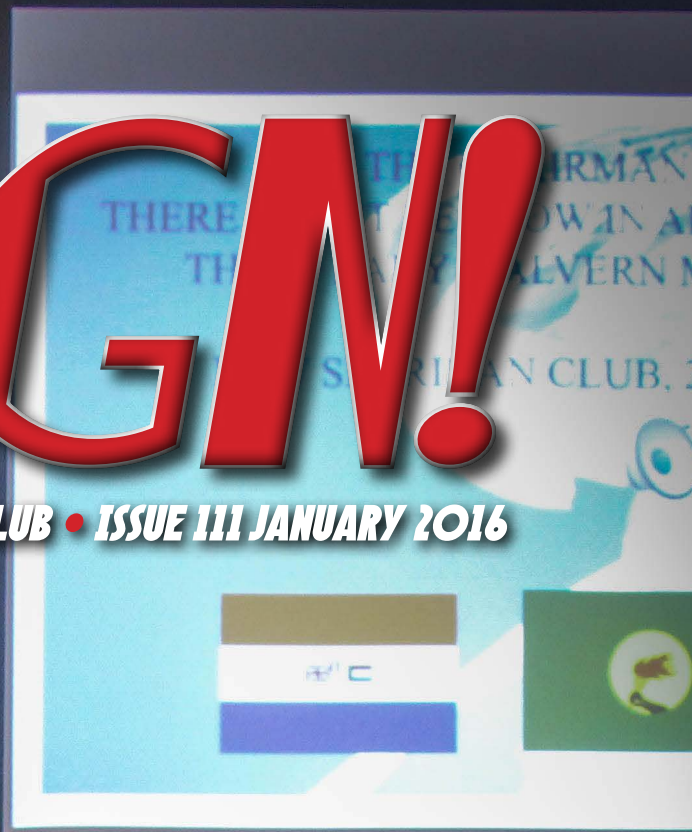


RESIGN!

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW SHERIDAN CLUB • ISSUE 111 JANUARY 2016



The Chairman of the Witham Rowing Club sets us straight about the Dark Continent

THE THOUGHTS OF CHAIRMAN HOWARD

Waxing lyrical

Count Martindt Cally von Callomon on the glory of dubbin

Going great guns

Roy Engoron on his country's unfortunate relationship with firearms

Wrong place, wrong time

Tim Eyre on the unlikely last man to be executed at the Tower of London





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 6th January in the upstairs room at The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB, from 7pm until 11pm. Ensign Polyethyl will tell us all about Nancy Wake, whom she actually met. New Zealand born, Nancy travelled the world in the 1930s and worked as a journalist before marrying a Frenchman. When the Nazis invaded she became a courier for the resistance, earning herself a 5-million-franc bounty on her head and the Gestapo nickname of The White Mouse for her ability to escape capture. Fleeing to Britain she joined SOE and was later parachuted back into France to help put together a 7,000-strong resistance force that harried the Germans for the rest of the war, inflicting 1,400 casualties with only 100 losses. Described as a "bombshell" often able to flirt her way out of trouble, Nancy



Nancy Wake

was also a crack shot, happy to execute traitors, and once killed a German sentry with her bare hands.

The Last Meeting

At our last meeting of 2015 Matthew "The Chairman"* Howard delivered a broadside entitled *There Won't Be Snow in Africa this Christmas*, the 4th Lady Malvern Memorial Lecture. (Lady Malvern had a habit of writing travel guides to countries in which she had spent but a fortnight, and this gives you an idea of the tone of the lectures.) Our speaker attempted to give a rounded introduction to the continent, taking in such key points as whether they do actually drink Um Bongo in the Congo (in at least one place they do), what to look for in a dictator and whether there will in fact be snow in Africa

this Christmas (yes, though possibly only on Mt Kilimanjaro). An essay version of the talk begins on page 4.

*Chairman of the Witham Rowing Club, that is, not the NSC



(Above, left and below) Howard comes at his subject from several angles, including his sartorial role model Mobutu Sese Seko



Having enjoyed us to sing along to the Um Bongo advert (left) Howard then gets Compton-Bassett to award a carton of the stuff to the lustiest singer, Ed Marlowe (right); (below left) William Cole grabs his hat; (bottom left) Tim Eyre (r) discusses something intriguing with Howard's brother; (below) Eugenie interrupts Harrison's avid reading of *Resign!*; (below right) merry Xmas everyone!



THERE WON'T BE SNOW IN AFRICA THIS CHRISTMAS

Matthew Howard tells you everything you always wanted to know about the Dark Continent but were afraid to ask

I HAVE STYLED MY ADDRESS, as with my previous travelogues, the Lady Malvern Memorial Lecture. Lady Malvern, devotees of P.G.Wodehouse will recall, we first encountered in *Jeeves and the Unbidden Guest*, and tales of whom were further recounted in *Carry on, Jeeves*. For those of you not aware, she was an authoress who had achieved a level of notoriety in polite society for a previous work, *India and the Indians*, a volume she completed having spent less than a month in the country having returned from the Durbar.

The reader encounters Lady Malvern having recently disembarked from her ship in New York, with her son Lord Wilmott Pershaw in tow, whom she hopes to foist off on Bertie Wooster for safe keeping whilst she writes a companion volume on the United States, commenting, "I shall not be able to spend more than a month in the country, as I have to get back for the Season, but a month should be ample. I was less than a month in India, and my dear friend, Sir Roger Cremorne, wrote his *America from Within* after a stay of only two weeks."

Well, I've done one better, the closest I've been to Africa being a week in Sharm El Sheikh (fig.1). Which, properly considered, is almost in Cyprus. And with this thought in mind, let us begin our examination of the Dark Continent.

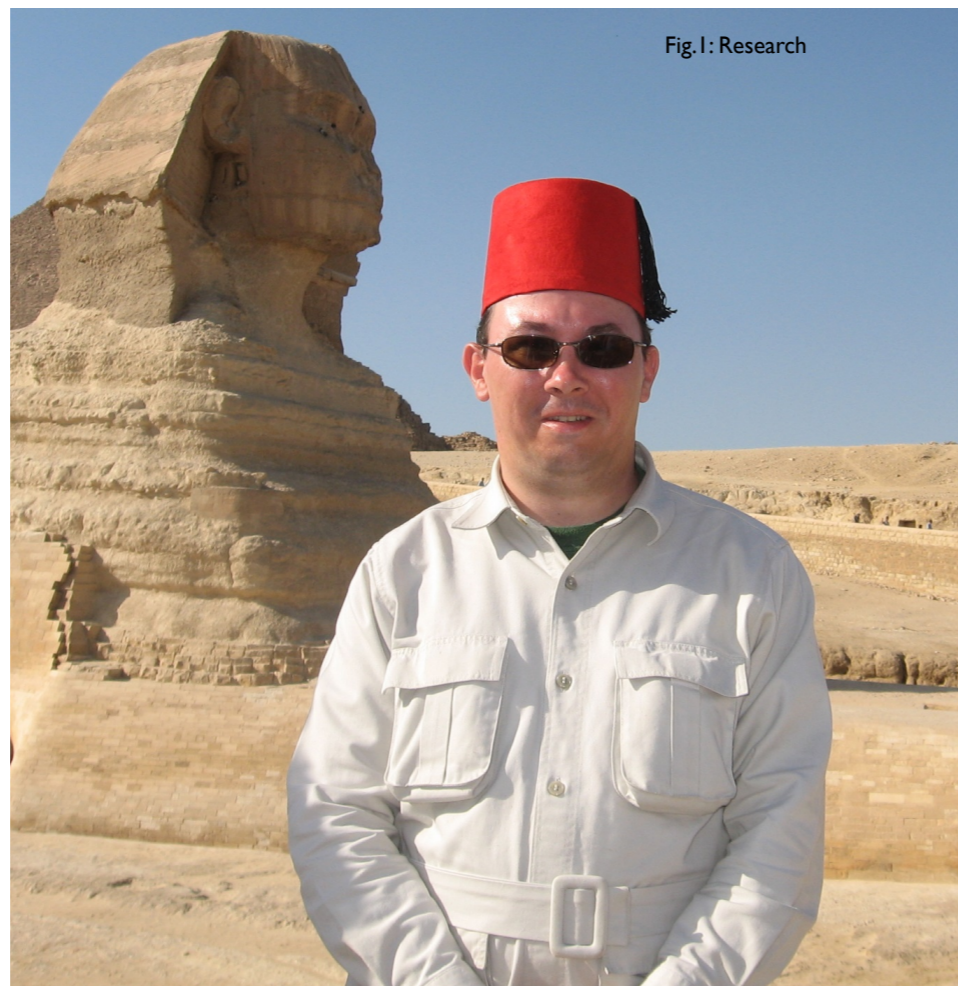
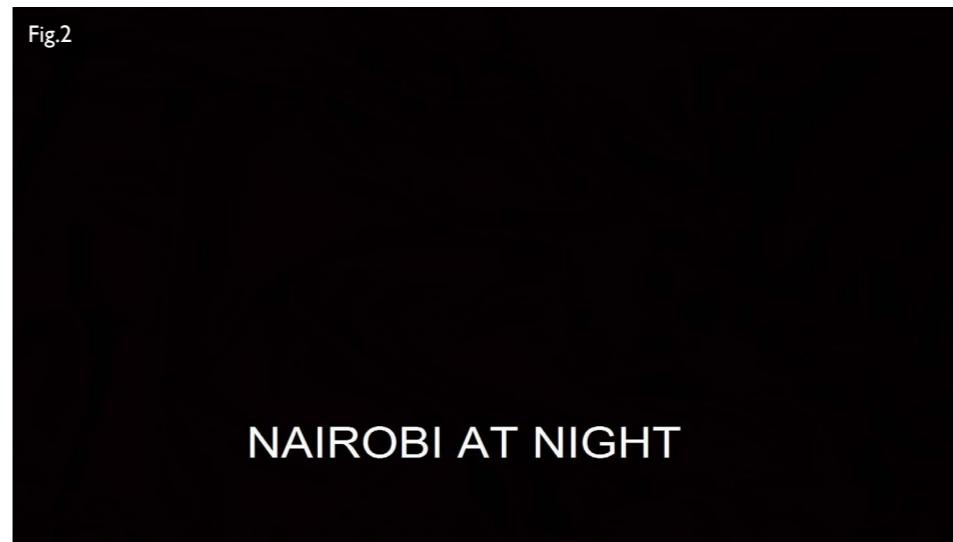


Fig.1: Research

1. THE DARK CONTINENT

Contrary to popular misconception, the label "the Dark Continent" was not so applied because the first explorers arrived at night (fig.2), but, ahem, because little was known about the mysterious land itself. The term was most likely used for the first time by American explorer and journalist Henry Stanley (fig.3) of Dr Livingstone fame. Another plausible explanation



is that the term derived from the tall vegetation in jungle areas, causing a lack of sunlight in the lower levels of the biosphere. What we can be certain of is that the term "Dark Continent" was nothing whatsoever to do with skin tone of the indigenous people of much of Africa whom the explorers encountered. Certainly not. Well, probably not. Although it might have been.

We live in an enlightened age, and as such there will be no call here for any outmoded racial terminology. Words such as... well, let's not go there. And nor would one wish to. Unlike the vast continent of Africa itself, of course. And where better to start when looking at Africa than at the country formerly known as...

2. ZAIRE

...(fig.4) a country now known as the



Fig.3: Henry Stanley

Democratic Republic of Congo.

Consultation of the key texts on Africa suggests that a rule of thumb applies that any country which includes the term "Democratic" in its name usually isn't.

An oxymoron if there ever was one, it is suggested. Rather like its (self-appointed) leader between 1965

and 1997, although I'm sure President Mobutu (fig.5) would not consider this autocratic

Fig.4: Flag of Zaire



Fig.5: Mobutu Sese Seko



regime, which almost bankrupted the country, as anything other than benevolent. And certainly not moronic. Even though he reputedly used to charter Concorde to take him on shopping trips to Paris, where his trademark headgear was lovingly blocked by the finest of milliners.

Conventional wisdom (Wikipedia) has it that he ruled for some 32 years over a country plagued by uncontrolled inflation, a colossal national debt and massive currency

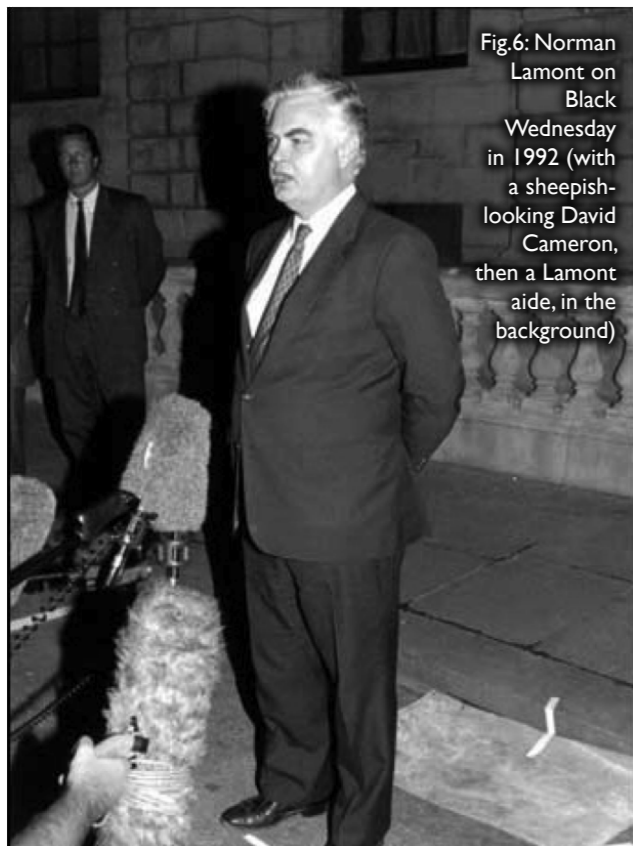


Fig.6: Norman Lamont on Black Wednesday in 1992 (with a sheepish-looking David Cameron, then a Lamont aide, in the background)

devaluations. But let any nation that is without sin cast the first stone (fig.6). Africa—closer to home than you think... However, never let it be said that anything I share with audiences such as yourself is “conventional” wisdom. “Unconventional”, I readily accept. Misjudged, quite possibly. But wisdom of a sort, none the less.

3. THE RUMBLE IN THE JUNGLE



Fig.8 And, lest we forget, were it not for the foresight- edness of a chap who in 1972 unsuccessfully failed to have



Fig.9



Fig.7

himself named as President for Life, there would have been no Rumble in the Jungle (fig.7), one of the finest of all displays of pugilism in the history of sport. The cry “Ali, Boma ye” still rings in the ears of the chaps who like nothing more than seeing two black men knocking seven bells out of each other for the entertainment of others.

There are many who attribute fights such as this to the early onset of Parkinson’s Disease in Mohammed Ali. I, however, have an alternative suggestion as to how Ali’s perpetual shaking of hands developed (fig.8). Michael Parkinson possibly has a lot to answer for. And not just because he comes from Barnsley. Sadly,



Fig.10

Ken McKay / Rex Features

Parkinson’s disease not only affects Mohammed Ali (fig.9). Here we have Billy Connolly, another notable victim of Parkinson’s Disease. A lesson to us all, and possibly the reason Parky’s chat show is no longer broadcast on a Saturday evening. All I can say is watch out Peter Kay (fig.10).

4. UM BONGO

For the intrepid traveller hoping to adhere to local customs, it would therefore appear essential when visiting the Democratic Republic of Congo, to drink as the Congolese do. And as



Fig.11



Fig.12

everyone of a certain age can readily attest, this means Um Bongo (fig.11). You remember Um Bongo? Let me remind you: see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wYj5o4kQsXs>.

According to none other than the War Child website, “no one in the Congo has ever heard of Um Bongo”. Well, I thought, this seems most unlikely. So, I contacted Um Bongo’s manufacturer, an Anglo-Portuguese operation called Sumol + Company, who advised me that they distribute their produce to both the UK and Portuguese markets. But not Africa, apparently.

However, saving me the trouble of

actually visiting Africa for the course of my researches, I am essentially indebted to modern anthropologists who are pleased to share the fruits of their research with what one apparently terms the blogosphere, and specifically the work of such a chap called Gabriel Chapman, who discovered imported Portuguese Um Bongo in a shop called Jambo Mart in Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of the Congo. I’m not making this up. Here he is (fig.12).

So it would appear that they do, indeed, drink Um Bongo in the Congo. Game, set and autocratic dictatorship. Put that in your pipe and smoke it, War Child. With the exception of

providing essential care to children experiencing conflict and the aftermath of conflict around the world, including Afghanistan, Iraq, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, what do they know?

For those who wish to marvel in its unique taste, Um Bongo can be purchased for ready money in the UK in only the finest of stores, such as Tesco, Asda, the Co-op and Home Bargains. For those of you so interested, it goes particularly well with gin, as our resident mixologist Clayton Hartley reliably informs me [*actually I've never tasted it, but Ed Marlowe says they do go quite well —Ed*], and in its neat form it continues to rot the teeth of the offspring of the lesser spotted proletariat to this day, being sold alongside Sunny Delight in the chiller cabinets situated in low rent retailers up and down our sceptred isle.

5. BONGO BONGO LAND

For all the work explorers have done in their probing of the Dark Continent, the search for the mythical “Bongo Bongo Land” continues to this day. It was first referenced in a German work of 1874 entitled *The Heart of Africa* as Bongoland, and it appeared in a song called “Civilization” in 1947, which contained the line “Bongo, Bongo, Bongo, I Don’t Want to Leave the Congo”.

Most famously, the late Alan Clark (fig.13), MP for both Plymouth & Sutton and Kensington & Chelsea alluded to Bongo Bongo Land whilst a Minister of State, would you believe, although he later claimed it was a misunderstanding and that, far from having racist overtones, it was simply a reference to the President of Gabon, Omar Bongo.

An easy mistake to make, of course, in much the same way as when he suggested selling weaponry to Iraq on the pretext it had dual usage was a “simple misunderstanding”.

Fig.15: Bongo Bongo (dual usage)

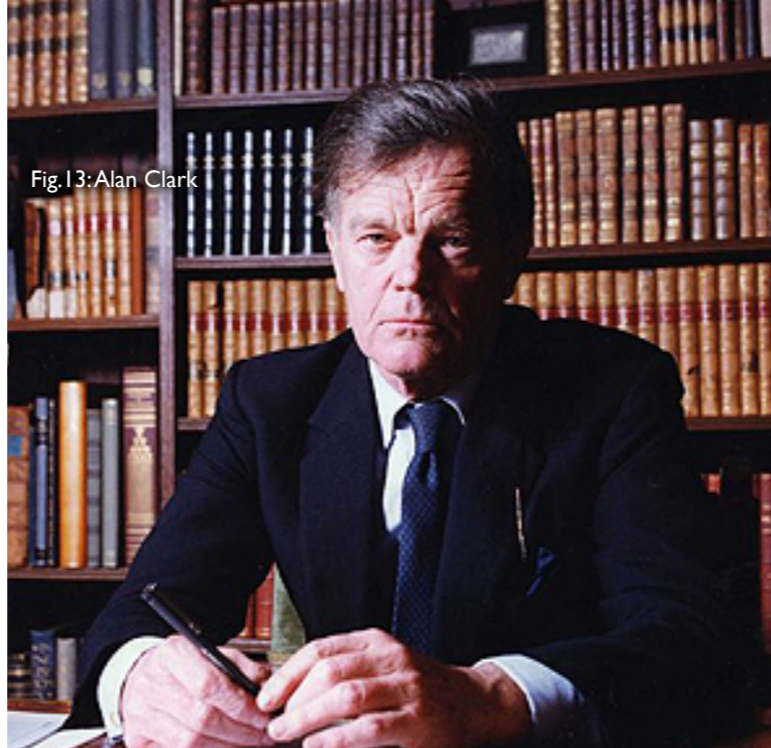


Fig.13: Alan Clark

He had certainly not given the arms manufacturer Matrix Churchill a “nod and a wink”. Certainly not. As he stated to camera when interviewed about his colourful life in 1993, he had never knowingly given anyone a nod and a wink in his life. And certainly not Valerie Harkess, the wife of a retired South African judge, or her two daughters, Alison and Josephine, collectively and notoriously known as “The Coven” (fig.14), all of whom



Fig.14: Judge James Harkess with wife Valerie (left) and daughter Josephine

he allegedly bedded unbeknown to each other. Still, he lived and dressed rather well, even if he had the morality of a tom cat, and a flexible attitude towards the definition of weapons of mass destruction and international diplomacy. So while much

referenced, the mysterious “Bongo Bongo Land” is as yet undiscovered (fig.15).

6. AFRICAN FOOD

The quest for new and exciting foodstuffs is often as good a reason for international travel as big game shooting and questing authentic rhino whips. For those of you whose sole experience of Africa is seeing cleaning staff at underground stations and going to WOMAD to “find yourself” in a field full of *Guardian* readers in the grounds of a country house in Wiltshire, the UK has plenty of African food to sample for those of a discerning palate.

Contrary to popular belief, Lion bars (fig.16) do not actually contain any extract of lion. Just cheaply made chocolate from Nestlé, the poor man’s Cadbury’s. Should you, however, find yourself entertaining a tribal chieftain and his family over the festive period, you will no doubt be delighted to read that a trip to Dalston Market in London’s East End (fig.17) should provide you with as much African food as you wish to consume. Chimpanzee, giraffe, porcupine, gorilla steaks and fruitbat are all available at the local Sainsbury’s and foodstuffs such as “grasscutter rat” (fig.18) are available at almost every stall. “Street food” indeed. Mmmm.

On the other hand, should you find yourself in Africa over Christmas questing traditional festive fayre such as pigs in blankets



Fig.16: A Lion bar

and sausage and chestnut stuffing, I would possibly suggest avoiding Algeria. Djibouti is also best avoided. As is Libya, Mali, Morocco and Niger. Oh yes, and Senegal and Sudan. And Tunisia. So, in short, don’t hold out for a full English should you find yourself ever housed at the Hilton Alger. Not much call for a Boxing Day ham there, sadly, and it might also be noted that Colston Bassett stilton is not quite as readily available in Algiers as it is in Paxton & Whitfield. So probably best not to bother.

7. LIBYA

For those who wish to holiday in Africa, there are many noted destinations which the intrepid



Fig.18: Grasscutter rats



Fig.17: Dalston Market



Fig.19

explorer may choose to visit, destinations such as the vineyards of the southern Cape, the Victoria Falls in Rhodesia and, of course, Libya (fig.19).

Libya is a much misunderstood country, not least by your correspondent, as I am sure I will amply demonstrate. There are many who would characterise our relations with the country as relating exclusively to the murder of PC Yvonne Fletcher outside the Libyan Embassy in St James's Square in 1984, the Lockerbie bombing in 1988, and the charismatic dictatorship of the Libyan leader between 1969 and 2011, one Colonel Gaddafi.

There is much that one can say about

Colonel Gaddafi. A sense of shame is not the first thing which springs to mind as, in what was possibly one of the most self-serving of gestures in the history of international relations, Gaddafi, in a spirit of international rapprochement, thoughtfully handed over two Libyan nationals for trial to the Netherlands in 1999 in connection with the bombing. I say self-serving, because during



Fig.20



Fig.21

the Libyan civil war of 2011, a former government official claimed that Colonel Gaddafi had personally



Fig.22



Fig.23



Fig.24: The Last King of Scotland?

ordered the bombing. The chap handed over didn't even claim, "I

was acting under orders." In short, "It wasn't me," was his defence. Which it probably wasn't.

Diplomatic relations with Libya were severed following the death of Yvonne Fletcher in 1984, and only reinstated in 1999 when the Colonel's government finally admitted responsibility for her death. Three years later the British Government sent a trade delegation to Libya and in 2004 our then Prime Minister, Tony Blair, who throughout his premiership proved himself to be an excellent judge of character (fig.20), thought it a good idea to have an audience in Libya with "Mad Dog" Gaddafi, during which the Prime Minister suggested that "people should not forget the past, they should move beyond it" (fig.21).

Which was very big of him. Especially as a £550 million pound Anglo-Dutch deal with Shell Oil for gas exploration rights hinged on diplomatic relations being resumed. I think it would be fair to say that our Prime Minister had little shame, but a good head for business. I wonder whether God thought it a good idea (fig.22)?

8. SCOTLAND

Colonel Gaddafi was given his Mad Dog moniker by Ronald Reagan (fig.23) during his presidency of the United States of America, but in a continent where mad dogs were, and indeed are, as prevalent as rabid dogs in France, few were as mad as the chap who proclaimed himself the last King of Scotland.

There are many who suggest that the last King of Scotland was one of the three chaps above (fig.24), or possibly this man below (fig.25), although it seems most unlikely. But it was Idi Amin (or should I say His Excellency, President for Life, Field Marshal Al Hadji Doctor Idi Amin Dada, VC, DSO, MC—all self-styled, of course; fig.26) who, in 1976 began proclaiming himself as the King of Scotland. Quite what led him to such a conclusion I cannot fathom. As we have observed, the titles he bestowed on himself have little basis in fact, and it would appear that a fondness for Scotland as a symbol of resilience and admiring the Scottish people for their resistance to the English was as good



Fig.25: The Last King of Scotland?

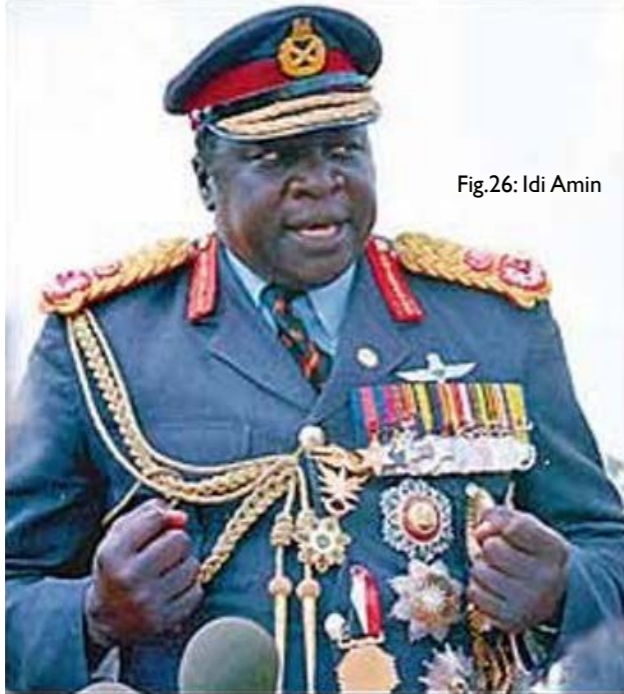


Fig.26: Idi Amin



Fig.28: Big cat



Fig.29: Bigger cats



Fig.30: Hungry hippo



Fig.27

Picture courtesy of Thomas Cook

a reason to claim his lineage. Idi Amin was President of Uganda between 1971 and 1979, and his period in office was characterised by human rights abuses, political repression, ethnic persecution, extrajudicial killings, nepotism, corruption, and gross economic mismanagement. The number of people killed as a result of his regime is estimated by international observers and human rights groups to range from 100,000 to 500,000. His backers during this period? President Mobutu and Colonel Gaddafi. Oh yes, and the Soviet Union and East Germany.

9. DANGEROUS WILDLIFE

Africa has many potential dangers for the unsuspecting tourist, not the least of which are autocratic rulers as we have

seen, but arming oneself with a machete, a rhino whip and an elephant gun would help



Fig.31

sooth any misunderstandings even in the most disagreeable of environments (fig.27).

The animal kingdom presents its own problems to the unwary traveller. Whereas visitors from these shores may think of big cats looking rather like fig.28, in Africa, they look rather like fig.29. However, you may be surprised to note that it is the hippopotamus (fig.30) who presents the biggest threat to those living in the continent of Africa. They are easily frightened and extremely aggressive, and whereas man-eating tigers account for the deaths of 5–15 humans per year, the hippopotamus strikes an impressive 300 people per year in its kills column. In short, you are more likely to die at the hands of a hippopotamus than a Pistorius. Which in light of his easy way with weaponry (fig.31) almost beggars belief...

10. SNOW IN AFRICA THIS CHRISTMAS!

None other than Bing Crosby once sang “I’m Dreaming of a White Christmas”, as fine a Christmas song as has ever been sung. Due to the prevalent meteorological conditions which generally prevail in the continent of Africa as a whole, I sense that were Mr Crosby ever to have taken a festive sojourn in Burkina Faso instead of spending it with David Bowie on a made for TV Christmas special he may very well be disappointed. Having covered most of the essential and salient points relating to the Dark Continent, we now come to the crux of this address—the question of whether there will, indeed, be snow in Africa this Christmas.

For those of you wishing to combine winter sports with festive frivolity, a cursory glance at the Ski Ethiopia website offers all the information one may need for an action-packed Christmas. It reliably informs readers that, “It is not normally possible to ski Ethiopia and you will not find any ski lifts or Ethiopia ski area.” An up-to-date report on the same site expands on the subject, and states: “Fresh snow is forecast at zero resorts. Powder is reported at zero resorts and zero resorts are reporting good piste conditions.”

However, it just goes to show what little “Sir” Bob Geldof knows, as I am delighted to report that snow will be found in Africa this Christmas and,

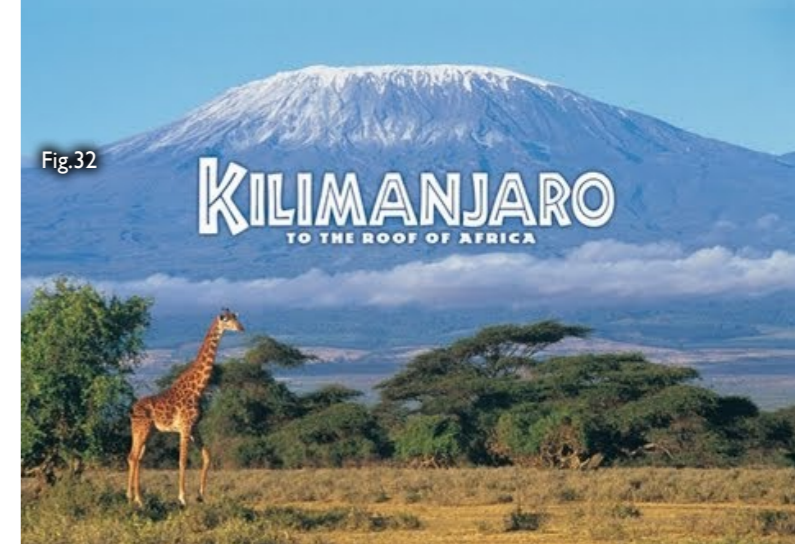


Fig.32

one would imagine, every Christmas in Kenya (fig.32) It would seem as foolish as Geldof is clearly meteorologically inept not to mention the Atlas Mountains in Libya and Morocco; and Drakensberg in Kwa Zulu Natal province has a snow machine capable of providing snow 365 days a year.

Bing Crosby sadly died in 1977, and as such, never had the benefit of the wisdom imparted in 1984 by Messrs Geldof and Ure. According to urban myth, whereas snow was not forecast in Africa for Christmas in 1984, there was reportedly a blizzard in the recording studio, mostly as a result of the presence of Francis Rossi and Rick Parfitt of Status Quo, who reputedly took on the role of pharmacists to the stars at the recording.

According to Rossi, “Rick told me recently that he got so out of it he couldn’t sing anymore and was so annoyed on his way home that he was almost arrested for kicking road cones.”

It’s a pity Constable Compton Bassett wasn’t around at the time. Then again, he hadn’t even been born.

My address has almost concluded, but in the spirit of the late Bing Crosby, there are, of course, many who have dreamed of a white Christmas for longer than one may choose to remember—such as this chap (fig.33).

On that note, Happy Christmas!



Fig.33

SHOOT STRAIGHT, TOMMIES!

Tim Eyre introduces us to Josef Jakobs, who entered history by being pretty much in the wrong place at the wrong time

WHO WAS THE last person to be executed in the Tower of London? It would be natural to imagine that it was a traitor to the Tudors, or perhaps a high-ranking Cavalier during the English Revolution. Remarkably, the last execution in the Tower was far more recent than this: it happened on 15 August 1941 and took the life of a German spy by the name of Josef Jakobs.

Officially called Her Majesty's Royal Palace and Fortress, the origins of the Tower of London go right back to the Norman Conquest of 1066. The White Tower at its core was built in 1078. The Tower is best known for its use as a prison in the 16th and 17th centuries. Notables such as Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth I and even the Kray twins were incarcerated here. However, the Tower itself was rarely used for executions: until the twentieth century the authorities usually used the nearby Tower Hill as a venue to dispatch the condemned and only seven people (including Lady Jane Grey) were ever executed within the Tower itself.

This all changed during the First World War, when 11 men were tried and shot for espionage

in the Tower. During the Second World War the Tower was used to hold prisoners of war. It was also fortified as a strongpoint for the last-ditch defence of London in the event of a German invasion.

Such an invasion was a very real danger in the summer of 1940, as the Battle of Britain

raged in the skies above eastern England. Many airbases were involved in the fighting but RAF Upwood in Cambridgeshire was not one of them. Instead its two Squadrons, Nos 35 and 90, were merged to form a training unit to prepare new aircrews. This was vital work, for there was a severe shortage of pilots during the Battle of Britain. In terms of action, RAF Upwood suffered two attacks by the Luftwaffe and, more intriguingly, was the venue for a German spy drop in 1941.

By the start of 1941 the immediate threat of invasion had receded but the Blitz in particular and the war in general continued. On 31st January Josef Jakobs took off from Schipol Airport in occupied Dutch territory. At 8.30pm he was dropped by parachute into the vicinity of RAF Upwood. Whatever plans for espionage Germany had

made for Jakobs were foiled even before he landed: the Abwehr (German Intelligence Service) had not trained Jakobs in parachuting and he injured his ankle as he passed through the narrow hatch of the plane. The injury was exacerbated when he landed

in a potato field, leaving him unable to walk and therefore useless for his mission.

The lore of espionage has it that the honourable course of action for a spy in these circumstances is to commit suicide. However, Jakobs was hardly an honourable man. He had been imprisoned in Switzerland between 1934 and 1937 for selling counterfeit gold. Upon his release he sold fake passports on the black market; to his credit this helped Jews escape Nazi Germany, albeit at a high price. For this he was arrested and imprisoned in Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp. It may have been that

The Tower of London



Jakobs's criminal activities were primarily driven by the economic instability of the 1930s: in the ten years prior to his conviction in Switzerland he had been a dentist and had fathered three children by his wife Margarete Knoeffler.

From Sachsenhausen Jakobs was called up into the army and then recruited by the Abwehr. By 1940 he was being trained in espionage in Hamburg. During this time he unwisely confided to a friend that he was planning to use his mission to England as an opportunity to defect and move to America, where he had an aunt. This so-called friend informed the Gestapo but, somewhat incredibly, Jakobs was retained by the Abwehr and his mission went ahead.

Instead of taking his own life at the age of 42, Jakobs passed the night smoking cigarettes under the shelter of his camouflage parachute. When morning came, he attracted the attention of two farm workers by firing his Mauser pistol into the air. He then threw his pistol into his discarded steel helmet and declared that he was from Hamburg and was "in no war". The farm hands notified the Home Guard, who in turn notified the police. He was taken to Ramsey Police Station where Jakobs was found to be carrying (among other things) a map marked with the positions of RAF Upwood and the nearby airfield of Warboys, forged identity papers, a forged ration book, 2½ pounds of chocolate, a portion of German sausage and £497 in wads of £1 notes (worth around



Jakobs in April 1940



An x-ray showing Jakobs's broken ankle



Ramsey Police Station

£22,500 at 2016 prices). Under his flying suit he was wearing a dark grey suit and a grey tweed overcoat; in the rural district of Ramsey such city attire would have attracted as much attention as his pistols shots had he been able to walk.

Most incriminating were the radio transmitter and torn-up cipher disc that Jakobs had attempted to bury beneath him as he lay in the field. A doctor examined Jakobs's ankle, diagnosed it as broken and put it in a splint. The doctor pronounced Jakobs fit to travel and so he was taken by car from Ramsey to Cannon Row Police Station in London. Here he gave a voluntary statement before being taken to the hospital in Brixton Prison.



The torn-up code disc that was to prove crucial in Jakobs's trial

The next day Jakobs was interrogated by MI5 but the severity of his injury was such that he needed more serious medical attention. Jakobs ended up spending two months in Dulwich Hospital, where the complications from his injury included sepsis and pneumonia. Once he had recovered he gave a series of statements to MI5. He claimed that he

had been sent to England to report on weather conditions but had no intention of helping Germany and was intending to defect as soon as he had landed. MI5 often turned captured spies into double agents but this was out of the question for Jakobs because the story of his capture had become well known.

It had also been well known to MI5 that Jakobs was on his way. British Intelligence had learned this from a real double agent called Arthur Owens. As a Welsh nationalist, Owens felt little loyalty to the United Kingdom and was recruited as a spy by Germany in 1938. His primary motivation was the attractive young women that the Abwehr made available to him. However, the prospect of greater financial gain caused Owens to volunteer his services as a double agent to the British intelligence services. He was code-named SNOW (a partial anagram of his surname) and informed MI5 of many incoming spies, including Jakobs.

Jakobs was tried by a military tribunal in Chelsea over two days at the start of August 1941. The trial took place behind closed doors to preserve the secrecy of the double-crossing system. Jakobs was defended by an Oxford-educated attorney by the name of E.V.E. White. A key exhibit in the prosecution was the destroyed code disc: it was argued that had Jakobs seriously intended to defect to the British then he would have left the code disc intact.

Unsurprisingly, Jakobs was found guilty under the Treachery Act 1940 and sentenced to death. Jakobs wrote a plea for mercy to King George VI, but His Majesty extended no clemency. This was hardly surprising



Arthur Owens

given Britain's desperate situation at the time: the USA had not yet entered the war and Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union was well under way. Spies were normally hanged during the Second World War but Jakobs was considered to be an enemy combatant and so it was determined that he should be executed by firing squad.

So it was that in the early morning of 15 August 1941, Josef Jakobs was taken to a miniature rifle range located between the inner and outer walls of the Tower. Here he was tied to a wooden chair and shot by a firing squad composed of eight members of the Scots Guards. His last words were "Shoot straight, Tommies". The autopsy reported that Jakobs received seven shots to the heart and one to the head.

With the perspective of history, it seems clear that Jakobs was simply a family man and a bit of a rogue who had been pressed into espionage, given minimal training and then booted out of a plane over East Anglia. Jakobs has not been forgotten by his descendants: one of his granddaughters, a Canadian by the name of Giselle, has made many visits to London

to learn about her grandfather's capture and execution. Until a few years ago, RAF Upwood was used as the venue for Ramsey 1940s weekend (see Resign! issue 95). The chances are that Josef Jakobs would have much preferred to attend such an event with his wife and three children than to spy for the regime that had put him in a concentration camp.



The chair on which Jakobs was executed



The rifle range where Jakobs was executed

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.



Mark Gidman

"Learning and earning"

Name or preferred name?

Mark Gidman

Why that nickname or nom de plume?

Well, it can be Governor General of Torquay, Baron Gidman of Highgate and Hampstead. Recently I just "awarded" myself the title "Lord Chancellor of

the Sheridan Club"—with a stipend of one pint of ale per annum.

Where do you hail from?

Torquay, "The English Riviera". Where Agatha Christie is from—stayed in her house once.

Favourite Cocktail?

French 75

Most Chappist skill?

My St Andrews tie knot is awesome.

Most Chappist possession?

Gold pocket watch—inherited from my Grandfather...beautiful.

Personal Motto?

"Learning and earning".

Favourite Quotes?

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy." —Shakespeare. It's the one I use the most.

"If not you who? If not now, when? —Jewish proverb

"Call me Trim Tab." —Richard Buckminster Fuller

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

I have a qualification in carpentry from the City and Guilds.

How long have you been involved with the NSC?

Since 2010... it was a real life changer for me—made some lovely friends, whole new social circle. A truly unusual club.

How did you hear about the Club to begin with?

I think I typed "vintage", "gentleman's club", or something like it into a search engine and scrolled through

a few pages and found it. I wish it was something a bit more romantic...but it's modern technological times, alas.

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

Angels Tea Rooms in my home village of Babbacombe—their scones are amazing.

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

Tough one that. Probably...

Winston Churchill: well travelled, humorous, witty.

M.R. James for his story telling style.

Warren Buffett for solid intellectual conversation and his encyclopaedic knowledge of psychology.

Favourite Member of the Glorious Committee?

Artemis Scarheart.

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

Yes, I did mine on Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia. That's a man who lived the good life of wine, woman and song—he did a "bit of politics" too



when he wasn't travelling the world.

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.



A True History of Dub Step

Count Martindt Cally von Callomon on the glories of dubbin

MY BOOTED FOOT hits the soaking grass and the water droplets perch on my toe cap like transparent pearls. They do not soak the leather—discolouring it as they usually seep into its tiny pores—they are apart, solitary beads of winter rain.

Now is the time of year where the wardrobe changes, where pullovers emerge from summer slumber, where the boots come out and the dubbin goes on.

Like all good things, dubbin comes in tins, as a concoction of wax, oil and tallow, rendering this unsuitable for most vegetarians other than me. When challenged as to why I don't eat meat I'm often asked why I wear leather boots. "I don't eat my boots," is the only answer I can give, and my boots, built especially for me by William Lennon in Derbyshire, like the cows that created them, need feeding. We feed cows to cows: beef fat (tallow) to fat beefy boots.

I took a pair of worn-out, cracked 1930s Buckinghams up to Lennons and they used them as a model to build me new boots, perfect in every recreated detail. They even rescued and applied the cotton heel pull-on tab from the originals, like building a new Bugatti around an



original radiator. The new boots were begat of the old ones.

My mother made me polish my shoes for school. Reluctantly I'd smear the pitch-black Kiwi on to my Tufs—a shoe made with a cheap dimpled leather composite that didn't reward me with a shine, just an ungrateful mottled black dull complexion. I never saw the point and dragged them on the pavement on the way home hoping they'd wear out. No-one bought me Wayfinders with the compass in the heel and animal tracks on the sole. I come from a broken home.

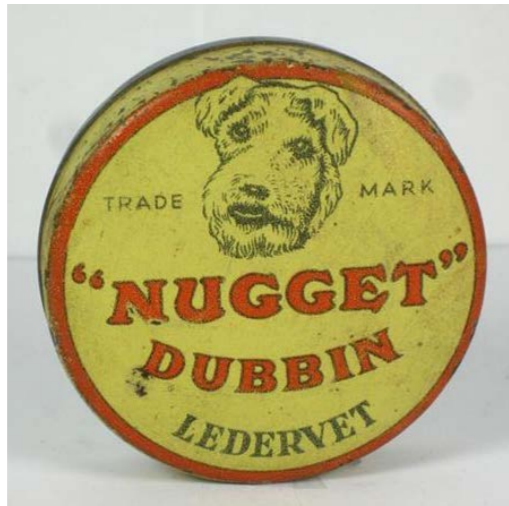


To dubbin a boot is not to cosset it as with a decent shoe polish. It's the narcotic of shoecare; you need "works" to gently heat the stuff and a separate brush with which to apply it. There is no smug final brush-off so that the leather gleams back at you. No, there's just the heady, oily matt finish of a boot prepared to repel moisture, sacrificing the vanity of the shine for the comfort of dry feet. All with a dense vapour like meths and petrol and tar.

Some time in the olden days, man realised that this valuable oily spew, when applied to leather, kept the best side dry, and so dubbin was invented, the word derived from the gerund describing the action of the dub: applying the stuff to leather. Just as sound is dubbed on to film, so we dub leather to make it work better.

Dubbed boots stop squeaking. The very gum that saves any decent boot also heralds their demise as the oil destroys the stitching that binds the uppers to the lowers, feet get wet

one way or the other. Yet today I welcome the wet season; I can march through puddles, I can marvel at the coffee-rich mud spatters that sit on top of the boot, the rich fecal detritus of road, track and field, my fecal attire pressed into another year's service, one that may well outlive me, and become models for new boots to be made, new boots then to be coated in fresh dubbin.



THE VIEW FROM ACROSS THE POND

Roy S. Engoron on the mess in the US

A FEW YEARS AGO, I was at a dinner at a lovely restaurant in London sitting next to a friend. During the meal there was the usual banter. Finally, my friend leaned in to me and said, “May I ask you a question?” I said most certainly. He looked a bit sheepish and said, quite *sotto voce*, “What is it with you Americans and your guns?”

What is it indeed with the seeming preoccupation with guns in the United States? It must be difficult to understand in the UK, where gun laws are so very strict. A year or two ago, I looked up civilian deaths due to hand guns. If I remember, in that year there were about 100 in the UK, 3 in Japan, and over 300,000 in the US. I sit here writing this, on 3rd December, just hearing the news coming in from San Bernardino about the shoot-out at a centre to help the disabled. Right now, there are 14 confirmed killed and 17 wounded (this number would increase to 22 the following day), but their prognoses are not certain. If the reasons of how we got here elude me, it must be completely incomprehensible to people in other parts of the world. Let me state categorically that people running around carrying guns—people not trained properly, people with mental problems, people trying to get everyone armed—scars the living daylights out of me. The question is then, “How did we get here?”

After the War of Independence, as our Constitution was being written, there were provisions that were not included in the body of the document. Finally, an agreement was reached that as soon as possible after the Constitution was adopted these provisions would be included. These became what is known as our Bill of Rights, and included the right of free speech, religious freedom, the right to assemble, etc. The Second Amendment is referred to as the Right to Bear Arms. It is this part of the Constitution that many people rely on to make

certain that there could be a gun in every home in the country. Right now, there is an estimate of 350 million guns in the US which is pretty much the population. We might want to kick that up a notch—those are just the guns that we know of.

Look at the Amendment, a mere 27 words. Perhaps people from other countries can understand the root of the problem—and make no mistake, it is a problem.

AMENDMENT II

Right to bear arms

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

It becomes very clear that when the Amendment was adopted on December 15, 1791, when they had just fought a brutal war for freedom, this would have made a lot of sense. In case no one noticed, this is the 21st century.

The United States Constitution is a very short document. The genius of the Founding Fathers is that they allowed a flexibility in the wording so that the document could be amended as time went on. The authors knew that times changed. However, how could they possibly even imagine AK 47s, IEDs, and rapid fire pistols? What seemed so cut and dry in the 18th century is a source of controversy in the 21st.

It must be noted that the Amendment states quite clearly that a well regulated Militia is necessary for the security of a free State. We no longer have militias in the US—at least not legal ones. We have a standing army, marine corps, navy, coast guard and air force. One would hope that the armed forces equipped with the latest technology, employing highly trained individuals, might be enough to insure the security of the State.

The subject of gun control is so divisive that all reason seems to have fled. There are certain



The Minute Man statue, Lexington, Massachusetts

chemicals in over-the-counter medications, usually having to do with nasal problems, that can be used in the making of some illegal drugs including meth. For the average person who needs these meds, one must sign a register to go on record that the drug will be used for the purpose for which it was intended. Yet in some states (and it is a state issue) one can simply go to a gun show to buy a gun. The maniac who murdered 20 children (the oldest of which was seven) at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut, bought all his weapons legally. He most probably should never have even been issued a driver's license. Yet he was allowed to buy fire arms with no in-depth check.

Why would this become a state issue? As most are aware, there are 50 individual states—hence the name United States. Each state has a governor and other elected officials. Each state has counties, wards, or parishes usually run by a mayor. Each state may levy its own taxes, control its own infrastructure and be responsible for the education of its children. The Constitution states that subjects not specifically covered in its text then become the responsibility of the individual state. The United States Constitution gives the right to bear arms to its citizens; it

does not go further to control that right. There are states with stricter gun laws than others. My state, California, has some of the strictest gun laws in the country. That did little good in San Bernardino since, at this point in time, it appears that the firearms were bought legally somewhere. In some communities where gun control of some sort was enacted, the cases went to the courts to be decided there.

Today, after the news broke at what was evening in the UK, the BBC ran the story with the caption, “just another typical day in the United States of America”. What must you think of us as a society that enables innocent people to be gunned down in schools, movie theatres, hospitals, medical clinics and shopping malls? What must you think of the United States, just a few weeks before Christmas, that there have been over 300 mass shootings in the country?

A friend has a wonderful perspective on the situation. He is of the opinion that—most certainly—citizens of the US should not be denied the right to bear arms. In the spirit of the original Amendment, he suggested that every citizen, at birth, be issued a musket and bayonet.

The Cocktail Cabinet

A log about grog

Drunk as a lord

By David Bridgman-Smith

As drinks correspondent for the NSC, I am constantly on the lookout for unusual and rare spirits to feature, and sometimes this involves a little extra effort. In the case of today's spirits, it required going through airport security, a metal detector, and an x-ray scan for my bag—yet my location was not Heathrow Airport, but central London: the Palace of Westminster. My targets were a range of spirits produced especially for the House of Commons and the House of Lords.

For many years, the Palace of Westminster has issued contracts to distillers to produce branded spirits. This practice goes back decades and previous gin producers include the Plymouth Gin Distillery.

While these spirits bear the moniker “House of Commons”, they are—bizarrely—not necessarily those served in the Palace of Westminster to MPs and Peers. During 2012 and 2013, they consumed 463 litres of Gordon's Gin, 52 litres of Famous Grouse, and 13.3 litres of Jack Daniels.

Sipsmith House of Commons Gin

(£28 for 70cl, 40.7% ABV)
This is bottled at 40.7% ABV, which is 0.9% lower than their flagship gin (bottled at 41.6% ABV). This is important, as with variance in the % ABV comes a difference in the concentration of botanical oils

and, thus, a difference in the flavour.

Nose: Citrus and vanilla, with a great selection of rich, plummy fruit notes and pine jelly.
Taste: Exceptionally smooth palate, with notes of spicy coriander up front, as well as some earthy floral notes, before creamy citrus and a long, dry finish with a hint of black pepper. Overall, this is a complex, smooth, and very accessible spirit.

As would be expected, the gin worked well with tonic, creating a light and refreshing drink. It works well with both Schweppes and Fever-Tree alike. It makes a characterful Martini, but the lower % ABV stops it from being too overwhelming. And while it makes a perfectly serviceable Negroni, some readers may find it a touch on the light side.



House of Commons Blended Scotch Whisky (£23 for 70cl, 40.0% ABV)

This is produced by Old St Andrews Ltd using a blend of malted barley and grain whisky from across Scotland.

Nose: Light and bright, with lots of grape, apple, and ever-so-slightly musky sherry notes.

Taste: A dry apple and grape fruitiness, combined with drier notes of vanilla and un-buttered toast, all wrapped up with the tartness of a dry sherry.

Finish: More subdued notes of dry, red apple and vanilla oak.

With soda: A flavoursome drink with some sweetness, as well as vanilla, caramel, oak, and a touch of crème brûlée. This is mellow and accessible—perfect to provide refreshment after a long day of debating bills.

House of Lords 10 Year Old Speyside Single Malt Scotch Whisky

(£29 for 70cl, 40%ABV)

I was keen to buy a single malt whisky, but was not especially excited by the Speaker Bercow House of Commons Single Malt, so I switched to “the other place” and went for the House of Lords Whisky.

This whisky, matured and bottled by Gordon & MacPhail in Elgin, Scotland, is specially selected for the House of Lords. The spirit has been aged in oak sherry casks for a minimum of 10 years.

Nose: Chocolate and sweet, juicy raisins, as well as lots of honey, ginger, and nutmeg. After a while, there's the tartness of grape—as in a sweet dessert wine—and a sweetness more reminiscent of sticky toffee pudding with hints of treacle and dates.

Taste: Initial sweetness, quickly followed by rich, sweet wood, spiced toffee, Calvados and fruity sherry, and the slightest touch of tobacco.

Finish: Spiced grape and apple, with a pleasant dry, creamy vanilla woodiness.

With soda: A delicious whisky soda that really helps to unveil some of the whisky's subtleties:



hints of tea and cherry pipe tobacco come through, before a dry, fruity finish and hint of wood smoke.

In Conclusion

Overall, I was impressed with the spiritous offerings of the Palace of Westminster, and it was certainly worth the extra effort to acquire them. However, with the quality of the Sipsmith gin and especially the House of Lords Single Malt, I think that our elected and un-elected representatives should definitely consider switching from Gordon's and Famous Grouse.

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



NSC FILM NIGHT

Leslie Howard: *The Man Who Gave a Damn* (2015)

Wednesday 13th January

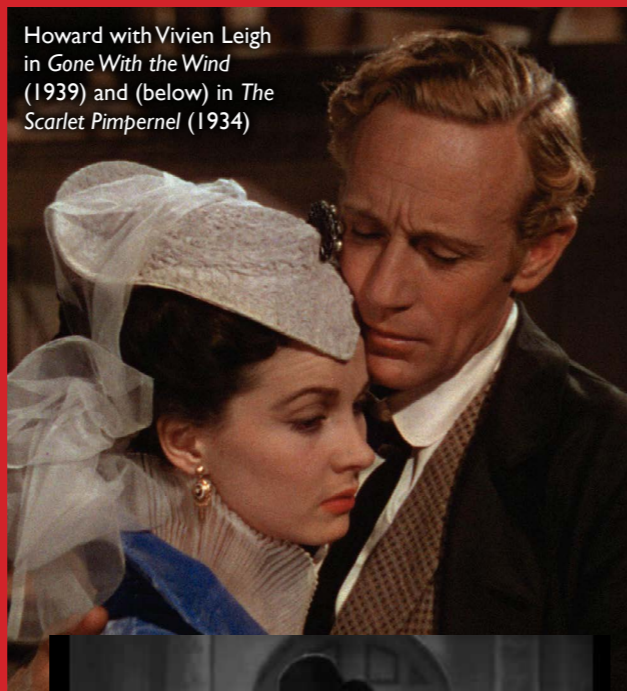
7pm–11pm

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

Admission: Free

Our Film Night this month is a special treat: made by Thomas Hamilton, a previous visitor to the NSC Club Night, this documentary profiles Leslie Howard, the in-demand matinée idol of the 1930s, seen as a perfect English gent and one of the stars of *Gone With the Wind* and *The Scarlet Pimpernel*. Despite his success in Hollywood, when the Second World War came along he felt the need to be back in England, where he helped the war effort through making films with strong political subtexts. So strong, in fact, that there are still speculations about the shooting down of his civilian plane by the Luftwaffe in 1943...

We are very lucky to have Thomas himself on hand to introduce the film and answer any questions you might have.



Howard with Vivien Leigh in *Gone With the Wind* (1939) and (below) in *The Scarlet Pimpernel* (1934)



CLUB NOTES

Club Tie Corner

THE CLUB'S STEALTHY infiltration of the media continues, storming into 2016 with this snapshot of Yootha Joyce as Mildred Roper in Seventies TV sitcom *George and Mildred*. Thanks to Ian Treal for bringing Mildred's affiliations to our attention (and to Neil McKeown for additional picture research). And we have Luke Wenban to thank for this shot from 1972 Hitchcock shocker *Frenzy*, in which a serial killer is strangling women with a necktie. (You'll be relieved to hear that, as a deliberate safety measure, NSC ties are too poorly made to be deployed as a garotte.)

Metrotrash

I WAS UNEXPECTEDLY contacted by producers of a French TV magazine show hosted by Antoine de Caunes—older readers will remember him from British TV shows *Rapido* and *Eurotrash*. They were filming a segment on Chappism and vintage enthusiasts over the weekend of 12th and 13th December. In addition to chatting with NSC Member Mark Gidman and *Chap* drinks editor Neil Ridley at the Candlelight Club, M. de Caunes attended an Extraordinary



Club Secretary Clayton Hartley (left) and Giles Culpepper (right) gaze manfully into the future with Antoine de Caunes

Meeting of the NSC at our traditional haunt of the Wheatsheaf pub, where Chairman Torquil Arbuthnot and *Chap* co-founder Vic Darkwood taught him the Chap Olympics disciplines of Trouser Semaphore, Hop, Skip and G&T and The Ambassador's Balls. Footage to come.

New Members

A HEARTY WELCOME to to Max FitzGerald and Jodie Dean, both from Eastbourne in East Sussex, both of whom joined in the last month. (In fact Max bought the Membership as a Christmas present for Jodie—what more could any woman want?)



Jon Finch as Richard Blaney in *Frenzy*



George and Mildred



Forthcoming Events



**BOTH OFFICIAL NSC JAUNTS (AND) 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 6th January

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 clarinetist Ewan Bleach with various guests.

Chills 'n' Fever

Saturday 9th January

9pm–2am

Paper Dress Vintage, 352A Mare Street, Hackney Central, E8 1HR London

Admission: Free before 10pm, £5 thereafter

A vintage discotheque at the new premises of Paper Dress Vintage shop. Jazz, blues, R&B, Latin, ska and more in this eclectic night of platter-spinning, featuring resident DJs Jon Clay, Paul Clifford, Strutter Brown and Daddy Rich, plus guest DJ Tall Simon.

NSC Film Night: Leslie Howard: *The Man Who Gave a Damn* (2015)

Wednesday 13th January

7.30pm–11pm

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

Admission: Free

See page 26.

The Sheridan Club Goes to Henley

Saturday 16th January

Leaving Paddington circa 11am, meeting at the Flower Pot at midday

A jaunt to the country idyll that is Henley on Thames to bring scandal and debauchery to the natives, kindly organised by Stewart Lister Vickers. Expect original Tudor pubs looking out on to the Thames, hiring rowing boats and visiting Stewart's former workplace, Upstairs & Downstairs, a 1920s teahouse, for tea with the Mayor. Stewart's proposed itinerary is:

11am Paddington (there is a train at 11.09)

12pm Saunter to the Flower Pot for pub lunch followed by charitable establishments and antiques.

4pm Upstairs and Downstairs Teahouse, which should be reasonably quiet after the Christmas rush. As such, the Mayor Lorraine Hillier may be able to join us. A hundred different blends of tea are available as well as savouries and cakes.

6pm Pubs. So begins the mission to visit Henley's pubs, many originally belonging to the now closed Brakspear's brewery. Expect oak beams and fine ales. The Angel, The Anchor, Station House, The Queen Victoria... There's also a Chinese takeaway round the corner from the station. Last train back to Paddington is at 11.55pm, getting in at 1.05am.

The John Steed Ball

Saturday 30th January

7pm–2am

The Eight Club, 1 Dysart Street, London EC2A 2BX (Old Street, Shoreditch High Street,

Liverpool Street and Moorgate stations)
Admission: Dining £140, non-dining £40 earlybird, £55 full price

Mrs Peel's, the Swinging Sixties party inspired by Emma Peel, the catsuited heroine of stylish 1960s TV show *The Avengers*, invites you to a charity ball in honour of actor Patrick Macnee who played Emma's bowler-hatted partner John Steed, and who passed away late last year.

In a penthouse club, with views across the city from heated terraces, there will be a gala dinner with special guests, exclusive performances and a charity auction, followed by a Mrs Peel's club night with live music, dance acts, DJing and more.

• Special guests **Peter Wyngarde**, star of 1960s TV detective show *Jason King*, and actress and singer **Aimi MacDonald**, both of whom appeared in episodes of *The Avengers*, plus Rodney Marshall, author of books on the series

- Hosting by lounge legend Count Indigo
- Live music from psychedelic rock band The Jetset International
- DJ Martin Green creating a soundtrack ambience
- Mind-expanding gyrations from our very own six-piece dance troupe Catsuit A-Go-Go
- A vintage 30/98 motorcar, the model driven by Steed, kindly loaned by Vauxhall
- Awesome views from our rooftop terraces
- Psychedelic lighting effects
- Cocktail bar

For dinner guests the evening begins at 7pm with a three-course meal, featuring a performance by Catsuit A-Go-Go, a talk by Rodney Marshall on Steed's cultural impact, a personal recollection by Peter Wyngarde followed by a Q&A session with him, a charity auction and a video message from **Dame Diana Rigg** herself.

For non-dining ticket holders the club night begins upstairs at 8.30 and features live music from the seven-piece Jetset International (playing your Sixties favourites and ticking all the psychedelic boxes—Hammond organ, sitar, flute and go-go dancing backing singers), Aimi MacDonald ("the lovely Aimi MacDonald" of *At Last the 1948 Show*) in conversation and singing to piano accompaniment, DJing from Martin Green, dance routines from Catsuit A-Go-Go and a talk by Rodney Marshall. Peter

Patrick Macnee as John Steed—come and celebrate his life and style at the John Steed Ball



Peter Wyngarde




Aimi MacDonald



Wyngarde will also be holding court in the library for the benefit of nightclub guests.

The event has been kindly sponsored by Studio Canal, who own the worldwide rights to *The Avengers*, and we will be raising money for The Actors Fund and Medicinema. More at www.mrspeels.club.



Luke Wenban and
Matthew Howard,
the Gilbert and
George of
the NSC

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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.