles competition, knights from around the globe will compete to be crowned the first London Champion. In the Agincourt Memorial Melee, the English team takes on the French team for bragging rights in the oldest rivalry. Throughout the day, visitors will be treated to Shakespearean performances with a special focus on Henry V, Mummers Plays of St George and the Dragon, Morris Dancers, medieval folk-rock band Princes in the Tower, Punch & Judy puppet shows, falconry demonstration, daring feats of archery, a medieval market with English ale and a hog roast turning on a spit at the Agincourt Arms.

Mrs Peel's

Saturday 25th April

8pm–2am

The Eight Club, 1 Dysart Street, London EC2A 2BX (Old Street, Shoreditch High Street, Liverpool Street and Moorgate stations)

Admission: £15 in advance, £20 on the door

Dress: 1960s

The Swinging Sixties party of your dreams! Inspired by Emma Peel, the iconic character from *The Avengers*, played by Diana Rigg, this event features live music from The Jetset International plus loungecore DJing, compère and lounge legend Count Indigo, go-go dancing, sitar playing, cocktails, free face-painting and hair styling services from Jenny Green, psychedelic light effects and stunning views from heated open terraces. See www.mrspeels.club.

Atomic Vintage Festival

Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd May

10am–11pm (late night lounge till 2am)

Sywell Aerodrome, NN6 0BN Northampton, Northamptonshire

Admission: £40–44 per day from www.atomicfestival.co.uk

A spectacular two-day celebration of mid-century music, dancing, fashion and style, with international bands and DJs, huge covered dance floors, classic and custom car show, vintage and retro market, rock'n'roller rink, open air cinema and drive-in movie, vintage kids zone, hot rod races, crazy flying circus, dance classes and lots more—including a breathtaking air display by a Sabre jet.

Gary Grønnestad
smokes an
outrageous pipe at
our March meeting



FOR THE LATEST information on what the Club is up to, who has been arrested, etc., have a squizz at www.newsheridanclub.co.uk. For more photos of Club events go to www.flickr.com/sheridanclub. You can even befriend us electrically at www.facebook.com.

CONTACTING US

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