

DESIGN!

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW SHERIDAN CLUB • ISSUE 127 MAY 2017

A-PUNTING WE WILL GO

Tales of the annual
“Punt, Picnic ‘n’
Plunge” in Oxford

**A gentleperson’s
guide to letter
writing**

Part 2 of Richard
D’Astartly’s paean to the
handwritten missive

How queer!
Auntie Maureen on
London’s illicit club
scene in the early
20th century

Essex Gothic

A peek into the world
of Chloe Clark





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

The Next Meeting

The next Club Meeting will take place on Wednesday 3rd May in the upstairs room at The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB, from 7pm until 11pm, when Francesca Albini will give a talk on chapbooks, together with her publisher Alban Low of Sampson Low. The talk will be about chapbooks in the past and in the present, about the chapmen who sold them and sometimes wrote them, and about the publisher Sampson Low, founded in 1793.

The Last Meeting

Our speaker was Auntie Maureen, with a talk examining the forbidden subcultures of early 20th-century London and the clandestine clubs that sprouted up to cater for them, safe places where gay men and women could be themselves—beginning with the fancy-dress Chelsea Arts Ball which was seen to be



hijacked by men seizing the opportunity to dress in drag and going on to include clubs like the Caravan and Billies, as well as the Shim Sham which specifically catered for queer black customers. Sadly the history of these places seemed to have revolved mostly around police surveillance, disgusted neighbours, raids and arrests. In this year, the 50th since homosexual acts were legalised by the Sexual Offences Act, Maureen has been engaged in a number of events marking this anniversary, and she showed us photos from a recent one at what is, as near as possible, the original site of the Caravan, which they lovingly decorated to match original photos of it. (They even smoked loads of fags in there and stamped out the butts, to get an authentic stale cigarette aroma...)

An essay from the talk begins on page 4.

An example of the chapman's wares



(Above) Maureen commences, to a packed house (right); (below, l-r) Birgit, Mrs Palmer-Lewis and Dave "Affability" Hollander



(Right) "Chuckles" Younghusband attempts to film the talk, even putting a microphone on Maureen; I don't think it worked



(Above) Maureen with a pair of "Hitchy Koos"; Darcy Sullivan; (right) Brandi Amis-Towler; Mark Christopher and Jack Defer; (below) new member Stav Bee expounds



Dave and Craigho with the Club's latest acquisition, a flag

Queer City Nights

Stories of London's hidden homo nightlife before
The Sexual Offences Act 1967 • By Auntie Maureen

IN THE 1960s, a socialist MP, Leo Abse, and a peer, Lord Arran, put forward proposals to change the way in which criminal law treated homosexual men by means of the Sexual Offences Bill. This was an attempt to liberalise the law relating to male homosexuality.

After World War II there had been an increase in arrests and prosecutions, and by the end of 1954, in England and Wales, there were 1,069 men in prison for homosexual acts, with an average age of 37. The Wolfenden committee had been set up to investigate homosexuality and prostitution in 1954. It came to the conclusion that criminal law could not credibly intervene in the private sexual affairs of consenting adults in the privacy of their homes. The position was summarised by the committee as “unless a deliberate attempt be made by society through the agency of the law to equate the sphere of crime with that of sin, there must remain a realm of private that is in brief, not the law’s business” (Wolfenden Report, 1957).

What followed was The Sexual Offences Act 1967, an Act of Parliament in the United Kingdom to amend the law of England and Wales relating to homosexual acts. It decriminalised these homosexual acts in private between two men, both of whom had to have attained the age of 21. But until that point in time it *had* been the law’s business—its presence had been felt across the social landscape for men between the start of the 20th century until The Sexual Offences Act 1967. The stories that follow are based on police surveillance reports, army documents, letters of complaint and seized evidence during police raids, including love letters. While these official documents, many now at the National Archives in Kew or the Metropolitan Archives in Clerkenwell, show how the law criminalised gay men, they are also the proof of a vibrant hidden homo history of queer London. These nightlife adventures are mostly about gay men, as women’s gay lives were even more hidden, denied or erased.

Chelsea Arts Balls
The Chelsea Arts Club



Two Men as “Hitchy Koos” (a Cole Porter reference), Chelsea Arts Ball, 1913

was established on 21st March 1891. One of the main sources of income in the early days were the Chelsea Arts Balls. “Quartz Arts” Balls had been held in Paris and Rome for years, in which artists, musicians and people of the theatre celebrated “Mardi Gras”. The Club decided to hold a ball in London which would rival those of Paris or Rome, and the first was held at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, in 1908. It was a great success, and attracted many celebrities, socialites, and leading actors.

Encouraged by their success, they sought a larger venue and from 1910 the Chelsea Arts Balls were held in the Royal Albert Hall, and for the next 30 years these were the Bohemian centrepiece in London’s social season. Either held on Mardi Gras or New Year’s Eve, the balls were extravagant affairs with over 100 performers, lavish decorations and up to 4,000 dancers, ranging from artists to ordinary Londoners, all in fancy dress on the “Great Floor” of the Albert



Chelsea Arts Ball in 1929 and (above) 1927



Hall. With exotic themes such as “Egyptian”, “Noah’s Ark”, “Arabian Nights” and “Sun Worship”, revellers would dance into the early hours until a breakfast was eventually served at 5am as an end to the festivities. These pageants were notable for their “variety, inventiveness, vivacity and colour.” For many men, becoming part of this carnival generated a palpable sense of release. Hundreds of working-class queens flocked to the balls, discarding the masks they wore in everyday life, wearing drag, dressing outrageously, and socialising unashamedly while never appearing to be anything out of the ordinary. In so doing, they were further

22/11
 26/11
 14/12/11
 Are the Police really going
 to allow the disgraceful
 scenes, of previous years,
 of degenerate boys and
 in female attire
 parading about
 at Lady Malcolm's Servants
 Ball, at the Albert
 Hall tomorrow night?
 Such Exhibitions are degrading
 in the extreme, and can
 only lead to such cases

protected
 by the Albert Hall's
 unique legal status: it was outside the
 Met's operational sphere. For once, temporarily
 and locally, men could fully escape police
 surveillance.

The results were spectacular. In 1934, one
 observer described "groups of men dressed
 in coloured silk blouses and tight-hipped
 trousers...lips...rouged and faces painted. By
 their attitude and general behaviour they were
 obviously male prostitutes."

Working-class men re-appropriated not only
 The Chelsea Arts Balls but also another high-
 profile public event, creating a further space
 at the center of metropolitan culture in which
 they could be together and socialise, free of the
 constraints that braced everyday queer lives.
 This other annual dancing and socialising spot
 was Lady Malcolm's Servants Ball.

Lady Malcolm's Servants' Balls

In the past, the Royal Albert Hall had been
 associated with Royalty and the upper classes
 of British society, but between 1930 and 1938
 it played host to a rather different event for

the large population of London's domestic
 servants. Lady Malcolm's Servants' Balls were
 an amazing opportunity for servants from all
 over the capital to have a night of dancing and
 socialising at a reasonable cost. This would
 almost certainly be the only night of the year
 when they would be able to dress up and dance
 until midnight, meet other servants and to
 have the sort of evening that was normally the
 preserve of their masters and mistresses.

The Servants' Balls were organised by
 Lady Jeanne Malcolm, wife of the Scottish
 Conservative MP Sir Ian Malcolm. Lady
 Malcolm had started the balls in 1923, in a
 very small venue in Kensington with only 360
 guests. The event was a huge success, word
 spread and the event grew bigger every year,
 moving from venue to venue until it ended up
 at the Royal Albert Hall. In 1986, a letter
 appeared in the *Mirror* newspaper from a
 reader who had been a 13-year-old servant
 in a house in Grosvenor Square, saying
 that the ball was a thrilling, glamorous
 occasion for servants and was very much
 appreciated by many for whom a night
 out was a rare event and whose wages
 were usually sent home to support their family.

Lady Malcolm also ensured that well-known
 figures from the music and theatre world were
 invited to judge the fancy dress competitions
 and to hand out prizes. One newspaper
 reported that Lady Malcolm had specified
 fancy dress, so that the servants would not feel
 embarrassed by not being able to buy expensive
 dresses or suits for the evening.

However, exactly because of the fancy dress
 and masked ball themes the annual event
 became a home for some "undesired elements".
 In the 1920s and 1930s the balls became a
 fixture of the gay scene in London, perhaps
 because of the cheap ticket prices and the
 degree of privacy offered by such large numbers
 of people. From the early 1930s the organisers
 of both the Chelsea Arts Ball as well as Lady
 Malcolm's Servants Balls were increasingly
 alarmed by these "disgraceful scenes", and
 a nagging sense that men's behaviour was
 somehow out of control.

In 1936 Lady Malcolm herself wrote
 cryptically—apparently in some desperation—to
The Times: "Each year I notice at the ball a
 growing number of people, who, to be frank,

are not of the class for whom the ball is
 designed. It is what it is called—a servants'
 ball, and I am jealous that it shall go on
 deserving that name."

Both balls employed private stewards
 to maintain "order" and exclude
 "undesirables". From 1933, having failed
 to secure a police presence, Lady Malcolm
 employed two ex-CID officers to remove
 any identifiable "sexual perverts". From
 1935 her tickets were sold with the proviso
 that "NO MAN IMPERSONATING A WOMAN
 AND NO PERSON UNSUITABLY ATTIRED WILL
 BE ADMITTED". On entry, men's costumes
 had to be approved by a "Board of
 Scrutineers".

Whatever they tried, however, the
 organizers could neither keep the
 "degenerate boys" out nor adequately contain
 their visibility; indeed, they often struggled
 even to identify them amidst the fancy dressed
 crowds. In 1938, an observer thus described the
 "extraordinary number of undesirable men at
 this Ball who were unmistakably of the Homo-
 Sexual and male prostitute types".

Alongside the balls, nightclubs and
 underground bars mushroomed in Soho
 from the early 20th century. Located next to
 the fashionable West End, London shopping
 districts and Theatreland, Soho was also a
 district of migrants. The growth of jazz clubs,
 bottle parties, queer clubs and dining clubs



meant it was increasingly seen as a cosmopolitan
 and bohemian area. Challenging social
 conventions in their sexual behaviour, artists
 and writers mixed with the wealthy Bright
 Young Things of high society and the criminal
 underworld in these clubs.

The Cave of the Golden Calf

In 1912 Frida Strindberg opened one of the
 earliest nightclubs for queer socialising in
 Mayfair. The Cave of the Golden Calf was a
 drapers' basement located at 9 Heddon Street,
 not far from the Café Royal (68 Regent Street),
 which had been the haunt of Oscar Wilde
 and his circle and a well-known gay venue of
 the time. It has been described as possibly
 the first "gay bar" in the modern sense.
 It offered Londoners modern jazz and
 shocking dancers, and had a reputation for
 bohemianism and toleration of same-sex
 intimacy.

Frida Strindberg set up the low-ceilinged
 nightclub up as an avant-garde and artistic
 venture. It was decorated by Spencer
 Gore in Russian-Ballet-inspired murals,
 with contributions by Jacob Epstein and
 Wyndham Lewis. The club's emblem,
 the Golden Calf, is the symbol of biblical
 dissipation and idolatry. Luminaries who
 frequented the establishment included Ezra
 Pound, Katherine Mansfield, Ford Madox
 Ford and Augustus John. The club's self-
 advertised aim was to be "a place given up
 to gaiety". Here the cult of Oscar Wilde
 could continue to worship.

A NIGHT IN THE CAVE OF THE GOLDEN CALF.





Garland Wilson

guarantee safety. Raids and police harassment ensured that, while they were open to anyone for the price of a pint, they might be risky to visit.

Billie's Club on Little Denmark Street in London attracted a primarily queer male clientele and offered a space for men to meet, socialise and dance together. Police officers went undercover at Billie's and raided the club in 1936. According to Detective Sergeant George Miller there were few women present. He reported that the "majority of the males present

were of the nancy boy type. They used makeup and their hair was waved or dyed".



Leslie Hutchinson

The Shim Sham Club

Interwar Soho was ethnically and sexually diverse. Queer black artists and musicians made their mark on British culture

and LGBTQIA heritage in Soho's bars and clubs. Raids were therefore also targeted against black venues such as the Shim Sham Club that were tolerant to queer patrons.

The Shim Sham Club opened in the mid-1930s at 37 Wardour Street. It ran as a bottle party, a type of members club, which meant it could avoid late-night licensing restrictions on alcohol. The Shim Sham was frequented by artists, artist's models, writers and musicians. It also welcomed queer, black and Jewish Londoners. In the 1930s queer African-American creatives visiting London brought the buzz of the Harlem renaissance with them. The Shim Sham was a place of black queer liberation in a time of persecution. One of the key musicians there was queer African-American pianist Garland Wilson. Born in West Virginia in 1909, he performed in Europe in the 1930s and played at the Shim Sham many times, including its opening night in 1935.

Another habitué was Elisabeth Welch, an American singer and actor of African-American, Native-American, Irish and Scottish heritage, who starred in feature films including



Elisabeth Welch

Many gay men, however, could not afford the cost of entry to such lavish surroundings and ended up instead frequenting cottages and pubs. In Fitzrovia, just north of Oxford Street, there was a cluster of pubs (the Bricklayers Arms, the Wheatsheaf, the Marquis of Granby and the Fitzroy Tavern) which were bohemian enough to accommodate "the fringe of the gay worlds".

Billie's Club

The publicly accessible pubs and clubs that appeared from the 1930s onwards could not

the 1936 *Song of Freedom* alongside Paul Robeson. Elisabeth also knew bisexual black musician Leslie Hutchinson, lover to Cole Porter at one point, with whom she went to what she described as "the marvellous late-night dives of Soho which, in those days, attracted all the stars and theatregoers".

The Colony Room

The Colony Room was a private drinking club for artists and other creative people on the first floor of 41 Dean Street, Soho. The club was founded and presided over by Muriel Belcher from its inception in 1948 until her death in 1979. The artist Francis Bacon was a founder and lifelong member, and the club attracted Soho's alcoholic, artistic elite, including George Melly, Peter O'Toole, and Lucian Freud. After Belcher's death, the club attracted a new generation of young British artists including Damien Hirst and Tracey Emin. It finally closed its doors in 2008.

In 1948 Muriel Belcher managed to secure a 3-11pm licence for the Colony Room as a private members' club—public houses, by comparison, had to close at 2.30pm. Francis Bacon walked in the day after it opened. He was "adopted" by Belcher who called him "daughter", and gave him free drinks and £10 a week to bring in friends and rich patrons.

The club had a certain notoriety for its decor as well as its clientele; its bilious green walls were famous. In addition to its vile colour, the staircase that led to the establishment was described as foul-smelling and flanked by dustbins. Indeed, many members referred to it as "going up the dirty stairs".

Belcher's open attitude towards sexuality attracted many gay men to the club, many of them brought by her Jamaican girlfriend, Carmel. The Museum of London website describes how Belcher "created an ambiance which suited those who thought of themselves as misfits or outsiders". She has been described as "an imperious

lesbian with a fondness for insulting banter". Poet Brian Patten described the Colony Room as "a small urinal full of fractious old geezers bitching about each other". For journalist Molly Parkin, the club was "a character-building glorious hell-hole. Everyone left their careers at the roadside before clambering up the stairs and plunging into questionable behaviour".

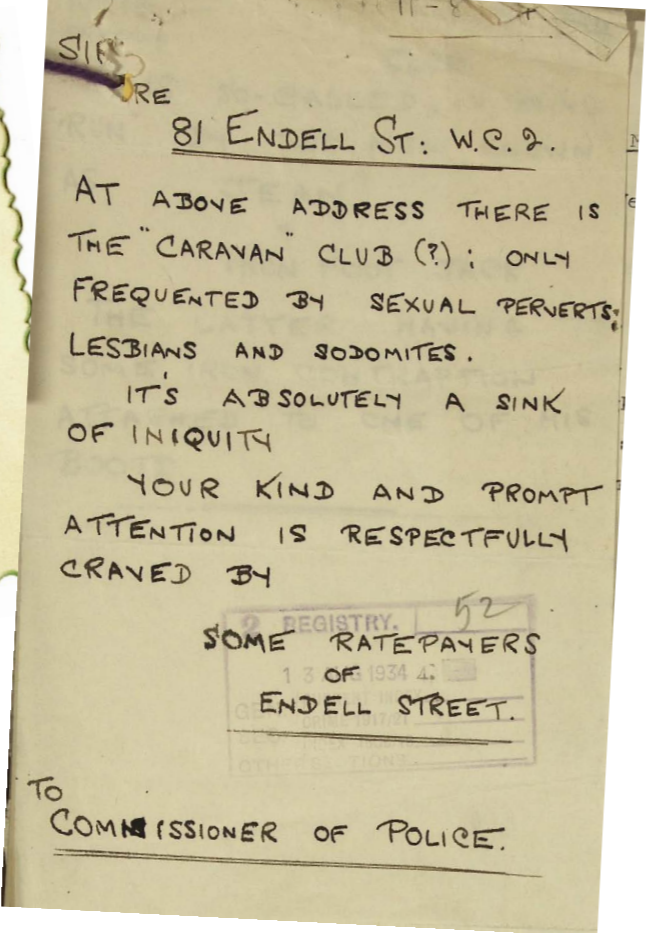
The Caravan

Another place of questionable reputation, according to various letters of complaint, was The Caravan, which billed itself as "London's greatest bohemian rendezvous, said to be the most unconventional place in town", a queer-friendly members' club founded in 1934 located at 81 Endell Street near Covent Garden. It was run by Billy Reynolds and a former strongman and escapologist called Jack Neave, known as "Iron Foot Jack" because of the metal platform he wore to compensate for a shortened leg.

To some, the Caravan Club was a fun place offering friendship and "all-night gaiety"; to others it was "absolutely a sink of iniquity... only frequented by sexual perverts, lesbians and sodomites". For the police, it was a place so dangerous that it required regular surveillance and a raid. Records in the National Archives

Muriel Belcher with bartender Ian Board (who took over after her death) and friends at the Colony





reveal
the Metropolitan
Police had it under surveillance from
October 1933 after a series of complaints.
Officers appear to have been stationed in the
Shaftesbury Theatre opposite, watching the
comings and goings from unused offices.

Reports include the observations that “men
were dancing with men and women were
dancing with women, a number of couples were
simply standing still, and I saw couples wriggling
their posteriors, and where I saw men together
they had their hands on the other’s buttocks and
were pressing themselves together. In fact all
the couples I saw were acting in a very obscene
manner.”

A total of 103 men and women were
arrested and taken to the nearby Bow Street
police station. Many of the young men there
were working class—labourers, shop assistants,
waiters. After the club’s very public closure in
1934, a big, farcical court case followed; *The
Daily Mirror* made a minor celebrity out of Jack

Neave. The
majority of the accused were found not guilty
in court on condition they never frequented
such a club again. There was, however, no
leniency for Reynolds and Neave, respectively
given sentences of 12 months and 20 months
hard labour in prison.

To celebrate 50 years since the
decriminalisation of male homosexuality the
National Trust recreated The Caravan in
March behind a shop front belonging to the
Freud Café-Bar on Shaftesbury Avenue. (This
location backed on to the building where the
original Caravan had traded in a basement.)
The Caravan’s striking orientalist bohemian
interior was re-created based on police
photographs taken after the raid in 1934,
now at the National and Metropolitan
Archives. Using documents, reports and
letters from these same archives I worked
with performance artist Timberlina to
re-imagine the club.



The Caravan in 1934 and
(right) recreated in 2017



RESOURCES

“If you went to clubs in those days before
the war, you’d have been arrested and put
in prison. I know personally a case where a
woman, who I knew very well, started this
gay club. Now I am talking many years ago,
before the war, and I could see the danger.
I said, you’ve got to stop it. But she took a
house in Holland Park. It was known as the
Holland Park case. They just danced, nothing
so blatant as they do now. And one Saturday
night the whole of Holland Park, reaching up
to Shepherd’s Bush I should think, was simply
full of Black Marias and police. People thought
the war had started or something. And there
were two young policemen who were dressed
up. Of course they gave the evidence. And
everyone was arrested.

“Now what I’m saying
is history. They took
them all to Brixton
prison. And kept them
there, they were not
given bail. When they
went up to the Old
Bailey, it was top news,
they had placards then,
you know. *The Evening
News* used to have a
placard on, and everyone
was talking about it.

“The judge made
them wear a placard. He said there’s too
many to deal with these terrible people, put
a placard on them and a number. And so they
were numbered, with the indignity of this
bloody placard. And then the trial came to the
time of the sentences and he sentenced them
to imprisonment.

“When it was all over, the judge called
these two detectives and praised them.
He said, I am going to recommend your
promotion for dealing with this horrible
case. I feel so sorry, it must have affected you
mentally. And I direct now that under no
circumstances must you ever be involved in a
case again of any description with homosexual
men because no human being could stand it.
It just shows you the scathing bitterness they
had for it.”

—Roy, born in Brixton in 1908, *Between
the Acts: Lives of Homosexual Men 1885–1967*,
edited by Kevin Porter and Jeffrey Weeks
(London: Routledge, 1991).

The Holland Park Avenue drag ball raid is
also covered in Matt Houlbrook’s excellent
book *Queer London*, where it is reported that
60 men were arrested in the raid leading
to a trial in March 1933: “The ballroom had
been let for a series of dances by Austin
S.—more commonly Lady Austin—a 24-year-
old barman, John P., a 22-year-old-waiter, and
Betty, who ran other West London dance
balls. Publicised via word of mouth and a flyer
advertising “Hotel Staff Dances” within a
network of friends working in nearby hotels,
the events were run “only for our love for
each other”.



Police raid
arrests, Fitzroy
Square, 1927

In court, arresting officers described a
“blatant” spectacle of sexual transgression:
men had danced together, kissed, and been
intimate: they had worn women’s clothes
and makeup and called themselves “Lady
Austin’s Camp Boys”... David M., one of these
arrested, asked of one policeman: “Surely in
a free country we can do what we like? We
know each other and are doing no harm...it is
a pity these people don’t understand our love.
I am afraid a few will have to suffer yet before
our ways are made legal.”

For those interested in viewing scans of
some of the original documents from the
National and London Metropolitan Archives
please email ask@auntimaureen.info and I
can give you access to a Dropbox archive for
your queer perusal.

And upon this charge cry 'God for Champagne, Scotch Eggs and St George'

By Stuart
Turner

A HALCYON MORNING OF clear blue skies and warming sunshine heralded the NSC's annual St George's Day "Punt, Picnic and Plunge" in the city of dreaming spires.

This was fortunate for Stuart Mitchell who, as our resident club "weather scryer", was under threat of significant marital strife if wife Frances' chosen outfit was despoilt by an unforeseen shower.

Following previous disappointing experiences at the Turf Tavern, Artemis had secured the club a splendid new forward base of operations in the form of the Bear Inn. Claiming to be the "Oldest pub in Oxford" the Bear is a charming old hostelry with its walls adorned with thousands of club ties (unfortunately the collection is now closed and the proffered NSC tie was politely refused).

To the great delight of Lady Compton-Bassett, the Glorious Committee for Life (in absentia) had generously laid on some light entertainment in the form of a Morris Dancing Festival, a troop from which was enthusiastically "Morrissing" on the road outside the pub. (I believe some photos were taken.) Frances Mitchell, unable to suppress her Irish heritage, was soon to be found in a side room giving it the full "river dance" accompanied by a trio of folk musicians on fiddles and drums.

Quickly the pub filled to capacity with straw boaters, striped blazers, picnic baskets and Beckwiths aplenty, mingling good heartedly with beards, bells, ribbons and top hats adorned with flowers and pheasant feathers.

At the allotted hour, the group supped up and



The Friday night black-tie dinner

set off on the short brisk stroll to the boatyard at Magdalen Bridge.

Our numbers swelled as members assembled from all corners of the civilised world (and Wales), but we were still lacking the shaman-like leadership of a member of the Glorious Committee.

As the minutes ticked by, minds and bladders turned to the retrospective wisdom of downing that last sneaky drink before leaving the pub.

This resulted in a lady member, who in the interests of gentlemanly discretion I shall not name, to adopt drastic measures by faking a pregnancy to gain benevolent access to a nearby hotel bathroom.

Eventually La Famille Scarheart arrived, we were quorate, and Andrew and his team did their usual very efficient job of getting people, children and picnics safely and drily ensconced into their respective punts.

Having been spoilt by uncharacteristically nice weather, we were further blessed by the



Clockwise from the top: Stewart before he fell in, just above the rollers; Stuart Mitchell punts Dr Blah and George; the children do a spot of trawling for haddock; the Beckwith and Lakin families set sail:

River Gods with a low and slow-moving current, the upshot of which was that the flotilla made splendid progress to our first stop where tradition dictates we moor up against the *Magdalen College – No Mooring, Strictly Private* sign. Once the flotilla had regrouped, we punted onward up river.

Our blessing continued when we reached The Rollers and found them dry, available for use and agreeably free of goose excrement (a substance that has caused the downfall of many a hearty chap and fair lady). Biceps bulged and backs strained as the boats were hauled up over the rollers and launched into the uncharted “upper reaches” of the river.

All the boats that is, bar one...

For in this, the year of our lord two thousand and seventeen, and in the absence of his Squire Henri De La Chance, the venerable Scarheart had at last exhausted his supply of “I would gladly do the punting this year but ...” excuses and found himself stood on the unfamiliar business end of a punt with a large pole thrust into his hand.



Stuart and Frances Mitchell

It transpires that for all the qualities that he undoubtable possesses (Member of the Glorious Committee for Life, Defence Secretary, Humanitarian, Philanthropist, Raconteur, Bon Vivant, Father to the Future King of Warwickshire, Gold Medal Winner at the Chap Olympiad, etc...) proficiency in propelling a flat-bottomed boat with a stick is not counted amongst them.

It reached the point where the Curé, appearing simply accepting that his fate was now to spend his remaining eternity bouncing twixt bank and bush on the Cherwell, calmly handed his paddle to Chloe, laid on his back in the prow of the punt and waited for death's sweet release (see photo).

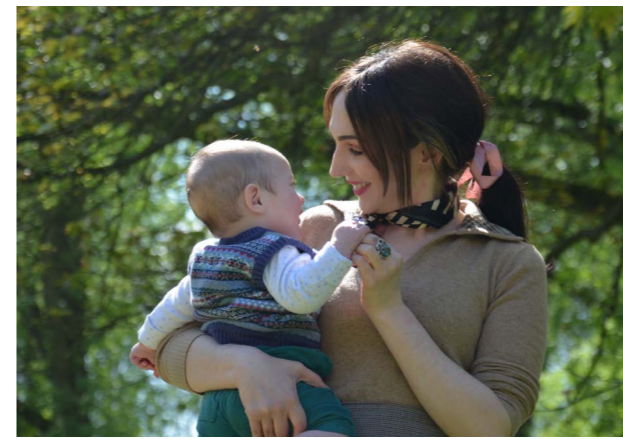
When it appeared that all hope was lost, Robert of the Clan Beckwith appeared like a tweed-clad superhero and with a single bound boarded the wayward punt.

Scarheart graciously relinquished the captaincy and, with a couple of deftly executed sweeps of the pole, Robert had the errant punt safely moored.

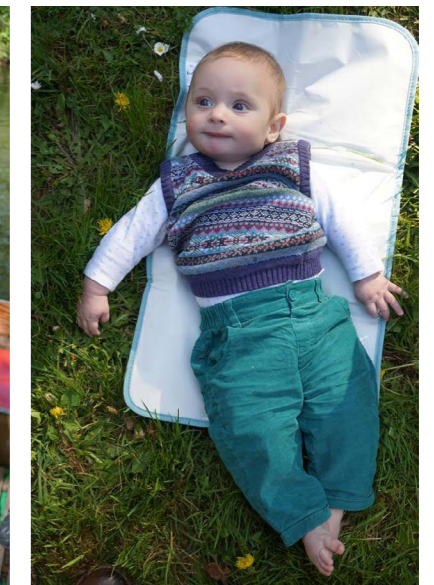
Chloe gamely volunteered to be launched “over the rollers” and soon found herself singlehandedly facing down a staunchly territorial Canadian Goose.

A picnic was taken in the park, where absent friends were toasted, fine provender was consumed and small children were exercised beneath the colours of the brand new NSC standard, which, in lieu of the flagpole, was tied to a nearby tree.

It was during luncheon that it was realised that in our haste to get underway, we had neglected to do the traditional “Chico St Martin Memorial Sweepstake”.



(Above) Young Max Scarheart is the centre of attention, with his aunt, mother and sun lounger; (below right) Stewart and George



This inexcusable oversight was swiftly rectified by Artemis and his trusty Moleskine notebook.

Once fed and (very well) hydrated, the flotilla launched back over the rollers and headed downstream. The stakes were high, the river gods had been very good to us all day, and this benevolence ultimately had to be repaid.

And the fates had chosen Stewart “Rockstar” Lister-Vickers to be that sacrifice. Not once, not twice, but thrice.

In Stewart's defence, he claimed that this was all due to the defective nature of the punt and in no way related to the amount of alcohol that had been imbibed over the previous five hours.

Plunge 1 was caused by “the punt being too short”; for Plunge 2 “the punt was too narrow”; and for the final soaking “the pole was too long”.



The rest of the flotilla, Chico included, arrived back at the boatyard without incident where Dr Pri received her winnings from the sweep.

Our tired and soggy band of mariners then wearily made its way back to the beer garden of the Bear Inn. Where ales were drunk,



The Curé collapses under the weight of ennui



Waiting for all the flotilla to catch up before heading on up river



Lunchtime!



Stewart, perhaps with a glass of what Blah is making on the right



Dr Blah, evidently about to mix Chambord and Champagne



Caroline Lakin



The Curé ruminates on ecumenical matters



I think that is Chico St Martin under that cap



Posing with the new NSC flag



achievements exaggerated and tall tales of derring-do on the high seas were told, until darkness and rapidly dropping temperatures forced us to wend our separate ways into the night.

Our thanks as always go to Andrew and his splendid team at the Magdalen Bridge Boathouse for their continued support and good humour and the Cherwell Boathouse



Restaurant for their hospitality and flexibility in hosting the previous night's traditional Black Tie Dinner.

(Clockwise from top) The River Gods claim their pound of flesh; Scarheart actually punting; the display of ties in the Bear; two sea dogs swap improbable tales; Priya claims her sweep prize



HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S DIPLOMATIC MAIL



Sir Richard D' Astardly on how to become a chap of letters

PART TWO

Letter headings

Several stationery companies offer a basic letter heading which is usually your address, but you can design your own. There are sites on the internet that specialise in images of historic or important letter headings. It is inspirational to view letter headings of the great and the good, figures from politics, sport and commerce. Reggie Kray had his own letter heading which he used from prison. The son of historian B.H. Liddell-Hart had his address as a two-liner the name of which I forget but was something like “Castle Somethingorother, Ambridge”. When a friend of mine went down to interview him, he found that “Castle Somethingorother” was the village hostelry, where Liddell-Hart junior spent most of his time.

Naturally, if you are the 14th Duke of Cumbeshire, then it is unlikely your address will change in your lifetime, and you can safely add it to your letter heading, but if you have just left college then your address may change frequently. Certainly your telephone number will. This may mean that your letter heading would be better if it consisted of a symbol or design.

With the advent of the inland telegraph and the trans-Atlantic cable, companies and personages would add their telegraphic address to their letter heading. Just as you can buy an internet domain name now, you could register a telegraphic address (called “RTA”) with the various telegraph and cable companies which would mean that senders did not have to give your full address.

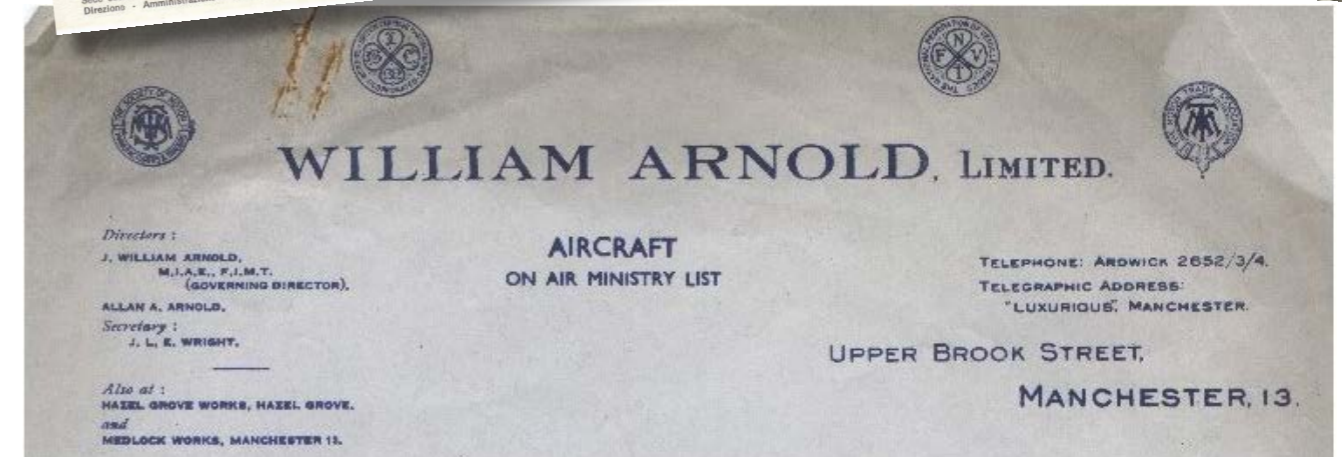
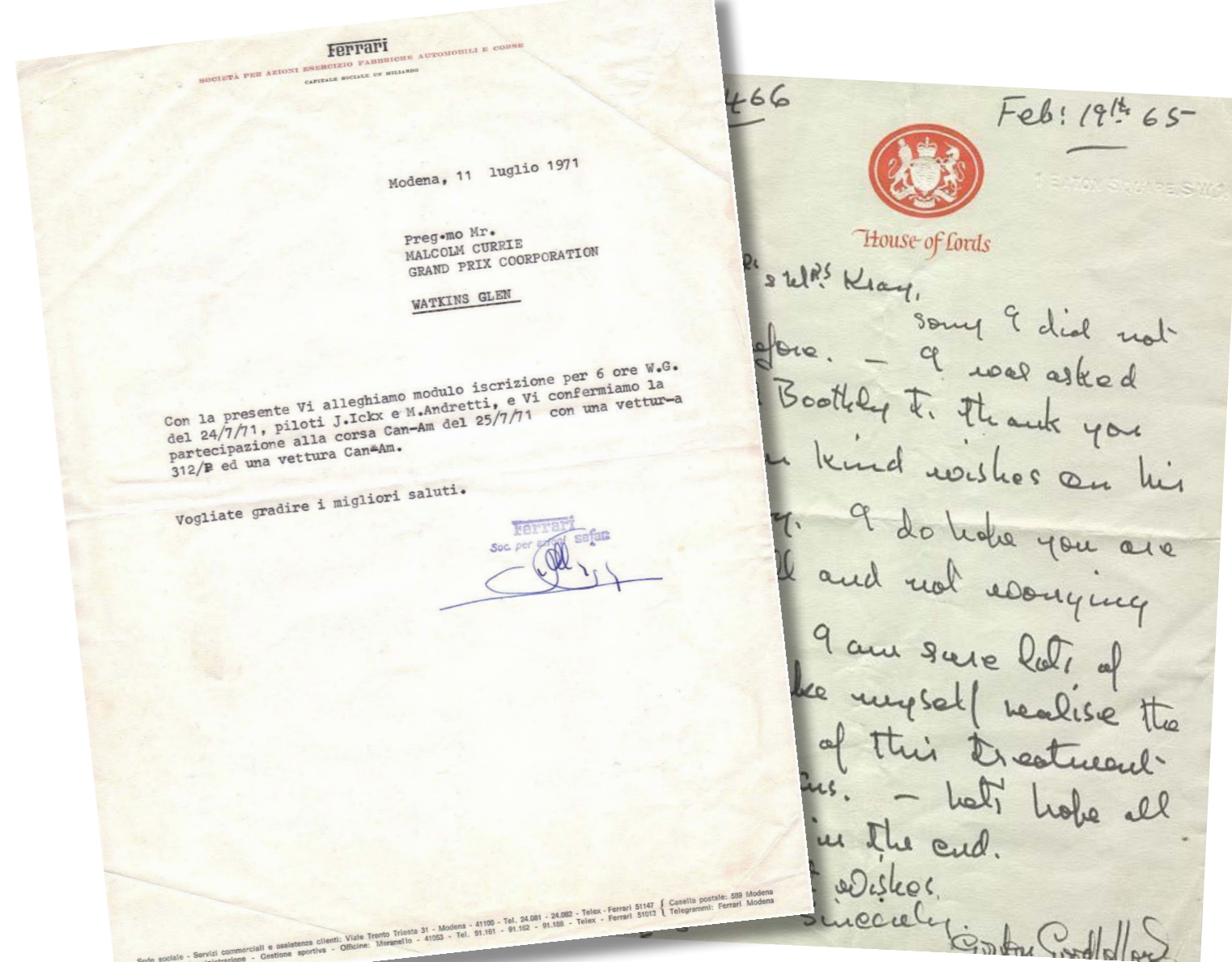
The British Racing Drivers Association had SPEEDMEN, SOUTHKEN, LONDON. Mauser Werke had PARABELLUM, OBERNDORF. Morris Garages had SPEEDILY, OXFORD. The Automobile Association used FANUM, LONDON, because

in their glory days their head office was at Fanum House in London. To facilitate rapid contact with their provincial offices, the RTA of each office was FANUM followed by the name of the town in which it was located.

When you sent cables internationally, there might be a different company involved, hence you see sometimes two telegraphic addresses on letter headings, one for TELEGRAMS and another for CABLES. Furthermore you would sometimes see an additional line or lines marked CODES:BENTLEYS. These were commercial telegraph code books which reduced to a lengthy mnemonic a long commercial phrase from the legal boilerplate of international trade such as “free on board”. For example, BRONB in Bentley’s code-book meant, “What cargo have you booked?” This saved telegraphic costs where you paid by the word. Copies of *Bentley’s Phrascode* (thick as a telephone directory) sometimes come up on Ebay, but thanks to the miracle of modern reference that is the internet, you can find PDF copies of the entire text. RTAs were listed in *Sell’s Directory*, copies of which also occasionally come up for sale on Ebay.

The telegraph and cable were considered by HMG to be of strategic importance. It was HMG policy, termed “All Red Line”, to connect all parts of the Empire (i.e. all parts of the world) via cable. Thus global telecommunications were invented, installed and controlled by the Royal Navy and the British Empire. This was an outstanding piece of foresight for when the Great War began communications were maintained throughout the conflict. German policy had been to try to span the globe using the new technique of wireless telegraphy, but their network proved insufficiently resilient to withstand destruction by the Royal Navy.

It is not easy to find a telegram service in these times and even circuit-switched telegraph,



which is TELEX, is uncommon except in third world countries. However, this means there is no harm in adding a spurious telegraphic address to your letterhead.

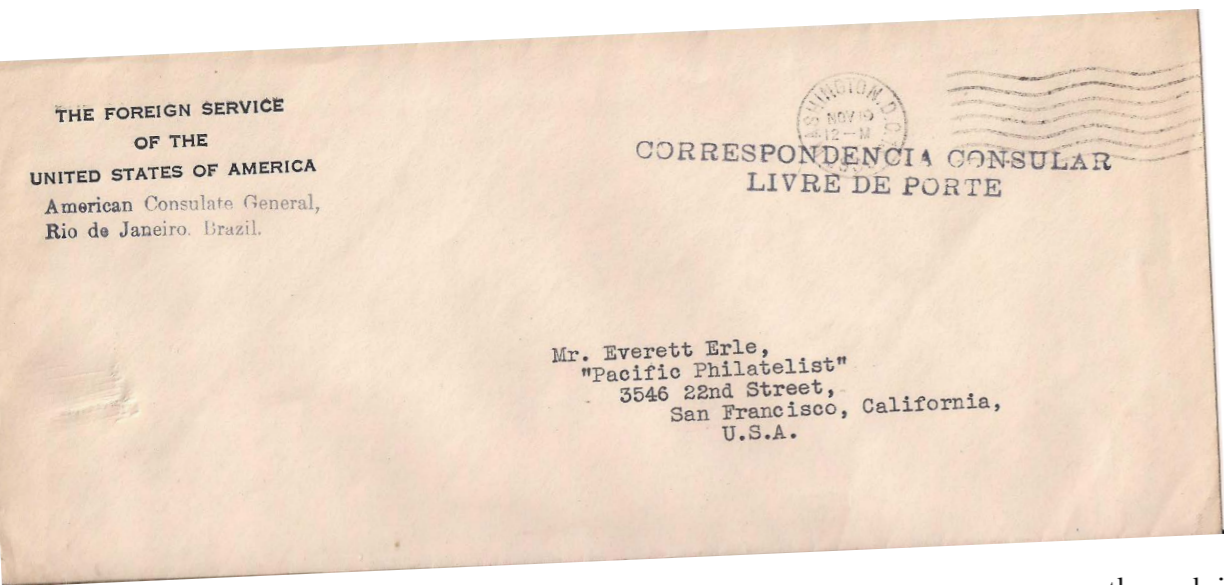
If you wish to add your email address to your letterhead and you have a requirement for a more permanent email address then you can use www.pobox.com.

Another possibility is to add lines such as telephone number, fax number, email address, DX code, ham radio call sign, to a rubber

stamp (see below) which is then appended to the foot of your letter.

Mourning paper

Mourning paper can be fabricated rather than specified and purchased at additional cost. One method is to place broad black bars down both sides of the paper using either oil paints or very large felt marker. Art supply houses will have a selection of materials which will be suitable. The staff at Cornelissen’s in Bloomsbury have



the British Museum. They make their stamps using a clear Perspex structural element which has a copy of your stamp visible

through it, so that you

been able to advise me on all manner of these projects. The same treatment with black bars can be given to the edge of the envelope. (I would suggest to all Sheridanites that if their wardrobe does not contain a black tie and black armband then this omission should be remedied forthwith, on the grounds that we will see some use out of these articles in the not too distant future.)

Rubber stamps

You will see mainly on business correspondence that the lip of the envelope is rubber-stamped with the company symbol as an authentication. A rubber stamp can be used in place of a wax seal on your second-class stationery. Rubber stamp manufacture is now quite difficult to find in England. For some reason, even the smallest town in Austria seems to have a shop which makes rubber stamps, brass nameplates, signage, etc. However, it is a stroke of luck that one of the best rubber stamp manufactories I have come across is a shop called Bladerubber (www.bladerubberstamps.co.uk) a few yards from

can see what you are stamping. Over and above adding your armorial seal to an envelope, you can add it to the top of your third-class stationery to give the impression that it has been printed.

Embossment stamps

A class above the rubber stamp is the embossment stamp, which crushes the paper between two brass dies that have had your seal machined into their surface. In fact only the depressed surface is machined. The raised surface of the other half of the die is made by casting it from the depressed surface. Company secretaries require embossment stamps to authenticate official documents therefore makers of embossment stamps do exist (Smythsons) but are rare. The actual press into which the die is placed has to be strong and therefore short, which means that it can only reach perhaps an inch from the lower edge of the paper. There are presses available which will stretch to the center of A4, which means that you can use the embossment stamp to make a letter heading,

either to tune individually your first-class stationery or to make your third-class stationery look more impressive.

Design

Letter headings, rubber stamps and embossment stamps all require design. While your initial ideas can be assembled on scrap paper, at some point your design will have to go to a workshop.

Companies like Smythson will do it all for you. My first set of customised stationery was designed by Smythson. The letter heading was designed by my showing them a torn-out strip of a German newspaper for the font of the main title, and then for the typeface of the address I told the designer that I wanted something which felt like the foyer of a 1920s Parisienne apartment block with a marble interior and cast bronze banisters. The result was magnificent, which is unusual because it is very difficult to express something which exists only as a nebulous set of associations within the mind. The same typeface was used to emboss the lip of the envelopes, which I had specified as lined with red tissue paper. The cost turned out to be eye-watering but the results were outstanding.



From top to bottom: Times New Roman, Courier Final Draft, Gill Sans MT Pro, Old Road Signs, vtypewritertelegram2

I notice that Smythson watermark their writing paper with "Smythson" and roll a small embossed "Smythson" on to the lower edge of the lip of your envelopes. Which means that one finds oneself in the "free advertising" business.

They will make writing paper with your own water-mark, of course. This purchase can easily be funded by selling one's other kidney.

The more closely you specify your design, the more closely the results will match your expectations, which is the key to happiness in all things.

This means that once you have finished your sketches, the next step is using a computer. My adventure started by deciding that I would best pursue the design process by taking over some of the details myself and ended with my complete control over the whole affair. Typically, images are prepared in Adobe Photoshop.

Mixtures of text and images such as letter headings, rubber stamps and embossment stamps can also be prepared in software such as Adobe Illustrator or CorelDraw, which are used to prepare posters, flyers and book covers. Several other packages, as well as those mentioned, will facilitate the manipulation of text around a circular pattern, which is what is required to produce a stamp.

Letter headings, where the text is all horizontal, can be prepared in something as simple as a word processor, which will also accept images.

The Adobe Creative Suite software is expensive but because Adobe Photoshop has become the *de facto* industry standard a group of independent software developers have developed a free opensource program called Gimp which has exactly the same functions as Adobe Photoshop. You can use Gimp without charge.

Heraldry

In the unlikely event you do not have a family crest, take some scrap paper and sketch all the symbols which are associated with you and your values and activities. For example, a few moments' thought assembled a coat of

arms for my Noble Lord the Earl of Essex which consisted of a burned-out stolen car, wheels uppermost, on a roundabout, with a background of a skyline of a shopping mall and a retail park.

Ladies might like to search among the images of the great illustrators of haute couture, such as René Gruau, David Downton or Christian David Moore.

Once you have assembled the images, make sketches of them in arrangements that seem likely to be complimentary. Work by elimination until you come up with something that will look good when rendered as a black and white symbol. If you are good at artwork then you can render the entire image on paper and then scan it. The less able you are at art work, the better your computer skills need to be, in order that you can process more of the design on a computer. Any deficiency in either of these



MOSSAD: IT IS NEVER AN ACCIDENT

TELEPHONE; TEL AVIV 1212
CABLES: FUNERALSINC, TEL AVIV

departments will have to be made up by a friend in the trade or a reduction in complexity of the heraldry.

Fonts

The next thing you will need is a font (typeface). By far the greatest number of words have been printed in the ubiquitous book printing fonts like Times Roman, which is on every computer. They are easy to read and therein lies their universal acceptance. But the bulk of fonts available are only intended for titles, headings or posters. There are vast numbers of free fonts which can be downloaded and used on your letterhead or stamp.

“Courier” you will recognise as “typewriter”. [You may also recognise it as the font to which computer systems often default if they can't find or render an intended font —Ed.] It was invented by IBM in



Hot rubber-stamp action in *The Blue Max*

1955. US Government documents had a main body text of Courier and for headings and titles used Futura. You can view pages of the Apollo Space Program on the internet which show these fonts. Futura was and is also used for aircraft instrumentation dashboards.

Fonts that reflect Chap values include:

Gill Sans: Designed by Eric Gill, it is ubiquitous on wartime MoD posters and inter-war railway posters. Redolent of all things Chappist.

Johnston Underground: Designed for London Underground, it is the font used in the signage on the network.

Transport: A font invented in the 1960s for use on the UK road system and was designed to be read easily at speed. It is so common you

hardly notice it. However it is not Transport that is the most use to chaps but the font that was used on road signage prior to Transport, with which younger members will only be familiar from watching Ealing comedies. You see road signs of this age only very rarely nowadays. This font I have only ever seen referred to as “Old Road Sign” but it is available for computers.

If you are searching for fonts then an idea is to type in a noun such as your favourite marque of automobile, sporting team, motion picture, architect, composer, followed by “download font”. It is rare that someone has not written a font on that theme. There is even a font called Kidnap which consists of randomly cut-out letters from newspaper headlines in order to modernise the process of producing ransom notes. It's a great time-saver and highly recommended.

Some examples in reverse historical era:

Barcodes: fonts which produce a barcode output, including US zipcodes.

Cheques: fonts which reproduce the computer lettering on cheques, called Westminster and MICR.

Typewriters: hundreds of fonts dedicated to reproducing the effect of an old smudgy typewriter.

Telegrams: There is a font called Vtypewritertelegram2 which recreates as closely as possible the print-out of a telegram printer, with the bars underneath and above the all-capitals lettering. Having this font means that you can blast off a telegram and send it first class post. I recommend study at one of the telegram websites for correct telegram form such as the headers, as well as ENDIT, STOP. The H.P. Lovecraft website has this and several other historic document formats.

Illuminated manuscripts, copper plate handwriting, fonts off Latin inscriptions on Roman monuments...

If you cannot find what you wish for then there is software available which allows you to design your own fonts.

From the other direction, there is an engine which will identify fonts which you have found at www.fontmoose.devroye.org.

The new Design Museum at High St Kensington/Holland Park has a very good section on typeface design which is worth a visit.

More fun with rubber stamps

Most of this design effort will go into a letterhead in text and heraldic image for use on rubber stamps or embossment stamps. However, you can add yet more decoration to the exterior of an envelope with a rubber stamp you have designed yourself. A stamp can be added to the upper left side of the face of the envelope. This could be something ambiguous, distant and romantic, such as an inscription in Japanese or Cyrillic lettering, or something more express such “The Indian Mail—Brindisi” or “Universal Exports—London”. Mail from Royal Navy ships used to go ashore in a canvas dunnage sack printed with the Crown symbol below which were the letters “HBM DIPLOMATIC MAIL” but I doubt there was an equivalent rubber stamp because diplomatic mail would go directly into the diplomatic bag. The beauty of the internet is that you can perform research in foreign languages. This allows one to find images of rubber stamps and letter headings used by SMERSH, the KGB and Mossad.

Alternatively your choice of stamp could be something waggish: I have seen with my own eyes the imprint of a rubber stamp “Destroy Before Reading” and “I haven't got time to read all this #####”.

More prosaically, your rubber stamp could just indicate Air Mail, First Class, Second Class, By Hand, etc.

I have always wanted to create a large “tick-box” rubber stamp which has a column of entries with a corresponding tick-box starting with “Merry Christmas”, “Happy New Year”, “Happy Saturnalia”, “Enjoyable Solstice”, “Ramadam Kareem”, “Happy birthday”, “Condolences on your bereavement”, “Your account is overdue”, etc., just to add that personal touch to a greetings card.

Rubber stamps are a thing of official documentation and not personal correspondence. So if you pen a handwritten sugar-sweet *billet doux* on your baby-blue Crown



OPENED BY CENSOR

ON ACTIVE SERVICE



Mill it may not be enhanced by adding at the bottom a large black ink-stamp of “Panzer Abteilung 503—Feldpost”.

Rubber stamps in film history

The three greatest moments in film for the rubber stamp are, in reverse order:

1. *The Great Escape* (1963), where the forging of the Ausweiss pass is crucial to chances of a successful home run.

2. In the dramatisation of the 1972 Munich Olympic games massacre *Munich* (2005) where in one scene in an office, the man behind the desk has upon his desk a circular stand with all his rubber stamps on it. It is a veritable Christmas tree of rubber stamps. He had more stamps than I have. It was the worst case of rubber-stamp-envy I have ever had.

3. The jewel in the crown of rubberstampdom's film career must be the speaking part in *The Blue Max* (1966). As George Peppard's aircraft hurtles earthward to its doom, James Mason signs and stamps his death certificate in front of a distressed Ursula Andress. Ker-blam! The rubber-stamp comes

down with a rubbery-stamping sound that is the mainstay of the rubber-stamp acting repertoire. “Come dear, we can’t be late for lunch,” announces Mason.

Envelopes—further decoration

Envelopes may be embossed and printed to your requirements by your stationer but further decoration can be achieved by your own hand without resorting to the expense of a stationer by using materials such as oil paints and water colours. It could be something simple such as blue bars for airmail in a fabulous cobalt blue oil colour or perhaps your Jockey Club racing colours, or if of an Ian Fleming persuasion you could reproduce the naval rank of Commander in black and gold oils. Alternatively the New Sheridan Club colours could be applied. I will have Cornelissen’s prepare a triumvirate of the matching oil colours as an “under the counter” special.

When applying oils I find I get more controllable results from the paintbrushes which have the soft rubber blades rather than the usual bristles.

If hand-addressing an envelope then you can write using dipping ink and a dipping pen (which you can see on First Wednesday club nights next to the visitor’s book). Dipping ink leaves a raised surface unlike a fountain pen. Dipping pens are available with a vast range of different nibs, even ones which look like a garden rake which are used for preparing music scores. A friend of mine has a business preparing handwritten place cards for weddings and makes it all look very easy but it does take some level of practice to be able to produce respectable results with a dipping pen. One advantage is that you can find dipping inks in a great variety of colours and compositions, including metallic gold.

My preference for the addressing of non-personal letters is the typewriter. The slightly raised embossment of the finish makes the typewritten address unmistakable, and in my view, commands attention and raises the expectations of the recipient. I have only one spare typewriter ribbon left and I have not seen typewriter ribbon for sale for 20 years.

If you are of a waggish nature then you can manufacture one of the square block codes which are read by iPhones, called “QR codes”.

There are websites such as www.barcode-generator.org which allow you to input text and see it represented as a QR code (or other codes such as ZIP codes). Your rude message can be printed as a code and then applied to the reverse of your envelope with 3M Photomount spray glue. To the casual observer it looks like something applied by the post office, but the more curious will apply their iPhones to the image.

Binding

The pages of your letter can be further decorated by either binding it with legal ribbon laterally and horizontally like a parcel or by punching the edge with a regular hole punch and looping the legal ribbon through the holes.

It is decades since I have seen legal ribbon in a stationers but it is available through on-line stationers. The type of legal ribbon most commonly observed is “pink” legal ribbon used by lawyers. Believe it or not, not all legal ribbon is created equal and some is more tightly woven than others. The ribbon is available in other colours such as black, blue and green. An alternative which is more readily available and more suitable for ladies is haberdasher’s ribbon the same size as legal ribbon. This is available from places like John Lewis and may be found in a much greater variety of colours, as well as patterns.

Calling cards

Once you have completed your artwork for your letterhead and rubber stamps you can re-use it on the design of your calling card. Some persons have their calling card printed as a half-size postcard (like a plain index card) or full-size postcard so that the recipient or yourself can annotate by hand an aide memoir relating the nature of your conversation or actions you were going to take as a result of the meeting. This is useful if you meet a lot of people over technical discussions. This is not a standard size but Smythsons will print on any size you like.

You can apply the same policy to the calling card as you apply to your letter heading to avoid having to reprint your calling card when your address or other details change. The front of the calling card can be printed with your name, armorial crest and motto, and the reverse can be stamped with a rubber stamp bearing your address, telephone number, ham radio call-sign, etc.



Another item of stationery not seen since a kinder, gentler, more civilised time

is the “death card”, which were packs of playing cards printed with the divisional symbol of US troops fighting in Vietnam. Your armorial crest can be re-used on the reverse of the playing card, so that whether you have just machine-gunned an entire village of grass huts from your helicopter or merely thrown an egg at the storefront of Abercrombie & Fitch then you can leave a death card so that they know by whose hand the work of Nemesis was done.

Stationery—the final frontier

Assembling all of the above for a supreme effort of stationery is a heady experience. After I had completed my “first class” stationery I wrote to a friend who was an ordained minister in the Church of England. He had been seconded to a position in the one of the CoE’s overseas offices in New York City. I used my headed stationery which was an embellishment of the original Voss Strasse Reichschancellery headed paper of the Nazi era using a rich red and black die-stamping embossment. I finished the letter with several original rubber stamps used by units of the Waffen-SS, then sealed the envelope with a black wax seal and an original Gestapo “Reichsadler” brass wax stamp. The actual letter I penned in black Pelikan ink from a vintage Mont Blanc Meisterstück fountain pen of the same type used by General von Manstein. In the text I wrote I thanked him for his provision of the blessing at the recent reunion of Waffen-SS veterans at Bad Reichenhall and hoped that the late hour at which we departed from the pole-dancing club did not cause him to miss his flight. Of course it was all done in the best possible taste.

I cried with laughter as I thought of the office secretary reading out the mail to him, and

INCORPORATING: THE SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS
PATRONS: GEORGE BEST, LORD LUCAN

LETTERS: 8-10 BREWER ST LONDON W1
WRITS: DX FRESHFIELDS CHANCERY LANE
TELEGRAMS: BOUNCEANDJIGGLE, SOHO
CABLES: RESIGN, LONDON
CODES: ROT13
TELEPHONE: WHITEHALL 1212
CLUBS: DRONES
SHORTWAVE: G6NSC
ICBM: +51.512447 -0.133743

guffawed out loud as I thought of him being de-frocked by the Bishop, cashiered by the Grand Metropolitan and rusticated by the Arch-Primate. He must have been sore for a week. I think he was posted to somewhere in the Yemen after that. I told you that letter writing can be fun.

The Glorious Committee

Armed with the above paragraphs, we can make an educated guess at the letter heading which best reflects the values of our own dear Glorious Committee. This would bear the mark of the club crest top and centre, below which was the address of the NSC operations room. The heavy white laid paper can be printed with the light brown circular stain of a mug of instant coffee, and perfumed with a cheap blended whisky. Using Smythson’s hand-manufacture service the lower right hand edge can be torn off in a strip in the manner of one who has removed a section for use as a roach.

After I specified the lattermost addition, Smythsons had me thrown out on to the street and I was told that they had called the police. As I dusted off my knees and picked up my hat, I gave an internationally recognised hand-signal back at the shop and reflected on how fortunate it was that I had given the name “Artemis Scarheart”...

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.



Originally Essex, now the picturesque Thames suburb of Richmond.

Favourite Cocktail?

White Russian.

Most Chappist skill?

Treasure hunting. More prosaically known as archaeology to some.

Most Chappist possession?

A miniature digital replica of a Leica Rangefinder camera. It is 1/3 the size of the original 1950s version and makes me feel like a spy.

Personal Motto?

What Would Dolly Do? (In reference to Dolly Parton).

Favourite Quote?

"Never complain, never explain." — Benjamin Disraeli

Chloe Clark

"What would Dolly do?"

Name or preferred name?

Simply Chloe Clark I'm afraid.

Why that nickname or nom de plume?

It seems I enjoy alliteration as much as my parents.

Where do you hail from?



At the Chap Olympics

"Either those curtains go or I do." — Oscar Wilde

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

But I drove solo down the west coast of America last year. I would recommend it to anyone, particularly the Redwood forests and Hearst Castle.

How long have you been involved with the NSC?

About four years I think.

How did you hear about the Club to begin with?

My sister began stepping out with some chap who it turned out was neither a bigamist nor swindler as I had first suspected, but merely a member of The Glorious Committee. I started coming along to parties in the guise of companion-chaperone as any self-respecting spinster sister would.

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

Breakfast at The Wolesley. It's a lovely way to start the day and the kedgeree is very good.

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

Anne Boleyn so I could see what all the fuss was about.

Elizabeth Taylor for the gossip and drinks.

Alcibiades because he always struck me as disreputable and fun.

Favourite Member of the Glorious Committee? Artemis Scarheart.

Christmas will be unbearable if I say otherwise.

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



At our Alice in Wonderland party in 2015

Funny you should ask... I am doing a turn in September on death and burial in the Roman world. It should be a fun night. Bring the kids!

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.



In Time Team made on a dig in Pyles



CLUB NOTES

New Members

A ROAR OF HEARTY congratulations goes out to Ivan Debono from Paris (though he makes a point of insisting, “I’m not French”), Martin Pritchard from Shrewsbury, Shropshire, and Stav Bee from London, all of whom have joined the Club in the last month (in Stav’s case at the last meeting in April—see page 3 for photographic evidence).



Martin Pritchard

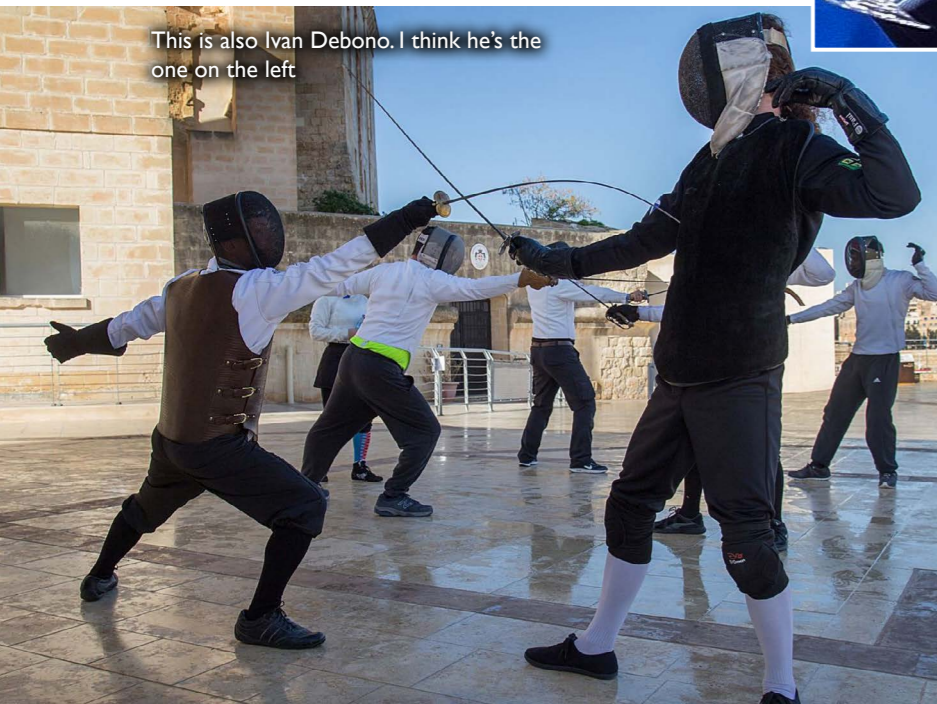
Club Tie Corner

A lumpen selection this time (on the opposite page, clockwise from top left): Birgit thinks Jack Whitehall is wearing NSC braces in *Decline and Fall*; Mark Christopher spotted this Club tie knock-off in *Global Luggage on the Strand*; Iain Treal noticed that Ray Davies was a dedicated follower of Sheridan; Actuaris declines to offer an explanation for this... although his eye was caught by Harry Dean Stanton’s tie in *Christine* (1983); Adrian Prooth detected that Denis Waterman is wearing Club silk in *The Sweeney*.



Ivan Debono at the Chap Olympics

This is also Ivan Debono. I think he’s the one on the left



As a bonus, Mark Christopher sent in this snap of him in a Panama he bought with a voucher for Laird, won in the raffle at the last NSC party





Saturday 1st July, 6–11pm
The Water Poet, 9–11 Folgate Street,
London E1 6BX

Celebrate the sci-fi of the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s! When the unexplored reaches of the Earth's dark continents were no longer a big enough backdrop for daring adventure stories, the era's faith in science, machines, speed and a gleaming future created a whole new genre for thrills, peril, xenophobia and scantily-clad women (who spent most of their time suspended inside sinister glass tubes or pods, if the magazine covers are to be believed). Magazines of pulp fiction flourished, with names like *Amazing Stories* (launched in 1926), *Astounding Stories*, *Startling Stories*, *Planet Stories*, *Super Science Stories*, *Thrilling Wonder Stories*—you get the picture. H.P. Lovecraft was ploughing his own furrow, writing tales of ancient, powerful aliens and eldritch inter-dimensional beings (in which heroes get a glimpse of the true horrific

nature of the universe which usually sends them mad). A more straightforward hero was Flash Gordon, who first appeared in comic-strip form in 1934, followed two years later by the movie serial starring Olympic swimmer Larry "Buster" Crabbe, who also played Buck Rogers, another sci-fi hero, in 1938. By the 1950s Earth was in regular peril in the movies and canoodling teenagers could only expect to be attacked by monstrous aliens.

At our party there will be silly games as usual, such as Plant the Flag on the Moon, Throw the Ring Around Saturn, a chance to design a logo for NSC Star Fleet, plus a buffet of nutri-pills. And of course there will be our famous Grand Raffle, prizes for the best costume, the best mad ruler evil laugh, and lashings of healthy space-fun.



Forthcoming Events



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

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

🍷 NSC Club Night

Wednesday 3rd May
 7pm–11pm
 Upstairs, The Wheatsheaf,
 25 Rathbone
 Place, London W1T 1JB
 Members: Free
 Non-Members: £2 (first visit free)
 See page 2.

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.

Tiger Rag

Every Friday
 Arcola Bar, Arcola Theatre, 24 Ashwin Street,
 Dalston, London E8 3DL
 10pm–2.30am
 Admission: £5 on the door; dance lessons £10
 The Vintage Arts Asylum and Ewan Bleach
 of Passing Clouds' Cakewalk Cafe collaborate
 on a new weekly event at The Arcola Theatre,
 Dalston Junction, featuring live jazz, blues,
 swing, calypso, Dixieland, ragtime, musette,
 tango, etc. Try your hand at the beginner
 lesson in swing, Lindy hop, shag, balboa
 and Charleston dancing, with no partner or
 prebooking required. Intermediate lessons

8–9pm and beginner lessons 9–10pm.

Black Tie Ballroom Club

Friday 5th May
 Beginners' class from 7pm, main dance from
 7.30–11pm
 The Indian YMCA, 41 Fitzroy Square, London
 W1T 6AQ (02073870411)
 Admission: £10 in advance (from Design My
 Night), £15 on the door
 Dress code: Strictly black tie, evening dress or
 vintage

Dance progressive partnered dancing to a
 strict-tempo ten-piece orchestra and a selection
 of pre war records of slow foxtrot, waltz,
 quickstep, tango, rumba, Jive and Charleston.
 Free ballroom dance lesson for absolute
 beginners from 7pm to 7.30 pm. Candlelit
 tables and chairs for all guests, a balcony area
 with tables for those who don't choose to dance,
 and four of five male and female taxi dancers
 available free of charge for those who do.
 The venue is dry, but free tea and coca cola
 is provided, and guests may smuggle in their
 own drinks if they are discreet. Tickets are
 £10 online or £15 on the door. The venue has
 a large wooden dance floor and is located in
 beautiful Fitzroy Square, London W1. In the
 same building (the Indian YMCA) the excellent
 in-house canteen does a set vegetarian three
 course meal for just £8 from 7pm to 9 pm.
 Dress code is strictly black tie and evening dress
 only. Activities include a quickstep bus stop and
 ten most glamorously dressed women able to get
 around the floor doing a slow waltz competition.
 Any questions please phone George Tudor-Hart
 on 020 8542 1490. For more details see the
 Facebook group.

Lucky Dog Picture House presents Deeds Not Words: The Women Pioneers of Silent Comedy

Saturday 6th May
 1.30pm
 NFT3, BFI Southbank, Belvedere Road, South
 Bank, London SE1 8XT
 Admission: £8.80–11 from whatson.bfi.org.uk

While the Suffragettes were fighting for
 women to have the vote, their cinematic
 counterparts were more than equal to the
 men, creating and starring in some of the most
 successful, subversive and inventive films of the

era. This special selection of rarely-screened shorts celebrates the brilliant women of silent comedy. Curated and presented by BFI Silent Film Curator Bryony Dixon with a new live score by The Lucky Dog Picturehouse. For full film listings please visit locofilmfestival.com.

Lucky Dog Picture House

Tuesday 9th May

Doors 7pm, films 7.45pm, jazz from 9.30pm
Jamboree, 566 Cable Street, London E1W 3HB
Admission: £5 (which can be reserved by emailing tldpicturehouse@hotmail.co.uk; reserved tickets much be collected by 7.30)

A film night with a difference: Lucky Dog only show silent movies, presented with a live musical accompaniment by their in-house band (featuring music from the era in which the films were made, I believe. Nothing by



Comediennes from the Suffragette era

Georgio Moroder). This time featuring a double bill of Buster Keaton's *One Week* (1920) about newlyweds' attempts to build a house from a prefabricated kit, and the Laurel and Hardy comedy *Liberty!* (1929) about two escaping convicts who change clothes in a car but manage to put on each other's trousers—the whole film is about their attempts to swap the trousers back, in alleys, in cabs and high up on the steel frame of a skyscraper under construction. The films will be followed by live jazz till closing.

1940s Weekend

Saturday 13th–Sunday 14th May

11am Saturday–5pm Sunday

East Anglia Transport Museum, Chapel Road, Carlton Colville, Suffolk NR33 8BN

Admission: £9 for adults

A weekend of fun and nostalgia. There will be a free park and ride service and bus services running to Lowestoft and Beccles using period buses, along with visiting vehicles of the era on both days. There will be trade stands and a BBQ in the park, plus the early evening running of the museum's vehicle fleet on Saturday in the unique setting of the museum, as well as music and dancing. There will be a price concession for those coming in costume. See eatransportmuseum.co.uk.

Bluestocking Salon at Dr Johnson's House

Thursday 18th May

6.30–9pm

17 Gough Square, London EC4A 3DE

Admission: £45 in advance

In collaboration with Dr Johnson's House,

a special event to celebrate the literary legend's friends and acquaintances with a Bluestocking Salon. We will be working our Georgian magic throughout the floors of this historic home to pay homage to Samuel Johnson and his many fascinating friends. A fitting place to celebrate the intellectual and artistic life of Georgian London, a bespoke event to bring this giant of a man and the Georgian period back to life. More details on the booking page.

Lipstick & Curls at Hemsby 58:

Full Parlour Service

Friday 19th–Sunday 21st May

3–6pm

Hemsby Rock 'n' Roll Weekender, Seacroft Holiday Site, Beach Rd, Hemsby, Great Yarmouth NR29 4HR

Vintage styling team Lipstick & Curls will be at the Hemsby Rock 'N' Roll Weekender offering a full parlour service for the ladies. Appointments already booking up. To make your reservation please email info@lipstickandcurls.net. Hair styling is £35, makeup £25 or £50 for both. For tickets to this great weekender please go to www.hemsbyrocknroll.co.uk.

The Candlelight Club

Friday 19th and Saturday 20th

May

7pm–12am

A secret London location

Admission: £25 in advance

The Candlelight Club is a clandestine 1920s speakeasy party in a secret London venue completely lit by candles, with live period jazz bands, cabaret and vintage vinylism. The bar dispenses vintage cocktails and the kitchens offer bar snacks and sharing platters, as well as a fine-dining set menu option.

This time for your dancing pleasure we will have live music from Duncan Hemstock and his All-Stars, who proved a revelation when they played for us for the first time in February. (You can hear live recordings of that session on Soundcloud here.) Your host with the most will, as usual, be Champagne Charlie and DJing will be the NSC's own Auntie Maureen.

"The closest you'll find to an authentic Jazz Age experience in central London. Its unique ambience, fuelled by hundreds of candles, is truly a scene to behold." —Time Out

Elysian Den

Sunday 28th May

5.30–10.30pm

The Boston Room, The George IV, 185

Chiswick High Road, London W4 2DR

Admission: £10 including £5 drinks voucher

Vintage music night featuring a beginners' swing dance class at 6pm followed by swing DJing from Tim Hellzapoppin'. The pub's Sunday roast comes highly recommended.

Day Trip to Bletchley Park

Saturday 3rd June

11am

The Mansion, Bletchley Park, Sherwood Dr,

Bletchley, Milton Keynes MK3 6EB

Priya Kali and Stuart Mitchell have colluded to propose a club outing to Bletchley Park, home of the British codebreakers during World War II. Bletchley is having a special event on the weekend of 3rd and 4th of June with a "1940s vintage weekend" which we thought

Bletchley Park in its WWII heyday



would make for a spiffing day out for NSC chums. (There are more details here: <https://www.bletchleypark.org.uk/whats-on/1940s-weekend>.)

The proposed schedule is: meet up at Bletchley Park ticket office at 11am. There is a 10.13am train from Euston station for those coming from London (price £16.20 return), but obviously choice of transport is down to individuals. Bletchley station is a 10 minute walk from the park ticket office.

Ticket price is £17.25, which includes admission to the mansion, museum and the huts. Tickets can be purchased in advance online, but if we get more than 12 people then we can get group rates with discounted prices. (Please note that this doesn't include the Colossus exhibit, which is part of the National Museum of Computing [NMOC]. NMOC is on the same site, but in a separate building, and has various historic computers dating from the 1950s onwards.

Admission to NMOC requires a separate ticket.

There are catering facilities on site, but from experience these can be cramped and somewhat limited, and as Bletchley closes at 5.30pm we propose to decamp to a local public house close by. This is the Eight Belles, which looks a suitable place to receive sustenance after a hard day's outing (they are a 1940s style pub, with a website at www.eightbellesbletchley.co.uk).

Please let Pri or Stuart know if you're interested, and we can try and arrange group tickets if there is sufficient interest. (emails: miladysweetpps@gmail.com or stuart.david.mitchell@gmail.com).

**UNISEX
TOILETS**

Prof. Philip Hancock
relaxes at the
Candlelight Club



CONTACTING US

telegrams@newsheridanclub.co.uk
mrrarbutnot@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. You can even befriend us electrically at www.facebook.com.