A man in a dark suit and striped tie is wearing a large, voluminous blonde wig. He is smiling and has his arms outstretched. In front of him is a large, green, fuzzy frog puppet with large blue eyes, a wide red mouth, and a purple tinsel mustache. The puppet is mounted on a mechanical base with a yellow cord. The background is a blurred indoor setting with warm lighting.

HOW LOUCHE IS YOUR LUAU?

The Club's summer party plumbs new depths of exotic savagery

The Chap Olympics

Photo report from *The Chap's* annual festival of élan, dandyism and unsporting prowess

The need for Thebes

Kathryn Best on the enduring appeal of the Egyptian city where she is building a 1920s-themed hotel

RESIGN!

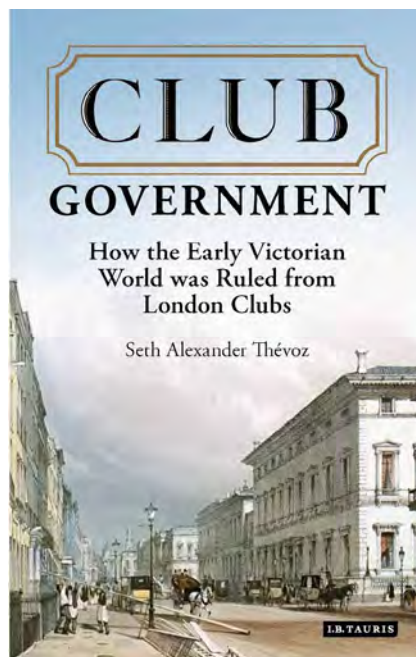
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW SHERIDAN CLUB • ISSUE 142 • AUGUST 2018



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 1st August in the upstairs room at The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB, from 7pm until 11pm. Seth Thévoz will talk to us about Club Government: How the Early Victorian World was Ruled from London Clubs, the subject of his latest book. “‘Club Government’ was a fixation of the mid-nineteenth century,” Seth explains. “Press accounts, diarists, and writers such as Dickens, Disraeli and Trollope all advanced the view that key political decisions were taken behind closed doors, in the clubs of St James’s. Yet despite Club Government being referenced in most major histories of the period, the topic has never before enjoyed a full-length study. Making use of previously sealed club archives, and adopting a broad range of analytical techniques, this book seeks to deepen our understanding of the distinctive and novel impact of Club Government on British politics in this period. The book concludes that while historians may have exaggerated the clubs’ reputation for interfering in elections, they have hugely underestimated



the extent of club influence on ‘high politics’ in Westminster, and more importantly, on the shaping of modern British political culture.”

“A fascinating forensic study of the period’s networks of power” —Ian Hislop, Editor of *Private Eye*

The Last Meeting

Our speaker last month was Kathryn Best, on the subject of ancient Thebes, now

Luxor, home to generations of archaeologists and Egyptologists, and a magnet for generations of visitors, from the Grand Tourists, young men broadening their minds by travelling through the remains of the ancient world, collecting art and artefacts as they went, to famous fans Agatha Christie and Florence Nightingale. Kathryn herself is not an archaeologist, but in fact an architect by training. Her connection with Luxor is that her husband is Egyptian and she has, for some years, been in the process of building a 1920s-style hotel in the city—

watch this space for a Club jaunt to visit once the work is finally finished...

An essay from the talk begins on page 14.



Torquil opens proceedings



Kathryn begins. Before you ask, the flags are residue from World Cup viewing activity in the room by other people



Lindsay Sinclair (l) with Giles Culpepper



(Right) Kathryn's friend Mahmoud was on hand to give an Egyptian perspective on his country's archaeology and the looting of it by the West;



(left) Samuel Mehdiabad and Philip Hancock;



(below left) Ian White summons the energy to go to the bar



(Below) The conviviality continues outside in Smoker's Alley; (left) Samuel fires up the briar



HOW LOUCHE IS YOUR LUAU?

Our summer party plumbs new depths of exotic savagery

THE NEW SHERIDAN CLUB's summer party was given a vintage South Sea island theme this time. This was intended to encompass a range of interpretations, but interestingly most people focused on a relaxed Hawaiian vibe—I counted just two ties in the whole room, which must surely be a record. (I was wearing a clerical dog-collar, which arguably counts as a third.)

Scarheart's imagination had fired off at various tangents and he welcomed guests to Port Horatio, capital of our island which he had dubbed Nani-Komite, "a paradise where the days are long, the drinks longer and nothing disturbs the sound of waves on the miles-long sandy beaches. Other than the *occasional* rumblings from Mauga o le Oti, but the Geological Society tells us that's nothing to worry about." Mauga o le Oti sat proudly in one corner—Scarheart was at pains to point out to any who came near him that it was not small but far away. During the evening there were indeed rumblings from the volcano, of increasing seismic intensity, culminating in a "spectacular" eruption just before the Grand Raffle.

Other entertainments including a Shoot the Missionary with a Blowpipe game, in which the missionary was played by Action Man and the

object was to knock him into a cauldron. A few people managed to knock him over, though I have to admit that he did not easily fit into the pot, which tended to go flying when he hit it. Stand-out winner was Kathryn Best's friend Mahmoud, who not only hit the missionary twice in succession, with the permitted two

darts, but then proceeded to hit him a third time with a lemon that he threw backwards over his shoulder—not in the rulebook, but we like to encourage talented improvisation.

Our other game was a simple hula hoop contest to see who could keep going for longest. Seonaid surprised us with her long-buried talents, but ultimately the prize went to Samuel Marde Mehdiabad's guest Mary, who could probably have kept going for longer than most of us could stand and watch.

We had one other competition, which was running in the background all evening—

Build Your Own Idol. We provided a range of raw materials, from construction toys like Lego and Meccano, to odd dolls, 3D glasses, and cargo cult fetishes with no name. To be honest my fear was that no one would take part in this, but in fact it was disturbingly popular. We chose the winner simply by presenting the idols to the throng and using the club decibel meter to



Bob the Lobster gets a luau makeover



Ed Marlowe as the attack on Pearl Harbour: he has pearls, pictures of US ships on his shirt, parachutists on his ears (ejected pilots?) and Japanese planes on the balloons



Lorna Mower-Johnson and Mrs H.

measure the level of worshipful ululation. It was a close-run thing, but the prize eventually went to Frances Mitchell's creation of her constant companion Bob the Lobster (a raffle prize at a previous party), this time with his Club Tie augmented with a grass skirt, being ridden by a doll that Scarheart found which looks uncannily like his sister-in-law Chloe.

As if the fun wasn't intense enough, we also had live music from Martin Wheatley of the Hula Bluebirds, on ukulele and lap steel guitar, accompanied by Dave Archer on acoustic guitar, playing some Hawaiian tunes.

Our traditional Snuff Bar, with a row of complimentary snuffs (something we introduced after the ban on smoking in pubs), was this time replaced by a Spice Bar, featuring mounds of cumin, paprika, turmeric and black pepper. I did wonder if anyone would be foolish enough to try and snort any of it, but to the best of my knowledge wisdom prevailed.

Finally the proceedings were rounded off with our traditional Grand Raffle, in which we raffled off a range of themed nonsense, including some rather splendid tiki mugs and a ukulele.

Many thanks to all who came along and to the staff of our venue, the Water Poet in Spitalfields.



Watching over us all, the "dormant" volcano Mauga o le Oti



Adrian finally has an excuse to wear this pocket square



It's safe to say the party was a riot of Hawaiian shirts



The Contessa di Campari and Stephen Myhill, with a light-up pineapple



Darcy Sullivan



George Davies and Stewart Lister Vickers



Clayton Hartley



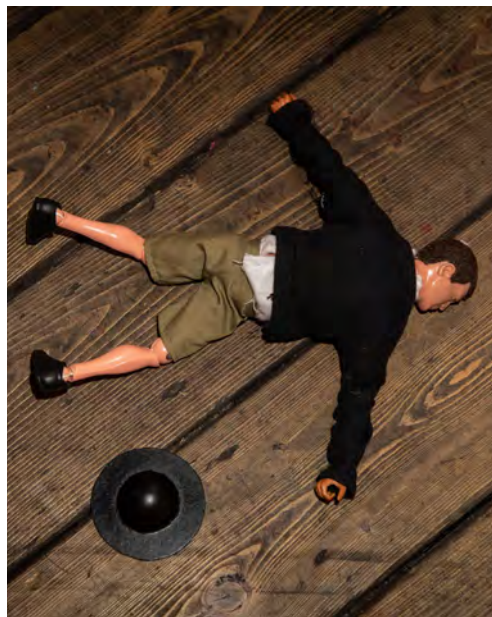
Andrew Harrison and Jasper Jones



Priya and Gary with Frances Mitchell



Shoot the Missionary with a Blowpipe: (top left) Robert is the first to have a go; (top right) Scarheart nervously invigilates; (left) Stephen's dart passes to the right of his target; (above) Action Man poised over the cooking pot; (above right) this shot of Pandora also shows the detail on her headdress, including the bottle of Malibu; (below left) Mahmoud turned out to be a sharpshooter; (below) Action Man lies flooded; (below right) Mahmoud's final trick, hitting Action Man with a lemon





Martin Wheatley (r) of the Hula Bluebirds on lap steel guitar and ukulele, with Dave Archer on the acoustic guitar, inspire spontaneous dancing





Hula Contest—
who can
hula for the
longest?



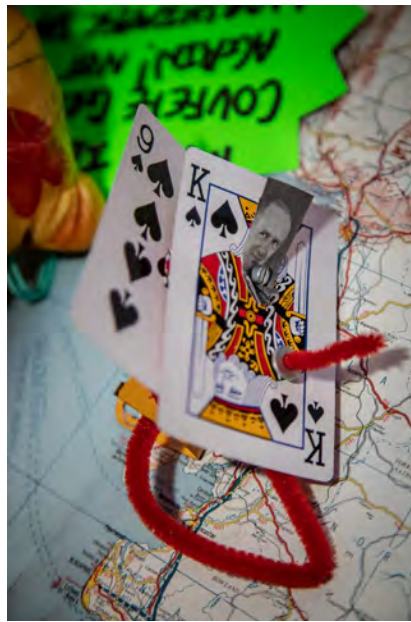
(Clockwise from
top) Seonaid
Beckwith, Stephen
Myhill, Frances
Mitchell, Priya
Kali, winner Mary,
George Davies, Lord
Hare of Newham

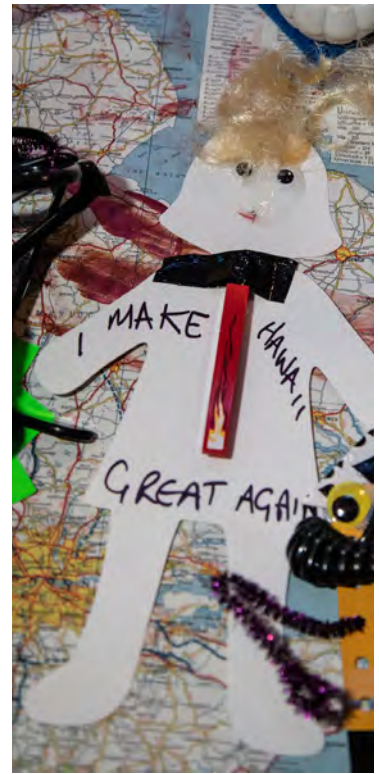




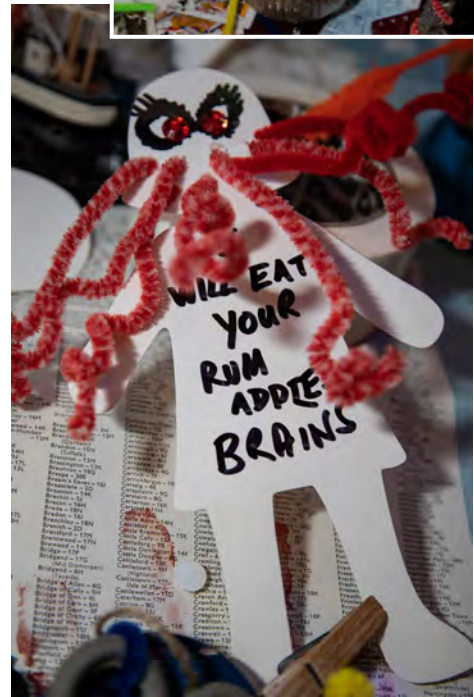
This is the idol that eventually won

Build Your Own Idol: the Prince Philip shrine was Scarheart's idea and seems to have been embraced





At the end of the evening, each of these fetishes was held aloft to the mob (see opposite and the front cover) and the winner chosen simply by the volume of primordial adulation





Mauga o le Oti erupts and the people fall on their knees in superstitious terror. Then we had the prize-giving: Mahmoud and Mary were awarded the blowpipe and hula hoop (plus an inflatable palm tree each), then many raffle prizes were handed out. See www.flickr.com/photos/sheridanclub/albums/72157671740552008 for all the photos



EGYPT

Through the Eyes of Some Adventurers

By Kathryn Best

BASED ON SOME of my own recent expeditions to Egypt, and the foolhardy commitment I have made to building a winter residence and business in Luxor, I would like to share with the Members some of the fascinating history of this mysterious and intriguing place—ancient Thebes—that formed a part of any respectable gentleman’s or gentlewoman’s classical education and Grand Tour. This history lives on today through the numerous universities, archaeology missions and amateur Egyptologists digging around for that elusive find which will change the course of history. Jesuit missionary Claude Sicard, who in the early 18th century produced the earliest known map of Egypt, was recorded as saying: “They say that Thebes has a hundred gates. That is more than probable: in the fortress in which the palace is enclosed one can see seven or eight entire portals, so tall and exalted, so ornate, so superb, so distinctive that they can have no equal. Each of these gateways, after having charmed you with itself offers you a spectacle of sphinxes... After this don’t talk to me of Rome, Versailles or Paris.”

Some context

Many of Egypt’s important historical centres are located along the banks of the Nile, which acts



The author in Egypt

as the “life-giving” water supply and transport artery through the centre of the country. Upper Egypt is the southern half of the country, and Lower Egypt the northern. There were rulers for each part—sometimes they got on, sometimes they did not, and more than once it was the Pharaoh who unified or reunified Egypt into a single sovereign nation. In terms of geography and landscape, the directions of north, south, east and west feature heavily in mythology and present life. The Nile runs south



to north and, through its annual flooding, was the most important aspect of Egypt's ongoing flow of wealth. The east bank at Luxor is known as the land of the rising sun, and therefore the land of the living. It is here that the temples were built and festivals were held. The west bank, where the sun sets, was the land of the dead, where most of the funerary monuments and tombs are to be found.

Ancient Thebes (the Greek name—previously it was Waset in ancient Egyptian and now Luxor) is about halfway down the country, in Upper Egypt. It is a magnet for Egyptologists and archaeologists, being the largest open-air museum in the world and site of some of the most profound finds in the field of antiquities—

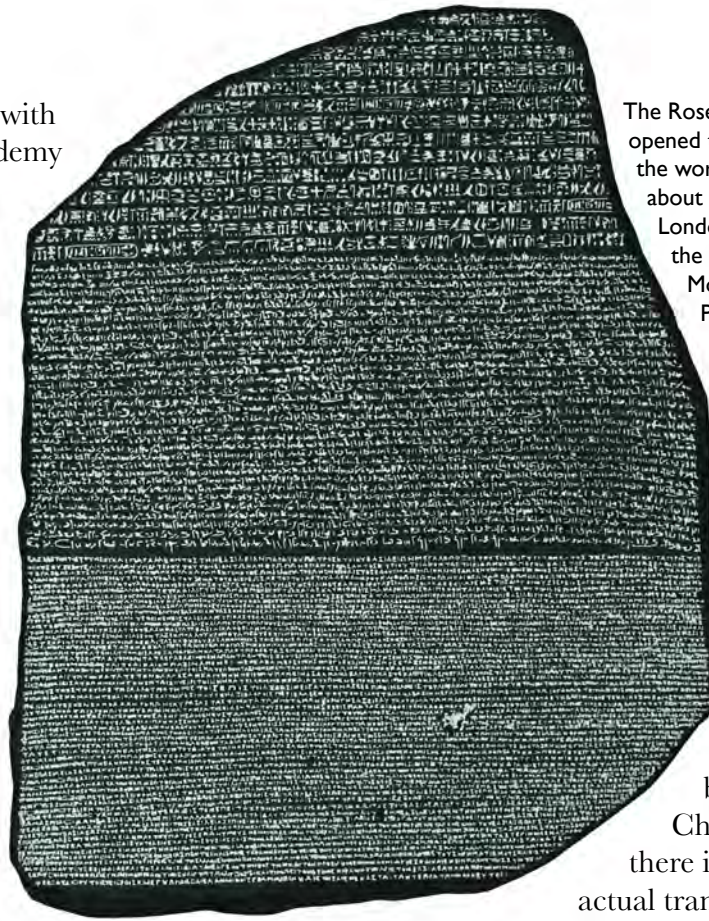
two notable examples being Karnak, the largest temple complex in the world, and the Valley of the Kings, where Tutankhamen's tomb was discovered by Howard Carter in 1922. They say that only 30% of all ancient historical artefacts have yet been excavated. This is what has driven visitors over the centuries.

Egypt through its military campaigns

Egypt was a relatively unknown country before Napoleon Bonaparte's expedition in 1798, and until the mid-19th century English relations with the Middle East were mostly commercial. It was Bonaparte who opened up the archaeological interest we now have in Egypt. In 1798, as part of his invasion and eventual conquering of the

country, he brought with him a travelling academy of distinguished scholars. His intention in dominating Egypt—to control the overland route to India—was a short-lived affair. In 1799 British forces under the leadership of Vice Admiral Horatio Nelson (or if you prefer 1st Viscount Nelson and 1st Duke of Bronté) defeated the French fleet at the Battle of the Nile. This was a remarkable accomplishment for a man who proved in his distinguished career that size isn't everything. Nelson was of slight build, weak constitution and stood at the altitude of just 5ft 4in tall. By 1801 the stranded French army was thrown out of Egypt and, under the terms of capitulation, Egyptian antiquities collected by the French passed into British hands. In her remarkable book *The British in the Middle East* (1969) Sarah Searight describes how William Hamilton, then secretary to Lord Elgin, organised for the removal of antiques from French ships as they were evacuating. The following year, Hamilton was to go on to supervise the removal of the “Elgin Marbles” from Athens.

It was during Bonaparte's campaign in Egypt that the Rosetta Stone was found by French soldiers in 1799. Originating from 196 BC and created during the Ptolemaic dynasty on behalf of King Ptolemy V, the stone is inscribed with three versions of a decree issued at Memphis, Egypt. The top and middle texts are in Ancient Egyptian, using hieroglyphic script and Demotic script respectively, while the



The Rosetta Stone: its decipherment opened the pages of Egyptian history to the world. In 1917, owing to concerns about heavy wartime bombing in London, the British Museum moved the stone for safekeeping to the Mount Pleasant station on the Post Office Railway, 50 feet below ground near Holborn, where it stayed for two years and 15 months

bottom is Ancient Greek. In 1802 the Stone was transported to the British Museum in London, where it is today the most visited object in the museum.

The stone was deciphered in 1822 by Jean-François Champollion, although there is controversy over the actual translation and disputes

simmered, such was the heated desire to “crack the code”. It is claimed by none other than a sub-editor of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, James Browne, that it was in fact the British scholar Thomas Young who planted the seeds to the deciphering of the text. In a series of anonymous articles submitted to the *Edinburgh Review* in 1823, Browne praised Young's work and alleged that the “unscrupulous”

Giovanni Battista Belzoni's signature at Medinet Habu Temple (along with those of Henry Salt and Felix Bonfils, among others). Belzoni was a pioneer to Egypt whose previous careers included spates as a circus man, a builder and seller of hydraulic engineering machines, an excavator of tombs and temples and an archaeologist. His methods of excavation were deeply questionable, and today we might refer to it as “pillaging”



Champollion had plagiarised it. Reassuringly, the authoritative work on the stone by British Museum curator E.A. Wallis Budge in 1904 gives special emphasis to Young's contribution compared with Champollion's. In the early 1970s, French visitors to the Stone at the British Museum complained that on the information panels the portrait of Champollion was smaller than the one of Young; English visitors complained that the opposite was true. The portraits were in fact the same size.

Egypt through the Grand Tour

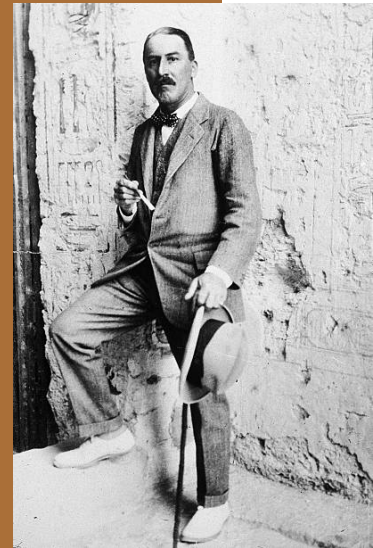
As a result of Bonaparte's military campaign and the ready availability of scholarly books by the 167 technical experts of his Commission des Sciences et des Arts, the remarkable antiquities of Egypt became known to the public. Egyptomania soon gripped Europe and, in particular, the imagination of those intrepid travellers seeking a classical "Grand Tour" education through guided travels abroad. After 1800, every visitor to Egypt took "mementos" back home and looting was commonplace. Henry Salt, a friend of William Hamilton's, arrived in Egypt in 1811 as Consul General. Salt wanted to "collect" as a way to augment his salary and many of his finds can now be found in the British Museum.

Soon, another questionable habit developed. It became customary, if not obligatory, for anyone who visited ancient sites to record the fact upon them. The names of Henry Salt, the Italian explorer Giovanni Battista Belzoni, Bernardino Drovetti, the French Consul General to Egypt, and the photographer Felix Bonfils can be seen today at Medinat Habu in Luxor, inscribed and dated as if the antiquities were a giant visitors book.

Writing in *The Guardian* in 2014, Jon Henley comments that, during Gustave Flaubert's tour of Egypt in 1850, he expressed his irritation in a letter to his uncle about "the number of imbeciles' names written everywhere", and in Alexandria he was unamused that "a certain Thompson, of Sunderland, has inscribed his name in letters six feet high on Pompey's column... It can be read a quarter of a mile off. There is no way of seeing the column without seeing the name of Thompson. This imbecile has become part of the monument and is perpetuated with it."

Extract from a letter by Howard Carter

By this time I was able to converse with the people among whom I was residing with tolerable ease. So to while away the darker nights, when the pestilential gnats and midges tired me out of all patience, I occasionally indulged in the diversions of the Omhda's Mandarah ("guest-house"). There in the evenings the select of the village—the sheikhs and the fathers of the people—are generally gathered and, contrasting with these, a fair representation of the community.



I must admit, however, that this practice was liable to serious criticism: some colleagues in the government service frowned upon it as a bad habit. They thought it degrading! But whether that be a fact or not, what I found was so valuable in this practice, or study, if it can be called such, was that it thereby brought me into contact with the people with whom I had to deal. It enabled me to study their manners and customs, and there can be no doubt that by it I acquired to a large extent their good opinion and at least some of their confidence.

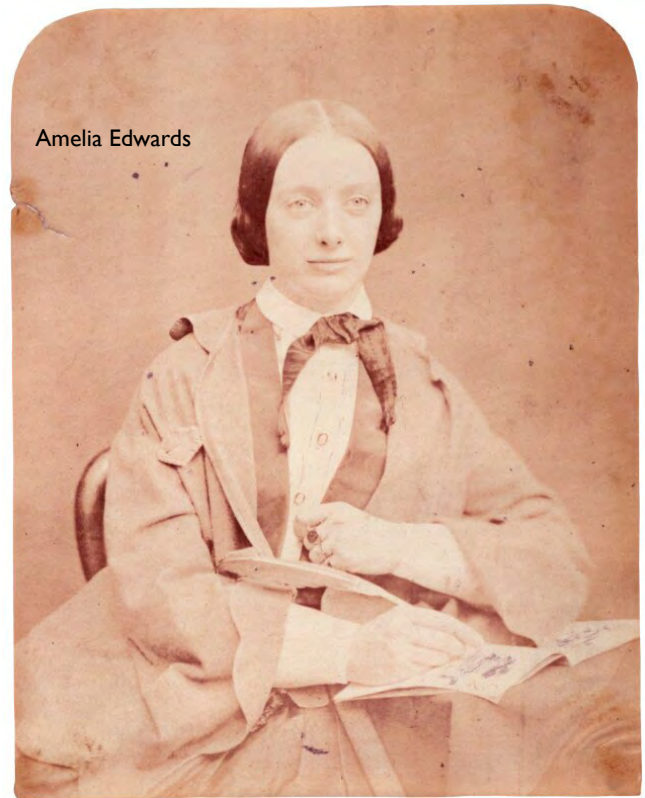
At this coffee-hearth one could at times listen to reciters of romances, who, without book, commit their subjects to memory, afford attractive entertainment, and are often highly amusing. Some of their recitations contain a deal of history and romance. Moreover, they are told in lively and dramatic manner, but unfortunately many of their stories, such as fables of questionable moral teaching, are extremely indecent. They cannot therefore be repeated. But here in a nutshell is one from the coffee-hearth, which may be recounted in any drawing-room, and one which, I believe, may be amusing to the reader. [Carter then goes on to relate a proverbial story about a snake and rat, with an ending that can be interpreted in two different ways.]

Egypt through its archaeologists

The remarkable work of Howard Carter and his patron Lord Carnarvon and their discovery of Tutankamun's tomb in 1922 is well documented and, with the recent spate of TV documentaries and drama adaptations, I will not reiterate what is readily in the public domain. However, a previously undocumented source of Carter's thoughts at this time has come to light by way of a friend, Mahmoud Al Hashash, whose great grandfather was present at the time of Carter's excavations and indeed played a part in the excavations within the Valley the Kings. The box on the previous page is an excerpt from a private letter, written by Carter himself, offering a first hand account of his time in Luxor.

Egypt today

For London Members interested in conducting their own Egyptological investigations, the Egypt Exploration Society (ESS) is open to the public by appointment. The Society was founded in 1882 by Amelia Edwards, following a visit to Egypt in 1873–4. Her travel experiences led her to develop a passion for documenting, exploring and preserving the country's unique heritage. The ESS carries on this mission and her legacy today. You can read more in her book describing her adventures, *A Thousand Miles up the Nile*, published in 1890 by



Amelia Edwards

George Routledge and Sons.

There will be more extensive information coming in the future about the opening of my 1930s-inspired boutique hotel and residential learning centre—located a stone's throw from Howard Carter's must-see former residence and now museum in Luxor—but feel free to contact me at info@kathrynbest.com. The staircase of red granite from Aswan (used historically for the ancient obelisks of Egypt) is being installed as you read this.

Glengourna, Gourna Village, West Bank, Luxor—opening in late 2019



Florence Nightingale

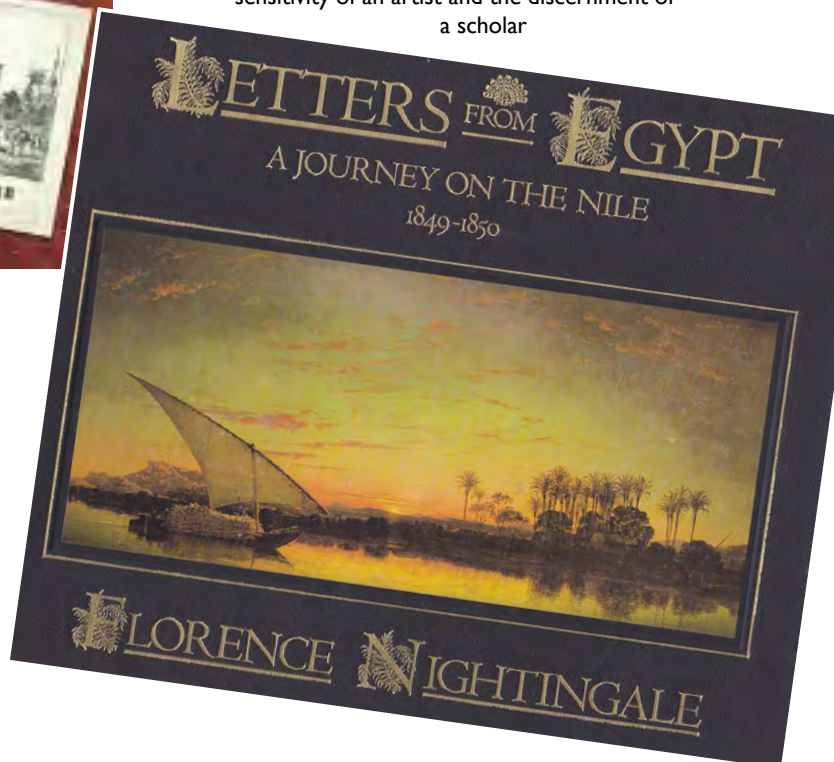
(1820–1910)

A social reformer, statistician and founder of modern nursing. Instead of politics, she followed a “calling” for nursing and is known for professionalising nursing roles for women. A pioneer of graphical representation of statistics, she is credited with popularising the pie chart.



(Left) In 1850, Florence sailed the Nile from Alexandria to Abu Simbel. As a wealthy unmarried 29-year-old with impeccable social connections, she travelled with friends for five months, writing to her family in England. Her letters capture her observations with clarity, insight, passion and a deliciously scathing wit, and give real insight into Egypt's tourism of the past. It is said that she approached Egypt with the soul of a mystic, the sensitivity of an artist and the discernment of a scholar

(Right) In the winter of 1849–50, 70 passengers boarded the boat in Alexandria and headed off to explore the ancient sites of Egypt. It was to be a winter of insight and revelation. At the time Egypt had no museums, and some travellers brought chisels to chip souvenirs from the temples and pyramids. Among the Europeans fighting their way on board were a young Florence Nightingale and, by coincidence, Gustave Flaubert. They disliked each other intensely. Florence wrote that “Flaubert appears supine, sprawled on deck, stirring himself only to stumble towards the occasional ruin and the houses of prostitutes, where energetic debauches left him feeling ‘empty, flat, sterile.’” Flaubert pronounced Florence’s party, on catching sight of them on the first night, as “hideous”, and that Nightingale’s companion Selina Bracebridge looked “like a sick old parrot”





AGATHA CHRISTIE'S

DEATH ON THE NILE



NAT COHEN presents for EMI a JOHN BRABOURNE / RICHARD GOODWIN production a JOHN GUILLERMIN film

PETER USTINOV · JANE BIRKIN · LOIS CHILES
 BETTE DAVIS · MIA FARROW · JON FINCH
 OLIVIA HUSSEY · I.S. JOHAR · GEORGE KENNEDY
 ANGELA LANSBURY · SIMON Mac CORKINDALE
 DAVID NIVEN · MAGGIE SMITH · JACK WARDEN

in AGATHA CHRISTIE'S **DEATH ON THE NILE**

Music by NINO ROTA · Screenplay by ANTHONY SHAFFER

Produced by JOHN BRABOURNE and RICHARD GOODWIN · Directed by JOHN GUILLERMIN

Technicolor® · Distributed by EMI Films Limited



Egypt in the movies: *Death on the Nile* (1978)

Directed by John Guillermin and released in the autumn of 1978, at the height of America's Tut-Mania born of the 1976–9 tour of *The Treasures of Tutankhamun* museum exhibit.

Albert Finney declined the opportunity to reprise his Oscar-nominated performance (*Murder on the Orient Express*, 1974) after considering the rigours of applying and wearing the extensive Poirot makeup and prosthetics in the triple-degree heat of the Egyptian desert.

Instead Poirot is played by Peter Ustinov. "Ustinov makes the character uniquely his own and plays Hercule Poirot as he should be played—calculating, manipulative when necessary, amusing in his own way. There was nothing wrong with his performance, only his height. The moment where he faces off with a cobra in his bathroom is incredibly tense."
—Ken Anderson, *Dreams are What Le Cinema is For*.



(Above) As a fan of bitchy dialogue, I find every scene with Bette Davis and Maggie Smith to be pure gold



(Above) By the late Seventies all-star casts had come to be associated with the cheesy last gasps of the disaster movie genre. *Death on the Nile* is much easier to enjoy now, despite Guillermin's workmanlike direction. (According to Jane Birkin, the director treated the cast like cattle, often swearing at them like a sailor to get them to move to another part of the boat for a new shot)



(Left) Ustinov (r) with David Niven as Poirot's friend Colonel Race

(Below) Anthony Powell's dazzling, Academy Award-winning costume designs do most of the heavy-lifting in the glamour department



All change!

In which the Chap Olympics undergoes a shake-up

THE CHAP MAGAZINE's annual festival of foppish games, where training and effort are frowned upon, while panache and creative cheating are encouraged, was this year a bit different—instead of the events taking place sequentially on a raised central stage, there were at least four different zones just marked out on the ground, where events were taking place all at the same time, joined by what were supposed to be a series of attempts to break various records, such as the most hats worn while riding a bicycle, or the most hats thrown successfully on to a hatstand (presumably in unbroken succession). In all honesty the reason for the change was partly financial—the stage costs a fortune to hire each time and the risk of people falling off it inflates the event's insurance too.

Another reason was probably to make it possible for guests to roll up and take part rather than registering for the limited number of places at the beginning of the day. It may well be that newcomers and the less outgoing might have appreciated this, but of course the NSC's own core of dandified show-offs resented the lack of a platform on which to perform, and there is no doubt that the day lacked focus and therefore theatrical energy. Whole games could take place without most people being aware of them and the small arenas and limited audience did seem to undermine the potential. Moreover our traditional MC, Tristan Langlois, master of the discreetly ironic bon

mot, was absent, replaced by some children's TV presenter who frankly didn't get it.

In addition to the games photographed here, the programme showed that Tea Pursuit also took place, but that must have happened before I got there: one person on a bicycle tries to pour tea from a pot into a cup held by another cyclist. There was Top Trump Toupée, where players throw balls to knock off Donald Trump's hairpiece (so essentially the same game as French Connection) and Riding Crop Rumpus,

where someone tries to spank people with a riding crop while a woman in a catsuit tries to stop them. These probably did take place but I was clearly somewhere else at the time.

Despite the chaos, the day is always an important social occasion and an opportunity to catch up with those members who can't make it to the weekday monthly meetings. We were allowed to erect our traditional club gazebo, and Pandora Harrison got to establish her "Winner's Circle", a cluster of tables decorated in club colours and festooned with picnic fare. There

was live entertainment during the interval from Palace Avenue Swing, but I saw just one couple dancing, compared to the complete stage-invasions of dancers we used to get in the old days...

Who knows how the event will manifest itself next year? Perhaps it will return to its roots as a bunch of likeminded souls gathering with picnics and booze in a park to play some silly games together.





(Clockwise from above) Tucking in at the Winner's Circle; the NSC gazebo; Sally Sweetlove and Miss Minna; good times at the Boodles gin bar; Darcy Sullivan; Mrs H. artistically sizing up the photographer, with Lorna Mower-Johnson; the Beckwiths and Tim Eyre





(Above) Men with their hands behind their backs: Will Smith, Craigh and the Curé; (below left) new MC Ben Shires and chums



Adrian Prooth



Gary Grønnestad and friend



Mark Christopher, Giles Culpepper and the Earl of Essex



Tom Carradine (right) with Pandora and Andrew Harrison (centre) and a chap who is a neighbour of the Harrisons



(Above) Lord Hare of Newham; (below) this table were running a game of Escalado, complete with odds on a bookie's blackboard



No idea who these people were



(Below, left to right) George Davies with a very Pre-Raphaelite wineglass; David Kudish with his dogs; Holly Swinyard (l) and friend





French Connection Contestants throw baguettes at pieces of cheese atop poles in an attempt to dislodge them. This chap on the right simply strode up to the cheeses and swiped them off, which only served to emphasise how little of the theatrical “creative cheating”, that is the traditional heart and soul of the Chap Olympics, was actually going on this time



An attempt to set a record for the most people to smoke the same pipe in 60 seconds. On one attempt they managed 40 people, which is presumably now the world record





An attempt to break the record for the most number of hats worn at the same time while riding a bicycle. This was a genuine existing record, held by a chap called Daniel Willner



I think the enormous straw hat above is model's own—perhaps she hoped it would give her an advantage

The existing record was 23 hats, and one contestant this time managed 27, thus presumably setting a new record. Mind you, I didn't see any official invigilators





Another record attempt, this time for throwing hats on to a hat stand. The existing record, held by an American, is 16, and on this occasion I didn't see anyone manage more than one, so they quietly dropped this event. (Right) Lizzie Beckwith is delighted with her Boodles hat



Luca Jellinek has some explaining to do



A singular jacket, the horizontal stripes somehow suggesting both sports blazer and prison uniform



Umbrella Jousting A hardy perennial that, in my opinion, is frankly rather dangerous. It does what it says on the tin; originally the knights had briefcases as shields, until it became clear that to hold the umbrella and case while cycling would require three hands. On this occasion most of the time it consisted of two blokes whacking each other with umbrellas—I hope they had fun because it was pretty tedious to watch. Salvation came from some stylish NSC types (this page) and Il Grande Colonnese's annual highly-orchestrated display, always with Chopper as his opponent (see opposite)



(Top) Stewart Lister Vickers battles Ed Marlowe; (bottom) Stuart Turner and Stephen Myhill cross brollies, with Stuart finding a novel way to deploy his umbrella as a weapon



A complex narrative in which mild-mannered Andy Hill metamorphoses into strongman Il Grande Colonnese, a regular character. Seemingly victorious, Trump invites Colonnese to join him on the Dark Side, revealing, "I am your father." Then an *umbrella ex machina* hovers down just in time, and Colonnese is victorious





Butler Baiting A three-legged slalom in which participants must pick up a glass of Champagne, carry it back, step over a raised cane and replace the glass, spilling as little as possible. Sponsored by Boodles gin; below *Chap* editor Gustav Temple presents the prize





At the end of the day Gustav bestows prizes for the best dressed female and male guests (top, Ida and Bunny respectively). In Olympic tradition there are usually bronze, silver and gold cravats handed out (for reasons that cannot be fathomed), replaced this time by wristwatches. Bronze went to a young chap called Toby, silver went to Il Grande Colonnese and gold to Chopper (who had spent most of the day in a rubber mask playing the role of Donald Trump—I guess that merits a medal by anyone's standards).

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.



James Rigby

Name or preferred name?

James "Riggers" Rigby

Why that nom de plume?

I cannot help but observe that many members adopt *noms de plume*. I do not. When one is descended from that illustrious 13th-century Lancastrian, Henry de Ryggeby, any other name would be inferior. It is vital to note that I am from the line of Lancashire Rigbys, and not from that lesser line of Lincolnshire ones who are entirely unrelated and should be considered frauds.

The "Riggers" thing is the well-known Oxford "ers" and features a lot among cricket commentators such as Blowers and Aggers. Coincidentally, I picked up the Riggers nickname

when I was up at Oxford in the early 1980s. I was there for a shopping trip one Thursday afternoon and a shopkeeper, upon seeing my name on the cheque I had presented for my purchases, first used it.

Where do you hail from?

Geographically speaking, my life's journey traces an inverted Golden Spiral on a map of South East England, centred on Wood Green in North London. From there I moved outwards and northwards to Enfield. Then east-south-east into southern Essex and most recently south-westward to Tunbridge Wells. If the journey continues along a Golden Spiral, my next destination will be somewhere very near to Goodwood and I shall die in Reykjavik.

Favourite Cocktail?

At what time of day? At what time of year? For which mood? Who writes these questions?

Cold weather daytime: very spicy Bloody Mary.

Cold weather evening: Old Fashioned.

Warm weather daytime: Comfortable Screw in a very tall glass topped up with lemonade. One of the bars where I've taught them how to make this, garnishes it with Haribo sweets on a stick which is novel, to say the least.

Warm weather evening: Dirty Martini. The dirtier the better. (This would have appeared in the section on favourite quotes below, but apart from me I can't find anyone else who's said it.)

Most Chappist skill?

Hat-tossing. I have three hooks at home. The genius of the scoring system is in its simplicity: score 20 for the outer hooks, 50 for the centre one

and obviously zero if the hat hits the floor. The scrupulously-kept records show a current 20-toss average of 27.4 points.

Most Chappist possession?

It's a tough call between my wit, charm, devilish good looks and modesty. I'll have to get back to you on this one.

Personal Motto?

Nil Nisi Bonum. It's the motto of London's Eccentric Club and translates as "(Do) nothing but good."

Favourite Quotes?

"The future is not set. There is no fate but that which we make for ourselves." Mrs S. Connor of Los Angeles, USA, 1995. I say 1995, even though the quote actually appeared in 1991. But the cinematic masterpiece from which it comes was set four years into the (then) future.

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

I saved the world from the Y2K computer bug. I eliminated lead from most of the petroleum spirit sold in the United Kingdom.

I played the cello in front of Her Majesty the Queen.

None of these were solo efforts.

How long have you been involved with the NSC?

Since late November 1965. Allow me to explain: I believe that a chap is born, rather than made. Anyone born a chap (whether a gentleman or lady chap) is therefore "involved" with the club, they just don't know it yet. I became cognisant of the club's existence in the second half of 2017 and joined in January 2018.

How did you hear about the Club to begin with?

It was in a vivid dream likely fomented by the copious amounts of cheese I had consumed the

previous evening. I was being beckoned through a gate, a portal if you will, by people I now know to be Torquil Arbuthnot, the Earl of Essex, and Artemis Scarhart. At the time, it really put the willies up me and I awoke sweating profusely. The rest, as they say, is history.

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

Jeffrey West shoes. The ones from the shops in Piccadilly and the City, and not the inferior ones sold in places like House of Fraser. Purists may demur, but I find them very rakish indeed.

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

Jesus of Nazareth, the Prophet Mohammed and Abraham from Genesis (the book of the Bible, not the soft rock band from the 1980s). I'll represent atheism and we'll settle this once and for all. If we can't agree by the time the cheese is served, we'll Spoof for it.

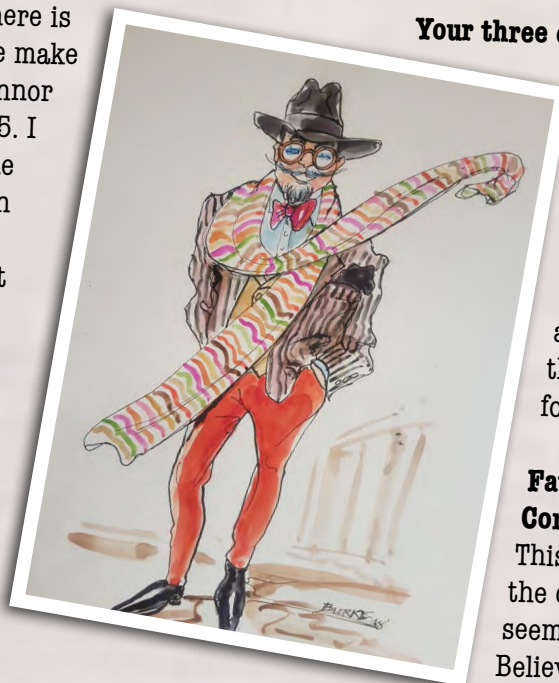
Favourite Member of the Glorious Committee? Artemis Scarheart.

This answer was pre-populated in the questionnaire received and there seems to be no way to change it. Believe me when I tell you I have tried my damndest.

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

I have yet to do a Turn. I have volunteered but am led to understand that all available slots are filled until at least 2019. When it's my Turn's turn, I shall wax lyrical on The Dandy History of Tunbridge Wells 1606-1909. A story involving chaps and dandies such as Beau Nash, Dr Samuel Johnson, and Edward VII when he was Prince of Wales (he of the bottom button waistcoat controversy.)

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.





CLUB NOTES

Club Tie Corner

ONLY A COUPLE of actual ties this time: this gentleman to the right is the character Moïse in French spy spoof *Au Service de la France* (courtesy of Benjamin Negroto) while the tie on the facing page appears in the 2016 Russell Crowe/ Ryan Gosling vehicle *The Nice Guys*. Meanwhile Ian Treal submits this photo of Melania Trump brazenly wearing Club colours on her recent visit to Blighty, Bingo Pittard pushes it somewhat with this piece of sportswear and Cyril Browne asks if the Club is going into the lawnmower business (below). On the facing page we have (apty, given our recent party theme) a hula hoop and a Nazi sentry box, both from the eagle eye of Lindsay Sinclair.



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New Member

A HEARTY WELCOME (or perhaps an “Aloha”, on this occasion) to Bob Jubb, who joins us from Houghton le Spring, Tyne and Wear. He gives his favourite cocktail as the Canchánchara—I had to look that one up. It’s rum, lime and honey water, an ancestor of the Daiquiri.



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 1st August

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 Dance Classes

Every Friday (except, presumably, when the

Get up close and
personal with Joan
Crawford



BTBC itself is taking place at the same venue)
6.30–8pm, followed by social dancing till
10.15pm

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

Admission: £15 for lesson and social dancing or
£10 just for the social from Design My Night

From the makers of the Black Tie Ballroom
Club (see below), the method of these beginners
classes assumes new students have musicality or
experience in other dance forms such as Lindy,
places the emphasis on moving in time to the
music, and aims for 80% of beginner students
to confidently and gracefully get around the
dancefloor with a partner after the first lesson,
and be ready for the improvers class after two
lessons.

An Afternoon with Joan Crawford

Saturday 4th August

12–4pm

BFI Southbank, Belvedere Road, London SE1
8XT

Admission: See whatson.bfi.org.uk

Ahead of a two-month retrospective of some
of her most memorable screen performances,
the BFI considers Joan Crawford's best
performance of all—herself. Through a series

of illustrated talks led by experts and fans alike, this event will look at Crawford's origins as the "it girl" and flapper superstar, to the much-parodied larger-than-life figure that has permeated films, TV series and books. Featuring broadcaster Samira Ahmed, academic Lucy Bolton (Queen Mary University of London) and film critic Pamela Hutchinson.

Mouthful O' Jam

Saturday 4th August

8pm-2am

The Salisbury Pub, 1 Grand Parade, St Annes Rd, London, N4 1JX

Admission: £8

Gaia Facchini's regular swing DJ night in the opulent gin palace that is the Salisbury, with a swing dance lesson from Gaia at 8pm followed by DJ sets from Tim Hellzapoppin, Kid Krupa and Stompedown Geoff.

Black Tie Ballroom Club

Friday 10th August

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 are provided, and guests may smuggle in their own drinks if they are discreet. Tickets are £10 online or £15 on the door. There is a large wooden dance floor and the venues 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, and the event usually sells out. 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.

Tropical Yard

Saturday 18th August

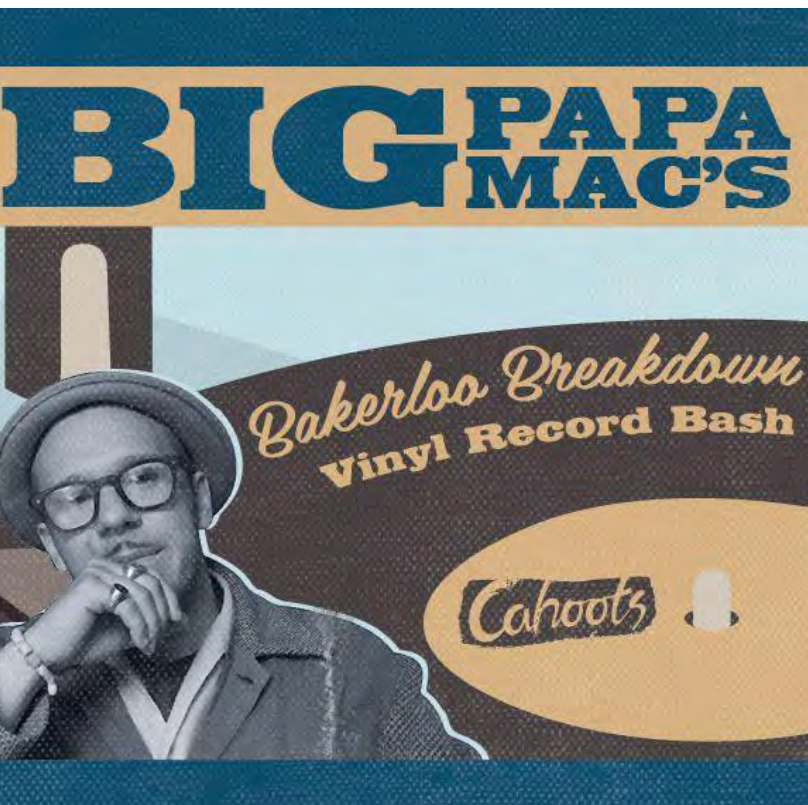
9pm-2am

Servant Jazz Quarters, 10A Bradbury, London N16 8JN

Admission: Free

If vintage Latin sounds are your thing, Tropical Yard returns for another night of intense rhythms from Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa. This month, residents Lady Kamikaze, Liam Large and Duncan Brooker will be joined by





very special guest Carlos René flying in all the way from Mexico City, where he has run the Bombo Y Maracas club for the past four years. With a passion for unearthing lost Mexican and Latin 1950s and 1960s 45s, Carlos will be sharing a heap of cumbia, porro, mambo, guaguancó and Latin R&B.

Big Papa Mac's Bakerloo Breakdown
Thursday 23rd August

10pm–3am
Cahoots, 13 Kingly Court, Carnaby Street,
London W1B 5PG
Admission: Free?

DJ night with Big Papa Mac playing music from the 1920s to the 1960s, in a basement venue decked out like a WWII-era underground station.

Keeping Up With the Courtaulds

Sunday 26th and Monday 27th August
11am–5pm
Eltham Palace, Court Yard, Eltham, London
SE9 5NP
Admission: £15 (free to English Heritage members)

It's 1937, the nation has been celebrating the Coronation of King George VI and gossiping about The Duke of Windsor and Mrs Simpson. Meanwhile at Eltham Palace, Stephen and Virginia Courtauld and their staff are getting ready to receive the new Queen for a dinner party in their recently finished house. For the staff, there are preparations to be made, tables to lay, cleaning to be done. The Royal Equerries will need to inspect the house before the Queen's arrival. For the Courtaulds and their friends, there are dances to learn, cocktails to mix, perhaps a game of croquet on the lawn and musicians need to prepare. Join The Courtaulds (with Stephen played by NSC Member Callum Coates, depicted) and friends and staff for



If you like swing dancing, cocktails and stuffed animals then the Asylum Speakeasy is right up your street



an Art Deco August Bank Holiday. Live music from Brandyn Shaw (as Al Bowlly), dancing, 1930s fashions, cocktail tasting (authentic period recipes). Who knows, you might even meet the Queen... More details at www.english-heritage.org.uk.

Don't miss Keeping Up with the Courtaulds, a chance to see the remarkable Eltham Palace (above and below), to hear live music and to interact with our own Callum Coates as Stephen Courtauld (bottom)



The Asylum Speakeasy

Friday 31st August
8pm–5am

The Kings Head, 257 Kingsland Road, London E2 8AS

Admission: £8.14–£16.76 from Eventbrite

Tiger Rag (see above) present a special party across three floors with an emphasis on boozing and socialising as much as dancing, featuring a host of DJs playing Lindy Hop, Charleston, Balboa, Shag, Cumbia, jump blues, reggae, and vintage dancehall.



Il Grande Colonnese celebrates his silver medal victory at the Chap Olympics

