



RESIGN!

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW SHERIDAN CLUB • ISSUE 104 JUNE 2015

The Holy Fox

The Earl of Essex on the life and times of Lord Halifax, the wartime Prime Minister we never had

Sun, sand and suffering

Tim Eyre reports from the Whitby Goth Weekend

Drinking like a fish

David Bridgman-Smith presents some “under the sea” cocktails

The New Sheridan Club summer party...

20,000 COCKTAILS UNDER THE SEA!



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 3rd June in the upstairs room at The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB, from 7pm until 11pm, when Mr Greg Taylor will give us a talk about the sinking of the British liner *Lusitania* 100 years ago last month, torpedoed by a German U-boat. The Germans claimed the vessel was carrying war supplies and were so pleased with themselves they issued a medal in celebration. The Allies denied the ship had anything but civilian cargo—including 1,198 men, women and children, 128 of them American—and the act arguably backfired as it was instrumental in America's entry into the war. It is a subject around which Greg has written a novel attempting to explain some of the more mysterious elements. This will make an inspiring warm-up for our summer party the following Saturday (see page 4)...



One of the Lusitania medals. The British produced copies as a propaganda tool to show how beastly the Hun was, and one of these 1915 items is a prize in our Grand Raffle on Saturday

The Last Meeting

At our April Club Night Our speaker was the Earl of Essex (quite possibly the holder of the record for the most addresses to the Club), talking this time about Lord Halifax, the aristocratic politician who could have been Prime Minister instead of Churchill. Essex gave us a detailed portrait of Halifax's life and times (even referring to him as Lord Irwin when discussing the period from 1925 to 1934 when this was his title), how he enjoyed hunting and shooting, despite having been born with no left hand and how his early uninspiring political career gave way to the period for which he is most remembered: his time as Foreign Secretary taking a pro-appeasement stance and having endless meetings with Hitler. When confidence in Chamberlain as PM dropped, the job was offered to Halifax, who turned it down, begging the question of how the war might have turned out if Halifax had accepted—when German forces surrounded British troops at Dunkirk, Halifax tried to persuade Churchill to negotiate a peace settlement... Thanks to Essex for his talk.



(Above) Craigoh with fellow Kiwi Dirk Heinsius; (right) Eva models this season's must-have cycle helmet



Lord Halifax

(Above) Torquil gives his customary opening address; (left and far left) Essex attacks his subject; (below) the Earl's rapt audience; (below left) a parade of Homburgs



(Left) Compton-Bassett models his covert coat; (centre left) waggery from Giles Pilkington; (far left) hilarity from the floor; (bottom left, l-r) Matthew Howard, Pilkington and Curé Michael Silver; (bottom, l-r) Von Gregory, Essex and Ed Marlowe chew the fat in Smoker's Alley



20,000 COCKTAILS UNDER THE SEA!

IN GLORIOUS
CHAP-O-VISION!

Saturday 6th June

6–11pm

The Cellar Bar, The Water Poet, 9–11 Folgate Street, London E1 6BX

Dress: Salty

Admission: Free for NSC Members, £5 for guests

Join us as we go a bit nautical and celebrate a life on, and under, the ocean wave (it is, of course, also the anniversary of the D-Day landings). Think Captain Nemo, elegance and adventure, mermaids and sea beasts, pirates and privateers, steampunk technology, dressing for dinner at fifty fathoms...

Note that we are starting and finishing earlier than usual (though there may be an afterparty somewhere else). The venue does reasonably priced food and has its own beer garden for the smokers. There will be the usual silly games, free snuff and our famous Grand Raffle (entry is free but only to Members of the NSC, including anyone who joins on the night).

We will have **live entertainment** from The Bohemianauts, a grog-sozzled, accordion-driven combo offering sick shanties of demi-monde decadence, cabaret carnivalism and tentacled menace from the deep...

Games will include:

- Shoot Nelson from the Rigging of a French Ship
- Harpoon the White Whale and Win your Sanity
- Design a Non-Euclidian Undersea City to House Dread Cthulhu in his Slumber of Aeons

So pull on your velvet sea boots, grab a harpoon and prepare to lash yourself to the wheel!

The gleaming hoard of raffle prize booty will include:

A piece of HMS *Victory* • a bronze octopus ring • a bottle of Kraken rum • H.P. Lovecraft's *The Call of Cthulhu* • a piece of eight • a bosun's whistle • a signed copy of *Lusitania R.E.X* by our own Greg Taylor • a bottle of Old Spice • an Airfix model of HMS *Victory* • a telescope • a 1915 *Lusitania* medal • some squid ink • a book of naval slang • a cat o'nine tails • a sea sponge • a clockwork submarine • a Cornish smuggling boardgame • *Longitude* by Dava Sobel • a large seashell • *Rum, Sodomy and the Lash* by the Pogues • a bag of limes • a signed copy of *Memoirs of a Blue Funnel Midshipman* by my father-in-law • DVDs: *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, *A Night to Remember*, *Das Boot* (full mini-series) • *The Hunt for Red October* • *Waterworld* • *The Little Mermaid* • *Deep Blue Sea* • *Pirates of the Caribbean* • *Jaws* • *South Pacific* • *Sharknado* • shares in Squidco

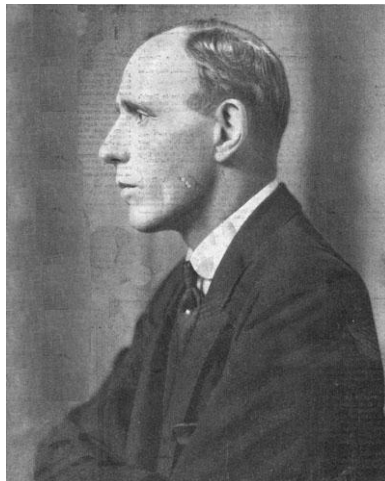




LORD HALIFAX

The Earl of Essex on the politician's choice to be wartime Prime Minister, who ceded in favour of Winston Churchill and disappeared from history

MY SUBJECT IS a politician you may very well never have heard of, Edward Frederick Linley Wood, otherwise known as the 1st Earl of Halifax, and formerly as Lord Irwin and Viscount Halifax. However, had he agreed to head a coalition government in May 1940, after Neville Chamberlain's resignation, instead of ceding to Winston Churchill, the course of history may have been very different.



centuries they had been respectable merchants of York, providing Justices of the Peace and aldermen; they were worthy, but not of national eminence. Just before the start of the Industrial Revolution they were wealthy enough to buy an estate, Hickleton Hall near Doncaster, and to settle as moderately landed squires. Some short while later they discovered themselves to be sitting on several hundred acres of Britain's deepest and finest coal

seam, the Great Barnsley Field. This left them wealthy enough to do whatever they pleased.

Churchill had dubbed Halifax "the Holy Fox" because of his high Anglicanism and love of hunting, but he respected him as a politician and was wary of his high regard within the Conservative Party, something that Churchill utterly lacked.

Charles Wood, Edward's grandfather, born in 1800, went into politics. He married the daughter of Earl Grey, the Whig Prime Minister, and rose to become Chancellor of the Exchequer and Secretary of State for India. He was awarded a viscountcy in 1866 and was considered close enough to Queen Victoria to be allowed the task of bringing her out of her isolation years following the death of Prince Albert in 1861.

Edward was born in Devon on 16 April 1881, into a rather sickly family. His three elder brothers all died in infancy, leaving him heir to his father's viscountcy. Edward himself was born with a withered left arm, with no hand, but this in no way affected his love of riding, hunting and shooting. He had a false hand in the form of a clenched fist with a thumb on a spring, with which he became adept at opening gates when hunting, while holding his reins and horn with the other hand.

The first Viscount Halifax displayed personal traits that would become characteristic of his grandson Edward. Never a party man in politics, his marriage to the daughter of an earl, once his son and grandson had followed suit, would establish the family with a higher social standing than their 218th position in the precedence of the

The Woods were a fortunate family. For

peerage would imply. His friendship with Victoria started a tradition of intimacy and confidentiality with the Royal Family which would prove invaluable to Edward some 70 years on.

Edward's father Charles, 2nd Viscount Halifax, had an unquestioning faith in God, which dominated every waking hour of his 94 years on earth, and also, paradoxically, a fascination with otherworldly phenomena. One of England's splendid eccentrics, he saw himself as the last of the Cavaliers and sported a Van Dyke beard. His love of ritual, extreme partisan high Anglicanism and all but Catholic beliefs set him at loggerheads with the hierarchy of the Church of England. All of this he instilled in his son Edward including all the standard Catholic doctrines (barring papal infallibility), which would largely shape his political and social beliefs throughout his life.

But there was always a strong sense of reality in Edward's politics. This was something distinctly lacking in his father, who had priest holes built and kept yaks, emus and kangaroos in the park at Hickleton. In 1870, only a year into his marriage and father of a six-week-old baby, Charles left for France to help fight disease among prisoners captured in the Franco-Prussian War.

Edward's own character was moulded by a series of tragedies that befell his family between his fifth and tenth birthdays. His three older brothers died, each within two years of each other: Henry died aged seven in 1886 of lung congestion and Francis of the same illness aged 15 in 1888. Charles died of pleurisy after a long illness, aged 20 in 1890. The years from 1888 to 1890 saw the deaths of a bewildering succession of family and friends, and although they met the fate of many in Victorian times from classic illnesses of the period, it left Edward the last son of six, and how the sole focus of his father's almost fanatical love, aged just nine years old.

It was little wonder that Edward would become a serious child, as much was expected of him. He had a blameless Eton, concentrating on the sports that his disability allowed, such as tennis, fives and bicycling. He kept up a lively theological correspondence with his father, but it was when he went up to Christchurch, Oxford, that he could really indulge his appetite for country sports and high church services. He joined the dining clubs Loder's and The Bullingdon, got into slight debt, went

beagling and generally did all the things expected of wealthy and well-born undergraduates.

Edward, though, had a capacity for work. He took a First in history and then won a fellowship to All Soul's. His father told him, "I am quite determined that you are to be prime minister and reunite England to the Holy See."

On going down from Oxford Edward found himself a wealthy man. In 1904, when he was aged just 23, an aunt left him both 88 Eaton Square and Temple Newsham, the Jacobean Palace outside Leeds known as "the Hampton Court of the North". The year before his father had offered him Garrowby, the largest of the family estates. Edward decided to go on a grand tour of the Empire, safe in the knowledge that he had a fortune to return to in England.

On his return he took the most sensible course open to a man of conservative political instincts and stayed well out. The Liberals had won a landslide election in 1906 and so he decided to take up his fellowship of All Souls. There he wrote a life of his father's hero John Keble. It was an objective, well researched, but excruciatingly dull tome...

By the time this was published in 1909 Edward had decided to follow his grandfather into politics, more for the lack of an alternative than for any political ideology. He decided to stand for the Conservatives.

Only two more ingredients were necessary for the career of a bright and successful Tory politician: a wife and a safe seat. Edward found both within four months, marrying Lady Dorothy Onslow and being selected for the North Yorkshire seat of Ripon. He duly won the seat for the Conservatives in the general election of 1910, with a majority of 1,244 in a poll of 11,000—safe enough to dissuade anyone from standing against



A young Halifax enjoying country pursuits. Note the artificial left hand



At the Viceroyal Palace

him again. Yet Edward led an undistinguished parliamentary career, concentrating on family life, with a daughter, Anne, born in July 1910, and a son, Charles, in 1912.

As Britain moved inexorably towards war in 1914, Edward, who had long been a territorial, took a commission in the Queen's Own Yorkshire Dragoons, spending the first three years of the war in Flanders. He performed unedifying tasks that were now allotted to the cavalry, such as capturing deserters, repairing roads, protecting estates and burying the dead.

On his leaves he made speeches for a more vigorous prosecution of the war and attacked the Asquith government for being "hopelessly out of touch with the people in the country". His frustration with the war was compounded by seeing swathes of school and university friends cut down. On a happier note, a second son, Peter, was born in October 1916.

Despite his fears that his constituents had forgotten him, the 1918 general election went well for Edward and the Conservative Party as a whole. It produced a majority of 250 for the coalition government, of which the Conservatives were by far the largest component.

In April 1921 Halifax was appointed Under Secretary at the Colonial Office; the Secretary of State was Winston Churchill. Churchill had wanted someone else, and had put off even seeing Halifax for a fortnight. Eventually Halifax marched into Churchill's office and said, "I have no desire to be your Under Secretary, nor to have any other office. I am prepared to resign and leave this office tomorrow. But so long as I remain here I expect to be treated like a gentleman."

Halifax adopted this forthright policy with

Churchill throughout his political life, and it mostly served him well. Later he advised cabinet colleagues to stand up to Churchill who, he said, despised 'yes men'."

Under Stanley Baldwin the Conservatives won the most seats in the general election of December 1923, but the Labour Party were able to form their first government with the tacit support of the Liberal Party, who had 158 seats to Labour's 191, against the Tories' 258.

Halifax, who had become a rather undistinguished Education Minister

in the last Conservative administration, had spent the next 11 months concentrating on agricultural issues; he would be appointed Agricultural Secretary upon the Conservatives' resounding victory in the October 1924 general election, following the collapse of the minority Labour government after a vote of no confidence. Again his time at Agriculture would prove frustrating largely due to financial constraints.

Baldwin, who had become Prime Minister, offered Halifax the Viceroyalty of India. Halifax's imperialism was of the messianic variety. He was "convinced that the empire promised better social conditions at home, a greater and healthier English-speaking people for the future and also by far the most powerful influence for world peace".

The Viceroyalty was a hybrid position which comprised the duties of king-emperor and prime minister, ruling over a sub-continent of 320 million people, involving numerous languages, five major religions and 86 semi-independent principalities. Halifax was 44 years of age, virtually unknown in Britain and completely unknown in India. He was appointed solely because his character commended itself the King George V and Baldwin—albeit after a number of better-qualified men, such as Earl Haig, had been turned down. As the King's private secretary explained to the Secretary of State for India, "His personality is unquestionable, and he has a charming wife."

Halifax accepted with reluctance, initially refusing the position, but after being raised to the Barony of Irwin of Kirby Underdale, Lord Irwin and his wife left for India on 17 March 1926.

Irwin believed eventual Indian self-government to be inevitable and, with proper safeguards, that Britain should guide India to that end in the

short to medium term. However, Irwin suspected that his immediate superior in Parliament, the Secretary of State for India Lord Birkenhead, had a more relaxed timetable in mind—somewhere approaching 600 years. Birkenhead, universally known as “F.E.” was best friends with Churchill, whose views on imperialism he largely matched.

Set against these problems was the Viceroy’s immense power. Irwin virtually had his own foreign policy to conduct; in Persia, Arabia and China it was Delhi that counted as much as Whitehall.

The Irwins, whose family now included Richard, born in October 1920, led a relaxed Viceroyal court, although this was all relative. The number of curtsies expected from ladies in the course of an evening was reduced from seven to three, and some dinners at which white tie and decorations were traditionally worn were relegated to the almost informal black tie.

Entertaining was done on a massive scale. There were three dinner parties a fortnight of between 75 and 120 people, garden parties, dances and huge state balls. All this was made possible by two private secretaries, a comptroller, six aides-de-camp and over a thousand indoor servants. Apart from a brief bout of malaria in December 1928, Irwin enjoyed good health and made a point of travelling the continent as much as possible.

The Conservatives lost the general election in July 1929 and Labour were re-elected, with William Wedgwood Benn becoming Secretary of State for India. Irwin thought him “a nice fellow, keen, with lots of ideas and a gentleman”.

Irwin’s Viceroyalty was dominated by general clamour for Indian independence and, while he was largely in favour, his policy of granting concessions was seen as excessive in Whitehall and half-hearted in India. His decisions prompted a violent reaction locally, with particular opposition by the Indian National Congress movement, led by Mahatma Gandhi. With London’s refusal to make concessions or qualify dominion status, Irwin resorted to repression, jailing all the Congress leaders, banning public gatherings and crushing rebellious opposition.

On the morning of 23rd December, the Irwins

were returning from a tour of southern India. As the Viceroyal train approached New Delhi a bomb went off underneath it. However, the bomb was too small and badly placed to derail the train.

Irwin responded to the assassination attempt with the phlegm expected of a Viceroy: “I can’t pretend that I personally was at any moment greatly disturbed by it. It went off about three coaches in front of me when I was sitting in my salon reading Challoner. I heard the noise and thought to myself, ‘That must be a bomb.’ I then smelled all the smoke which came down the train and concluded that it was indeed a bomb; but, as nothing happened, I went on reading Challoner until someone came along.” He told Lady Harlech that he was “inured to that kind of thing by the Cona Coffee machine, which was always blowing up”.

The Viceroyal train, scene of the assassination attempt



Irwin ultimately opted to negotiate with Gandhi, signing the Gandhi–Irwin Pact in January 1931, ending Civil Disobedience. And while this was not the end of the unrest, by the time the Irwins left India on 18th April 1931 his Viceroyalty had largely been judged a success. He returned to British politics with significant prestige.

The Irwins landed in England on 3rd May to be received with welcomes and honours. Edwards accepted an Order of the Garter, and it is believed he was offered an Earldom, which he refused so as not to outrank his, now elderly, father.

The Irwins settled into comfortable domesticity at Garrowby for over a year. Edward bided his time while the political turmoil following the 1931 financial debacle played itself out. Irwin never really enjoyed economics and strenuously avoided any position that demanded a detailed

understanding of it. He refused an offer of the Foreign Secretaryship as he was in too bad an odour with the right wing of the Tory party, and did not make his maiden speech in the House of Lords until December 1931.

In August of that year Ramsay MacDonald formed a National Government but most of its ministers were Conservatives and, due to MacDonald's failing health, Irwin's mentor Stanley Baldwin assumed most of the prime ministerial duties as Lord President of the Council. Baldwin persuaded a seemingly reluctant Irwin to join the government in June 1931 in his old department as President of the Board of Education. This was technically a demotion but he was lured by the prospect of working on the Government's India Bill, which proposed increased self-government for the Raj. Yet, although Irwin's old nemesis Birkenhead was now dead, he was still opposed by Churchill and many rank-and-file Conservatives.

Irwin became Viscount Halifax on the death of his redoubtable 94-year-old father in January 1934. In 1933 he had been elected as Chancellor of Oxford University. When Baldwin succeeded MacDonald in June 1935, Halifax gladly exchanged education for the army, becoming Secretary of State for War. This was essentially a watching brief, which lasted for five months until Baldwin's National Government secured a landslide victory in November 1935. Halifax became Lord Privy Seal and later Leader of the House of Lords.

Although Secretary of State for War, Halifax revealed his dovish attitude to the rising military tensions in Europe and in particular regarding Germany and the rise of the Nazi Party under Hitler. In November 1934 Churchill had warned about the German air menace in the House of Commons, but in December 1935 Halifax had made a decisive intervention at the Committee of Imperial Defence, challenging the Chiefs' of Staff assertion that Britain needed an increased rate of rearmament. "Are we to judge the situation so serious that everything has to give way to military reconditioning of our defence forces? Such a conclusion in fact seems to rest on premises not only of the inevitability but of a certain degree of certainty as to the early imminence of war, which I am not prepared to accept."

Now free of departmental duty he could range across the whole gamut of government policy. But he decided to interest himself primarily in foreign

affairs. The Chiefs of Staff continually reiterated one central message to ministers throughout the 1930s—that the Empire, supported by France but not by America, could not defeat Germany, Italy and Japan simultaneously. And by 1934 it was clear that Germany was, in the words of the Defence Requirements Committee, "the ultimate potential enemy".

Italy, under the leadership of the Fascist dictator Benito Mussolini, had invaded Abyssinia on 2nd October 1935. Although this was a criminal and slightly absurd act, it did not affect any vital British interests. The National Government had broadly supported the weak and ineffectual League of Nations in mediating in foreign disputes, but was embarrassed when it emerged that the foreign ministers of Britain and France, Samuel Hoare and Pierre Laval, had concluded a pact in Paris, known as Hoare-Laval, which circumvented the League and awarded Italy half of Abyssinia.

The press and public opinion were broadly in support of Abyssinia and demanded that the government distance itself from these negotiations. As much as Halifax almost certainly approved of the practical solution of Hoare-Laval, he felt unable to support the Foreign Secretary as it would endanger his mentor Baldwin, and made a speech in the Lords saying that Hoare should resign. Hoare duly obliged and was replaced by the 38-year-old Anthony Eden.

Eden, a fellow Etonian and north countryman, was a distant relative of Halifax and the following year his wife's step-brother, the Earl of Feversham, married Halifax's daughter Anne. Halifax was seconded to Eden at the Foreign Office in an unofficial capacity, partly to support him but also to keep an eye on him for Baldwin.

On 7th March 1936, Hitler ordered German troops to march into the Rhineland, hitherto a demilitarised zone under the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles. Following the First World War, Halifax's political "feel" made him realise that war with Germany over their previously held territory was simply not feasible and Eden was probably in agreement with this. Halifax devised a compromise plan whereby an international force would occupy the zone to a distance of 20 miles either side of the Rhine. Hitler, realising that no military intervention was in the offing, turned Halifax's plan down.

In his autobiography, written after the war, Halifax comments, "I have little doubt that if we



With Hitler at the Berchtesgaden

had then told Hitler bluntly to go back, his powers for future and larger mischief would have been broken.”

July 1936 saw the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War and earnest Anglo–French discussions as to how it could either be foreshortened or at best prevented from escalating into a general European conflict. The resulting policy of non-intervention, agreed upon at a conference in London in September, was equally disregarded by Russia, Germany and Italy. Halifax’s policy that this was solely an internal Spanish affair led to the embarrassing situation of nationalist forces attacking and sinking merchant shipping flying the Red Ensign.

Eden enjoyed considerable autonomy in foreign affairs, partly because they bored Baldwin and partly because the Prime Minister was increasingly occupied with the Royal abdication crisis that autumn of 1936. There was little doubt where Halifax’s sympathies lay regarding the latter: his attitude to divorce was almost indistinguishable from that of his father, who thought that remarriage after divorce was little different from bigamy. The 2nd Viscount believed murder to be better than divorce, “as it did less damage to the moral side of the family unit”.

That year saw two happier events for Halifax. In addition to Anne’s marriage to the Earl of Feversham, his eldest son Charles married Lady Ruth Primrose, the daughter of the Earl of Rosebery.

With the crisis over and the new King crowned, an exhausted Baldwin retired to make way for his long-time heir apparent Neville Chamberlain in May 1937. Halifax took over as Lord President of the Council and continued to lead the Lords. He had long been close to Chamberlain politically

and greatly admired him, but was never as personally friendly with him as he was with Baldwin. Godfrey Nicholson MP summed up Chamberlain’s problem with reference to his father and brother: “Joe was worshipped, Austen was a great gentleman but poor Neville got the ugly duckling treatment.” Neville was determined that, as the only Chamberlain to make it to the premiership, he was going to master foreign affairs better than the other two.

Under the new regime, Halifax’s understudy role at the Foreign Office subtly changed. Chamberlain began to flex his foreign policy muscles and Halifax instinctively sided with the man who wanted peace, seeking appeasement of Germany.

On 13th October 1937 the editor of *Field* magazine wrote on behalf of Prince Lowenstein, the president of the German Hunting Association, inviting Halifax—ostensibly in his capacity of Master of the Middleton Hounds—to the International Hunting Exhibition soon to open in Berlin. Chamberlain seized upon this opportunity to engage in relaxed and informal discussions with the Nazi leadership.

Halifax duly accepted the invitation and left for Berlin in November 1937. The hunting exhibition was a gruesomely Teutonic affair where the meeting of delegates took place at “5pm sharp”, which a map showing Germany’s “lost territories” hung alongside huge portraits of Herman Göring. The German for a “view halloo” is “halali!”, so Halifax was nicknamed “Halalifax” by Göring, to the general enjoyment of the Berliners.

Halifax got a rousing reception wherever he went, doffing his bowler to the “Heil Hitler” salute.



The entire diplomatic initiative was nearly wrecked, however, when Halifax met the Führer at his Bavarian holiday retreat at Berchtesgaden. The immensely tall Halifax, upon stepping out of his car, mistook



The Chamberlain government (1937)

the diminutive Hitler for a footman and was about to hand him his hat and coat.

This was seen as the “high-water point” of Halifax’s appeasement. His message to Hitler was that areas of the Versailles treaty might be reinterpreted to Germany’s benefit. Hitler, having listened to Halifax, rebuffed further discussions about the Anglo–German rapprochement, regarding the British position to be a sign of weakness; after Halifax left Hitler spoke of him contemptuously as “the English parson”.

Chamberlain thought Halifax’s meeting “a great success”, but although he had shown sincerity in seeking a general European settlement, Hitler had perceived only weakness and further opportunities for expansion of the Reich.

In January of 1938 Chamberlain and Halifax were poised to open negotiations with Mussolini. Eden, who was piqued that this decision was made when he was out of the country, made resignation noises, which came as a shock to Halifax. Things came to a head in February when Chamberlain stood firm on the principle that having all three Axis powers at Britain’s throat was far too dangerous to contemplate.

Eden regarded Mussolini as an untrustworthy gangster, but Halifax proposed a compromise whereby any Anglo–Italian agreement would require the withdrawal of Italian troops from Spain. Chamberlain agreed to this, but Eden asked for time to reconsider. He returned to No.10 to say that he still wanted to go. A full five days later Chamberlain offered, and Halifax accepted, the Foreign Secretaryship. Churchill told the House of Commons that the appointment of a peer was

“derogatory”.

Halifax was by now a figure of some considerable weight in the Conservative Party, whose political instincts Chamberlain (always more of a liberal unionist than fully a Tory) respected. Now Halifax was known, trusted and respected by elements of the party to which he himself had only limited access.

In March 1938 Hitler annexed Austria, an action commonly known as the *Anschluss*, the unification of the German peoples of Austria and Germany.

Halifax had stated in 1937 that “the British people would never consent to go to war because two German countries wanted to merge”. But he could not be so dilatory about the obvious threat to Czechoslovakia, with a continuous Fascist bloc now from the Baltic to the Adriatic. The military position was clear: Germany could overthrow the whole of Czechoslovakia in less than a week.

Chamberlain, however, did not see an economically powerful Germany as “necessarily a bad thing” and thought that eastern Europe was no more important to British interests than Abyssinia had been. “Czechoslovakia would be like Humpty Dumpty,” he said. “He would have fallen off the wall and no one could put him back again.”

However, on 13th September the Czech government declared martial law and two days later Konrad Henlein, leader of the Sudeten Germans in Czechoslovakia, placed himself under Hitler’s protection. The situation was considered so desperate that Chamberlain flew to Germany on 15th September to meet Hitler at

the Berchtesgaden, the first British Prime Minister to visit Germany since Disraeli in 1878. In the wake of this Chamberlain announced “a new understanding between England and Germany”, that Hitler’s objectives “were strictly limited” and once “the Sudeten Germans were included in the Reich he would be satisfied”.

However, on 24th September, Hitler made clear in the Godesberg Memorandum that total Czech withdrawal from the Sudetenland was required, and German troops would occupy the territory at once. The next day Hitler, ever the diplomat, invited Chamberlain to Munich to “renegotiate” the Godesberg terms. Chamberlain announced to a packed House of Commons that Hitler had invited Mussolini, Daladier (the French prime minister) and him to Munich the next day. The Commons erupted into unprecedented scenes of relief and jubilation.

Before leaving Munich Chamberlain, almost as an afterthought, asked Hitler to sign a banal one-page document stating the desire of the British and German peoples never to fight one another again. Waving this piece of paper to cheering crowds on his arrival back at Heston Aerodrome he pronounced “peace in our time”.

The Munich Agreement was popular with most people in Britain as it appeared to have prevented a war with Germany, but Churchill and Eden attacked the government for behaving dishonourably and for abandoning the Czech army, one of the best equipped in Europe.

Chamberlain presented the Munich Agreement to the House of Commons as a triumph of restraint and dignity and spoke of “the winning back of confidence, the gradual removal of hostility between nations until they could safely discard their weapons”. Halifax told the Lords that

it was an improvement on the Godesberg demands but that the outcome was only the better of “a hideous choice of two evils”.

Halifax no longer had to worry about being re-elected, but a new general election had to be held before November 1940, by which time the “Munich afterglow” would be growing very dim for Chamberlain. Under the influence of Alexander Cadogan, the new Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, Halifax did an about-turn on the need for rearmament, which he had opposed as War Minister, and consistently took a tougher line on speeding up rearmament than Chamberlain when in committee. Despite his great personal respect for the Prime Minister, Halifax was coming around to Duff Cooper’s view that Chamberlain had about as much chance of “squaring Hitler” as “Little Lord Fauntleroy would have of concluding a satisfactory deal with Al Capone”.

In January 1939 Halifax and Chamberlain went to Rome to visit Mussolini. The meetings were perfectly civil but completely unproductive. They attended athletics displays and went to the opera, they met the King of Italy and the Pope and held long discussions with Il Duce and his son-in-law and Foreign Minister Count Ciano. A friend of Leo Amery’s described Halifax and Chamberlain as “our tall, black-coated ministers looking like a couple of undertaker’s mutes”.

In March the German Army seized the rest of Czechoslovakia that it did not already occupy, thus breaking the Munich Agreement and shattering Chamberlain’s and Halifax’s policy of appeasement. On 27th April, against opposition from the TUC and much of the Labour Party, compulsory military conscription was introduced for all 20- and 21-year-olds.

Chamberlain, who had pledged never to introduce peacetime conscription, was progressively isolated within the Cabinet and politically alienated from Halifax.

The mood of the country was against the constant meetings with Hitler and Mussolini, which seemed only to strengthen the belief that war was now inevitable.

On 25th August, two days after the announcement of the Nazi–Soviet Pact, Chamberlain announced a Polish–British Common Defence Pact,



(Left to right) Count Ciano, Halifax, Chamberlain and Mussolini



Chamberlain with his “piece of paper” allegedly promising “peace in our time”

the floor twice and upset too many of its senior members.

The King and Queen also wanted Halifax for Prime Minister. The Woods had served the Royal Family for over a century, in a personal as well as political capacity. Lady Halifax was one of the Queen’s ladies in waiting and the King and Queen used to dine at the Halifaxes’ Eaton Square home. Further, Halifax had offered unwavering support to the Duke of York during the abdication crisis. Even the problem of Halifax not sitting in the House of

which offered Poland assistance, specifically in the event of a German attack. On the same day Halifax stated, “We do not think this agreement will be binding.” while Cadogan stated, “Naturally our guarantee does not give any help to Poland. It can be said that it is cruel, even cynical.”

On 1st September Germany invaded Poland and two days later Neville Chamberlain announced to the nation that Britain was in a state of war with Germany. No military assistance to Poland was forthcoming.

Chamberlain instituted a War Cabinet. He restored Churchill to the Cabinet as First Lord of the Admiralty and gave Eden a government post.

During the “Phoney War” Chamberlain stumbled on, but was forced to step down after a disastrous Allied campaign to seize the northern part of Norway, which was thwarted by German troops invading Norway through Denmark. Chamberlain sat through what became known as the “Norway debate” for two whole days and, while Churchill could be held responsible for the military failure, Leo Amery delivered the knock-out blow to Chamberlain in a speech echoing Cromwell’s words: “You have sat here for too long for any good you are doing. Depart, I say, and let us have done with you. In the name of God, go!”

A new National Government needed to be formed and the Labour Party, who had refused to join Chamberlain’s administration and had attacked Churchill over Norway, were prepared to serve under Halifax. The bulk of the Conservative Party also distrusted Churchill, who had crossed

Commons was not a major obstacle: the King readily agreed to hold his earldom in abeyance and a safe Tory seat could easily be found.

Halifax, however, was of a different frame of mind. He had no objection to becoming Prime Minister in different circumstances, but he felt he would be in a better position as Foreign Secretary to dissuade Churchill from disastrous overreactions as Prime Minister, and would still be heir apparent and most influential cabinet minister. In a highly confidential letter to a friend he wrote: “I don’t think WSC will be a very good PM, though I think the country will think he gives them a fillip.” He also admitted that he was bored by, and only semi-literate in, affairs of military strategy, while Churchill thrived on war and was fascinated by it.

Churchill initially wanted Halifax to lead the House of Lords but Halifax had made it clear to him that this was unacceptable, and he retained his position as Foreign Secretary. Churchill was keenly aware of how weak his support in the 1935-elected House of Commons was, and Chamberlain retained his position of leader of the Conservative Party. Churchill was not to become politically secure until much later in 1940.

As France teetered towards defeat Halifax energetically opposed a recourse to total war and lone opposition to Germany, and was concerned that the British Expeditionary Force would be lost as our only bargaining chip. Churchill argued that the Italians might offer peace negotiations and that playing for time was in Britain’s interest: in the event Churchill won the argument and the BEF

was saved at Dunkirk.

The death of Lord Lothian, Britain's ambassador to the United States, on 12th December gave Churchill an opportunity to move Halifax. He had a tendency to use foreign vacancies as a means of removing troublesome politicians, and he also wanted to make way for Eden at the Foreign Office again. He was confident that Halifax no longer posed a threat by causing trouble for him among the Conservative backbenchers, now that Chamberlain had passed away the previous month.

Halifax found the idea of spending the rest of the war in Washington repugnant, and firmly believed that Lord Beaverbrook, the Minister for Aircraft, whom he referred to as "the toad", was constantly disparaging him behind his back and had come up with the Washington move. Lady Halifax warned Churchill that the day might come when he would need Edward's support in Britain, as he had no colleague so loyal and Halifax "commanded a following here unlike anywhere else". However, the Halifaxes were resigned to their fate and resolved to make the best of it.

Halifax's misgivings about America were more than borne out by his first few months there. A series of gaffes furnished the American press with opportunities to create "diplomatic incidents". Halifax never understood the way the American government worked and used to liken it to "a disorderly day's rabbit shooting". It all seemed to add up, as one American book described it, that the new ambassador was "a British imperialist, an unrepentant old-school-tie Tory, representing an outworn feudal system".

Lady Halifax, a sensitive and intelligent woman, realised that at the age of 60 her husband had to be "de-iced". Gradually Halifax adopted a more informal approach, managing to talk to the American people on his numerous tours across the country. The entry of America into the war in 1941 marked the beginning of Halifax's widespread popularity.

Late 1942 brought two family tragedies in quick succession. On 1st November his second son Peter was killed at El Alamein, and on 30th December his youngest son Richard had his legs crushed when an unexploded Stuka bomb fell on him.

Churchill was grateful for Halifax's assistance in bringing America into the war on Britain's side and offered him an earldom in May 1944, which Halifax accepted "on behalf of the team with

which I have worked".

On Halifax's retirement as ambassador in 1946

Churchill told him how "your work through these dangerous years is so widely respected and crowned with success".

Halifax had been in the job for five years and, after a

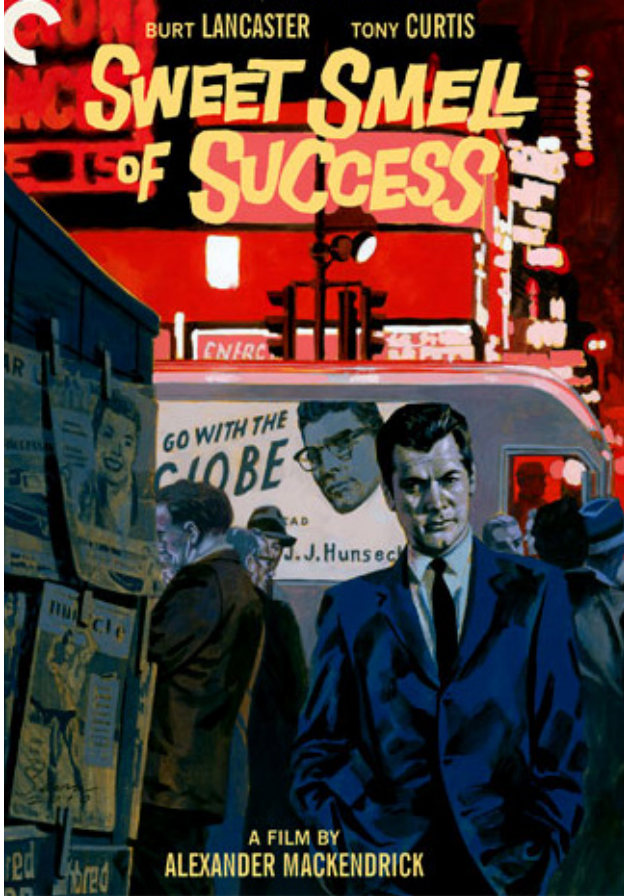
disastrous start, had been phenomenally successful; he felt real affection for America, made many return visits and counted the years in Washington as among the happiest of his life.

In retirement he returned to largely honorary pursuits, as Chancellor of Sheffield University and Chairman of the BBC. He died on his Garrowby estate shortly before Christmas 1953, aged 78.

On 5th July 1940 a book titled *Guilty Men*, co-written by Michael Foot, then a firebrand journalist and editor of *Tribune* and the *Evening Standard*, attacked the appeasement of Chamberlain and Halifax. It sold over 200,000 copies and went into dozens of reprints by December of the same year, firmly identifying Halifax as a defeatist, if not indeed a traitor. Halifax was reticent to defend himself. He had always had a low opinion of journalists, apart from his close friend Geoffrey Dawson, editor of *The Times*.

Harold Begbie, a supporter of Halifax, referred to him as "the highest kind of Englishman in politics", while Rab Butler, who worked closely with him at the Foreign Office, called him "this strange and imposing figure, half unworldly saint, half cunning politician". But perhaps his greatest gift to the nation was to pass over the premiership to a man who more greatly fulfilled its need at its most perilous hour.





Press Gang

OUR MAY FILM NIGHT featured the noir 1957 *The Sweet Smell of Success* in which hungry showbiz press agent Sidney Falco plays cat and mouse with domineering gossip columnist J.J. Hunsecker against a backdrop of Manhattan night clubs.

It was based on a story by Ernest Lehman that appeared in a 1950 issue of *Cosmopolitan*. He had named it *The Sweet Smell of Success* but the magazine's editor did not want the word "smell" in its pages so it was retitled *Tell Me About It Tomorrow*. It was inspired by Lehman's own experiences of working for Irving Hoffman, a New York press agent and columnist for *The Hollywood Reporter*, though Hunsecker was based on Walter Winchell, an ex-vaudevillian who became the first syndicated gossip columnist in the 1920s and 1930s, inspiring fear in the powerful and famous, trading positive mention and using what he knew to blackmail celebs into giving him more dirt on others.

The director, Alexander Mackendrick, had previously worked for Ealing Studios (directing *The Ladykillers* and *The Man in a White Suit*) but when that went belly-up in 1954 he looked to Hollywood. He signed with independent producers Hecht-Hill-Lancaster to adapt George Bernard Shaw's play *The Devil's Disciple*,

but when that fell through they wouldn't release him from the contract and insisted he direct *The Sweet Smell of Success*. He wasn't keen, considering the script, adapted by Lehman, too dialogue-heavy. He and Lehman worked on it for weeks before Lehman became ill and was replaced by Clifford Odets. A playwright in New York, Odets had sullied his reputation as a leftwing firebrand by naming names in the McCarthy witch hunts—returning to Manhattan for shooting filled him with a neurotic tension that suffuses the movie. The production schedule could not be changed so Odets was still writing as shooting began, often typing pages on the day they were filmed.

Both Burt Lancaster as Hunsecker and Tony Curtis as Falco give riveting performances, filled with malign energy. Universal, to whom he was contracted, did not want Curtis to play the role, fearing it would damage his career, but he was keen to show he could act and was not just a pretty face. In fact location shooting was hampered by crowds of Curtis's fans who kept breaking through police lines.

Lancaster apparently intimidated a lot of people on the production but Mackendrick used this menace in the role. He filmed Lancaster from below, allowing high lighting to cast shadows on his face. He had Lancaster wear the trademark glasses to give him the air of "a scholarly brute" but smeared the lenses with Vaseline so Lancaster's eyes could not focus, giving him a reptilian blank gaze.

The film previewed badly, as fans of both Curtis and Lancaster were repelled by the characters they played. Everyone in the production company blamed each other for what they believed would be a flop. Burt Lancaster even blamed Lehman for dropping out, telling him at a party, "You didn't have to leave—you could have made this a much better picture. I ought to beat you up." Lehman replied, "Go ahead—I could use the money."

But critical reaction was good, praising the performances and camerawork but most particularly the dialogue, what A.O. Scott in the *New York Times* called "a high-toned street vernacular that no real New Yorker has ever spoken but that every real New Yorker wishes he could". The American Film Institute put Hunsecker in its list of top 50 movie villains and the film is today widely considered a masterpiece.

NSC FILM NIGHT

Orlando (1992)

Wednesday 10th June

7.30pm–11pm

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

Admission: Free

“Do not fade. Do not wither. Do not grow old.”

A young Orlando accepts this pledge to Queen Elizabeth I on her deathbed at the beginning of Sally Potter’s 1992 tantalisingly colourful portrayal of Virginia Woolf’s 1928 gender-bending satirical epic spanning over four centuries, full of failed romance, bad poetry and near-death experiences in war. Lord Orlando magically changes sex part way through the film and experiences the 18th and 19th centuries as



a woman of privilege—only to discover the prejudices held by the great male minds of the time towards a woman’s intellect, as well as how the legalities of property ownership pertained to her sex. The film also features a lively reenactment of the celebrated Frost Fair of 1608.

The beautiful yet androgynous Tilda Swinton plays Orlando, Quentin Crisp tries his old hand as Queen Elizabeth, and a handsome young Billy Zane seduces as the swashbuckling adventurer Marmaduke



Bonthrop Shelmerdine.

Presented by Priya Kali. As usually there will be an array of teas, cakes and boozes on offer.



Tomb Wi

IT IS NO SECRET that many people in the Vintage and Chap subcultures have previously been involved in the Goth and Punk scenes. Perhaps out of a desire to re-live my black-clad youth I made the effort to attend Whitby Goth Weekend last October. Whitby (as it is known to attendees) is one of the world's premier Goth events. At its core is a music festival held in the Whitby Spa Pavilion at the edge of the sea, where headliners in the past have included the likes of The Damned, Alien Sex Fiend and New Model Army. However, with several thousand attendees the event largely takes over the town for a long weekend twice a year.

Splendid Victoriana on show



Dr Tim Eyre attends the Whitby Goth Weekend

Whitby Goth Weekend has a proud founding legend. It started in the early 1990s with a young Goth called Jo Hampshire who lived in a Yorkshire mining town. Lacking local Gothic company, Ms Hampshire placed a classified advertisement in *NME* in search of like-minded Gothic penfriends. She received many replies and corresponded with around forty of them using old-fashioned paper-and-ink letters. As these long-distance friendships developed she decided to organise a real-life meet-up in a pub and chose Whitby as the venue. From the penfriends word spread about the event and so it was that literally hundreds of Goths turned up at The Elsinore pub in Whitby. Clearly Ms Hampshire was on to something; she continued to organise the meet-ups and they grew in scope and popularity until they became the major events they are today, still organised by the same person.

Whitby was an inspired choice. Part of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* is set in Whitby, so its spooky credentials are set in the literary canon. The town itself is a suitably Gothic venue, with old buildings lining tangled cobbled lanes and a ruined abbey glowering down on the town from the top of a hill that is ascended by a flight of 199 worn stone steps. More pragmatically, Whitby's primary industry is tourism and so there is plenty of accommodation. Naturally, Whitby Gothic Weekend is held at Hallowe'en time in late October (and also in late April). This means that Goths do not compete with holidaying families for B&B rooms and the owners of B&Bs have at least six days of shoulder season a year where they can be sure of full occupancy; one must book several months in advance to secure a room in Whitby

ith a View



The author and his wife

during the Goth Weekend.

As well as the music festival, Whitby Goth Weekend also offers the Bizarre Bazaar, a market where numerous vendors sell Gothic clothing from pop-up stalls. This market is so popular with both traders and attendees that on our visit it spanned three venues in Whitby, all of which were packed by mid morning. The charity shops of Whitby get in on the act too: a fellow attendee told me that they hold back

their Gothic items until the Weekend and other branches of the chain charity shops even send their spookier items up to Whitby to be sold to willing buyers. Whitby now has a few permanent shops selling Gothic items; they took me right back to the alternative shops I frequented in Nottingham in the late 1980s.

However, during daylight hours at least, people-watching and promenading are perhaps the dominant activities. Whitby is perfect for



this and many of the outfits are a sight to behold. We spent many happy hours simply strolling through the lanes, along the seafront and climbing the steps to the abbey. The Goth subculture started over 30 years ago and so many of its original adherents have settled down and raised children. We were pleased to see whole families dressed up in their sinister finery. I even noticed a few Gothed-up mobility scooters.

This opportunity to see remarkable outfits is not lost on photographers. Whole busloads of shutterbugs turn up in Whitby to photograph the Goths and it can seem that the former outnumber the latter. This is a source of controversy because in such large numbers they can become something of a nuisance and not all of them display as much decorum as they should with their subjects. In 2012 the Whitby Gothic Weekend organisers were driven to issue a photographers' code of conduct.

The photographers are not the only spectators. I learned in the course of the weekend that many of the attendees had very little in the way of Gothic credentials. (Full disclosure: this includes my wife, who prefers

Bananarama to Bauhaus.) This was brought home to me when a fellow-guest at my B&B told me that he and his wife were going out that morning "dressed as Goths". Still, even without buying into the subculture, such costume attendees are to be commended for their sartorial efforts, they add to the atmosphere and they help sustain both the event and the residents of Whitby.

I didn't notice anything in the way of Chap in Whitby; I suspect that this relatively subtle aesthetic would have been eclipsed by the outfits on show. However, Steampunk and Victoriana were very much in evidence. Besides, Chap subculture has its own festival in the form of the Chap Olympics. *Vive la difference.*

"Goth" means different things to different people, such this *Bride of Frankenstein* costume (left) and these more brutal outfits (below)





(Above) Suitable transport for a Goth; (below) are this all-white couple deliberately setting out to be un-Goth?



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.



Maximillion Conrad

“Flexibility and twirling”

Name or preferred name?

Maximillion Conrad

Why that nickname or nom de plume?

A combination of factors. To honour my grandmother I selected Maximillion, the name she wanted me to have. I wanted to retain the same initials (MC) as my given name, so I selected Conrad, the name of a prominent old family in the Kalispell, Montana, community.

Where do you hail from?

I was born in San Marino (the city in California, not the country). I call the tiny town of Polson, Montana, my US home, and here in Blighty it's lovely/leafy Walton-on-Thames, Surrey.

Favourite Cocktail?

My favourite cocktail? That's like asking me to choose my favourite child, or favourite hat. Impossible! They are all deeply dear to me.

Most Chappist skill?

Speaking of cocktails... I like to pride myself on being able to come up with a cocktail for most occasions. At mammon I am often approached by my fellow wage-slaves seeking solutions to business or personal problems. Invariably the best answer is cocktail-based. Need help with the five-year plan? That would be a Manhattan, but use Orange Angostura Bitters to offer a hint of hope to a basically futile exercise. Can't shake a nasty head cold? A Hot Toddy with a spoonful of honey and two whole cloves will clear that right up and will open your mind to alternative life-styles. It's true.

Most Chappist possession

If you were to ask my family they would probably say I have too many. The one I think stands out is my Swaine Adeney Brigg horse-hair fly whisk. An item of perfect utility and superfluity.

Personal Motto?

Hum... I've personally never really seen the need. I think a personal motto ties oneself down too much. Flexibility, and twirling (forever twirling!) allows you to keep an open mind and honest

perspective. Hold on, did I just come up with one?

Favourite Quotes?

When I was younger it was a rather pompous statement about honesty and truth and blah blah blah... Now I think it's, "Would Sir prefer that shaken or stirred?" The answer is almost invariably, "Shaken, thank you."

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

While at university in Montana I hopped a train with some friends to see where it was going. We ended up in Reno, Nevada. We broke up a fight in the street where two gentlemen and a lady were beating a person over a business dispute. Turns out the gentleman at the receiving end of the dispute ran a brothel, and my friends and I "managed" it for a few days while he was treated in the hospital.

How long have you been involved with the NSC?

My goodness. Has it been that long? My NSC card says I joined 30-06-2007 as club member #92.

How did you hear about the Club to begin with?

Serendipity! I was employed at the time at the decaying grand old magazine *Reader's Digest*, where Mr Hartley was similarly engaged. I happened to mention to him another twee little magazine I had recently discovered called *The Chap*. That opened the door to the NSC for me.

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

While not entirely chappish behaviour, I do highly recommend taking long walks through the beautiful British countryside. If done at the proper pace, and with a lovely country pub lunch as a mid-walk respite, there is nothing so soothing for the soul.

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

I would choose Cotton Mather, who I believe has been greatly misunderstood by history. He's



A once-in-a-lifetime chance to shake the hand of Mr B the Gentleman Rhymers

primarily remembered now for his involvement in the Salem witch trials, but he was also quite a good poet, scientist and educator. Next I would love to invite Richard Feynman, the physicist, and pretty good bongo player, as I think he'd be outstanding fun at parlour games and most likely a deft hand at mixing Martinis. Finally, it would be Cleopatra, queen of Egypt, possessor of outstanding wit and beauty.

Favourite Member of the Glorious Committee?

How could it be anyone other than Artemis Scarheart. The other two chaps, what's-his-name, and who's-it, they can't hold a candle to Artemis. When I recall his life-affirming laughter, and soulful blue eyes that make you feel like the only person in the universe... sigh.

Have you done a Turn yet? If so what was it on, if not what are you planning to do?

I have had a turn, just—this February I shared the History of Profanity. I must confess I don't know why it took me so long to come up with a topic, bitch.

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.

The Cocktail Cabinet

Wherein Members blog about grog

Four cocktails and two spirits under the sea

By David Bridgman-Smith

I am very excited about the theme of this year's NSC Summer Party, organised by our glorious committee—*20,000 Cocktails Under The Sea*. Consequently this month's article is on "under the sea" cocktails.

First off, here are some drinks made with smoked salmon vodka, which is commercially available from some distilleries, such as Alaska Distillers. However, this is rather hard to come by in the UK and so, in the spirit of innovation, I decided to make my own.

Smoked Salmon Vodka

1 slice of the best Scottish smoked salmon
500ml vodka
Coffee filter

Thinly slice the salmon into strips. Add to a bottle or kilner jar and top up with vodka. Leave to infuse for 3–4 days then fine-strain the liquid through the coffee filter.

Neat, room temperature:

Nose: Quelle surprise! Smoked salmon: the oaky, wooded, smoked notes, as well as a hint of fishy brine.

Taste: The vodka really captures the flavour of smoked salmon, providing a touch of oily saltiness as well as a more gentle and refined smoked element. This has a clean flavour that does exactly what it

was designed to do.

Neat, from the freezer

This has a greater viscosity and added oiliness to the mouthfeel, reminiscent of the fish itself. Very good intensity of flavour, with a lingering finish of fresh smoked salmon, with a hint of wood smoke and salt. The best way to drink this vodka.

Martini

This is a lovely, simple way to enjoy the delightful smokiness of the vodka, somewhat reminiscent of the Station Master cocktail (a gin Martini made with Lagavulin 16 malt whisky instead of vermouth). Dry vermouth works well with fish in cooking and it works well with the flavours of the spirit here.

Bloody Mary

Absolutely superb—this is a really tasty drink, even for those who don't normally enjoy a Bloody Mary. The vodka adds a lot of additional flavours: a little saltiness and a fair bit of smoke, reminiscent of smoked cheese or fish. Full of flavour, this would be perfect as an accompaniment to a brunch of Eggs Royale.

In conclusion, the vodka captures the refined, smoky flavour of smoked salmon, as well as some of the salty elements, without being unpleasantly "fishy". I think a great way to serve it would be in a small, chilled glass, perfect for sipping alongside a starter at dinner.

Da Mhile Seaweed Gin

Another appropriately

A Bloody Mary made with smoked salmon vodka





Da Mhile's seaweed-infused gin, served from an oyster shell

nautical spirit is Da Mhile's Seaweed Gin, which is made by the Welsh distillery based near Cardigan Bay. Da Mhile take their original gin and then add a post-distillation infusion of Cornish Seaweed. The gin was designed

specifically to complement seafood and one serving suggestion is to sip it from an empty oyster shell.

Nose: Complex and intriguing, with floral hints of rose, as well as citrus, coriander, some dry juniper and pine notes, and salty leafy notes.

Taste: A very strong flavour, with the same notes that are found on the nose. This is a mostly smooth spirit, with just a touch of warmth at the end. The bold flavours of the gin should make it a great candidate for mixed drinks. There are some pleasant spice elements on the finish.

Nautilus Cocktail by Trader Vic

- 40ml tequila
- 40ml cranberry juice
- 20ml fresh lime juice
- 10ml sugar syrup

Shake with ice. Not especially sea-faring, but this drink does share its name with the famous submarine of Captain Nemo in *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. The drink itself is rather like a cross between a Cosmopolitan and a Margarita, but without orange liqueur. As I'm sure you can imagine, the drink is rather tart,

but not unbalanced. There is fresh zing from the cranberry and the lime juice, with a subtle, smoky saltiness from the agave in the tequila.

Gone Fishin'

- 50ml Bombay Sapphire East gin
- 10ml blue curaçao
- 150ml tonic water or soda water

Build in a glass with ice and garnish with lemon wheels and gummy fish sweets.

This is a Gin & Tonic made with Bombay Sapphire East, which is an extra citrusy and spicy version of the gin thanks to the addition of lemongrass and black peppercorn to the botanical mix. The blue curacao adds a touch of sweetness, which is nicely balanced out by the lemon in the garnish. For this cocktail, you can use either tonic water or, if you prefer a slightly cleaner, fresher flavour, soda/sparkling water. The ice in the glass makes the gummy fish extra chewy so watch those fillings!

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



A Gone Fishin' cocktail



CLUB NOTES

Club Tie Corner

ACTUALLY NO TIES at all this month, but we do have this NSC camping chair (below), courtesy of the eagle-eyed Lord Finsbury Windermere Compton-Bassett. I'm a broad-minded fellow and willing to consider all manner of branded merch, but what irks me is that the object in question appears to be for sale for £3!



James Gradisher

New Members

CONGRATULATIONS TO Lord Peckham who signed up at the last meeting in a fit of gin-induced bonhomie, to James Gradisher, a self-confessed “music anorak” from West Sussex, and to Lord Simon Hall of Southwell, Nottinghamshire, all of whom have become Members of our august brotherhood in the last month.



Simon Hall, (holding the hat) sends us this holiday snap



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 3rd June,

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 10th June featuring the Man Overboard with Enrico Tomasso on trumpet.

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 clarinettist Ewan Bleach with various guests.

Hush Hush Hoopla presents

Eating for Victory

Friday 5th and Sunday 7th June

8pm

The Tea House Theatre, 139 Vauxhall Walk,



London SE11 5HL

Admission: £20 in advance from Brown Paper Tickets

An interactive dining/performance event: it's 1940. Radio London and the Ministry of Food are recording their popular radio programme The Kitchen Front at the Tea House Theatre. London residents lucky enough to secure a ticket will enjoy cocktails, canapés, performances from London's variety stars and swing dancing through the blackout. With your ration card, you are invited to try a selection of hors d'oeuvres—new and innovative recipes created using wartime rations. (Full menu here.) You'll participate in the making of Eating for Victory while your radio hosts and Ministry officials are wrapped up in the dramas of the Blitz, both on air and off. Come in your wartime finest and be ready to take part! In the spirit of community and generosity that kept Britain going through the war, Hush Hush Hoopla is collecting provisions for the Norwood and Brixton Food



Cheryl Knight as Joyce Grenfell in *Turn Back the Clock*

COUNT INDIGO AND CLAYTON HARTLEY PRESENT

MRS PEEL'S

LIVE THE HIGH LIFE

Saturday 13th June

8PM-2AM

The Swinging Sixties party of your dreams

MP GUEST APPEARANCE BY
1960S SINGER AND COMPOSER
BARBARA MOORE

MP COMPERE AND LOUNGE
LEGEND COUNT INDIGO

MP DJ MARTIN GREEN
CREATING A MOVIE
SOUNDTRACK AMBIENCE

MP LIVE ART HAPPENING BY
PAINTER GINA SOUTHGATE

MP PSYCHEDELIC LIGHT EFFECTS

MP FREE HAIR STYLING FOR GUESTS

MP COCKTAILS

THE EIGHT CLUB,
1 CHANGE ALLEY, LONDON
EC3V 3ND (BANK TUBE)
DRESS: 1960S

£15 in advance

FROM

www.mrspeels.club

£20 ON THE DOOR
LIMITED TABLE
RESERVATIONS £30

Bank. To receive your ration card, we kindly ask you to bring a few items to donate on the door. Their shopping list can be found here.

The New Sheridan Club Summer Party
20,000 Cocktails Under the Sea

Saturday 6th June

6-11pm

The Water Poet, 9-11 Folgate Street, London E1 6BX

Dress: Salty

Admission: Free for NSC Members, £5 for guests

See page 4.

Turn Back the Clock

8th-14th June

8pm (plus 2pm on Saturday 13th; 3pm only on Sunday 14th)

St James's Theatre, 12 Palace Street, London, SW1E 5JA

Admission: £20-25 from www.stjamestheatre.co.uk

A celebration of Joyce Grenfell, originally in honour

of her centenary year, adapted and performed by Cheryl Knight. This gem of nostalgia from the golden age of revue is suitable for all, and concealed in this comedy revue are some of Grenfell's most delicate and poignant pieces. Delight in the truthful, funny and moving characters. Revel in the evocation of one of the greatest female entertainers of the twentieth century.

NSC Film Night

Orlando (1992)

Wednesday 10th June

7pm–11pm

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

Admission: Free

See page 7.

High Societease

Saturday 13th June

2.30–5pm

Kettner's, 29 Romilly Street, London W1D 5HP

Admission: £39.50 in advance

If you can't wait till the evening for your debauchery to begin, Kettner's, the Soho restaurant that has been hosting swagger and scandal for 150 years, presents an afternoon of burlesque and cabaret. The ticket price includes a glass of Champagne, finger sandwiches, scones, sweets and, presumably, tea. The entertainment features Ruby Deshabillé, hooping and riotous acrobatics from the potty-mouthed Abi Collins, feats of juggling and balancing from Mat Ricardo and your host Joe Morose.

Mrs Peel's

Saturday 13th June

8pm–2am

The Eight Club, 1 Change Alley, London EC3V
3ND (Bank tube)

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

Dress: 1960s

The Swinging Sixties party of your dreams in a penthouse lounge club. Inspired by Emma Peel, the iconic character from *The Avengers*, played by Diana Rigg, this event features live music, freakbeat and loungecore DJing, compère and lounge legend Count Indigo, go-go dancing, a live art happening from painter Gina Southgate, cocktails, hair styling services,

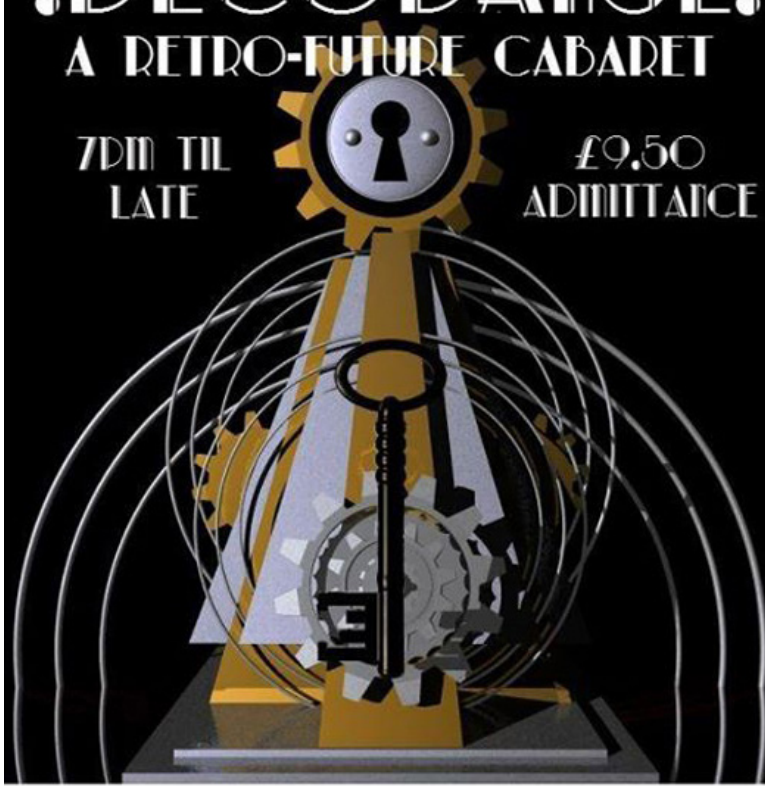
.13TH JUNE 2015.

DECODANSE:

A RETRO-FUTURE CABARET

7PM TIL LATE

£9.50 ADMITTANCE



A Decadent Evening of Cabaret
Electrowing, Goth Steampunk and Tea Duelling
in the Art Deco splendour of HORNSEY TOWN HALL.

psychedelic light effects and more. See www.mrspeels.club.

One Room Paradise

Saturday 13th June

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 shiny 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.

Crouch End DecoDanse

Saturday 13th June

7.30pm–1.30am

Hornsey Town Hall, The Broadway, London
N8 9JJ

Admission: £9.50

Dress: "A mash-up of Steampunk meets the Jazz Age/Victorian Steampunk time traveller/ Gothic flapper/KitKat club cabaret

An ambitious melding of Steampunk, Goth, cabaret, electroswing and Deco era, as part of the not-for-profit Crouch End Festival. The venue is, by all accounts, an Art Deco marvel. The entertainment includes various cabaret and sideshow acts, live music and DJs. See www.decodanse.com.

Black Tie Ballroom Club

Saturday 13th June

Beginners' class from 2.30, main dance from 7.30pm

Colliers Wood Community Centre,
66–72 High Street, Colliers Wood,
London SW19 2BY

Admission: £10 for the dance, £15 for dance and lesson

Dress code: Strictly black tie, evening dress or vintage

A monthly event featuring live sets from the ten-piece strict-tempo Kewdos Dance Orchestra with vocals from Alistair Sutherland singing through the voice trumpet. Period records from the 1920s and 1930s for Charleston, waltz, quickstep, slow foxtrot and tango, 1940s for swing and 1950s for cha cha, rumba and jive. Interactive social activities include a “bus stop” for waltz and quickstep and a “snowball” and “excuse me” dance. Prizes of free glasses of bubbly for the ten most glamorous looking

female dancers to perform a jive or swing dance with a partner. Male and female taxi dancers available.

For absolute beginners there is a “learn to dance in a day” class from 2.30pm to 7pm in the same building. The main dance is from 7.30 pm to 11 pm. Prosecco and ice bucket at just £15 per bottle, wine £10. For further information dial 020 8542 1490.

The Candlelight Club's Summer Ball

Saturday 20th June

6.30pm–1am

A secret central London location

Admission: £33.50 in advance

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

The Candlelight Club is clandestine pop-up 1920s speakeasy. This time we present a grand summer ball in an original 1920s ballroom. There will be dancing to live gypsy jazz music from Le Bistrotet, cabaret from your host Champagne Charlie, exotic burlesque from Suri Sumatra, Charleston hoofing from dance troupe the Gatsby Girls and vintage DJing from Auntie Maureen. Dining options include a three-course set menu (pre-order only) as well as an à la carte menu on the night.





GOLD & SILVER BALL THE METALLIC MASQUERADE CONWAY HALL, LONDON

Russian Summer Ball

Saturday 20th June

6.15pm–1.30am

Lancaster House, Stable Yard, St James's,
London SW1A 1BB

Admission: Dinner and dance £195, after-
dinner only £95

Dress: White tie and decorations or black tie

An annual event, a proper old-school ball with a strict formal dress code. Guests of honour will be Princess Olga Andreevna and Prince Rostislav Rostislavovich of Russia and the Ambassador of the Russian Federation. The evening begins with an Ivan the Terrible Vodka reception, followed by a three-course dinner and silent auction. From 9pm there is a vodka reception for after-dinner guests followed by a Cossack show and dancing to Igor Outkine and his Viennese Fever Orchestra, a sabrage display, then dancing to Russian and gypsy music from the Mazaika Band. Tickets may be purchased here.

A Curious Invitation presents

Gold and Silver Ball: The Metallic Masquerade

Saturday 20th June

8pm–2am

Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, London
WC1R 4RL

Admission: £25 or five for £100 from
acuriousinvitation.com/metallic2015.html

A recreation of the Gold and Silver Ball thrown by Princess Pauline von Metternich in 1902, celebrating the precious metals that represent the sun and the moon, with live music from the Hackney Colliery Band and DJs

playing Viennese waltzes, a cabaret room hosted by Desmond O'Connor and featuring burlesque, sword swallowing, circus feats and operatic arias, an opportunity to do some life drawing plus free swing dance classes before the ball begins.

Brighton's Genuine Vintage Monthly Swing Dance

Saturday 27th June

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 07522 339392/07588 806654."

Lipstick & Curls presents

Hair and Makeup Academy

Sunday 28th June

11am–6pm

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

Admission: £120

Vintage styling team Lipstick & Curls offer this full-day course, covering basic techniques such as pin curling, a range of classic hair styles, such as the victory roll, the poodle and the French pleat, plus a run-through of vintage makeup styles from the 1920s to 1960s. Includes lunch. For more details see at lipstickandcurls.net.

Read Tim Eyre's report on the trip he and his wife made to the Whitby Goth Weekend on page 14



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.



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