

Bad Santa

Prof. Philip Hancock on the sinister origins and questionable history of the Man with the Bag

Stuart Mitchell

Everyone's favourite meteorologist gets the Brogues Gallery treatment

Top brass

Robert Westbury on the history and influential role of the Salvation Army uniform

Cheers!

The annual Xmas Moot bids goodbye to 2017

RESIGN!

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW SHERIDAN

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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 January in the upstairs room at The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB, from 7pm until 11pm. Stewart Lister Vickers will blow away the cobwebs with a discourse entitled *From Beau Brummell to Marilyn*



Manson—Military Uniforms as Civilian Fashion. “The Napoleonic Wars witnessed the most glamorous armies the world has ever seen in a paradox of beauty and violence,” he explains. “The functional and cultural ideologies behind these uniforms vary between logical and fanatical, from showing up through the smoke of battle to ideas of masculine sexual prowess enhanced by corsets. The drip-down effect of that glamour on civilian

fashion was immediate with much of Beau Brummell's pioneering style the product of rigorous military discipline, again clashing stoic masculinity with frivolous fashion. The hussar jacket is perhaps the ultimate manifestation of this powerful aesthetic that has lasted 200 years

in popular culture and so I shall focus on its own qualities and paradoxes as well as its influence outside the military.”

The Last Meeting

For our Christmas meeting Philip Hancock gave us a talk on the dark side of Santa Claus. He looked at the various folklore traditions from around the world that merged to form Father Christmas as we know him, traditions that mostly revolved around devils who hunted down children who had been bad and beat them, or perhaps kidnapped them in a sack and tossed them into a hell mouth. St Nicolas himself, although in reality fairly wealthy and prone to acts of generosity to those in need, also seems to have had a habit of punching anyone who disagreed with him; even after death he reappeared to thrash a priest who questioned his sainthood. The Santa who focuses more on rewarding good children than torturing the bad, seems to have been born in the US in the late 19th century—although contrary to popular opinion he pre-dated the famous Coca Cola advertising. From here, however, he was happily co-opted to advertise not only Coke, but cigarettes, whisky, firearms and the US involvement in WWII (“Santa goes to war”). There are even saucy subversive adverts where Santa is peering up skirts or pinging suspender belts.

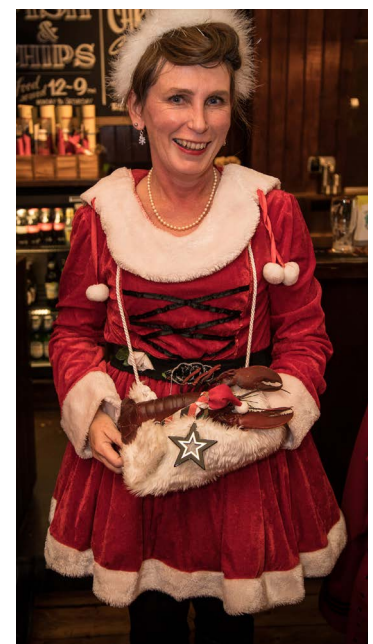
A written version of the talk begins on page 4.



(Above) Prof. Hancock weighs into his subject; (right) a medieval painting of St Nicolas punching out a dissenter; (below) Santa's later role in saucy advertising



(Above) newcomer Sandra; (left) the pub's traditional Xmas tree; (below) another immersive outfit from Frances—even Bob the Lobster has his own Santa hat



(Right) Darcy Sullivan looking as if he's feigning jollity when caught about to crush Matthew Howard; (below) this should really be a caption competition: in fact Howard was demonstrating how you can only tie someone else's bow tie from behind; (far right, l-r) William Cole, the Earl of Essex, Lucky Henry



BAD SANTA

Phillip Hancock on the dark origins and history of The Man with the Bag



Fig. 1

until the 1930s and 1940s that companies such as Coca-Cola, for example, recognised his potential value as an untarnished and popular brand ambassador and portrayed him as such. Similarly, Hollywood films such as *Miracle on 34th Street* (1947) started to represent him as the ultimate symbol of the post-war American dream, combining family values, decency and the “natural” urge to consume.

Yet one doesn't have to look back much further to find a slightly different, and perhaps more interesting, version of Santa doing the rounds. The first published image we have of

Santa Claus—replete with sled, solo reindeer and a furry hat (fig.2)—is to be found in an 1821 booklet, published in the US, that contained a poem by one Arthur J. Stansbury entitled “The Children's Friend: A New-Year's Present to the Little Ones from Five to Twelve”. The poem commences very much in the vein we might expect, telling the tale of a generous character beholden to relations of “love and peace”:

Old Santeclaus with much delight
His reindeer drives this frosty night.
O'er chimney tops and tracks of snow,
To bring his yearly gifts to you.

The steady friend of virtuous youth,
The friend of duty and of truth,
Each Christmas eve he joys to come
Where love and peace have made their home.

It also tells us, however, that “old Santeclaus” had a somewhat darker side, especially when

CHRISTMAS IS OVER. Hangovers have been nursed, childlike enthusiasms extinguished, rows forgotten and credit card bills are an inconvenient reality. Nevertheless, the next one is only eleven months away so what better time to sit down, enjoy a hot cocoa and read about the star of the seasonal madness that has just passed, good old Santa Claus.

Except that this isn't a story about him. Rather, this is a tale about not-so-good old Santa Claus, his alter ego, if you will. This is a tale of the Santa—and his associates—they don't like to talk about; the child-beating (and eating), cigarette-smoking (and hawking), sexual voyeur and military propagandist. This is a tale of Bad Santa.

To be fair, the idea that Santa Claus is a wholly benevolent and kindly sort of chap (fig.1) is something of a recent invention; traceable back to mid-20th-century America, his country of origin and spiritual home. For it wasn't

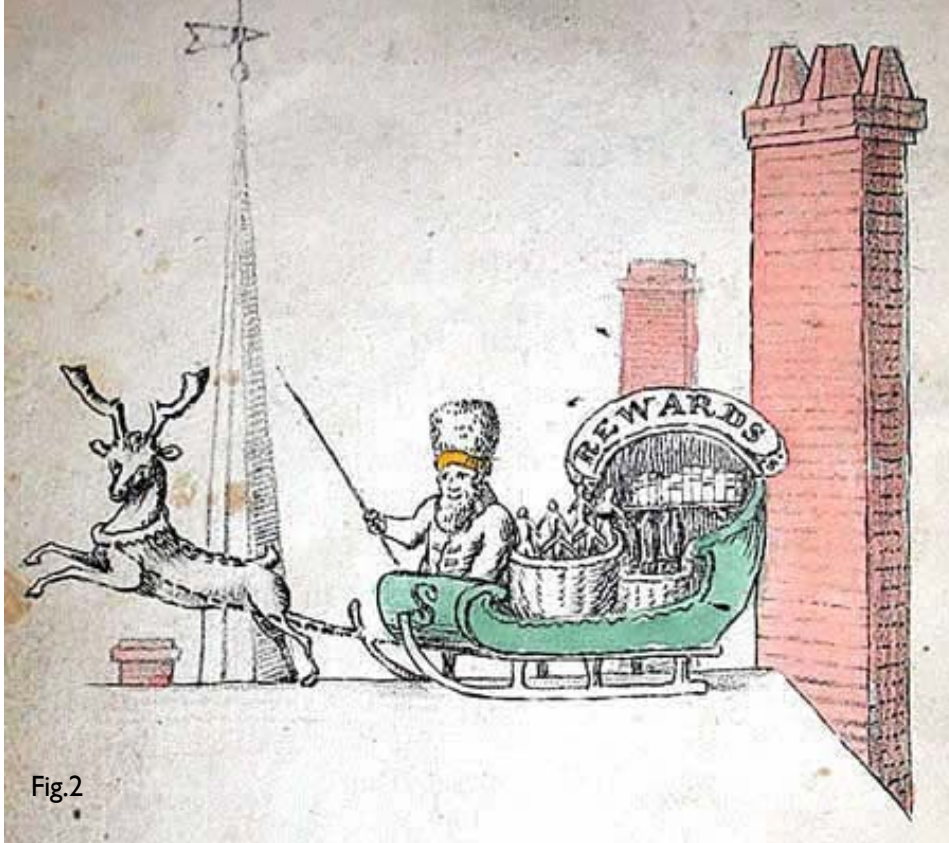


Fig.2

template for a seasonal bringer of gifts to children: generous, caring and pious (fig.3).

Yet while Nicholas might have been a saint, he was no angel. As a bishop, he was also known for something of a handy left hook when, at the first Council of Nicea in 325AD, he reportedly thumped an Egyptian theologian in staunch defence of the doctrine of Trinitarianism, an act that saw him—until God intervened—defrocked and

confronted by youth that was not so virtuous, ending as it does:

But where I found the children naughty,
In manners rude, in temper haughty,
Thankless to parents, liars, swearers,
Boxers or cheats or base tale-bearers,

I left a long, black, birchen rod,
Such as the dread command of God
Directs a Parent's hand to use
When virtue's path his sons refuse.

Today, of course, the idea that Santa Claus would not only condone but actively encourage the beating of a child is something that would be difficult for most people to imagine. Yet on closer inspection Santa has a somewhat more chequered history than many of us might realise, or indeed care to know.

Good Old Saint Nick

According to Christian tradition, Santa Claus is a descendent of St Nicholas, originally a fourth-century Bishop of Myra. Nicholas was known as a good and charitable man, remembered for anonymously throwing bags of gold into the bedroom windows of young girls, resurrecting dismembered and pickled schoolboys, and calming the seas for distressed sailors. As such, for the nuns and clergy of the 11th or 12th centuries he was the perfect

imprisoned. Even after death, he was reputedly not one for turning the other cheek, having purportedly descended from heaven simply in order to beat a Dutch abbot half to death for refusing to allow his monks to sing responses venerating the good saint in his church.

This rather more robust side to St Nicholas's character was not lost either, as tales of him



Fig.3

visiting children across parts of Europe on the eve of his Saints Day (December 6th) became part of the Christmastime story. For when St Nicholas arrived it was not simply to reward the good, but rather to also judge and often thrash the naughty. This was no jolly old gift-giver therefore, but a staunch defender of the faith that happily meted out punishment—as well as praise—to those he deemed fell short of his saintly expectations.

As the story of St Nicholas's annual visits spread, however, they started to become a source of some embarrassment to the church. After all, how could a kindly saint be associated with publically inflicting violence on young children, especially when village elders, dressed as the bishop, were carrying out this aspect of his character purportedly with a little too much enthusiasm. Something had to be done. Yet, at the same time, both the church and parents often relied on fear to keep order amongst the often unruly and rebellious young, a fear that the threat of Saint Nick's disapproval had provided. The answer was to reach back into pre-Christian mythology and find Saint Nicholas a companion; one who could do the dirty work for him.

Bring on The Wild Men

Human cultures are full of stories of bedraggled, bearded, half-men and supernatural characters who roam remote areas only to encroach on human settlements in the mid-winter when it is dark and cold and food is scarce. Today we call them yeti or sasquatch, but in pagan and medieval Europe they were known by other names.

Many of these

Fig.5



Fig.4

who, so it was told, would lead a wild hunting party across winter skies astride his eight-legged flying steed Sleipnir (fig.4). Children would leave gifts of food in exchange for sweet treats, but those who were deemed unworthy could find themselves spirited away and forced to join the hunt for all eternity.

In England, there was Robin Goodfellow (or Puck as we better know him), a mischief-maker and regular defiler of women (and occasionally men) who would ultimately become sanitised in the form of the Green Man, the fool and, eventually, when combined with the tales and appearance of Wodan, the spirit of winter cheer we came to call Olde Father or Sir Christmas. In Finnish lore, it was the evil spirit Nuuttipukki who became the winter totem Joulupukki—the yule goat—who again would reward good children while often brutally punishing the naughty.

Yet while characters such as Robin Goodfellow (fig.5) and the like were undoubtedly an influence on the evolution of both the



characters provided a perfect companion for Saint Nicholas, empowered by the good saint on one night of the year to mete out punishments on his behalf. Often, they themselves derived from even more ancient tales of winter Gods and spirits, however, who would also influence the stories that gave birth to Santa. Perhaps the most influential was the Germanic God Wodan (or Odin in Norse)

American Santa Claus and the more disreputable of Christmas characters, they were not associated directly with St Nicholas. What Saint Nick needed was a wildman of his own, of which there was no shortage.

In Germanic lands, figures such as Pelznichol,

Bellesnickle and Knecht Ruprecht often played this role, accompanying St Nicholas—who judged as to whether a child deserved gifts or an act of retribution from his unholy accomplice. Such retribution could take many forms, from beatings with a birchen rod (fig.6), to being spirited away in a sack to the depths of hell. In France, the role was taken by Père Fouettard (“Father Whipper”), while in the low countries it was Zwarte Piet, a Moorish slave, who did the honours.

Perhaps the most horrific and, thanks largely to Hollywood, the most well known is the Alpine character of Krampus (fig.7). A truly “domesticated devil” who, as well as beating children, throwing them off cliffs or even eating them for Christmas dinner, also had other satyr-like appetites that were often exercised on young women deemed to be of dubious virtue. Today Krampus events are still held in Alpine countries such as Austria, and even in cities such as Los Angeles, where hordes of drunken Krampusses frequently intimidate and harass local residents.

By the 19th century, however, these malevolent characters, imported into the US by European settlers, were melded with the Catholic St Nicholas, turning him from a Bishop into a fur-clad quasi-supernatural character who, once again, was given license to deal with children both nice and naughty, in the form of the American Santa Claus.

Santa Sells (Out)?

While it is difficult to pin down the exact point in time when the Santa Claus we know today supplanted St Nick as the seasonal gift-giver and his visit shifted from 6th December to the 25th, it is widely agreed that he emerged out of 19th-century New York literary society, his name being a variation on the Dutch for St Nicholas, Sint Nikolaas, abbreviated in turn to Sinter Klaas. Appearing, perhaps most famously, in Washington Irving’s satirical *A History of New-York by Diedrich Knickerbocker* (1809) and Clement Clarke Moore’s possibly plagiarised poem “A Visit from St Nicholas” (1823), whatever his exact origins, by the end of the century Santa had become the established figurehead for the newly invigorated Victorian Christmas on both sides of the Atlantic.

By this time, despite his continuing tendency





Fig.8

northern states did not end there. During the winters of 1863 and 1864 newspaper articles and leaflets produced in the north reportedly informed southern parents, and their children, that Santa would not be able to visit them due to the strength of the northern naval blockade and this was the price they were paying for their secessionist ambitions. So much for spreading goodwill and peace on earth.

This role as a tool of military propaganda continued into the 20th century as the US used Santa first in a perhaps more fitting role as a symbol of hoped-for peace during the First World War, but then as a tool, all-out military participant in the battle against America's enemies during the Second (fig.9). Yet while Santa was, by and large, formally excluded from military service after WWII, this is not to say that his image was not also associated with goods and services that many might consider almost as bad, if not as damaging, as all-out war.

When it comes to Santa Claus, no one has

to distinguish the naughty from the nice, his role as harsh disciplinarian was quickly forgotten, with a lump of coal being the worst a naughty child could expect. Yet as one set of behaviours that were somewhat at odds with his gentle and peace-loving credentials were left behind, it would seem that another took their place.

Take, for example, what is considered to be the first "modern" (i.e. jolly and rotund) image of "Santa Claus". Drawn by the political cartoonist Thomas Nast for *Harper's Weekly* of 1863, it is a slightly disturbing image (fig.8) of Santa delivering gifts to the Union troops during the on-going US Civil war. Rather than wearing red or brown furs, however, he is depicted clad in the stars and stripes while hanging a wooden effigy of Confederate president Jefferson Davis. This image is accompanied by the heart-warming text:

Santa Claus is entertaining the soldiers by showing them Jeff Davis's future. He is tying a cord pretty tightly round his neck, and Jeff Davis seems to be kicking very much at such a fate.

Santa's role as a propaganda figure for the



Fig.9

been madder for him than the mad men of the advertising world, especially in the US. Perhaps his most well-known endorsement is that of that ‘health-giving’ elixir Coca-Cola. And while the popular belief that it was Coca-Cola, and their graphic designer Haddon Sundblom, who were responsible for creating the image of the red and white Santa is a myth, there is no doubt that it was this image that helped to popularise the character world-wide from his appearance from 1931 onwards.

More interestingly, however, is a very similar image used by White Rock mixers picturing Santa enjoying a bottle of their ginger ale in his office in 1923 (fig.10). Nothing wrong in that of course, unless one considers that what is also on his desk is a bottle of whisky. This is despite the fact that this

ad was produced in the middle of Prohibition and that to ask for a “white rock” was speakeasy code for a spirit and mixer. So just what export business is Santa running from his office in the North Pole, we might ask?

In many respects drinks both sugary and alcoholic have been the least worrying of Santa’s commercial associations over the decades. For example, while many of us might still enjoy the attractions of tobacco, I suspect far less of us would want to see it so enthusiastically endorsed by childhood heroes such as Paddington Bear or Noddy. Yet for decades Santa was the annual face of the worldwide tobacco industry, endorsing almost any brand that came his way. Similarly, when it came to encouraging childhood recreational activities there were few arms dealers as active as Santa around the festive season (fig.11).

Yet despite his somewhat chequered past as trained killing machine, potential Prohibition

Fig.10



gangster, tobacco hawker and arms trader, at least Santa was a man of sexual propriety and long-term fidelity. Well, perhaps. As I have already suggested, however, Santa has evolved from a long line of somewhat satyristic creatures often associated not only with fertility, but downright promiscuity and even unnatural violations.

While in early days he might have been merely tempted to drunkenly “try it on” with the occasional Christmas fairy, by the 1950s his somewhat disturbing voyeuristic appetites were there for all to see from staring up ladies dresses, to visiting young women dressed only in their negligees (fig12). Indeed, in what is possibly the richest of ironies, the last Christmas image by the one man who was more than anyone responsible for creating the wholesome family-centred image of Santa, Haddon Sundblom, was the cover of the 1972 Christmas issue of *Playboy* showing a naked blonde bursting out of her Santa suit



Fig. 11

SANTA CLAUS will get around more quickly this year, as he has adopted the "Stevens-Duryea" automobile to speed him safely on his way. More than ever will St. Nick be welcomed, because he is loaded down with Stevens Rifles, Pistols and Shotguns for the youths of the land. Give your boy that "Stevens" he has been wishing for so long, and make this Xmas time a memorable one for him. "Stevens" means Safety, Accuracy and Reliability to the highest degree attainable, and makes Men out of Boys.

Our line is a large and varied one, comprising Rifles, Pistols and Shotguns.

(fig.13). This image, or so his widow believed, was a final rebuke to the Coca-Cola Company that had somewhat unceremoniously fired Sundblom a decade earlier.

Bad Santa Today

Now of course you might think that in this day and age of child-centeredness Bad Santa is a thing of the past. After all, if nothing else, he has his brand image to think about, one reputedly worth something in the region of \$1.6 trillion. Alas, as in most things, life is never that simple.

In a world in which we like to see our heroes fall, Santa continues to have his dirty washing exposed for all to see. Cinema, for example, that brought us *Miracle on 34th Street* and, more recently, saccharine sweet offerings such as *Arthur Christmas*, has also revelled in Santa's darker side, in films that celebrate his barbaric wild-man origins and satanic associations, including the numerous Krampus films that have recently emerged, or the superb Finnish film of 2010 *Rare Exports*, which presents Santa himself as a child-hating, semi-barbarous creature of the arctic wastelands.

Even his sexual preferences have become a topic of public discussion with, for example,



Fig. 12

O-O-OH Santa—
I just love that
Microsheen shine!

Miss Microsheen, and every other slick chick, recognize quality when they see it. They know at a glance that a MICROSHEEN shine "stands out"—tells the world you're really going places. So for the holidays—and before every date all year 'round—be sure your shoes have that well-groomed "million dollar" MICROSHEEN look. Buy a can today. And ask Santa to slip a can in your stocking.

GRIFFIN MICROSHEEN STAIN BOOT POLISH

Black • Brown • Tan • Oxblood • Cordovan • Mahogany • Blue • Red • Neutral

Chap-Hop's own Mr B having remarked in song about dear old Santa's possible penchant for all pleasures rectal, a theme previously explored in songs such as Clarence Carter's 1968 soul classic "Back Door Santa", and

memorably exploited in the 2003 Hollywood movie *Bad Santa*. More recently, an uproar was caused down under (that's Australia) by lingerie chain Honey Birdette's 2017 very public Christmas advertising campaign that pictured, among other things, Santa being straddled by an extremely scantily clad young woman—seemingly to his upmost delight.

Yet while all of this might seem humorous and largely inconsequential to most of us, please spare a thought for those men who every year bravely don the red-and-white suit and bring little children's dreams to life in department stores, shopping malls and garden centres across the land.

While largely part of a closely regulated industry, with national and international training schools imparting the highest standards of professional behaviour, the legacy of *Bad Santa* still adheres to these fine and noble men. For even while the days of the whiskey sodden, tobacco reeking and damp trousered elderly misanthrope of my childhood are largely a thing of the past, there are those who seem to go out of their way to besmirch the good name of Santa (fig.14).

Not that this isn't occasionally self-inflicted, such as the case of the performer who, several years ago, was physically escorted from a London department store after sexually propositioning the teenage daughter of a visiting family before insulting and abusing the mother.



Fig.13

Or the performer who was found to be running a porn studio in his grotto after hours or, for that matter, the one who pinned an annoying teenager up against a department store wall and threatened to rip his f*****g head off in front of a crowd of slightly bemused—if not terrified—pre-schoolers....

So even though Christmas has passed for another year, it might already be worth starting to think about who might slip down your chimney next December. Or indeed you might even want to consider bricking it up: after all, if you've been naughty you can't be too careful!



Fig.14

DING DONG

MERRILY

It's Christmas, so the Club goes to the pub

AS IS TRADITIONAL, we met for one last knees-up in a pub before we all went our separate ways and suffered our families for Christmas itself. For most of the Club's existence this gathering has taken place at the Dover Castle public house on Weymouth Mews, usually by annexing the back room. Sadly last year that pub was closed down to make way for a bistro so we had to find pastures new. At Matthew Howard's suggestion we tried the Rising Sun, located on the picturesquely-named Cloth Fair next to Smithfield meat market (handy if anyone needed to dash out and get some mince during the evening, though I'm not aware that anyone did). This all went well so we returned to the Rising Sun this time too, and I think a new tradition has been born.

It is also traditional that this is the one time of year when we see Lord Mendrick to check

he is still alive; the rest of the year he is abroad, teaching the children of the rich in some plague-ridden part of the world. For the second year he didn't turn up, so I now suspect he was actually consumed by cannibals some time ago and someone is keeping his Facebook page alive for sinister purposes. The Club should really mount an expedition to find his grave.

Aside from Mendrick's absence, the meeting went convivially. There were no great incidents, announcements or entertainments, just a bunch of people drinking in a pub. Frances Mitchell was resplendent in a Christmas-themed skirt, Ian White turned up dressed as the Phantom Raspberry Blower of Old London Town, while Mark Christopher turned up without a tie, and therefore technically not dressed at all. Apologies to those who left too early or arrived too late to feature in the pics!





Merry Christmas, everyone!



Newcomers James Rigby and Emma Hartley



Matthew Howard, Mrs H. and Darcy Sullivan



Chloe Clark



Stuart Mitchell, Artemis Scarheart and Birgit Gebhardt



Frances Mitchell's themed outfit;



(Above) Curé Michael Silver and Dr Jonathan Black; (left) Adrian and Phillip contemplate the emptiness of their glasses; (below) Scarheart shows himself to be both a good listener and a forthright talker (sorry, ladies, he's taken); (bottom) Matthew Howard hasn't lost the old magic





(Top) Frances suspects Mark of not wearing a tie—he puts up a spirited resistance but she and Scarheart eventually succeed in publicly shaming him; (right) outside the pub a stranger (second from right, next to Lucky Henry) is naturally drawn to the wholesome allure of tweed; (below left) Philip Hancock prepares to face the elements; (below right) Ian and Scarheart show themselves to be *hommes sérieux*



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.



Stuart Mitchell

“If it ain’t broke...”

Name or preferred name?

Stuart David Mitchell (but not Stewart — apologies to Stewart Lister Vickers)..

Why that nickname or nom de plume?

Because my parents had to choose between that and Guy.

Where do you hail from?

Current abode is down the M4 in Reading, but born in London — at least third generation.

Favourite Cocktail?

I’m quite fond of a Vesper Martini, but also like a good Malbec.

Most Chappist skill?

Tying a bow tie blindfolded (but it’s probably best not to ask why one would be wearing both at the same time). I can also grow a reasonable moustache with sufficient notice (and spousal approval).

Most Chappist possession?

My first 35mm film camera, given to me by my father: a Zorki Z4 from the 1960s.

Personal Motto?

“If it ain’t broke — I’m not done yet.”

Favourite Quotes?

“Never underestimate the greed and stupidity of the average person.”

“Man versus geography — geography wins.”

“There’s no such thing as bad weather — just the wrong clothes.”

(All of the above I made up myself, so can’t attribute them to anyone famous or witty.)

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

I own both a sword and a bow — the sword is a replica of Narsil from *Lord of the Rings*, and the bow I have as I used



to belong to a local archery club. The sword was purchased in France and "smuggled" into the country, as I didn't want to have a difficult conversation at customs

How long have you been involved with the NSC?

The first NSC event we attended was the Christmas party in 2014, and we signed up on the spot. We had attended the Chap Olympiad earlier that year, but not with the NSC. Earlier this year I co-organised a club outing to Bletchley Park with Pri, which was well received and a very enjoyable day out.

How did you hear about the Club to begin with?

A personal recommendation from our good friend and NSC member Lord Hare.

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

If you're into afternoon tea then I can recommend the Corinthia Hotel in Whitehall, London – we've been going there for a pre-Christmas family get together for several years now and the high tea with



With the guardian of spousal approval, Frances

Champagne is splendid..

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

An Englishman, an Irishman and a Scotsman – the conversation may not be up to much, but there should at least be a few good jokes.

Favourite Member of the Glorious Committee? Answer: Artemis Scarheart.

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

Not yet, but I am scheduled to do a turn for the March Club Night on the subject of William Henry Fox-Talbot, inventor of modern photography. Just the small detail of getting on and writing something remains between now and then

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



With word (I suspect some photo-shopping has gone on here)



TOP BRASS

Robert Westbury on the history of the Salvation Army uniform and its influence in the wider world

IN THE MOST recent edition of *The Chap*, Holly Rose Swinyard made mention of the possible sartorial influence of The Salvation Army uniform on some of the costumes of the *Star Wars* franchise. For an organisation whose look and purpose has gone almost unchanged in over 150 years it is not entirely surprising that

the look of their uniforms may have had wider ranging influences. Indeed such is the influence that Chrissie Hynde wore a Salvation Army uniform for the video of “2000 Miles”. Yet what some may not realise is that throughout the country, and indeed the world, there are actually multiple versions in use. As we have now passed through the festive season it is

quite likely that members will have encountered at least some of these uniforms as Salvation Army bands are such a fixture on most high streets at Christmastime.

I was born and raised in The Salvation Army, and while no longer a member, I’ve been fascinated by the uniforms from a very young age.

The original design was based on the typical military uniforms which one would have seen on the streets of Victorian London, and for men this would vary between navy blue high-collar tunics and red lion-tamer type tunics. For the female members it was typically a navy blue skirt and jacket. The most distinguishing item for female members was the bonnet. This interesting item of headwear was quite common at the time, but for early Salvationists it had a very practical purpose. Early meetings and rallies were often disrupted by people who disagreed with the teetotal nature of the organisation and their aggressive stance on social justice, and the assembled groups would often be pelted with projectiles. The bonnet

Early Salvationists





The author modelling the contemporary Hendon festival tunic in 2005 (left) and high-collar tunic circa 2007 (above)

as soon as the meeting was finished there was no delay in being able to get into the sea!

The high-collar tunic was replaced with an open-collar, five-button tunic, also in navy blue. For ordinary soldiers the male tunic has no breast pockets, these usually being reserved for officers. For both men and women the tunic is completed with epaulettes which denote rank or the church of which the wearer is a member, along with twin S emblems on the lapels. These elements of the uniform are universal—the S

provided members with some limited protection against these.

The navy blue, double-breasted, high-collar tunics largely fell out of use in the 1980s and 1990s—although the band of the church at Govan, Scotland, continued to wear these right up until 2014. My grandfather was a young man at the church in Weston-Super-Mare and recalls that the best thing about these high-collar tunics was that during the summer one could wear a swimming costume underneath and





(Above) Evangeline Booth, daughter of Salvation Army founder William Booth, and the first woman to hold the post of General, in 1934, showing the distinctive bonnet; (below) Chrissie Hind in the video to the Pretenders' hit "2000 Miles"

only changes based on the native language of whichever country the uniform is being worn in. In the Western world the navy blue uniform is the norm, but in warmer climates it can also be



seen in white, grey or biscuit.

For members of Salvation Army bands there are also red tunics, known as festival tunics. These are usually worn at concerts and many bands who play carols in shopping centres at Christmas time will opt to wear these as they are more festive and attract more attention than the standard navy.

By maintaining such a consistency in the design of the uniform it has meant that the organisation remains recognisable the world over, and while not the most practical of outfits it makes members easily identifiable whether they be going to or from church, playing carols at Christmas or selling the *War Cry* in pubs and city centres.

Perhaps the most distinctive, and possibly the most unusual, Salvation Army uniform is that of the Household Troops Band. This happens to be a personal favourite of mine although I never had the privilege of wearing it.

The Household Troops Band was formed in 1887 and consisted of young Salvationist brass musicians who then began a six-

month tour of the country. Their uniform, which has largely remained consistent to this day, incorporates slightly unusual headwear in the shape of the pith helmet. This was coupled with a red guernsey, blue trousers and gaiters. In 1888 they became the first Salvation Army band to cross the Atlantic when they toured Canada.

The original band was dissolved in 1893 to make way for a new national band, the Internal Staff Band which remains in existence. In 1985 the Household Troops Band was recreated by Captain John Mott drawn from players from the National School of Music. This reformed band adopted a very similar uniform to the original, including the distinctive pith helmet, but minus gaiters. The band continues to this day and consists of active bandsmen from across the country. Much like the original band they can usually be found in the summer on tours of seaside towns providing open air concerts,

and also take part in the annual Lord Mayor's Parade. Unlike with many Salvation Army bands, the majority of Household Troops Band concerts are for those who have no connection with the Salvation Army.

The uniform of the Household Troops now consists of a red tunic with light blue cuffs, navy trousers with red stripe, white gloves and, of course, the pith helmet which bares the crest of the Salvation Army.

As time has gone on and attitudes have changed, more casual elements have found their way into daily use, such as polo shirts and hooded tops. Whilst these are more practical for daily wear, they lack so much of the elegance of the early uniform and so it is some comfort that most soldiers still routinely wear the traditional uniform.

(Right) The Joystrings, the first Salvation Army pop group to achieve chart success, in 1964; (above right) the Joystrings cleaning up the streets of Soho; (below) the uniform of the modern Household Troops Band





CLUB NOTES

New Member

HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS TO Faiysal AliKhan, who joined the Club last month. Faiysal divides his time between Islamabad, Pakistan, and Oxford, where he is a Research Associate at the Centre of International Studies. Here we see him at Henley this year, resplendent in Leander Club colours. Meanwhile Rino Kristiansen actually appeared as a new Member in the last issue, but we didn't get a photo of him till now.

Club Tie Corner

THE MOST IMPORTANT news has to be that Santa is a Member of the NSC, judging by this still from *Kirstie's Handmade Christmas* (below). Opposite page, clockwise from top: thanks to Col. Cyrus Choke for pointing out that Randolph and Mortimer Duke from *Trading Places* are Clubmen (as all the best villains are); Tory Laitila sent us this snap of a random pianist in a Buca di Beppo restaurant; Benjamin Negroto has spotted NSC

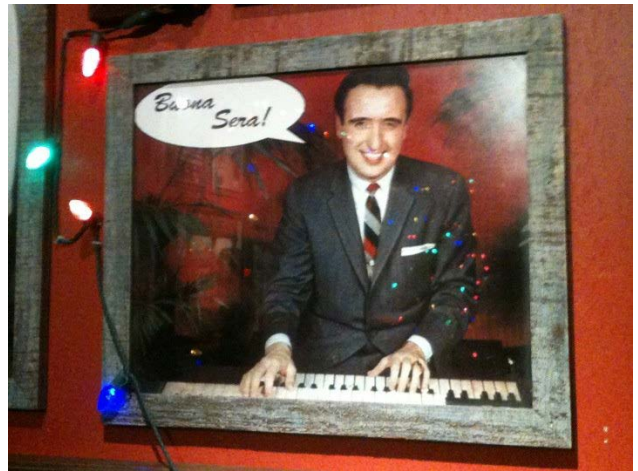
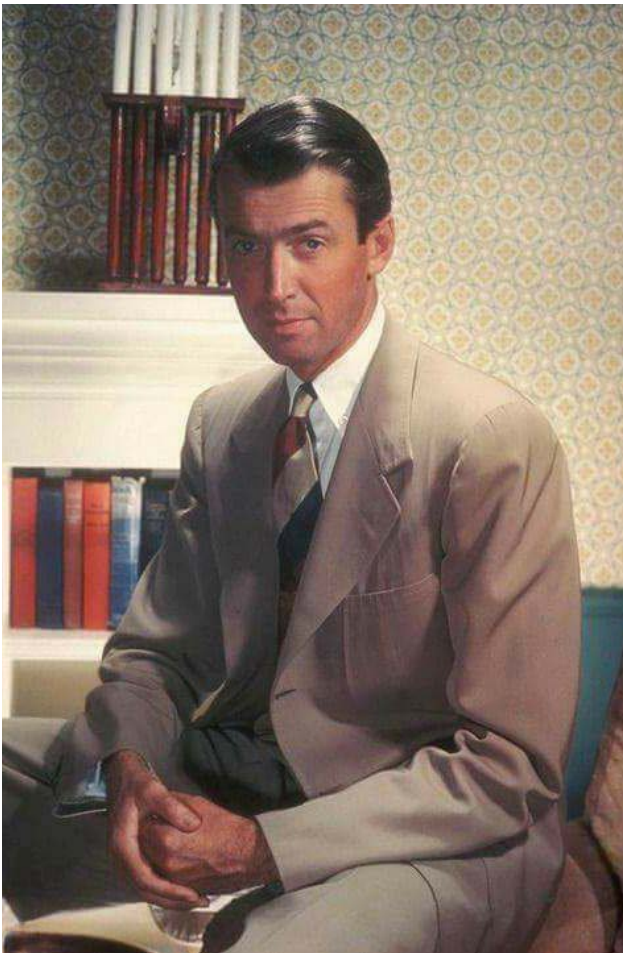


(Above)
Faiysal
AliKhan;
(right) Rino
Kristiansen





tendencies in his ladyfriend's choice of jewellery; and David Wright has, rather reassuringly, found evidence that gentleman and good egg James Stewart had the right stuff.





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 January

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: £7 entry after 10pm; dance lessons £10

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 January

Beginners' class from 7pm, main dance from
7.30–11pm

The Indian YMCA, 41 Fitzroy Square, London
W1T 6AQ (02073870411)

Admission: £10 earlybird 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 or 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. We have
a large wooden dance floor and are 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, and
we have sold out for the past
four dances. 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.



Farewell to the Geffrye Museum

Saturday 6th & Sunday 7th January
The Geffrye Museum, 136 Kingsland Road, Shoreditch, London E2 8EA
Admission: Free

The Geffrye Museum, which explores the home and home life from 1600 to the present day, is closing for two years for renovations, and this weekend they are having a farewell party, offering live entertainment, street food, cocktails, talks and tours. If you haven't visited the museum, which has a series of mock-ups of period living spaces, now is the time.

The Big London Flea

Sunday 7th January
11am–6pm
13–15 Stoke Newington Road, London N16 8BH
Admission: Free

More than 50 stalls, both veteran traders and locals having a clear-out, gathered across the ground floor of the former ABC cinema and offering furniture, homewares, clothing, industrial electricals, lighting and more. There is also a food hall. See www.hackneyfleamarket.com.

Hackney Flea Market

Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th January
11am–6pm
Abney Public Hall, 73a Stoke Newington Church Street, London N16 0AS
Admission: Free

More than 30 handpicked vintage traders offering 20th-century furniture, records, salvaged French homeware, antique luggage, textiles, “kitschenalia”, Danish decor, reclaimed industrial fixtures, Atomic Era electricals, bric-a-brac and collectibles. See www.hackneyfleamarket.com.

The Candlelight Club: Russian Roulette

Friday 19th and Saturday 20th January
7pm–12am
A secret London location
Admission: £25 in advance
Dress: White Russian aristocrats, Soviet spies, Prohibition dandies, swells, gangsters and molls, degenerate aristos and decadent aesthetes, corrupt politicians and the Smart Set In the Know



Princess Natalia Paley, cousin of Tsar Nicholas, ended up as a fashion model in Paris. Come and celebrate the stylistic and creative impact that White Russian exiles like her had in the 1920s at the Candlelight Club this month

A 1920s clandestine speakeasy party in a secret London venue completely lit by candles, with live jazz bands, cabaret and vintage vinylism, a cocktail bar, and kitchens serving bar food as well as a three-course bistro dinner menu. See www.thecandlelightclub.com.

If you're still pining for the Motherland after the NSC's Revolution! party last month, this event will have an extra Russian theme to mark the 100th anniversary of the 1917 Revolution, which saw thousands of exotic, elegant, cultured, and frequently hard-up White Russians fleeing with their furs and their tastes for luxury and decadence, making an impression everywhere they landed, from Paris to Shanghai, and having a major impact on 1920s culture as we know it.

There will be live music from Russian folk/jazz/klezmer band Atomek Soviet Swing (a project specially put together for a Russian cultural event last year, and only the second time the band will ever have played, though you will recognise some of the players). There will be cabaret from Champagne Charlie. There will be vintage vinylism from Auntie Maureen. And there will be vodka. Oh yes.

“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*

Down these mean streets Adrian
must go, who is not in himself mean

