



Talking Tobacco

The Earl of Essex leads a cigar walk in St James's

Hats off to the Homburg

Tim Eyre on this iconic headgear

Cash in the attic?

Harrison Goldman on what's hot and what's not, in the world of antiques

A gilded cage

Roy Engoron on the rise and fall of the Hollywood studio system

DESIGN!

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW SHERIDAN CLUB • ISSUE 109 NOVEMBER 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 4th November in the upstairs room at The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB, from 7pm until 11pm. Derek Collett will tell us some tales about Nigel Balchin, a biography of whom he has just published. Best

known as a writer of novels, particularly those set during and just after the war, Balchin studied natural sciences before switching to industrial psychology, being heavily involved in the design and marketing of Black Magic chocolate and allegedly Aero and Kit Kat. During the war he worked for the Ministry of Food and then became military scientific adviser, achieving the rank of brigadier. After the war he worked as a screenwriter in Hollywood. As if this weren't enough, he was a good enough cricketer to play for Wiltshire. *(Please note the slightly earlier start time for the lecture this month.)*



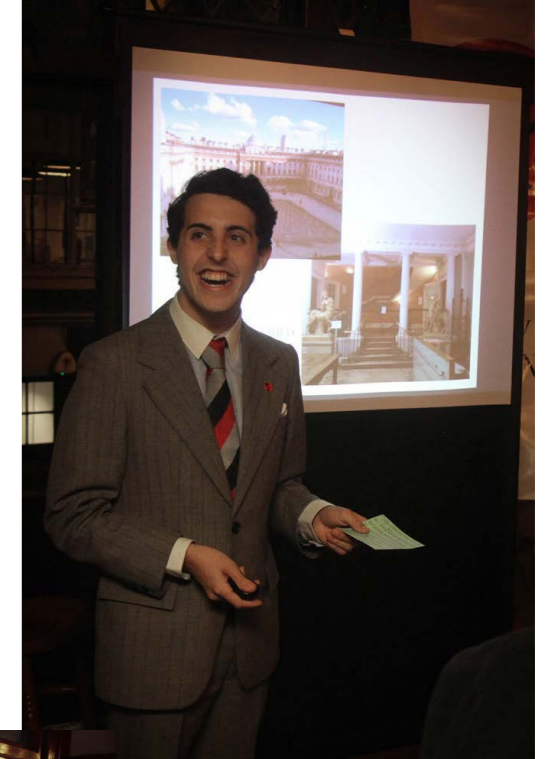
Nigel Balchin

The Last Meeting

It was gratifying to have a bustling good turn-out for the meeting that marked the ninth anniversary of the New Sheridan Club, including seldom-seen covers like David Saxby. Our speaker was Harrison Goldman, who introduced us to his passion for collecting art and antiques. He took us through the

typical house, room by room, advising on items one might look out for, what types of antiques are hot at the moment and which might be not selling so buoyantly in the current market. He told us how he grew up in a household where only the newest was desired and how, through his grandmother, he developed a contrary taste for the old, starting his collection when still a boy. He's only 21 now, but talks impressively confidently about his subject, and offered to evaluate items brought in by members of the audience. Many thanks

to Harrison for his time. An essay version of his talk begins on page 4.



(Clockwise from top left) Mark Gidman does his best to embarrass Giles Culpepper; Lord Hare of Newham; Harrison kicks off; Nick Von Fiction is forced to wear a Punishment Tie; Harrison highlights some gems from the front hall; the throng; Kiwi visitor Dirk Heinsius (left) with the Earl of Essex; in Smoker's Alley William Coles looks villainous; David Saxby makes a point of order; Torquil opens proceedings



CASH IN THE Sheridanite's ATTIC

Harrison Goldman may delight or disappoint you as he assesses the antique value of your house's contents

WE ALL KNOW too well the numerous day-time television programmes that have led to a rebirth of interest in antiques and collectables. These are often overlooked in one's home, and you may just be unaware while

watching a rotund gentleman in tweed jacket and bow-tie valuing a priceless vase (it's always a vase isn't it?) that you too could be sitting on a small fortune...or more likely pile of rubbish.

If one considers what antiques one may have lying around one's estate, then I think it best to do so in a practical order. I always find it useful to think of the art and antiques market in some relation to that of property. There are numerous factors which alter an object's value: condition, age, rarity, quality and originality are just a few but, as with property, location is another key factor. I need not remind fellow Town Members of the NSC of the trials and tribulations of soaring property prices in the Smoke, but it is worth noting that likewise geography too plays a role in the value of antiques and art.

Consider that a George III oak bureau (fig.1) of good quality, of solid wood with sleek lines, can be cheaply—and ridiculously—bought at a provincial auction for less than £75. However, once tarted up, gleaming from the polish you've had your servant spend hours on, placed in a London shop the very same bureau could retail for well over a thousand pounds. (That is not to say he will get that price, however.) "Jammy dealer!" I hear you say. But remember all the costs a dealer would have to incur, shipping, restoration, insurance, rent, tax and so forth.



Fig.1



Fig.2

We all set high prices knowing that we are going to be bartered down, and if you consider the hours involved, dealers are not making the high margins they once were!

Anyway, the art market aside, if I may tour you through our imaginary estate, the hallway is probably the room you first enter (unless you are the stable boy or loathed aunt). Traditionally you can expect to find typical pieces of furniture such as a hall stand and

a long-case clock (fig.2)—yes its "long-case", never "grandfather", which is an American term, seen as bad as pronouncing Magdalene College as its spelt. Both of these items however have been hit hard by the changing tastes in style for two main reasons. Firstly they are large, occupying lots of space and people generally



Fig.4



Fig.5

don't have the high ceilings, let alone staircases to occupy them. Secondly they are brown. It is widely known that "brown furniture" has taken a hard blow in recent years. The Chelsea yummy-mummies prefer shabby chic, run-down tat compared to elegant and opulent antique furniture. Rest assured though it is having a revival. That said, the average hall stand will cost today around £100 in a local auction, unless you've one by Liberty & Co or Heals from the Arts & Crafts period which will be more than ten times that price, so keep an eye open! With long-case clocks, however, the market is tricky; generally London makers command much higher prices, as do more complicated movements of chimes, music and automata. Top examples can make £15,000 plus, yet in the provinces you can expect to pick up a modest



Fig.3

plain example for less than £200.

Moving into the kitchen, I'm always being asked to look at the family china. If I had a pound for every willow pattern I've seen then I'd frankly be wealthier than I am now. Sadly china, once treasured and used only for best occasions, is often worth a fraction of its original cost. Car-boot sales are full of very pretty sets which you can often buy for less than £20, and it's the same at auction. Unless you have something bold, angular and striking such as by a good Art Deco maker (fig.3) such as Shelly or Clarice Cliff, then I advise to just enjoy them for what they are, as tea certainly tastes better out of a teacup and saucer!

In the dining room you may have a

Fig.6



Fig.7

beautifully carved heavy mahogany dining table with spare leaves (planks for extending the table), with a suite of 6/8/12 matching chairs (fig.4), but unless it is really unique then I will have to let you down immediately. Very brown furniture is unpopular as mentioned earlier, yet will be having a comeback soon (at least we antiquarians pray!). Sadly people—especially in London—don't have the room for such tables anymore, and with the demise of dinner parties

more is spent on the new television than a dining suite. Resign, I say! More popular now are 20th-century high-design suites by makers such as Eames, Ercol, G-Plan and Epstein. Clean sleek lines, light colours and easy to clean surfaces all have their attraction to the modern buyer. Whereas a Victorian set of table and six chairs may give you change from £200 at auction, a gleaming Art Deco solid walnut with burr walnut veneer and leather upholstered seats (fig.5) can set you back over £6000 at a London fair.

For your drawing room, often the place for your prized artworks to take possession, sadly its the same story again. Old fashioned countryside scenes, chocolate-box images have lost their favour. From the 1970s these were once attractive to American clients, but now Impressionist and more contemporary abstract art is preferred, to make a bold statement, reflecting the owner's personality and personal conquest, and all that nonsense (the author would like to remind his readers he is a

professionally trained art historian). Beautiful amateur watercolours and oil paintings of our green and pleasant land now fetch small sums between £50 and £150 on average at auction, while anything vaguely resembling a burnt hedge or scribble from a dusty sketchbook can make significantly more—and that's often not even framed!

For your bedroom I won't repeat myself about the sad pitiful demise of brown furniture, but let's consider what is perhaps in our wardrobes. Vintage fashion (thanks to some rambunctious, eccentric and mysterious social groups...) has undergone a huge revival (fig.8). Always check for designer labels before throwing away that tailored three-piece suit or a floral dancing dress. Someone out there will be interested and more sales are made online and at specialist vintage fairs than anywhere else now for period clothing.

Your bathroom is probably not the place you may expect to find many priceless possessions. Well, you are right. If you happen to be lucky enough to have a gleaming copper bath (fig.9) or original Thomas Crapper lavatory system (fig.10) then you could be sitting, or something else rather, on a princely sum of several thousand pounds.

So there you have it; due to word restrictions (and a looming essay), I could only mention a



Fig.8

few items. May I also take this opportunity to thank everyone who attended my talk: it was an honour to share my 21st birthday celebrations with the NSC's ninth anniversary and see so many of you there.

Should you have anything you are unsure of, still searching for that object you have been dreaming of, clearing your Aunt's garage or need a charity auctioneer, do contact me as I'd be delighted to hear from you. You can reach me at harrison.goldman@icloud.com

Fig.10



Fig.9



The New Sheridan Club Christmas party

CURIOUSER & CURIOUSER

**Saturday 28th
November**

7pm–midnight

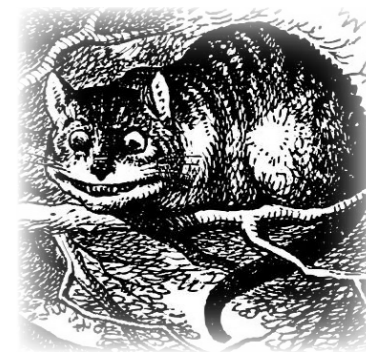
The Tea House Theatre, 139 Vauxhall
Walk, London SE11 5HL (020 7207 4585)

Admission: Free for Members, £5 for
guests

Dress: Mad hatters, dormice, white rabbits,
stoned caterpillars, animated playing cards,
walruses, carpenters, stripey-stockinged
nymphettes and laudanum-crazed
Victorian clergymen

It's 150 years since the publication of
Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, the enduring
fantasy created by Lewis Carroll (in real
life the Anglican deacon and Cambridge
maths dons Charles Dodgson) to amuse
some children, including Alice Liddell,
daughter of the Dean of Christ Church
College, who may or may not have been
the model of the character. *Alice* and
its companion *Through the Looking Glass*
concern a bored girl who stumbles into an
otherworld of surreal logic where everyday
items from her life, such as playing cards
and chess pieces, come to life.

Our party will feature silly games,
such as **Umbrella Croquet**, **Shoot the
Hat Off the Hatter** and the **Drink Me**
game, where contestants must identify the
ingredients of a mystery cocktail by taste
alone.



There will be
our **Christmas
bran tub**,
complimentary
snuff and our
famous **Grand
Raffle** (free
entry but only
to Members of the NSC, including
anyone who joins up on the night).
Prizes include an antique pocket
watch, a dormouse in a teapot, a
hookah and smoking cap, an Alice
band, some playing cards, DVDs
of several different screen versions
of the tales and other films inspired
by them, books, including the
works themselves plus biographies
of Carroll, a fake lobster, a bubble
machine, some pink lawn flamingos,
The White Rabbit by Jefferson Airplane
and the best of the Mock Turtles, a
full size croquet set and more...

Appropriately for a mad hatter's
tea party, the venue is the Tea House
Theatre, run by Members Grace and
Harry.



DREAM FACTORIES

What could be more American than Hollywood? Roy Engoron reveals some surprising links between the infamous “studio system” and 19th-century Britain...

IN THE INTEREST of full disclosure, as they say, let me admit to all of you that I am an avowed Anglophile. England has always held a fascination for me even as a small child. Yes, I did play cowboys and Indians, but on your island, you had Robin Hood and the Knights of the Round Table—that was so much more romantic. The very first time I was in London, I was staying at a small hotel in Earl’s Court. I got up at three in the morning just to walk around the streets. As many times as I’ve been to the UK, I still have a very romantic view of it. I have always had an image that all of you put on your tweeds every morning, get on your bicycles and leave your thatched cottages until tea time. My dream would be live in St Mary Meade next to Jane Marple.

Therefore, when I was allowed to give my lecture on *The Rise and Fall of the Hollywood Studio System* on film night and show the film *Hollywood: The Dream Factory* [the October Film Night—Ed], I found it both an honor and a privilege to be part of the “clan”. The question then must be asked why a British audience would be interested in Hollywood at all, let alone the massive studio system.

There are incidents that happened in 19th-century America that laid some of the



Charles Frohman

foundations for the system that produced what we know as Hollywood. What immediately comes to mind is the British actor Charles McCready, famous for his *Macbeth*, which he usually insisted on playing in kilts. He felt threatened by the American actor Edwin Forrest whom he thought was more athletic and dashing in contrast to McCready’s rather staid presence. He made certain that when Forrest came to tour England, absolutely no theatre would be available to him. Forrest returned to the US where the story spread like wild fire. The next time McCready

appeared in New York, the theatre was packed with people, but not to see the play. When the actor appeared on stage, everything imaginable was hurled at him including the theatre seats. This was the infamous Astor Place Riot which was so serious that the militia had to be called out; 30 people lost their lives in the melee. But the incident established a very crucial premise: when one controls the theatre, one controls everything. The major studios, MGM, Fox, Warner Brothers, and Paramount all not only produced the films, but owned the theatres in which they were shown. That is until 1948 when the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that such a system was a monopoly and, therefore, against federal law.



Sarah Bernhardt

he decided to go to Europe and find new talent to breathe life into what had become a tired menu of mediocre theatre. Sadly, he booked passage on the *Lusitania* and was killed along with hundreds of others when the liner was torpedoed by a German U-Boat in 1915 off the coast of Ireland. Since Frohman was the driving force in the enterprise, after his death, it collapsed.

By 1915, studios were already being formed. United Artists was created by a partnership with Charlie Chaplin, Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks and D.W. Griffith. Carl Laemmle, in 1912, formed Universal Pictures; Jesse Lasky joined Adolph Zukor, also in 1912, to form Paramount Pictures. The much-despised Harry Cohn formed Columbia in 1918, Warner Brothers was also formed in the same year. In 1924, the giant among giants was founded when Marcus Lowe joined Metro Pictures along with the Goldwyn Pictures Corp plus L.B. Mayer Pictures to form Metro Goldwyn Mayer Pictures, also known as MGM or Metro. In 1932, the last big studio to come into being was a company formed by joining 20th Century and Fox Pictures to form 20th Century Fox under the leadership of

It was American Charles Frohman and his five partners who took the McCready lesson full scale and created the Syndicate in 1896. Together, they owned or managed almost every theatre in the US, quite literally, from coast to coast. They had an exclusive contract with their participants which gave them pretty much a monopoly on all aspects of theatre, including the writing, in the entire country.

But some people, such as G.B. Shaw and Mrs Patrick Campbell, refused to go along with such a plan since it pretty much destroyed art in the theatre. The Schubert brothers, in an attempt to gain inroads to the American theatrical market, went to Europe to find talent. J.J. Schubert persuaded Sarah Bernhardt to perform in America which she did five times with great success. Frohman realized the Syndicate could not survive with such competition so



Louis B. Mayer



The historic creation of United Artists



Bette Davis

Darryl F. Zanuck. His son Richard still runs the company. So studios became entrenched in the American entertainment industry and the American economy. They survived using lessons learned from McCready and Frohman, and would last almost half a century.

As the studio system took root, with all of its impressively macho, suave leading men such as Clark Gable, John Wayne, Cary Grant, Randolph Scott, and William Powell, it was three women who began to chip away at the foundation. First was Bette Davis. She was diminutive in size, but certainly not in personality. She challenged the studio heads at Warner's to give her more meaty roles. Penalized for perceived infringements of her contract with a suspension, she took the studio to court for adding the time of that suspension to the end of her seven-year contract. She lost the case, but established herself as a star who could and would stand up for herself for the rest of her career.

Katherine Hepburn proved that not only could she do without Hollywood, but that Hollywood could not do without her. When she was labeled box office poison in 1938, she went back to Broadway and ultimately starred in Philip Barry's *Philadelphia Story*. Her boyfriend at the time, Howard Hughes, bought the film rights for the play and gave them to her as a birthday present. Hepburn proved not only that she could act, but that she was also a rather shrewd businesswoman—even if she did wear trousers in her off hours. She insisted that if Metro wanted to do the film, they would have to do it with her playing the leading role, Tracy Lord. Not many ever argued or crossed Hepburn again and her career lasted for decades.

Olivia deHavilland was a star in 1943 when she filed a lawsuit against Warner Brothers. She was tired of playing the wimpy ingénue and wanted more adult roles. She had appeared with Errol Flynn in eight films including *They Died with Their Boots On*, *Captain Blood*, and *The Adventures of Robin Hood*. She achieved stardom at the age of 23 portraying Melanie Hamilton Wilkes in *Gone with the Wind*. DeHavilland was an outspoken Roosevelt Democrat while the studio heads were rabid Republicans. To punish her refusal to play the young girl and her vocal forays into the world of politics, she



Katharine Hepburn



Olivia de Havilland

was suspended. As was the practice, the time of her suspension was added to the end of her contract. She went to court to plead her case. This time the California Supreme Court agreed with her, telling the studio that what they were doing was tantamount to indentured servitude. All the studios were affected, and never again would they be able to control their actors as they had in the past.

The major studios were greatly threatened by the growing popularity in the years after the Second World War of the television set. At the end of the war, it was estimated that there were 15,000 TV sets in the US—by 1955, there were over 50 million. Jack Warner was so anti-television that he banned the use of TV sets even as props or furniture on any set of any film being shot at the studio. Very soon, a schism formed pitting the people of the cinema against the people who worked in television. While the studios kept insisting that TV was a passing fad, to hedge their bets they introduced innovations that were impossible to get on the home screen—Cinemascope, VistaVision, stereophonic sound, 3D, and even one silly invention called Smell-O-Vision.

People who worked in the TV industry, the actors, writers, technicians, etc., were looked down upon while the film folk were lauded—by themselves mostly; they were truly legends in their own minds. After all, film was *art* while TV was commercial. It took two men of monumental stature to bridge the gap. First was Orson Welles who, in the early 1970s, began doing commercials for Paul Masson Wineries in the Santa Cruz mountains of California: “We will serve no wine before its time” was the slogan he made famous with that unmistakable voice of his. The other legend was, arguably, the greatest actor of the 20th century in the English-speaking world—Laurence Olivier. He did commercials for the Polaroid Land camera. If the man who wrote, directed and starred in *Citizen Kane*, and the English peer who portrayed

Heathcliff, Richard III, Henry V, Hamlet, and Archie Rice could do commercials for television perhaps the new upstart medium wasn't as bad as the Hollywood moguls supposed. It is ironic that, to this day, it is the massive amount of television production that has saved the brick and mortar studios. In the Golden Years of Hollywood, the major and minor studios put out about 800 feature films a year, not counting short subjects, cartoons, news reels, etc. Today, barely 50 get produced, and most are not shot at Hollywood studios.

Winston Churchill said that the English and the Americans were “two peoples separated by a common language”. As I return to the US, I realise that lorries and lifts must give way to trucks and elevators. I shall once again wear sweaters and not jumpers. When all the bills come in for this trip, I will write checks and not cheques. However, the things that separate the two nations are in the minority compared to those things which keep our relationship strong. If the great gods of travel decide in their wisdom to bring me back to your shores, almost a certainty in my mind, I shall look forward to enjoying all that the United Kingdom has to offer—the busy West End, the different neighbourhoods of London, the quiet rolling hills and lovely villages, the moors, the tea (how do you get it that hot?). I love my country; I truly do, but it doesn't have Robin Hood and the Knights of the Round Table. On my next trip, I hope to meet and get acquainted with more of you. If not, I'll see you at the movies.



Roy at our Film Night

Talking Tobacco

The Earl of Essex takes us through the key points of interest on the recent Cigar Walk of St James's that he put on for the Club

1. The statue of Roosevelt and Churchill, New Bond Street

It is as good a place as any to begin a cigar tour, in the heart of Mayfair and close to St James's and the gentlemen's clubs that are so associated with the smoking of postprandial cigars. The bronze statue of Sir Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt, known as *Allies*, was unveiled by Princess Margaret on 2nd May 1995 to commemorate 50 years of peace and, like it or loathe it, it is now a popular tourist attraction.

Winston Churchill is probably the most famous cigar smoker in the world and almost certainly the most prolific. He smoked approximately ten cigars a day, or 250,000 during his lifetime, and he died aged 90.

Roosevelt was a heavy cigarette smoker, at least two packs a day, and he died aged 63 after suffering chronic respiratory problems and cardiovascular disease. Make of that what you will.

Now, cigars are made all over the world and the vast majority are machine-made and relatively low cost, but our tour especially focuses on Cuban cigars, or Havanas, which are handmade and produced solely on the island of Cuba.

Christopher Columbus first reached Cuba in October 1492, and noted in his log: "Indians who carried a little lighted brand made from a plant, whose aroma it was their custom to inhale." Columbus observed that these

aboriginal Cubans called the plant "cohiba", a name that has survived to this day and is now the brand name of the most expensive Cuban cigars.

Cuba became a Spanish colony ruled by a governor in Havana. Spanish historians claim that Hernando Cortez, a fellow explorer, was the first man to bring tobacco to Europe, in 1518. The Spanish were the prime architects of the cigar industry as we know it today. In April 1717 the Spanish King Felipe V arranged the Royal Monopoly of Cuban Tobacco. This act ruined many local planters and was only countermanded by royal decree in 1817, which allowed free trade between Cuba and the known world, but always through Spanish ports.

The cigar factories of Seville experienced rapid growth in the early 1800s and King Ferdinand VII granted the Cubans the right to produce and sell tobacco in their homeland. The island soon swarmed with producers with their own brands, although still made exclusively for the Spanish crown.

Britain cultivated tobacco in its colonies in North America, but it was almost exclusively produced for pipe smoking. Imported cigars were, as they are today, treated as a luxury product and heavily taxed. But English army officers who were veterans of the 1814 campaign against Napoleonic forces in Spain were gifted Spanish cigars and these became a popular and refined smoke. From 1823, when only 15,000 cigars were imported into Britain, the figure grew exponentially and by 1840 amounted to 13 million.

The cigar became popular among the



bourgeoisie and the postprandial cigar became a tradition. Smoking rooms, known as "cigar divans", appeared in London. They featured musicians and poets and were fashionable to be seen in. Simpson's in the Strand first opened in 1828 as a chess club and coffee house, known as "The Grand Cigar Divan".

Rail companies introduced smoking cars and silk smoking jackets, the forerunner of the modern dinner jacket, came into vogue, to help gentlemen protect their daywear from the vagaries of smoke and burning ash.

2. Dunhill, Davies Street

Alfred Dunhill opened a small tobacconist's shop on Duke Street in 1907, offering tobacco blends tailored for the individual customer. The business expanded rapidly and in 1912 Dunhill



Giles Culpepper ponders his selection in the humidor at Davidoff



We were incredibly lucky that Edward Sahakian himself was in the shop, and he happily showed us the humidor and answered our questions

Honduras after a trade dispute with the Cubans who also produced a similar cigar for Davidoff. Eventually Dunhill gave up making cigars altogether, focusing on its men's clothing and accessories, and sold the rights to British American Tobacco, who sell the cigars under the Dunhill name.

Alfred Dunhill opened its new flagship store at Bourdon House in August 2008, which was formerly the town house of the Duke of Westminster. It houses an optimum-temperature regulated humidor, stocking only Cuban cigars, and a limited number of private cigars "keeps" for their customers.

3. Sautter Cigars, Mount Street

The late Desmond Sautter opened his cigar store at 106 Mount Street in February 1979, selling cigars and cigar accessories, specialising in Cuban cigars, particularly vintage ones. He designed a walk-in humidor and, following the cigar boom of the late 1980s and the launch of American magazine *Cigar Aficionado*, in which Sautter was often mentioned, the store became a favourite with Americans seeking the finest Havana cigars—unavailable at home due to the USA's trade embargo against Cuba after the revolution. Winston Churchill lived above the shop during his "Wilderness Years" from 1900 to 1905, when the building was a haberdasher's.

introduced his famous white spot trademark to his pipes. The firm received its first Royal Warrant as tobacconist to Edward, Prince of Wales, and would later count his brother, King George VI, as a customer.

Dunhill had numerous marketing and distribution arrangements with Cuban cigar manufacturers such as Romeo y Julieta and Montecristo. The firm even had its own line of cigars produced from 1982 to 1991, which are now much sought after at Cuban auctions. Eventually Dunhill sought new producers for their cigars in the Dominican Republic and

4. Davidoff, St James's Street

Davidoff of London was opened in May 1980 by Edward Sahakian, an Iranian émigré who had fled the revolution in his homeland in 1979 after his breweries had been burned down by the mob. It is undoubtedly the poshest cigar store in London. Davidoff, a family company expanded by Russian Zino Davidoff in 1930, originally produced Cuban cigars similar to Dunhill in the 1970s, but moved production to the Dominican Republic to ensure better control of production. The London store has a walk-in humidor well-stocked with Cuban cigars, and also sells other gentleman's gifts such as walking canes and umbrellas.

5. J.J. Fox, St James's Street

This shop was established as Robert Lewis in St James's in the 1840s, although the original business can trace its roots back to a store in Long Acre in 1787. In 1992 the enterprise was acquired by James J. Fox, a tobacconist firm established in Dublin in 1881. Winston Churchill bought his first cigars from Robert Lewis in 1900, and his last cigars, weeks before his death, in 1965.

Churchill first visited Cuba in 1895 as an observer with the Spanish army in the War of Independence. There he got his taste for Cuban cigars. One of his favourite brands was Romeo y Julieta, which named his favourite cigar size a "Churchill". He even smoked cigars on a high-altitude plane using a customised oxygen mask. He maintained accounts at many cigar merchants, particularly Robert Lewis



In the basement museum at J.J. Fox, Priya tries out Churchill's chair for comfort

and Alfred Dunhill, not all of them fully paid-up. Luckily he received many thousands of cigars as gifts during the war, allowing him to smoke just the first third, the best part of the cigar, before discarding them.

Cuban cigar brands

Many of the brands registered in 1810 remained in production until the nationalisation of the industry after the revolution in 1960. The new state cigar company Cubatabaco only kept 25 brands in production from 1962. The most popular Cuban brand is Montecristo, representing 23% of all cigars sold. By comparison

Romeo y Julieta take 15%, Partagas 12% and Cohiba 11%. The bestselling individual cigar is the Montecristo No.4, a petit corona.

Some cigar terminology

Lector Someone whose job it is to read aloud, usually from the newspaper, to the workers rolling cigars.

Vitola The size or shape of a cigar

Tercedor A worker who rolls cigars

Chaveta A knife with a semicircular blade used by the tercedor to cut tobacco

EMS Stands for English Market Selection, premium cigars specifically chosen for the UK market for over 100 years



At the end of our tour we relax in the smoking room upstairs at J.J. Fox

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.



Angus Elbow-ffish

"The Cross stands fast as the world spins"

Name or preferred name?

Fr Michael Mowbray Silver or Angus Elbow-ffish

Why that nickname or nom de plume?

It popped into my head during a particularly ferocious bout of man-flu. The two little fs are critical.

Where do you hail from?

Norf Lundun, mate (originally); but, long since, from Letchworth—once home to the inimitable Liturgical Historian Fr Adrian Fortesque and the dubious Philosopher Simon Critchley.

Favourite Cocktail?

The one that someone has just bought for me—or has Oscar said that already?

Most Chappist skill?

Ability to recite the liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer, and sing lustily.

Most Chappist possession

My Victorian spectacles, and my collection of Baroque vestments.

Personal Motto?

Stat crux dum volvitur orbis [The Cross stands fast as the



world spins—the motto of the Carthusians]

Favourite Quotes?

"Progress was alright, it just went on too long." — James Thurber

"Inside every 'outsider' is an insider, trying to get out." —My humble self

"Better a live dog than a dead lion." —Ecclesiastes 9:4)

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

My self-harm of choice is an implacable determination not to be (in the mundane sense) on the winning side. I also suffer from that most middle-class of maladies—dyslexia. Additionally I have a phobia of suburban tidiness; what could be more depressing than a neatly mown lawn when one could have a glorious meadow replete with long grasses and wild flowers?

How long have you been involved with the NSC?

Since the beginning—when it was new, only it wasn't! Now it is old, but is called New.

How did you hear about the Club to begin with?

My long-time friend Fiona introduced me to *The Chap* which, back then, ran the Sheridan Club.

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

Let me have two! Take Pastis (not absinthe) before every meal. Attend Vespers at the London Oratory on Sundays.

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

John Betjeman (obviously); Lizzie Siddal (obviously—that wondrous hair!!!—provided she left her laudanum at home); Joan of Arc might set it off nicely? Or, if she was still smoldering, W.S. Gilbert.

Favourite Member of the Glorious Committee?

Artemis Scarheart.

Have you done a Turn yet? If so what was it on,



With altar server Mark Patrick at St Alban's Meadow Way, Letchworth

if not what are you planning to do?

Yes, once I did something on turmoil in C.19 Anglicanism and the emergence of its self-consciously Traditional aspect. I brought some vestments and a satirical 'Spy' caricature as visual aids. It was livelier than it sounds.

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.



With portrait by Anastasia Russa

Hats Off to the Homburg

Tim Eyre on a sadly neglected item of headwear

READERS OF THIS magazine will doubtless be familiar with a variety of hats. The top hat is of course well known, as is the bowler. The fedora and trilby are natural staples of the chap wardrobe. However, there is another type of hat that is less frequently seen these days, even at vintage events, yet was popular in the mid-twentieth century: the Homburg.

The Homburg is a stiff felt hat with a narrow brim. Whereas fedoras and similar hats have a “snap brim” (which means that the brim can be flipped downwards at the front), the brim of a Homburg is fixed and is curved upwards. The crown is fairly high and has a crease along its length. A hat band with a flat bow decorates the base of the crown. It is typically black or grey in colour. The robust construction of the Homburg makes it well-suited for doffing.



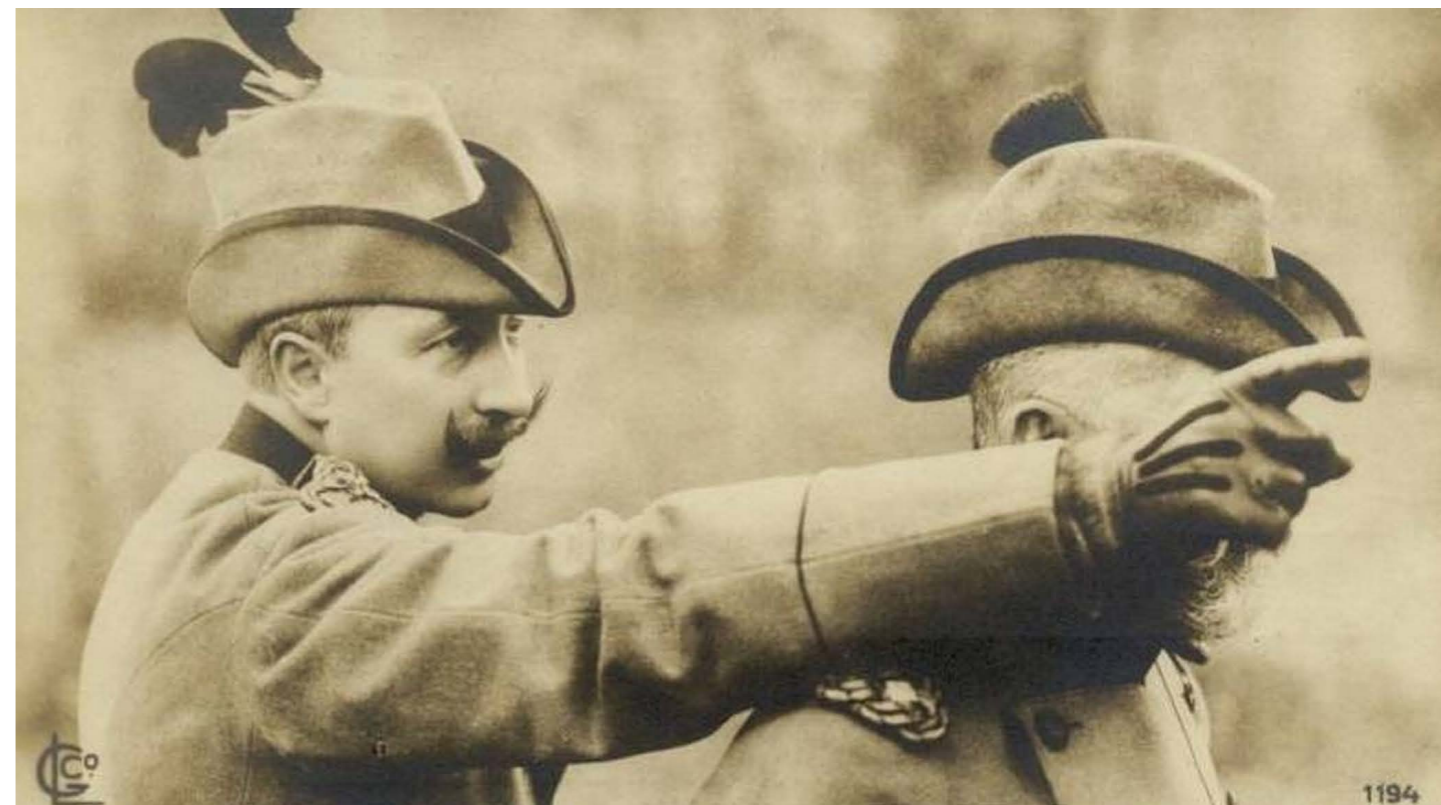
The author relaxing at home in his own Homburg

Origins

The Homburg hat as we know it today originated in the German spa town of Bad Homburg, which lies to the north of Frankfurt. In 1834 a spa well was discovered in the town and by 1842 a pair of brothers called François

and Louis Blanc had opened a casino and spa building. In 1860 a railway line opened to connect the town to Frankfurt and in 1888 Kaiser Wilhelm II declared the castle at Bad Homburg to be an official Imperial summer residence. Bad Homburg became an internationally famous spa town and attracted the rich and famous of Europe, including the Russian nobility and that towering figure of sartorial excellence, Edward VII.

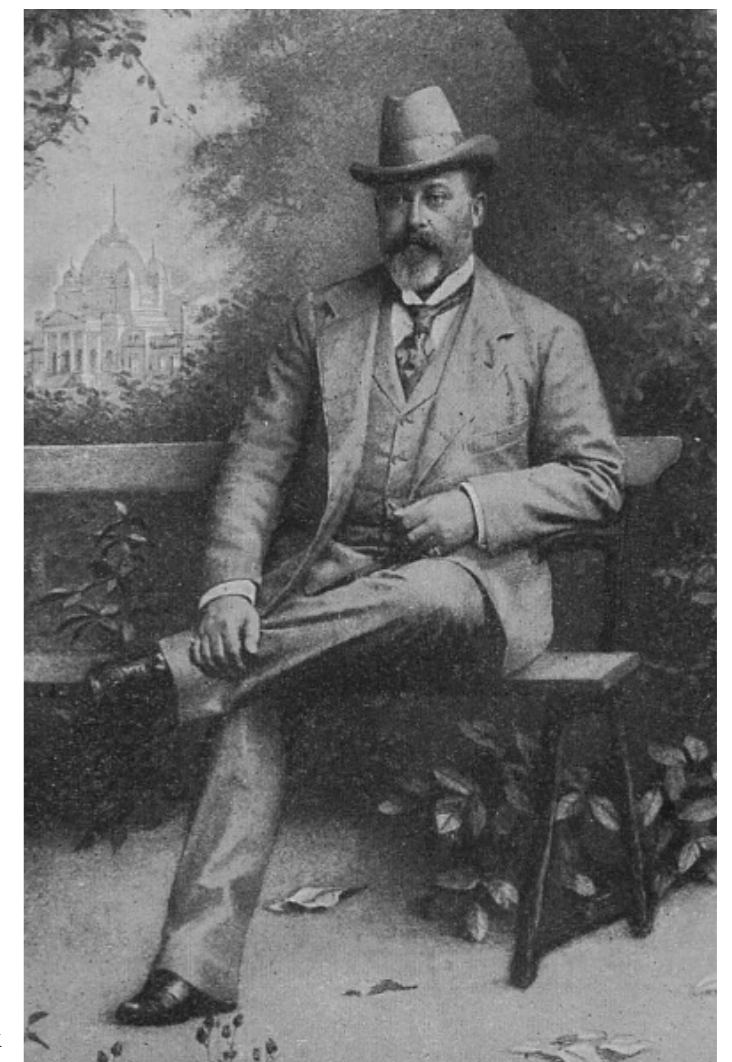
Edward made annual visits to Bad Homburg to take the waters and to attempt to lose some weight through fasting and exercise. In August 1882 he visited the

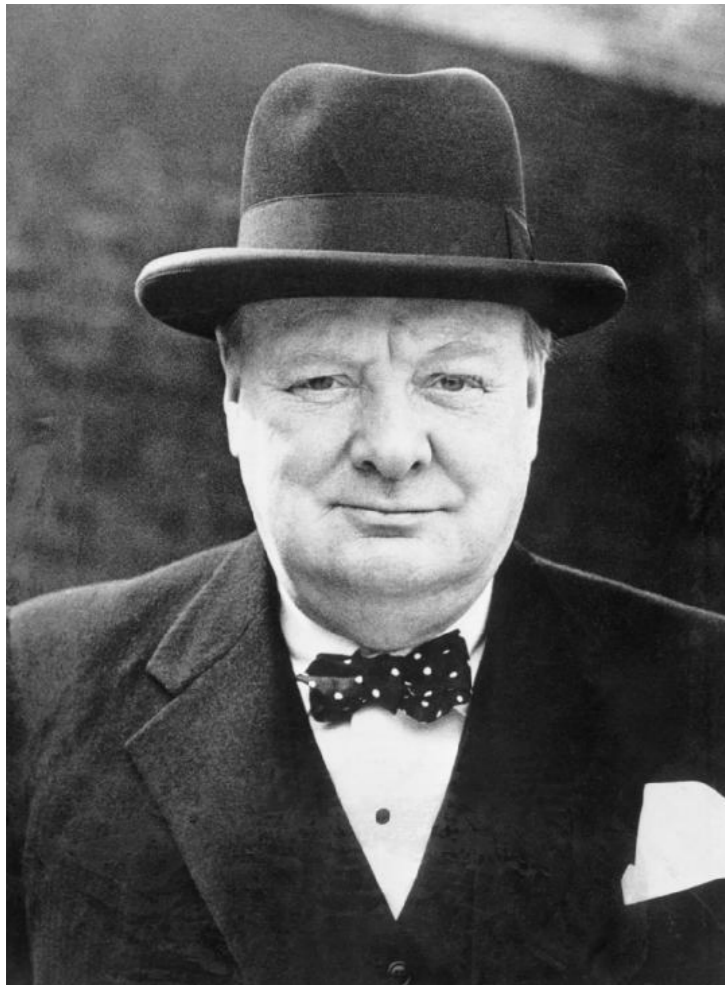


factory of the upscale hatters Möckel. Here he ordered a hat based on the German hunting hat of the sort worn by the Kaiser. The original hunting hat was green with a brim that turned sharply upwards. To ensure that the hat was better suited for city wear, Edward VII ordered a version in grey with more subdued lines. On his return to England, Edward’s leadership in the matter of men’s style meant that the hat was widely admired and copied by others. It evolved in shape, with the crown becoming lower and the brim less curled until it settled on the shape we know today. The most popular colour for the Homburg became black or dark grey.

Italy has a completely different story for the origin of the Homburg. In Italy the hat is known as a “Lobbia” after a politician called Christian Lobbia (1826–76). In 1869 Lobbia was subjected to a politically-motivated assault in which he was coshed on the head with a stick. This attack led to a surge of public indignation against corruption. Proponents of the Lobbia theory of the origin of the Homburg hat claim that Lobbia was wearing a bowler hat at the time of the attack and that the blow to his head created a dent in its crown. The theory goes that an opportunistic hatter took

(Above) The Kaiser’s hunting hat and (below) Edward VII’s copy, showing a more tapered crown than today’s Homburg





The evolved Homburg with a lower, less tapered crown, seen in a vintage advert (above) and on the heads of Winston Churchill (left above) and Anthony Eden (left below), for whom it was a trademark

advantage of the publicity to market a new type of hat. However, there is little evidence for this theory beyond the hat's appellation in Italy.

Wearers

Particularly notable wearers of the Homburg include Winston Churchill and Tony Hancock. Dwight D. Eisenhower wore a Homburg to his presidential inauguration in 1953 and again in 1957; this was a break from the tradition of wearing a top hat for the event. In fiction, Hercule Poirot wears a Homburg hat, as does Al Pacino's character Michael Corleone in *The Godfather*. However, the most significant wearer of the Homburg hat was the politician Sir Anthony Eden (1897–77).

Eden was well known as a stylish dresser and in the 1930s he was considered to be a fashion leader. He often wore a Homburg and this hat became something of a trademark for him. Indeed, so closely was Eden associated with this hat that the Homburg became known in Britain as the "Anthony Eden", or on Savile Row simply the "Eden". Eden was prime minister of Britain from April 1955 until



Homburgs sported by Tristan Langlois (top) and Curé Michael Silver (bottom). Note the pinched crown, a typical feature of the modern Homburg but absent from the image in the advert opposite

January 1957. However, this is not the only instance of an article of clothing being named after a British Prime Minister: the Duke of Wellington (1769–1852) held the same office for slightly longer, between 1828 and 1830 (and also for a month in 1834), and gave his name to the ever-popular boot.

Formality

The Homburg is considered to be a fairly formal hat, being one step down from a top hat. It cannot be worn with white tie but is the only hat that is considered acceptable with black tie. Of course, a gentleman does not wear a hat indoors, which means that the Homburg can typically only be worn for the brief period of the walk between carriage and door. A pleasing exception to this is that most important of outdoor events, the Chap Olympics. Here the master of ceremonies Tristan Langlois correctly wears black tie with a Homburg. This event provides an excellent opportunity for a gentleman to don a hat for a full day's duration.

Acquisition

I acquired my Homburg at Ramsey 1940s Weekend (see *Resign!* issue 95) and their former popularity means that they are readily available in vintage shops and (for those who don't feel the need to try hats on before buying them) on auction websites. Vintage hats in general (not just Homburgs) sometimes have a sweatband that is in poor repair; the stitching can come away, leaving it partially or fully detached. Fortunately this can be fixed by a milliner.

At the other end of the price scale from vintage, Lock & Co. on St James's Street do a fine line in Homburgs of unquestionably high quality. Christys also make Homburgs in a variety of colours, including green. If you feel ready to branch out in the headwear department then the Homburg would be an excellent place to start. Just make sure you wear it at an angle rakish enough to stop traffic.



NSC FILM NIGHT

Bullshot (1983)

Wednesday 11th November

7.30pm–11pm

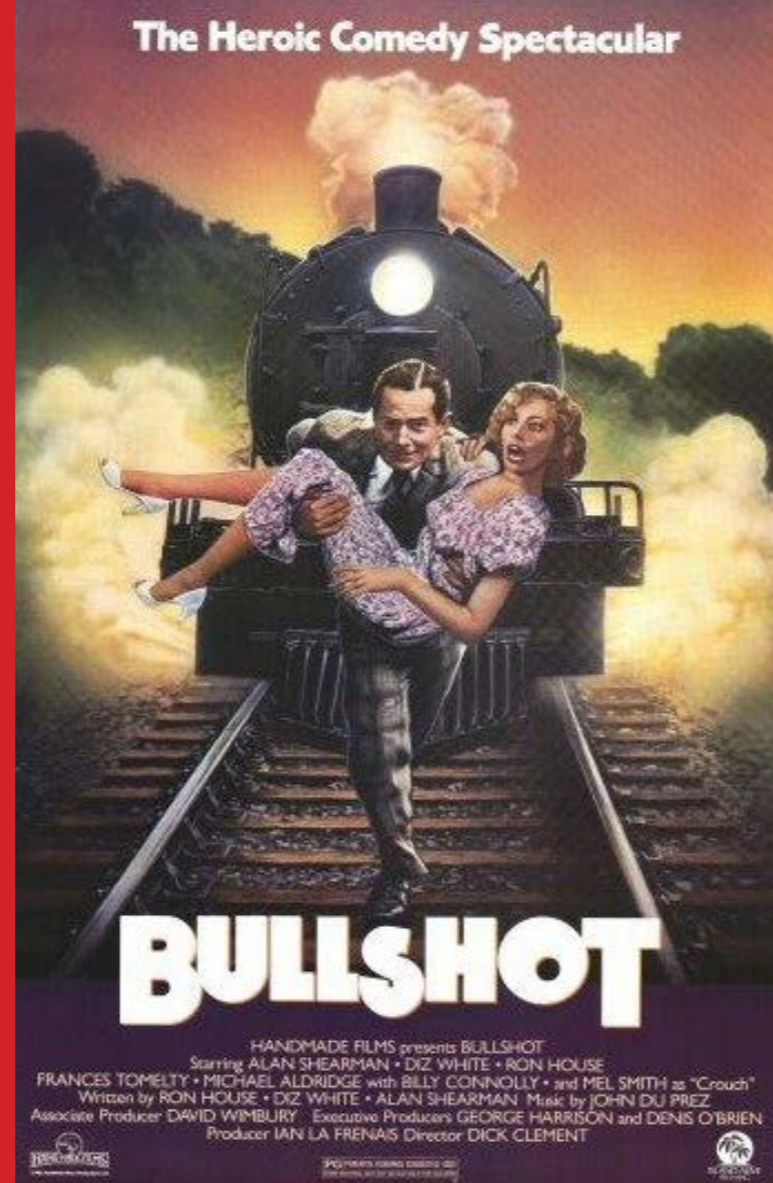
The Tea House Theatre, 139 Vauxhall Walk,
London SE11 5HL (020 7207 4585)

Admission: Free

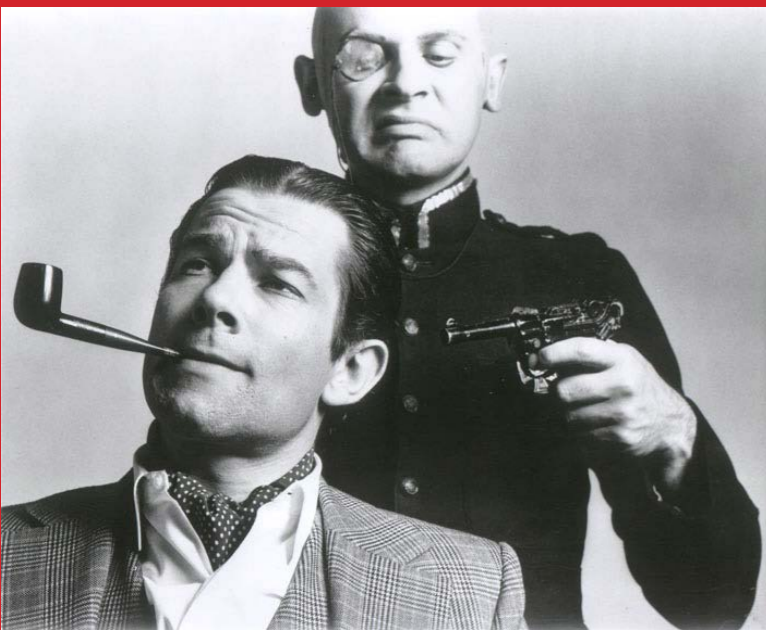
Rescheduled from August, Lord Rupert presents this most Chappist of action comedies, spoofing the Bulldog Drummond novels of the 1930s. Captain Hugh “Bullshot” Crummond (Alan Shearman)—WWI flying ace, Olympic athlete, racing driver and part-time sleuth—must save the world from the dastardly Count Otto von Bruno (Ronald E. House), his wartime adversary. And, of course, win the heart of the heroine (Diz White).

Made by George Harrison’s Handmade Films the movie was directed by Dick Clement and produced by Ian La Frenais, the men best known for writing TV sitcoms such as *The Likely Lads*, *Porridge* and *Auf Wiedersehen, Pet*, but the writing credits here go to all three stars. The film was adapted from the 1974 stage play *Bullshot Crummond*, which played in London before being taken to America and filmed for TV. (According to Ron House’s website it still averages 60 productions a year; in 2012 Ron penned a sequel, *Bullshot Crummond and the Invisible Bride of Death*.)

The film is full of stereotypes of the genre—bald villains, absent-minded professors, femme fatale spies, etc, but just as much fun is had



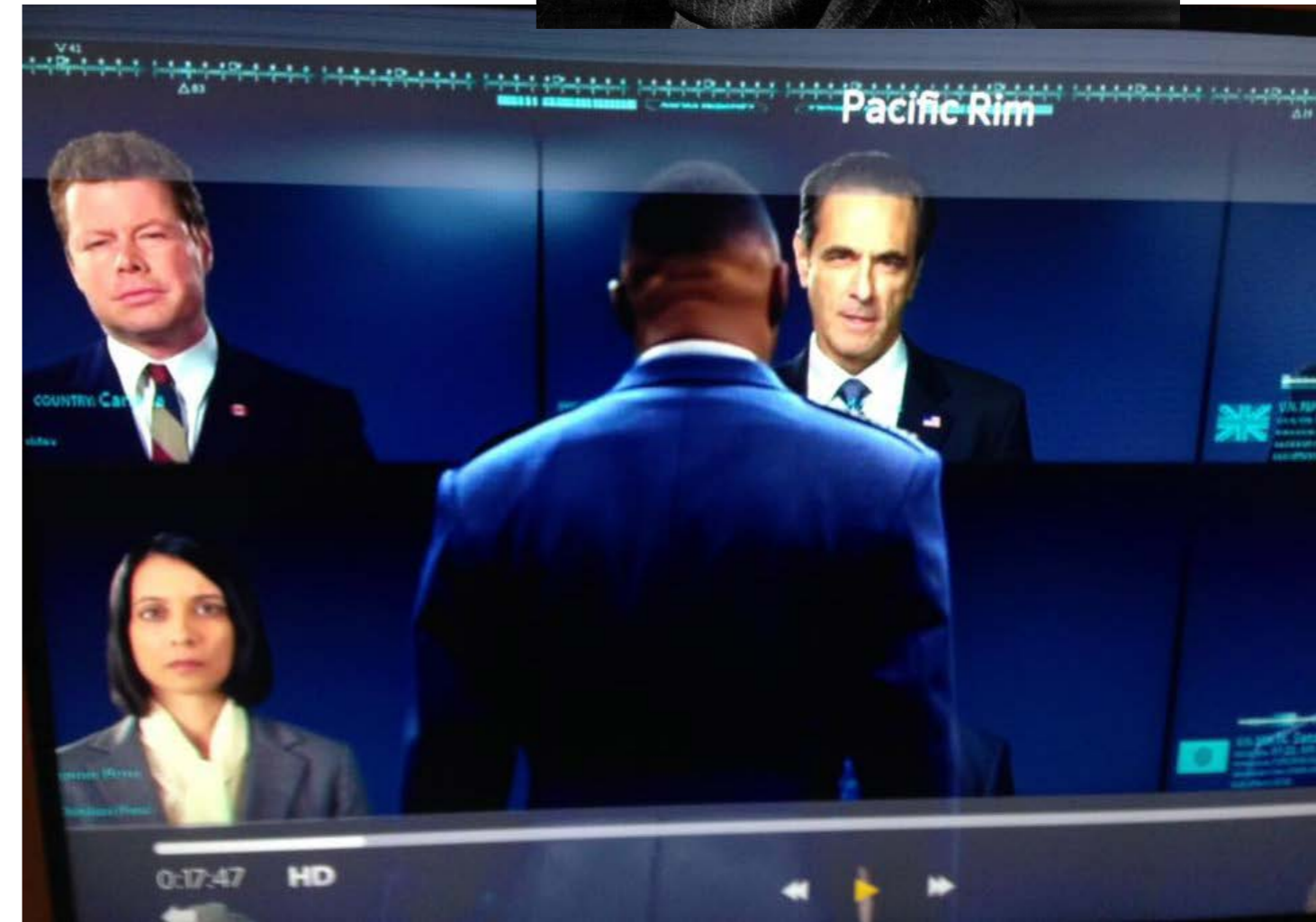
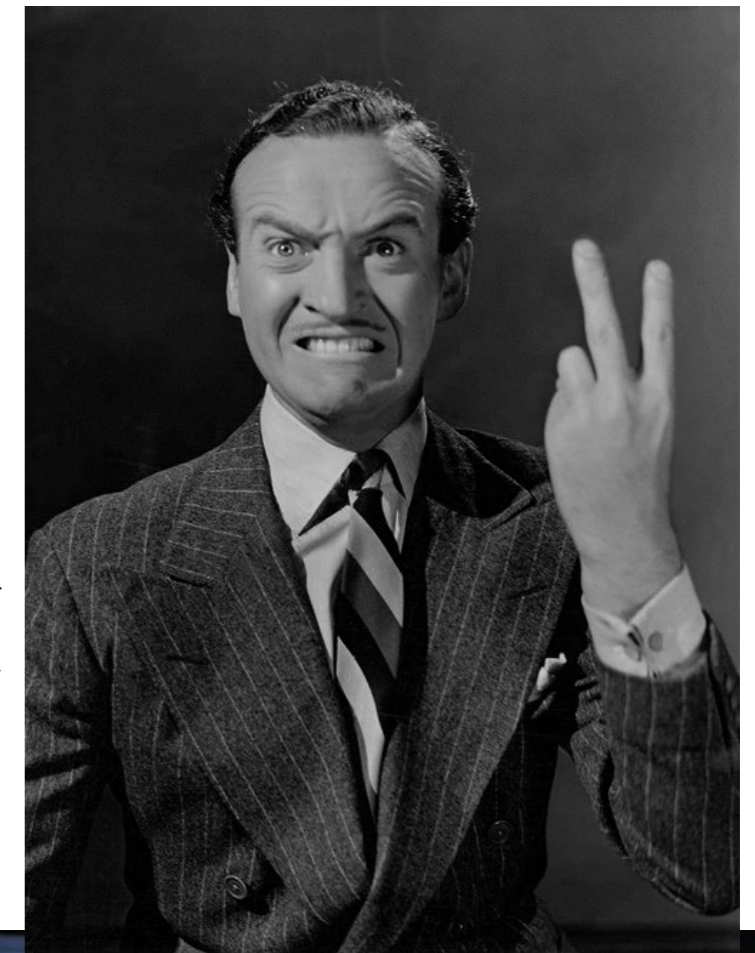
by undermining these traditions: despite his status as all-round hero, Crummond is more a destroyer than saviour, often saving the day through blundering accident rather than design. He keeps bumping into members of his old regiment, the Royal Loamshires, who were maimed by his incompetence (including Hawkeye MacGillicuddy—now blind—played by Billy Connolly). Although allegedly well-endowed, Crummond is something of a prude with ladies (“Is this seemly, Mrs Platt-Higgins? Playing popular music and your husband only ten years dead?”). Of course he is also capable of implausible feats of arcane skill—scaring off a giant octopus by mimicking the sound of an approaching whale, defusing a bomb with his hands tied using static electricity and brandy fumes and some unlikely marksmanship: “By rapidly calculating the pigeon’s angle of elevation in the reflection of your monocle, then subtracting the refractive index of its lens, I positioned myself at a complementary access... and fired. It was no challenge at all.”



CLUB NOTES

Club Tie Corner

THE NEW SHERIDAN CLUB continues to advance its influence through time and space like some Martian red weed (or, more accurately, a red, black and silver weed). This month’s pieces of incontrovertable evidence come first from Actuarious, who proffers this photograph of David Niven (right) who, despite its being a black and white image, is clearly wearing a Club tie (and is clearly channelling the spirit of Matthew Howard), while Artemis Scarheart sends us this still from *Pacific Rim* (below), observing, “Good to see that in the battle against the Kaiju, the Club is represented.”





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 4th November

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 hosted by Ewan Bleach with guest performers each time.

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.

🎩 NSC Film Night

Bullshot (1983)
Wednesday 11th November
7pm–11pm
The Tea House Theatre, 139 Vauxhall Walk, London SE11 5HL (020 7207 4585)
Admission: Free
See page 24.

Paper Dress presents
Big Momma's Door
Friday 6th November
7.30pm–3am
Paper Dress Vintage, 352a Mare Street, Hackney, London E8 1HR
Admission: Free?

Paper Dress Vintage have moved to a new shop and are continuing their tradition of evening events within the shop. Live music from 1950s R n' B outfit Big Momma's Door, Jimmy Regal and the Royals and Peter Cat, plus DJing from our own Sadie Docherty.

Lady Luck Deluxe
Friday 6th November



BONHEMIANAUTS CABARET

8pm–3am
229 The Venue,
Great Portland Street, London
W1W 5PN

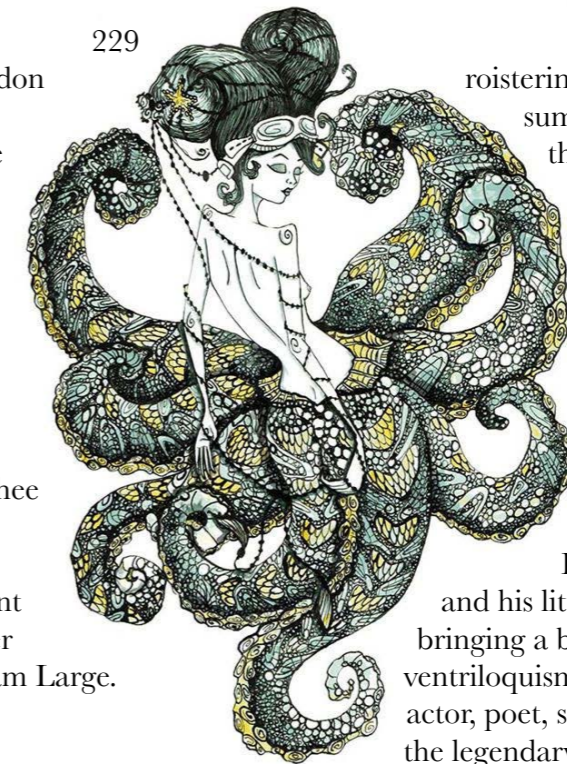
Admission: £13 in advance
Following the success of last year's tribute show for DJ El Nino, the Lady Luck crew are having another big knees-up, featuring live music from Tony Diavolo and the Dirty Luckers, special guests Paul-Ronney Angel, Joe Louis, Rohan Thee Man and Alice Jayne, plus DJs Lady Kamikaze, Tony Diavolo, Daddy Rich, Count Sizzle, Paul Clifford Strutter Brown, Keb Darge and Liam Large.

The Candlelight Club
Friday 13th and Saturday 14th November
7pm–12am
A secret London location
Admission: £20/25 in advance
Dress: Prohibition dandies, swells, gangsters and molls, degenerate aristos and decadent aesthetes, corrupt politicians and the Smart Set
In the Know

The Candlelight Club is a clandestine pop-up cocktail party with a 1920s speakeasy flavour, in a secret London venue lit by candles. Each event offers a classic cocktail menu, plus live period jazz bands (this time from cabaret cove Champagne Charlie and his Bubbly Boys) and vintage vinylism from the New Sheridan Club's own DJ Auntie Maureen. Ticket holders get an email two days before revealing the location.

The Bohemianauts Cabaret
Friday 13th November
8pm
The Others, 6 and 8 Manor Road, Stoke Newington, London N16 5SA
Admission: £10 (£8 concs)
An evening of music and

229



cabaret hosted by the Bohemianauts, roistering stars of our own summer party, and featuring the additional talents of: The Fabulous Bakewell Boys, northern English Luchadors turned Working Mens Club entertainers. Their blend of puntastic cheesy humour, deranged musical numbers and dangerous wrestling is guaranteed to entertain; Tom Baker and Hugo, the Bohemianauts' frontman and his little "knee-pal" Hugo bringing a bizarre edge to traditional ventriloquism; Roddy McDevitt, the actor, poet, songwriter and co-host of the legendary Glastonbury Underground Piano Bar; Dominic Jones, master of character comedy and surreal invention; Milky Sugar and Joplin Parnell, with a style harking back to blues and vaudevillian singers of the 1920s and 1930s.

HHM Kalakaua Tweed Ride
Saturday 14th November
From 1pm



Come and conga with Champagne Charlie at the Candlelight Club

The NSC Annual Pub Crawl

Thursday 19th November

6.30 till closing time

Wandsworth...

Admission: Free but bring beer money



Ian White, member of both the NSC and CAMRA will curate his annual pub crawl, taking us to taverns of historical and aleist interest. This

time the focus is on Smithfield, and all the venues are close to one another. The itinerary looks like this:

Meet at 6.30pm: Old Mitre (Fullers)

1 Ely Pl, Holborn Circus, EC1N 6SJ

A traditional 1547 real ale pub, tucked away in a small alleyway, with framed historical pictures.

7.30pm: The Viaduct Tavern (Fullers)

126 Newgate St, Old Bailey, EC1A 7AA

Victorian pub, one-time jail and former gin palace with original gin booth and grand wall frescoes.

8.30pm: Bishops Finger (Shepherd Neame)

9-10 W Smithfield, Smithfield EC1A 9JR

Classic, informal pub, Name recalls that which used to be given in Kent to signposts shaped like an index finger.

9.15pm: Hand & Shears (various)

1 Middle St, Smithfield, EC1A 7JA

A rare example of a Victorian layout featuring three separate rooms in this Grade II listed building.

10.15pm: Fox & Anchor (Youngs)

115 Charterhouse Street, Farringdon EC1M 6AA

Four-storey townhouse, Grade II Listed, with an exceptional 1898 Art Nouveau façade, including terracotta and faience tiling from top to bottom, fancy ornamentation including mosaic floor in front of the doors.

Assemble at Iolani Palace, 264 South Street, Honolulu

Admission: Free

For Chaps who happen to find themselves in Hawaii in November, the velocopedic community there are holding the third annual local version of the Tweed Run, honouring His Hawaiian Majesty King David Laamea Kalakaua. The route will travel through Honolulu, commencing at Iolani Palace, proceeding to the historic Linekona Building and culminating with tea at The Lounge of Ala Wai Community Park. Appropriately Chappist dress is called for, and there will be prizes for best dressed lady and gent, as well as most stately bicycle and even best tea cup (participants are requested to bring their own crockery). More at tweedridehawaii.weebly.com.

Riviera Swing

13th–16th November

Victoria Hotel, TLH Leisure Resort, Belgrave Rd, Torquay, Torbay TQ2 5HL

Admission: £199 for two nights; £259 for three nights; £149 for a non-residential weekend pass; see www.rivieraswing.co.uk

A small but potent weekend festival of 1930s and 1940s swing, focusing on British music and featuring live performances from the Alex Mendham Orchestra, Benoit Viellefon and his Orchestra and the Memphis Belle Orchestra, plus DJing from OK for Sound, Rob Be-Bop and Voodoo Doll, all hosted by Viv the Spiv. There are also dance classes, tea dances, sing-alongs, classic cinema by Paul Cotgrove of the White Bus and a vintage market.

Defense Dans La Rue Workshop

Saturday 21st and Sunday 22nd November

11am–5pm

West Hill Community Hall, Compton Avenue, Brighton

Admission: £50 for the weekend, £30 for one day

Mr Phil Crawley of The Black Boar Swordsmanship School, and Mr Chris Chatfield of The 1595 Club will be holding a two-day workshop looking at Defense Dans La Rue, a vintage martial art for gentlemen that predates the better-known Edwardian discipline of Bartitsu. Mr Crawley will be teaching cane and knife techniques. Mr Chatfield will be teaching

unarmed. To book your place contact the organisers. See the Facebook event.

Tango Supper

Sunday 22nd

November

6.30–11pm

Palm Court

Ballroom, Waldorf

Hilton, Aldwych,

London WC2B

4DD

Admission: £69

A regular event at London's Waldorf Hilton, in the beautiful Palm Court Ballroom, where Tango first scandalised Edwardian London society in 1910. These black tie events are hosted by professional Argentine Tango dancers, Leonardo Acosta and Tracey Tyack-King. On arrival at 6.30 you will be greeted by your hosts and receive the specially created cocktail, Tango Essence. Leonardo and Tracey will then give a 45-minute lesson of Argentine Tango which is suitable for all levels. The two-course supper and dance will follow and during the evening there will also be a performance of Tango through the ages by your hosts. Carriages at 11pm.

Voodoo Doll's Winter Ball

Friday 27th November

8pm–3am

Bask in the Ray Collins Hot Club at Voodoo Doll's Winter Ball



Learn the gentlemanly art of *Defense de la rue*



The Rivoli Ballroom, 350 Brockley Road, London SE4 2BY

Admission: £18 (see the Facebook event for details of payment)

A feast of 1940s and 1950s jump blues, jive, swing, boogie and rock 'n' roll, featuring live music from the ten-piece Ray Collins Hot Club and DJing from Voodoo Doll in the splendid Rivoli Ballroom, a wonderland of plush red velvet, gold-framed walls, Austrian crystal chandeliers and oversized Chinese lanterns, the only intact 1950s ballroom in London.

The NSC Christmas Party Curiouser and Curiouser

Saturday 28th November

7pm–midnight

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

Admission: Free for Members, £5 for guests

Dress: Mad hatters, dormice, white rabbits, stoned caterpillars, animated playing cards, walruses, carpenters, stripey-stockinged nymphettes and laudanum-crazed Victorian clergymen

See page 8.

Come to the
Christmas party and
drink to the Club's
health in its tenth year!



CONTACTING US

telegrams@newsheridanclub.co.uk
mrarbutnot@newsheridanclub.co.uk
mrhartley@newsheridanclub.co.uk
mrscarheart@newsheridanclub.co.uk

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](http://www.flickr.com/sheridanclub). You can even
befriend us electrically at [www.
facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com).