

The 12 Days of Chapmas

In which the
Committee
give Members a
Christmas they
won't be able
to forget

50, Not Out

Matthew "The Chairman"
Howard looks back on a
life less ordinary

Here for the beer

Ian White takes us south
of the border on this
year's Club Pub Crawl

Saucy Jack

A profile of Jack Calloway,
bandleader and flâneur—
and a man with his own
cocktail named after him

RESIGN!

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW SHERIDAN CLUB • No. 146 • DECEMBER 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 5th December in the upstairs room at The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB, from 7pm until 11pm, when Philip Hancock will offer us *The Vindication of Christmas*. "With its title taken from a 1652 pamphlet distributed as part of a campaign against the parliamentary government of Oliver Cromwell," he explains, "this talk considers the Puritan war on Christmas of the 17th century and beyond. Effectively banned in Scotland and the English Commonwealth between 1645 and 1660, the celebration of Christmas became a site of not only religious, but political and social struggle both here and in the fledgling USA. Something that, as we shall see, continues to have repercussions to this day."



The Last Meeting

Four days after having celebrated his 50th birthday, Matthew "The Chairman" Howard regaled members of the Club with *50, Not Out: Reflections on a Long Life in the Chair*, a variety of stories amassed during a life less ordinary (and yet oddly so), including his love of the sound of leather on willow, his misspent youth, Lincolnshire life, his tenuous connections with both Shane Meadows and Bertie Wooster, what's wrong with Yorkshire, why he isn't allowed to get his hair cut at Trumper's any more and why his is no longer welcome at the Boat Race. As we have come to expect, it was a talk on the cusp of propriety, deviating substantially from its ostensible subject matter and with enough illustrations to fill the *Picture Post*.

An attempt at an essay version of Matthew's talk begins on page 12.



Alas, I wasn't able to attend our November meeting as I was whooping it up on holiday in Lisbon. Thanks to Adrian Prooth and the Earl of Essex for pitching in on shutterbug duty



Clockwise from top left: our Chairman Torquil Arbuthnot opens proceedings; Matthew begins, dressed in his trusty Mobutu hat; George Davies; Artemis Scarheart, doubtless barking a command; (l-r) Howard, Mark Christopher, Henry Ball, Stewart Lister Vickers, George Davies; Giles Culpepper, looking more than usually sinister; William Cole, looking pensive



The 12 Days of Chappmas

Lo, it was the New Sheridan Club Christmas party

AFTER MUCH FURIOUS debate, pounding of tables with fists and drunken pistol duelling, the Glorious Committee finally decided that our Christmas party this year would be themed around—Christmas. But more specifically a Chappist Christmas, the kind that Bertie Wooster would dream of.

We even had a singalong of *The Twelve Days of Christmas*, but with revised words to suit the Chappist theme. We used PowerPoint slides so that everyone would know what words to sing: you can see these slides on page 11.

Appropriately enough, given the first line of the song, our first game was Shoot the Partridge from the Pear Tree. As luck would have it, there is a company that makes plush toy partridges (ours arrived finally on the very morning of the party: as a contingency plan its stand-in had been a duck from Hamleys). If you pressed a button on its back it made a noise that, we were reliably informed, was the sound a partridge makes. (The only sound I've ever heard a partridge make is a gentle sizzling in the oven.) The role of the



Lord Hare, an angel in borrowed wings

pear tree was played by a cheap fake Christmas tree decorated with real pears hung on paper clips. After three or four contestants managed to knock the bird off its perch, the game went to a shoot-off, in which only Seonaid managed to score a direct hit the second time around (prompting Scarheart to dub her “The Jockal”).

We had live entertainment from Tom Wild, a tweed-clad banjolele-toter singing songs about such Chappist sentiments as why he doesn't want children and why he can't drink cider any more, after an incident in his youth, and pondering why it is that his dog attracts all the winos in the park when he takes it for a walk. Tom kindly donated a couple of his CDs for the Grand Raffle and the Lucky Dip.

Following the singalong, we had our second game of the evening, a highly involved and nail-biting test of skill and nerve. Players were given a pole on the end of which, hanging on a length of string, was Action Man dressed as Santa Claus. Taped to one hand was a crude hook made from a bent paper clip and the game started with a



Miss Minna



Our hostess, Grace



Suzanne Coles, with four calling birds, and Darcy Sullivan as The Nutcracker

sack of toys hanging on the hook. The arena of play was a model of a domestic drawing room with a chimney. Using the pole, players had first to lower Action Man down the chimney, then deposit the sack of toys. Finally—and this was far and away the toughest part—they had to pick up a glass of sherry using the hook and extract Action Man with it. The “glass” was actually a plastic shot glass with a wire loop that looked like a bucket in comparison to Action Man. Successful contestants got to drink the sherry (the finest supermarket nectar that £5.50 can buy). Players were also racing against the clock, with a time limit of 60 seconds; there was a lot of blundering around and knocking over the pail of sherry (the action took place on a plastic tray with sides to contain the spillage but some of the liquor still found its way on to the steps of the stage, rendering them sticky for the rest of the evening). Successful contestants showed the merits of slow, careful play and nerves of steel. Three players managed to extract the sherry: two of them did in just under the time limit, while our winner Sebastian Alexander did it in an impressive 40 seconds.

Carrying on in the background throughout the evening were three other entertainments. Hunt the Cow Creamer was simply that—hidden somewhere in the venue was a cow creamer, which had to be found. Needless to say the prize was the creamer itself. (In case



Just some of the fantastic Grand Raffle prizes

you're wondering, this game is a reference to a Wodehouse story in which Bertie is tasked with stealing a cow creamer.)

For those with a crafting bent we had another competition, to design the Committee's Christmas card, which goes out to corporate clients, heads of state, the Pope, etc. A wealth of materials were provided, from felt tips and crayons to paints,

Thanks to Suzanne Coles for additional photos



Most of the buffet was hoovered up before I could bring the camera to bear

paint pads, a paint roller, and some potatoes for making potato prints. It was a tough decision for the judges, who were torn between Darcy's diabolical Krampus figure, Ali's bloody handprint (a protest, it turns out, about the fact that, due to an oversight, no actual paint brushes were provided), and Zack's card with its exhortation inside to "get bent" (which would have gone down particularly

well at the Vatican, I'm sure). The prize eventually went to Ian White's design which, though less agreeably subversive, showed technical inventiveness in its use of both glitter and potato

prints of pipes and top hats.

And one other feature of all our Christmas parties is the Lucky Dip, in which an old swing bin is filled with shredded paper that hides delightful gifts, of a quality level that would make a Chinese cracker manufacturer blush. (You can tell how classy this operation is by the fact that one year the venue staff actually started using it as a dustbin, scraping plates into it: I think there are still morsels of spaghetti and Brussels sprout at the bottom.)

Rounding off the evening was our traditional Grand Raffle, featuring goodies of a Chappist and Christmassy nature, such as Christmas pudding flavour gin and snuff, a pipe and slippers (plus some of Peterson's Christmas tobacco), a smoking cap, some Christmas tree baubles containing intoxicating liquor, various DVDs of Christmas classics, some artificial snow and a DIY snowman kit: a carrot, two lumps of coal and a bottle of water (requires some assembly).

Many thanks to all who came and to Harry and Grace of the Tea House Theatre for hosting and laying on the buffet. Merry Christmas one and all.



Miss Minna at the crafting station



(Left) Jonny and Jen

(Below) Zack gingerly essays the Lucky Dip



(l-r) Stewart Lister-Vickers, Benjamin Ro-Jo and Matthew Howard



Andrew, either as Joseph or just in an opulent dressing gown



Shoot the Partridge from the Pear Tree
Clockwise from top left: the partridge, James Blah, Suzanne Coles, Miss Minna, George Davies, Seonaid Beckwith, Joanna Xie



You can see George's projectile passing just over the partridge's head



Santa's Chimney Challenge
Featuring (top left) Essex, (left) Seonaid, (right) Stewart and (bottom) Sebastian



(Above) Tom Wild provides a musical interlude



(Left and below) Entries in our Design the Committee's Christmas Card competition

To see many more photos from the party, have a gander at the album on the Club's Flickr page: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/sheridanclub/sets/72157704229835544>





Grace found the cow creamer and wins it as her prize

On the first day of Chapmas, my butler gave to me...

A cartridge in a Purdey



Seven fortunes frittered

six pipes a-puffing
five cold gins
four calling cards
three French chefs
two turtle-necks
and a cartridge in a Purdey



Two turtle-necks and a cartridge in a Purdey



Eight aunts avoided

seven fortunes frittered
six pipes a-puffing
five cold gins
four calling cards
three French chefs
two turtle-necks
and a cartridge in a Purdey



Three French chefs

Two turtle-necks
and a cartridge in a Purdey



Nine corks a-popping

eight aunts avoided
seven fortunes frittered
six pipes a-puffing
five cold gins
four calling cards
three French chefs
two turtle-necks
and a cartridge in a Purdey



Four calling cards

three French chefs
Two turtle-necks
and a cartridge in a Purdey



Ten whistles wetted

nine corks a-popping
eight aunts avoided
seven fortunes frittered
six pipes a-puffing,
five cold gins
four calling cards
three French chefs
two turtle-necks
and a cartridge in a Purdey



Five cold gins

four calling cards
three French chefs
two turtle-necks
and a cartridge in a Purdey



Eleven ties a-knotted

ten whistles wetted
nine corks a-popping
eight aunts avoided
seven fortunes frittered
six pipes a-puffing
five cold gins
four calling cards
three French chefs
two turtle-necks
and a cartridge in a Purdey



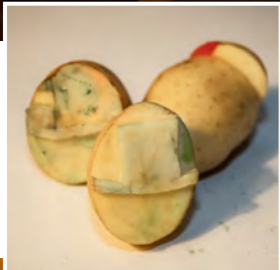
Six pipes a-puffing

five cold gins
four calling cards
three French chefs
two turtle-necks
and a cartridge in a Purdey



Twelve flappers flapping

eleven ties a-knotted
ten whistles wetted
nine corks a-popping
eight aunts avoided
seven fortunes frittered
six pipes a-puffing
five cold gins
four calling cards
three French chefs
two turtle-necks
and a cartridge in a Purdey



(Above) Ian is rewarded for his innovative use of potato prints (left)



(Left) Zack is genuinely thrilled with his Leander Club pink hippo; (above) Seonaid weeps at the beauty of her Andy Williams CD; (above right) Scarheart congratulates the Curé—who had already left



Maximillion wins a DIY snowman kit—two lumps of coal, a carrot and water



Frances bags a nutcracker, some nuts and a bag of tangerines



George goes home with the pipe, slippers and Xmas tobacco

50, NOT OUT

On the occasion of his half-century, NSC Committee nabob **Matthew Howard** reflects on a long life in the chair



IT IS A TRUTH universally acknowledged by experts in such matters that one should write about what one knows. Were this not the case, half of the memorable situation comedies I was brought up on would never have been written. Look at the output of David Croft and Jimmy Perry (fig.1) and all is manifestly apparent. My dear chum the Earl of Essex is much the same. I am very much looking forward to his forthcoming talk on the Nazi Lamplighters of Rural Essex next March, which I am sure will be an illuminating tale.

I am a simple and humble man, albeit one who viewed the African dictators he saw on television as a child as a source of style tips instead of examples of how *not* to run a country (fig.2). I have billed this talk today as one of a life less ordinary, and yet oddly so, as I hope I will demonstrate. Oliver Lane, I man whom I consider a good friend, once said to me, “Howard—I’ve known you 10 years and yet I know nothing about you.” It made me think. I have always considered my time at the Sheridan Club, or “Lodge” as I affectionately refer to it, an escape from the 21st century and I suppose in some senses I leave the real world at the door when I climb the stairs. Well, for those of you who are interested, and I am much indebted to those who came to hear me speak last month, this, as Bert Baccarach and Hal David once wrote, is the story of my life.

I was born in Rugby on a cold, crisp day on 4th November 1968, a day known where I grew up as Mischief Night. Make of this what you will. My parents (figs 4–5) worked for BTH, subsequently AEI, all of which subsequently Marconi, in the research lab in



Fig.1



Fig.2



Fig.3 (above) revisiting my place of birth in 2016; fig.5 (left) with Father when I was 40: the Mao gene is strong in our family



Fig.4





Fig.6



Fig.7: Dan in Coggeshall

Lincolnshire
COUNTY COUNCIL
97.5% white and proud of it

Fig.7



Fig.8

Rugby, my father being a research physicist who was part of what Harold Wilson subsequently termed “the white heat of technology” in 1963, involved in the development of silicon-based technology, which subsequently led to the development of semiconductors and the replacement of valve technology.

My mother worked in the research lab library, and they met more formally through a shared interest in Rugby theatre. My father had acted at University, and before Harold Pinter came on the scene, once married Antonia Fraser, daughter of Lord Longford. I should add he was playing the priest in *Twelfth Night* at the time. My mother was a highly successful and critically acclaimed amateur actress in Rugby theatre circles, but her cuttings folder ceased to be added to after my arrival in 1968.

To put 1968 into some historical context, Man United had beaten Benfica in May the same year to become the first British side to win the European cup (fig.6), and nine months later man landed on the moon. I was never much fussed by the idea of walking on the moon but in light of my subsequent footballing skill, stood more chance of doing so than playing for United. I was rubbish.

My Father was much in demand by his employers, and circumstances dictated that I had moved four times by the time I was three. My brother Dan was born in Coggeshall in Essex in 1971, and less than a year later we ended up in the multi-racial melting pot that was, and indeed is, rural Lincolnshire (fig.7) for the second time in 1972, and moved to a house in a village ten miles outside Lincoln affectionately referred to, mostly by me, as Toad Hall (fig.8), and described rather disparagingly by Pevsner in his book on the buildings of Lincolnshire in three words: “Plain. Late Georgian.” He may not have been much of a fan, but it has been the family home ever since (fig.9).

There was one half-Chinese girl at our primary school—her parents ran the local takeaway—and one black boy at my secondary school. After my first two years, he had gone, and that was it. Lack of diversity aside, the main problem about being brought up in Lincolnshire is that very few people knew anything about it or precisely where it was. No motorways passed through it, the East Coast main line didn’t stop there, there was no ice rink and no one ever

toured there as either a band or in repertory theatre. We had a castle and a cathedral, but so did York, and that’s where everyone who required the diversions of similar activities appeared to end up.

On top of that, there was the problem of Yorkshire. To understand precisely, you must come with me back to the USSR. In 2004, my wife Liz and I visited Estonia and Latvia, and the guide book made mention of the compulsory study of both the Russian language and the Soviet state. It was much the same in Lincolnshire.

If you think the citizens of countries in the former soviet bloc had it hard with queues outside bakeries and only vodka for comfort, you haven’t lived. It was much worse in Lincolnshire living in a Grade 2 Listed local manor house, I assure you. We had it tough in the shires (fig.10), force-fed a diet of home grown organic vegetables, Lincolnshire sausages handmade by the local butcher, home-brewed ale and cookery straight out of Elizabeth David’s *French Provincial Cook Book*.

To compound our woes, with the exception of the *Lincolnshire Echo*, which acted as some sort of local stocks by printing the name, age and address of every miscreant to pass before Lincolnshire’s judicial system—as I found out to my cost in my teenage years—all our local news came from Yorkshire. A rolling stream of propaganda from what seemed to be another world, featuring on a loop the fortunes of Yorkshire bloody cricket with the ever ubiquitous Geoffrey Boycott, the delights of Harrogate and, worst of all, the ups and downs of Leeds U-fucking-nited (fig.11). We were force fed Wugby Weague on a Saturday afternoon (fig.12), a game I detest to this day for not having proper scrummages, and tales of local celebrities on a seemingly nightly basis ruled the airwaves (fig.13).

My beef was this: I didn’t live in Yorkshire, I lived in Lincolnshire. On top of that, I could barely understand a word they said in Yorkshire. All those thee’s, them’s and thous. As a result, *Emmerdale Farm* made as much sense to me as *Mahabharat*—which was shot entirely in Hindi.

This was amply demonstrated to me in 1989 when I visited Headingley Cricket Ground in Leeds for the first time. The test match coincided with the reign of a gentleman who was termed the Gay Serial Killer, and



Fig.9: Me and Dan in 1972



Fig.10



Fig.11



Fig.12: I’ll give you “up and under”

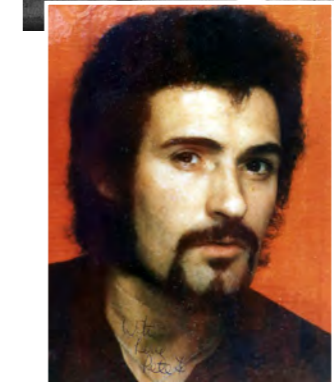


Fig.13



Right: Police Constable Robert Hydes (left) and Sergeant Robert Ring, who arrested Peter Sutcliffe on the night of Friday 2 January 1981 in a lonely Sheffield street (above). The initial charge was of driving a car with false registration plates

Fig.15



a spectator sporting garb which I had only previously seen on the Village People (fig.14) had occasion to walk past the stand in which I was sitting, to be met by a chorus of, “One Cyril Keller, there’s only one Cyril Keller.” I was bemused, and enquired of the chaps with whom I was attending the match, “Who’s Cyril Keller?” Apparently they were singing “There’s only one serial killer,” and I was met by the apparent response from a spectator in front of me in a broad Yorkshire accent: “They can’t spot their own kind.” I still didn’t have a clue what he had said.



Fig.14, Cyril Keller

Many years later when visiting a friend at University in Sheffield, I inadvertently encountered the location of Peter Sutcliffe’s arrest in January 1981 (fig.15). Given the hours our local television stations spent on his activities, I’m surprised they hadn’t put up a blue plaque.

I grew up on a visual diet of the BBC (fig.16), there only being three channels available to watch when I was born. You will note the logo states “BBC1 Colour”, but colour television did not reach my home until I was aged 11 in May 1980. As I said, we had it tough.

I have oft joked that as children, we were never allowed to watch ITV, as it was common (fig.17), but my parents were never so crass as to use such a term. One learned from example, not by snobbery, but it is true that almost all of the television delights I enjoyed as a child were shown on the BBC. One might readily guess that a certain two shows proved seminal in our appreciation of the channel in the 1970s (figs 18 and 19). I can’t quite see it myself.

ITV was noted in the 1970s for being the home of racist comedies such as *Mind Your Language* and *Love Thy Neighbour*. Even *Rising Damp* was rather near the knuckle if Rigsby’s interactions with Phillip were anything to go by. As we didn’t watch ITV, all of this went over our heads, and I never once knowingly saw *Magpie*, ours being rather more a *Blue Peter*

type of house. My only regret as a child was not watching *TISWAS* (fig.20). It was a work of genius...

Childhood clothing was provided by Clothkits (fig.21), making my brother and me occasionally resemble members of the Mamas and Papas, the clothing being made by my Mama and paid for by my Papa, known to me for most of my life, as I remember it, as “Father”. It’s not every boy who takes to a patterned lavender jerkin, but I coped with it with remarkable fortitude, all things considered.

Education-wise, my primary education was in the local village school of 150 pupils (fig.22), built in 1878 and which employed the teaching methods of its foundation for the duration of my period of attendance. The school had a staff which would have made the cast of *The Last of the Summer Wine* look sprightly, and was run with a rod of iron by Mr Glover, a man of stout brogues and a fine thorn proof suit, who slipped miscreants with a vigour scarcely imaginable to pupils of today.

My secondary education was not much more progressive in its teaching methods. Lincolnshire had a mix of both the comprehensive system and the tripartite system, and it was the latter which was the path my catchment area embraced, much to the annoyance of my Mama, who rather bizarrely thought that labelling 75% of children as academic failures at the age of 11 wasn’t necessarily the best of ideas.

I had passed my 11 plus in 1980, and as if by magic, was given a Raleigh Arena bicycle (fig.23). The two things were of course never formally linked, and strenuously denied by my parents, but I knew better.

It was indeed a blessing I did not go to the local secondary modern, as I would have been ripped to shreds—the places were, in my not so humble opinion, like borstals, and although I would have been unlikely to end up in the greenhouse (fig.24), the other pupils at the secondary modern invariably did, gardening apparently being a key and integral part of their curriculum, if only based on my experience of watching their pupils digging allotments from the window of my primary school class room.

So, off to Queen Elizabeth’s Grammar School for Boys I went (fig.25). If you have ever seen the Channel 4 documentary recreating life



Fig.21 (left); fig.22 (above); fig.23 (below)



Fig.25



Fig.16

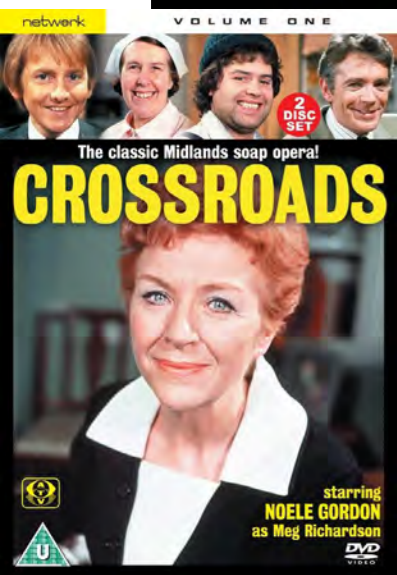


Fig.18



Fig.17



Fig.19: Me and Dan



Fig.20





Fig.26



Fig.27



Fig.28



Fig.29



Fig.30



Fig.31

in a 1950s grammar school, you wouldn't be far wrong. The flinging of blackboard dusters and chalk was very much the order of the day, and that was just the teachers. "Get on with your work, Howard," would be met with a piece of chalk flying past my ears. In light of the frequency of such occurrences, I was lucky I wasn't blinded.

The one teacher who understood me left at the end of my first year—the man was a genius. It may all have been rather different if he had remained in the school, but he was replaced by a G-&-S-loving eccentric called John Taylor, who was very fond of grabbing his charges by the hair, and earned the soubriquet Ming due to a combination of his facial hair arrangement and his merciless way of dealing with the pupils in his charge (fig.26). He got his comeuppance when he tried his hair-pulling methods of discipline on my brother. My Mama, who by this time had become a local-authority-appointed governor of our school, paid him a visit, duly offered him the benefit of her considerable wisdom, and made it clear that such behaviour was unacceptable. He never knowingly did it again.

As a child brought up on *Star Wars* in the 1970s, it didn't take long for me to be attracted to the dark side of life. Quite what took me there I cannot be sure, but rebellion without any obvious cause became a recurrent motif of my early teenage years. I sense I wasn't the only one (fig.27), but I was just a bit of a pain in the arse. Punk provided the soundtrack to my early years at Queen Elizabeth's, Crass proving to be a particular favourite of the time.

I was an anarchist, if not an Antichrist, and dreamed of Anarchy in the UK. It never came, of course, not even to Lincolnshire, but I did meet Steve Ignorant, the founder of Crass, later in life (fig.28), and he was charming. He's a lifeboatman in Norfolk now.

As to whether I would have flourished better at a comprehensive school is still discussed around the dining table some 39 years later. One will never know, of course, although my Mother remains convinced so, and Mothers invariably know best.

For anyone who has ever had the pleasure of watching Shane Meadow's seminal film *This is England* (fig.29), it paints a picture of a world available to those attracted to the dark side of

life in the East Midlands in the 1980s. It was to such society my friends and I became attracted, the evenings and summer holidays being spent at the local youth club or hanging around outside the village hall, being a general pain in the arse.

Suffice it to say that drugs, oddly, failed to play much of a role to those who misspent their youth in my part of rural Lincolnshire, "County Lines" thankfully being a thing of the future, but the smell of Evo Stick (fig.30) is one I shall never quite forget, glue sniffing making a brief and unwelcome appearance amongst the less discerning of my acquaintances. One gentleman so described, nicknamed "Skinhead Tommo", for obvious reasons, and readily identifiable by the fact he had not only his name but an inverted crucifix tattooed on his forehead and obviously therefore not the sharpest tool in the box, tried to sniff Copydex to (fig.31), of course, zero effect. I don't think they had studied the science behind aromatic hydrocarbons at his local secondary modern...

Highlights of my misspent youth, if highlights is the word I am looking for, included my parents arriving home from work one evening to find our kitchen full of skinheads with a ouija board set out on the kitchen table (fig.32) with their cards from a Lexicon pack, and being prosecuted for underage drinking along with ten of my peers, as a result of the hospitalisation of my school friend in October 1983, who had been knocked over by a passing motorist as a result of having consumed seven pints of snakebite at a Young Farmers disco in a local village hall. I was subsequently fined five pounds at Lincoln Juvenile Court in February 1984 for my misdemeanours—the same sum Bertie Wooster was fined for stealing a hard-working police constable's helmet on the night of the University Boat Race (fig.33). The court room is now home to one of the four copies of the Magna Carta, but at the time, home to a hanging magistrate who made Judge Jefferies seem lenient. Five pounds was a fortune to me—I had one month to pay and was in receipt of £1.30 a week pocket money at the time.

My indignity was compounded by the transcription of the case on the front page of the *Lincolnshire Echo*, which detailed the proceedings comprehensively. My mother, it was reported, had not seen the need to warn me of



Fig.32



Fig.33

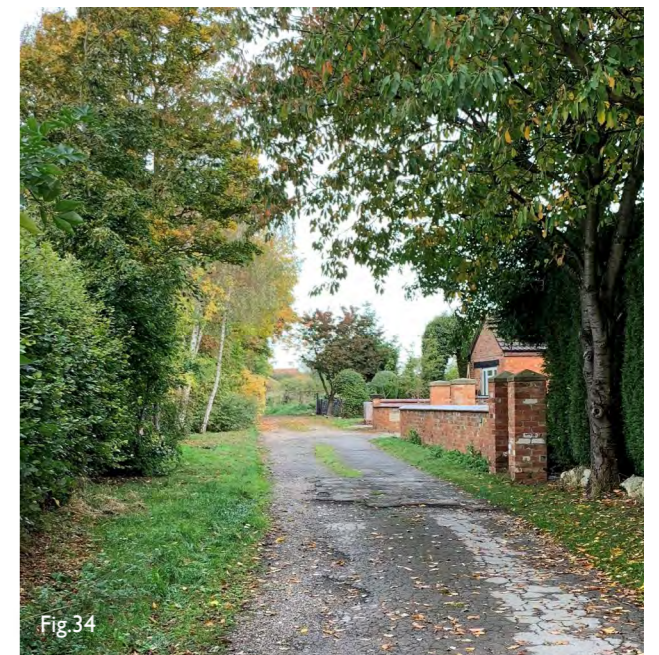


Fig.34

the dangers of under age drinking due to the fact I would be unlikely to get served, as I at the time "was 5ft 4", had a 30 inch chest and my voice had "barely broken".

Suffice it to say it didn't take long for my peers to work out who was quoted.

Three weeks after the accident, another friend thought it a good idea to celebrate being almost 14 and a half by borrowing his parents' car on bonfire night and driving seven miles down country lanes in the fog to greet his friends including myself, loafing in our customary

position outside the village hall. I can still hear him coming around the corner and skidding to a stop, inviting us to go for a drive.

Well, I thought, here's an offer you cannot refuse—a joyride in dense fog with a driver almost three years away from his provisional licence. The only problem was we were followed by an unmarked police car, and my career as a TWOCKER lasted precisely half a mile (fig.34).

As you might guess—to paraphrase Oscar Wilde—to be visited by the police at home once in a month might best be described as unfortunate, but to turn up with them in a police car the day after your birthday three weeks later looks like carelessness.

My parents had had enough. I received a caution for my second indiscretion for allowing myself to be carried in a TDA incident (known by the legislature at the time as “Taking and driving away”) but described in the contemporaneous drama *This is Britain*, starring a young Tim Roth, as “Touching the dog’s arse”. Suffice it to say I never subsequently had any urge to touch any dogs’ arses, but to be caught within half a mile of starting was surely decidedly unlucky on our part. I can laugh about it now, but even *I* thought enough was enough when criminal records at 15 became the order of the day.

Romance-wise, my teenage years were not without their moments, both good and bad. I had an eye for the finer ladies as one might readily imagine of a chap of my level of discernment, amply demonstrated by the poster which adorned my walls during my teenage years (fig.35). The first girl I kissed was at a teenage disco in a local village hall, a young lady of an outgoing nature and an extremely snug pair of stretch jeans called Sadie. She smelt of Charlie and Embassy No.1, but to me, she seemed like a goddess.

She was the milkman’s daughter, and in possession of a very pretty older sister called Kerry. It was Christmas, and she asked if I would like a Christmas kiss. I was petrified but embraced the embrace to the best of my ability. I was just 14, and she snogged at ferocious pace as if she was listening to Motörhead playing *Overkill*. I have never forgotten. Her sister was rather more *Careless Whisper* in her subsequent approach and, proving Christmas had indeed come early, their friend Emma offered a similar



Fig.35



Fig.38



Fig.36



Fig.37

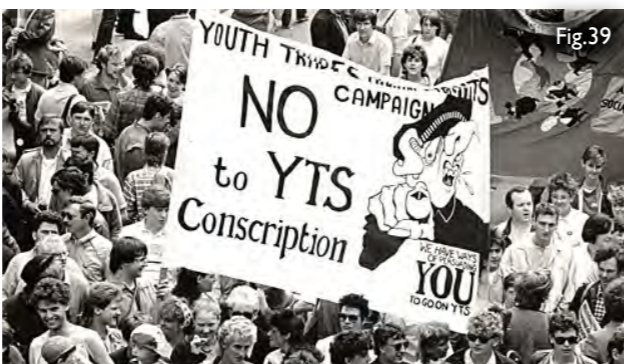


Fig.39



Fig.40



Fig.41



Fig.42

sexes and wasn't exactly a tortured youth. Just difficult.

Following O-Level results day in 1985, not a day either my family or I recall with any particular degree of fondness (fig.37), I was left in something of a hole, and found myself at the DHSS on Orchard Street in Lincoln, complete with vandal-proof chairs, reinforced glass screens and the air dense with the smoke of Superking cigarettes. For three days, I became one of Thatcher's “1 in 10”, immortalised by the group UB40 (fig.38).

There was little else for it—it was a life on the dole, or conscription into the YTS, the Youth Training Scheme (fig.39). Within days, I began an office apprenticeship at Lincoln Co-Operative Society in the cash office, and in six months, learned more than I had done in the preceding five years at school. I passed my O-Level resits the following November and, six months into my year of the YTS, I managed to secure a position with a firm of accountants in Lincoln whose business model was based on piling it high and selling it cheap.

I knew little about accountancy but liked figures. I was also, however, young and naïve, and not exactly flush, being in receipt at the time of about £27.00 per week basic which, when enhanced with a creative travel expenses claim, brought my YTS weekly income to the princely sum of £35.00.

I was interviewed by the junior partner in the firm, an ex-tax-inspector who had seen the light. As well as telling me I had the job he informed me that the salary was £180.00...

A week, I thought, a week! I can leave home, have driving lessons, pay to take girls out and live like a king!

“...A month,” he said, £40.00 more than I was receiving on my YTS. In the split second between announcing the salary and the period it covered, I was spending like Viv Nicholson after her pools win in 1961 (fig.40). A second later, I was reduced to the status of a bum. But at least it was a job.

I started work there in March 1986, coinciding with the metamorphosis of the Hepworth's clothing chain into Next under the custodianship of George Davis (fig.41). I loved Next. For two or three years, Next ruled the sartorial roost. Proper shoes, real trench coats, beautifully made double-breasted suits,

festive endowment some half an hour later, thus completing a hat-trick. She subsequently became Miss Lincolnshire in 1987, a very pretty young lady, and for one evening, I felt like George Best with Mary Stavin (fig.36).

As with all teenage amatory entanglements, things got a little better with the passage of time and practice. I had several girlfriends at school, but things rather dried up after leaving, the ladies expecting rather more than I was in a position to provide with no money and no car—but I am getting ahead of myself.

Anyway, back to 1984. Fresh from my day out with the magistrate at Lincoln Castle, the following two years passed in something of a hormonal blur, characterised by little connection with compulsory academia, and general teenage malaise, although I had many friends of both



Fig.43

lined trousers, bench grade shoes and sea island cotton tops, all exquisitely presented and at an affordable price. Think Charles Twyritt and you wouldn't go far wrong (fig.42).

They then bought the catalogue Grattons, launched the Next Directory, over expanded and sacked George Davies in December 1988. It never really recovered in my view. I visited a branch of Next by accident in September this year. I almost wept. It looked like a cross between River Island and Littlewoods.

In 1987, the film *Wall Street* the film was released (fig.43). I kitted myself out in stripey shirts and braces, carried a Filofax and slicked my hair back with mousse and Vidal Sassoon hair spray. I thought I looked amazing. (fig.44)

I probably looked a proper Charlie, and by that I don't mean Sheen. Quite what my firm's clients thought of me I couldn't be sure, but I got a fair idea when I encountered a couple of clients in a pub in Lincoln one Christmas Eve.

"Look here", one said to his mate. "It's Mr Fawcett's dog".

"No it isn't," came the reply. "It's Mr Fawcett's dog's knob."

What do you say to that?

I had outgrown Lincoln. Most of my friends had left, my brother went to University in the early 1990s, and I cried my eyes out. He was two years, 8 months younger than me, and had fled the nest, leaving me behind. It was time to get a grip.

In truth, the only thing I had managed to accomplish since leaving school was the founding of the world's only non-rowing rowing club, of which I was appointed Chairman, hence my soubriquet. The founders had all grown up together (fig.45), and we first went to Henley in 1990. We have had an unbroken attendance as a club ever since, and now number 16 full members, eight in the first boat, and eight children in the second, with an honorary coxswain who is now in her late seventies.

My letter of appointment in 1991 suggested I might wish to lead the way in new traditions for the club and generally to "Push things forward". Quite whether they anticipated my getting over-excited one year at the University Boat Race and gate-crashing the presentation in front of a global audience of over 400 million viewers, is of course, open to question. To say



Fig.44



Fig.45: Matthew and co-foundress of the WRC, Charlotte

the organisers weren't much fussed by this would be something of an understatement, as I found when I chanced my arm and contacted them for a high-resolution photograph of myself and the victorious Oxford crew on the stage. Their response was curt and to the point. "I presume you are the interloper at the presentation. I shall ensure you are banned from next year's race and all subsequent Boat Races."

The email thoughtfully came with a high resolution picture of my misdemeanours (fig.46), as requested, the said attachment reading "MATTHEW HOWARD—NO ADMITTANCE".

Perhaps they had some soul after all?

I went to night school in 1992 and sat for an A-Level in politics, by means of a *de facto* access course to prove to a University that I might be a capable mature student. I was 24. This was a potential escape route. I worked my socks off, passed the exam in a year and went to University in 1993.

I say "University", for a university Anglia now was (fig.47), but one which, in its wisdom, decided to include "Polytechnic" in its full name for reasons of international marketing. It wasn't for everyone (fig.48), but it did for me.

Better known nowadays as Anglia Ruskin University, it is among the finest of the academic institutions in Cambridge, certainly in the top three, along with Manor Community Academy on the Arbury and of course, Hills Road Sixth Form College. I sense I might have missed one, but there we go.

Due to our student union being out of action during what passed for the Fresher's Week at Anglia in 1993, I managed to press-gang a number of my friends into joining the Cambridge Union Society (fig.49), on the grounds of finding somewhere easy to meet. I loved the Union from the first moment I visited it, I previously having been made aware of its existence by my Father, who thoughtfully endowed me with two things before I went up to University—an allowance, "So you can make sure you didn't miss any dinners", which I thought incredibly thoughtful, and membership of the Union, "So you will always have somewhere to go to the loo when you are in town."

I was always in awe of the officers who sat on the dais of the Debating Chamber (fig.50), if



Fig.46



Fig.47



Fig.48



Fig.49



Fig.50

only for the fact that they had made it there in spite of, or because of, the Machiavellian politics which seemed to surround almost every election during my time at Anglia.

The Union were landlords to Footlights, the comedy group whose alumni include John Cleese, Stephen Fry and Hugh Laurie, among innumerable others, who used the cellars of the Union as their clubroom, and you might recognise one or two of the Footlighters who were prominent during my time at University (fig.51). Of course, they all looked rather different back in the day (fig.52).

Through sheer perseverance and a modicum of good luck, I eventually became an officer of the Union after two years serving on junior committees, duly elected to serve as Librarian for the Easter term of 1996 (fig.53), nominally responsible for the Library, but in effect the booker, co-ordinator and host of most of the speaker events for the term one was elected for, which in terms of profile was akin to No.2 to the President. My election to office came by a bye-election which I won by one vote, my opponent, a teenage mathematical prodigy from Trinity, having mislaid his membership card, and thus being unable to vote for himself.

They would never have had me as President—I was from the wrong University—but I was a good pair of hands, knew what I was doing, and served out my term of office without any incident and with some small level of success (fig.54). The Union is now 203 years old, and not before or since has anyone from outside Cambridge University ever been elected as an officer. I was lucky, but as my dear friend Shteeve, with whom I lived at University, and I often said, “You make your own luck”.

I read for a degree in Sociology with Politics. I say “read” but “browsed” would be a more accurate description of my academic endeavours of my time in the Fens. The lecturers were rather more Ryan Giggs than David Beckham if you will excuse the analogy and, as is depressingly commonplace in academia, veered very much to the left.

I preferred independent study modules to those they had thoughtfully chosen to include in their curriculum, and was once accepted to write an essay on the subject of *Punk: Counter Culture or Fad?* I have to confess I rather indulged myself with reminiscences of my misspent



Fig.51



Fig.52



Fig.53



Fig.54: with Lech Walesa, the highlight of my term of office



Fig.55: Librarian and President, Easter 1996, reunited in 2015

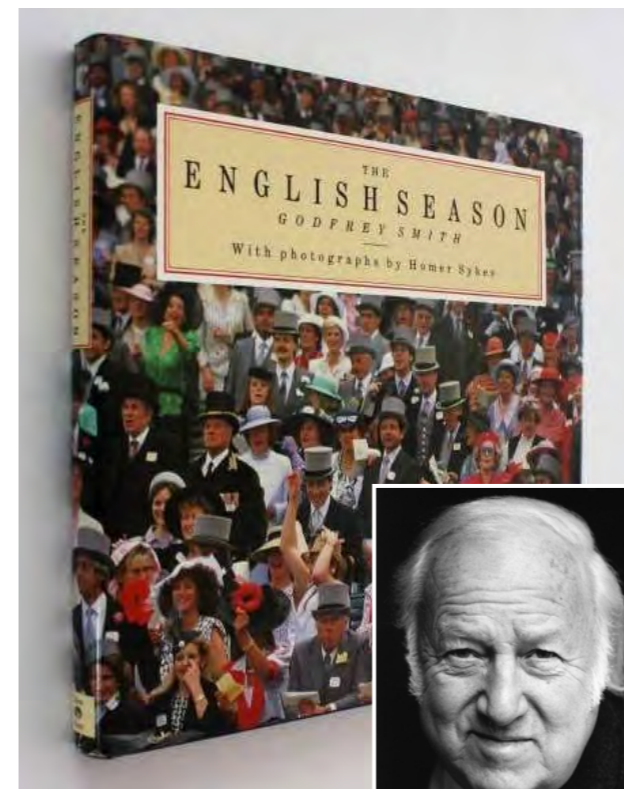


Fig.56



Fig.57

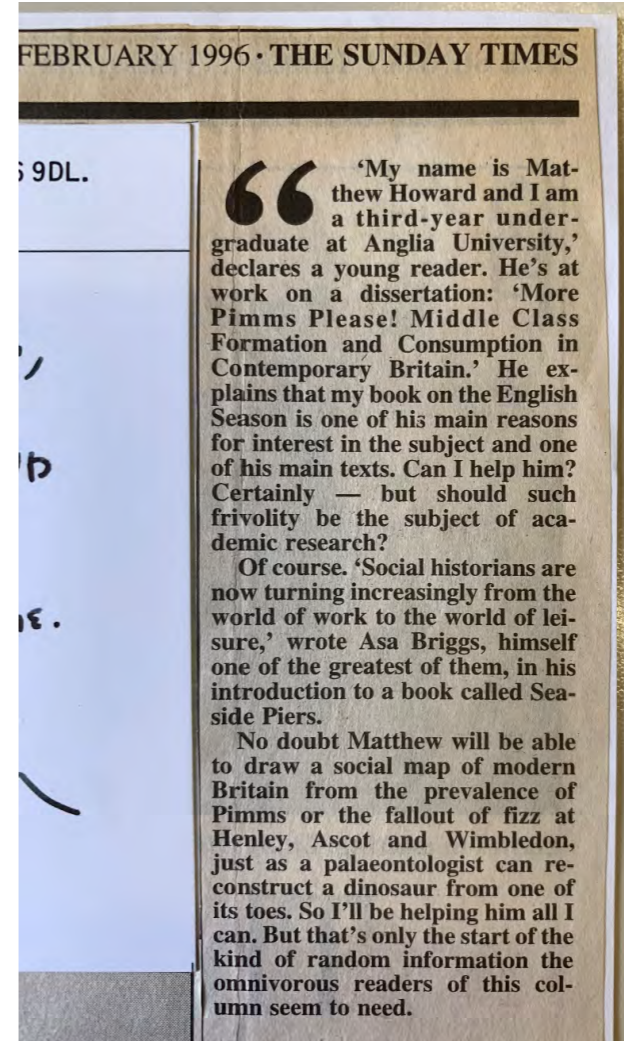


Fig.58

youth, and was met at judgement day with a perfunctory pass grade of 40%, and the comment, “If I had asked for the life and times of Matthew Howard, this might have been rather better received. Don’t do it again”.

As you may readily witness here this evening, I took his advice with a pinch of salt.

My dissertation was on the subject of consumption, and was entitled *More Pimm’s Please! Middle Class Consumption and Formation in Contemporary Britain*. My dissertation supervisor and I met frequently, at no small inconvenience to either of us, and during the course of one of our conversations, he once enquired, “I don’t suppose you take the Guardian, do you?”

“Not even if it’s free,” I replied.

I made that bit up. But no, I didn’t. I sense he may have had the measure of me.

I subsequently almost managed to get my own back, following written enquiries to the author of one of my key sociological texts (fig.56). The author Godfrey Smith (fig.57) had been President of the Oxford Union when my Father was an undergraduate and achieved his place in newspaper history by being the first editor of the *Sunday Times Colour Supplement*, the first of its kind. Godders thoughtfully provided me with copies of some of the articles I had enquired about which had featured in his magnum opus, and subsequently included extracts of my letter to him in his column in the *Sunday Times* news review in 1996 (fig.58) where he wrote a weekly column.

I thoughtfully managed to drop this into conversation with my dissertation supervisor at our next meeting: “I don’t suppose you take the *Sunday Times*, do you?” I enquired.

Deuce.

He had the last laugh, of course—he got to mark my masterwork, diligently produced and with solid fieldwork based on having worked in the cash office of Lincoln Co-op when I was 16. I’m sure my manner cost me at least 10%, for it was a scholarly work right up there with the Hitler Diaries, but I still managed to get a 2:2 for my endeavours, and graduated with a solid 2:2 without academia ever significantly interfering with my time at University.

There are days I spent at University I will never forget. During our last summer there, I met a chap on a train I had known through the Union, the head of the Labour students called



Fig.59



Fig.60



Fig.61



Fig.63



Mark Leonard. I was on my way to appear on a talk show called *Banksy*, broadcast on the short lived cable TV station Live TV (fig.59) which introduced the world to such highlights as the News Bunny, the weather in Norwegian and *Topless Darts*, and was rather full of myself—only to become swiftly deflated when he announced he was on his way to meet Peter Mandelson. Mark Leonard subsequently joined the think tank DEMOS, and is attributed with having effectively invented “Cool Britannia” (fig.60) as a result of his 1997 work *Britain™*. This meeting may have been a precursor to it. As to whether or not things ever actually got better after May 1997 will be debated by political historians for many years to come, but his place in the history of the 20th century will not be forgotten.

I could go on for hours reminiscing on such matters, but one memorable event which might amuse was the occasion I went to pick up some recreational pharmaceuticals for the first time from a fellow student who was enhancing his student grant by being a purveyor of rare herbs and prescribed chemicals (fig.61). The goodies were duly weighed out, and the time for payment arrived.

“Do you take cheques?” I asked.

The chap was so bemused, but possibly taken aback by my uncharacteristically smart demeanour, that after a short pause he replied, “Yes. No problem.”

He might have asked most of his customers in similar circumstances if they were taking the piss, but I think he realised I was asking in all sincerity.

Sartorially, I had my occasional misjudged moments (fig.62). However, in spite of my ignorance of drug etiquette, and an overdeveloped sense of irony, I kicked the backside out of my University days, all to a soundtrack of Britpop, the rise and fall of which coincided with our time at University, and the final days of the Major years.

I was accompanied on most of my journey by Liz (fig.63), whom I met in Fresher’s Week; I moved around the corner from her after two terms, spent time with her in the summer holidays, and we formalised our friendship in October 1994. We have thankfully been together ever since.

I spent four months unemployed back in Lincolnshire after University. In my not-so-

humble opinion, I thought I had amassed more than enough CV points to put any prospective application to the top of a potential employer’s in-tray. Sadly, a 2:2 in Sociology and Politics suggested otherwise. However, in the words of Norman Lamont when reflecting on Black Wednesday, *Je ne regrette rien*.

I got my first job after University by accident. I cannot recall exactly what job I applied for, but the recruitment consultant added up the job I had applied for with my accountancy experience and put me forward for an accountancy job in Clerkenwell with a firm located in the Charterhouse. I have remained there ever since. Liz had consented to move to London with me, and we had friends in Enfield with whom I briefly lodged whilst looking for gainful employment. I made one stipulation when it came to flat hunting—anywhere but Enfield.

We moved to Enfield in November 1996, and have subsequently remained in the borough thereof ever since, albeit for 12 years with a London postcode. The borough of Enfield is in what is geographically termed Middlesex, if only for postal purposes, and is the county after which my beloved side who call Lord’s their home are named. I joined Middlesex as soon as we moved to Enfield and, as a result of a very understanding wife, have called Lord’s my summer home ever since. Some key players on the social scene at Lord’s maintain part of their sartorial stash in the pavilion (fig.64) but as a humble Middlesex Member, my extensive collection of colourful hosiery (fig.65) has to remain in God’s Own Borough of Enfield.

Following Middlesex can be rather up and down, but I will never forget the day in September 2016 (fig.66) that we won the County Championship on the final afternoon of the last day of the season by beating, of all counties, Yorkshire, who would themselves have been champions if Middlesex had lost to them.

Revenge was sweet, and my childhood annoyances almost forgiven (fig.67).

One other place I did choose to frequent when I arrived in London was Trumper’s. I was originally a customer of the branch in the basement of Simpson’s on Piccadilly but, following its closure, I graduated to the Curzon Street branch, where I was attended to by the legendary Monty Park, who used to regale me with tales of his visiting John Major in Downing



Fig.64

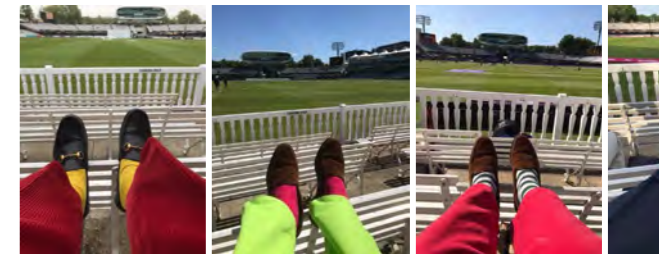


Fig.65



Fig.66: two teams enter, one team leaves



Fig.67: Forgive and forget, eh, Major?



Fig.68

Street with his small bag of tonsorial trimming equipment, and Prince Andrew at Buckingham Palace. Well, I thought to myself, I'm in good hands here, but this was not a view which was universally held, especially at home. I managed to survive a few years before Liz put her foot down, and said I should change hairdresser because every time I came home, I looked like Hitler (fig.69). She never saw the picture I took with me to show Monty how I wanted my hair cut, of course.

Monty once enquired as to what I was doing over the weekend, and upon discovering I was off to Hoxton to spend the evening with the hipsters, offered the cautionary advice: "Be careful there, Sir. It used to be where the boys ran the show."

I immediately inferred which boys Monty was referring to (fig.70), but subsequent to this advice I did once encounter Reggie Kray in the flesh when I cranked the post-modernity knob to 11 and went to see Charlie Kray's funeral in Bethnal Green in 2000 for reasons of pure social voyeurism.

I found myself adjacent to the cortege, to have a blackened window slowly drop down, leaving me face to face with none other than Mad Frankie Fraser (fig.71).

"All right," he said, "Thanks very much for coming."

Facing a man twice certified insane, who spent 42 years of his life in prison, all I could say was, "Pleasure." Oddly, pleasure was the last thing on my mind.

Many years later, I visited the Blind Beggar pub where Ronnie Kray shot George Cornell. It was Scarheart's stag night (fig.72) and, as you can see, we dressed down for the occasion, the "boys" being long since gone.

Liz and I married on a glorious June day on the Jubilee weekend in 2002 (fig.73), and made a weekend of it in Ashby de la Zouche where the party carried on until Monday. It was the best weekend of my life.

Socially, our initial time in London carried on much as our student days had been, with a very similar crowd of friends. As our circumstances changed, we had a few good holidays, but in 2010 our life changed forever with the arrival of Lily, whom Liz and I affectionately called "Sid" after Sid Vicious, due to the way her sizable head of hair stood on end when she was young (fig.74).



Fig.69



Fig.70



Fig.73

Fig.72



Fig. 71



Fig.74



Fig.75



Fig.76



Fig.77



Fig.78



Fig.79

Liz went into labour early on 24th February, and we went to hospital late afternoon the same day. I expected to be home in time for *Newsnight*. Lily, however, chose to arrive at 4.53am the following day. I was exhausted. I will say no more than that, some eight and a half years later, I still cannot look at a sink plunger in quite the same way again.

Our life changed for ever that day, for the good, and she is a source of immense pride and amusement to us on a daily basis (fig.75).

Now, I can hear you asking, this is all well and good, Howard, but how did you end up here today? In 2006, I went for the first time to the Chap Olympiad. I had been alerted to the

existence of *The Chap* by my brother Dan and, following bonding with Sean Pearson over the subject of pith helmets (fig.76), was encouraged to come along to the Sheridan Club, which I duly did the following month. The club night ran, after a fashion, but no Gustav. The next month, the club had closed. My life as a formal paid-up chap seemed to be cut off even before it started, but by September 2006, the idea for the New Sheridan Club was mooted and by October that year it had opened its doors. I was invited to join the committee in July 2009 following my winning the silver cravat at the Olympiad (fig.77), and the rest, as they say is history. When I first joined, I was offered the choice of how to be referred to in the club, something which followed the use of soubriquets on the Sheridan Club online forum, and I chose Chairman to pay homage to my non-rowing activities and my likeness to another famous Chairman (fig.78).

If I had my time again, I might have chosen Reggie, after Jeeves, because if truth be known, I am rather more Jeeves than Wooster, even though I may have aspirations on a grander scale. Anyway, Chairman it was and Chairman it is, and I have been here ever since.

I have delivered several talks, invariably on the cusp—but just, I hope, erring on the right side—of probity. The NSC has provided good friends and company, and I am ever thankful for it.

One other mystery I can shed some light on is the precise origin of the call to "Resign!" (from which this magazine gets its name). There are three potential culprits (fig.79): the Earl of Waveney thinks I first called for resignations. I think Artemis was the first, and Artemis blames Waveney. Anyway, it was one of us. Probably.

But you all should, of course. As should we. But not yet.

I am almost done, but I shall leave you with this. Father died in December 2016, at home in his bed with Mother by his side. In his final years Alzheimer's robbed him of his brilliant mind, but his death certificate stated he died of old age, which was of comfort to us. I cannot imagine that, as a modest and reticent man, he would ever have delivered a talk such as this, but I hope he would have concluded that one's life is, as Coca Cola one described itself, the real thing, not a dress rehearsal, and that mine was a story worth telling. I hope you think so too.

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.



Jack Calloway

Name or preferred name?

J. Ambrose Emerton. Stage/preferred name: Jack Calloway. Also known as St Clair, Bertie or The Commodore.

Why that nom de plume?

Jack after my great grandfather and Calloway in homage to one of the finest and most admired bandleaders of the era.

Where do you hail from?

Bailiwick of Jersey, although I now live in Bristol.

Favourite Cocktail?

The Jack Calloway:
Fill a shaker with blackberries and blueberries and crush thoroughly. Add
1-2 shots vodka
1 shot crème de cassis
1 shot elderflower liqueur or cordial
Juice of half a lime.

Shake well with ice, pour dirty in a fancy tumbler, or in my case a fine champagne coupe. To finish, squeeze a final wedge of lime over the mixture and let it float in the glass. Garnish with a sprig of mint.

This cocktail was created in Bristol three or four years ago when my dance orchestra was first starting out. We used to rehearse in a bar called the Bootlegger on Gloucester Road. I was fond of Charlie Chaplins (sloe gin, apricot brandy and lime juice) but asked the barman, Drew Pratley, if he could make me something that better suited my sweet tooth. He asked me various alcoholic questions and came up with the Jack Calloway. He wanted something sweet and cheeky but with a "debaucherous" party vibe—much like myself, apparently.

Most Chappist skill?

Being able to dance Balboa.

Most Chappist possession?

It's difficult to decide among the cacophony of canes, spats, boaters and cigarette holders that fill the drawers. Other than that, it simply must be my gorgeous radiogram.



Personal Motto?

To the bar!

Favourite Quotes?

"My audience was my life. What I did and how I did it, was all for my audience."

—Cab Calloway

"I declare before you all that my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service and to the service of our great imperial family, to which we all belong."

—Queen Elizabeth II.

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

Although I now adore the works of Noel Coward and Jack Buchanan, my first adoration musically was that of Richard Tauber. Followed, oddly, by Dean Martin.

How long have you been involved with the NSC?

Since about teatime.

How did you hear about the Club to begin with?

Through my wonderful drummer and good confidante Mr Richie Paradise.

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

My local watering hole, The World Famous Old Duke in Bristol.

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

If it was a



chaps night: Jack Buchanan, Noel Coward and Terry Thomas. Bandleaders night would have to be: Cab Calloway, Glenn Miller and Benny Goodman. Entertaining females is a rather difficult one, I can only decide on two for my own personal enjoyment—would simply have to be Marilyn Monroe and Carole Lombard. Then again, Rat Pack Night would also be a great hit... I am quite indecisive on this question.

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?

I have not done a turn yet, as I've only been a member since about half past one. I would have to give it some thought. It is a lovely idea however and I do very much look forward to attending as many of the NSC soirees as one possibly can. Weather permitting.

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.

SOUTH OF THE BORDER

Ian White reports from the latest New Sheridan Club pub crawl

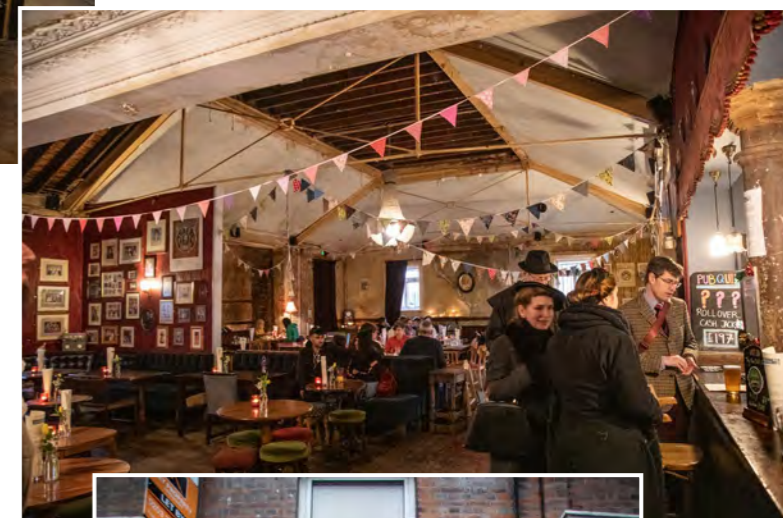
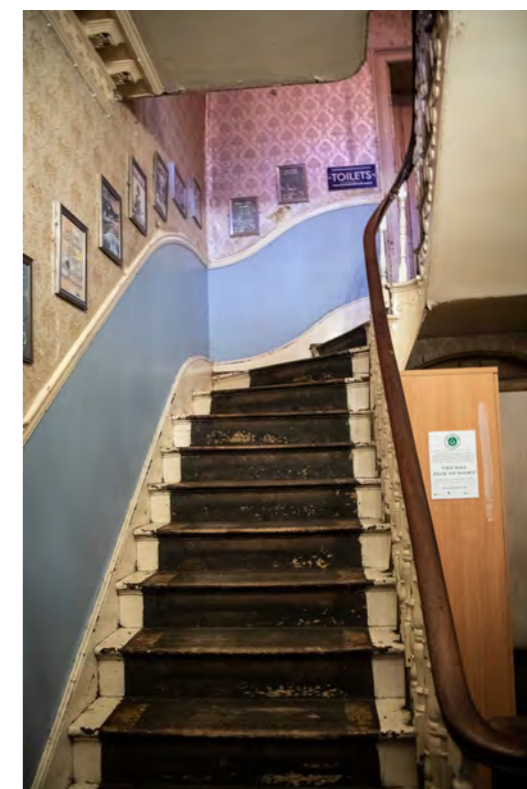
WHAT BETTER? A PUB right by two rail stations, the Catford Bridge Tavern is an ideal starting point. A great example of the “Brewers Tudor” style of 1920s/1930s take on Elizabethan Tudor architecture, this pub, after a colourful history of as a music venue and a locals den, has been recently renovated, now with a big U-shaped bar. It seemed very apt that an ale was on offer called Stiff Upper Lip, from the By The Horns brewery.

From here it was a quick saunter into Catford Constitutional Club, a premises hidden behind

shops, down an alley to a former Conservative Club, that was apparently a farmhouse at an earlier stage—it’s quite odd to think of Catford as farmland. Inside there have been no renovations: it is just as it was found after 20 years of disuse, adorned by a quirky assortment of old furniture, collapsed ceilings, distressed-look pictures and framed *Private Eye* covers.

After the amusement of viewing the eccentric interior it is time to descend into Catford itself: no visit could be complete without a look at the Catford Cat and the grade II listed Broadway Theatre.

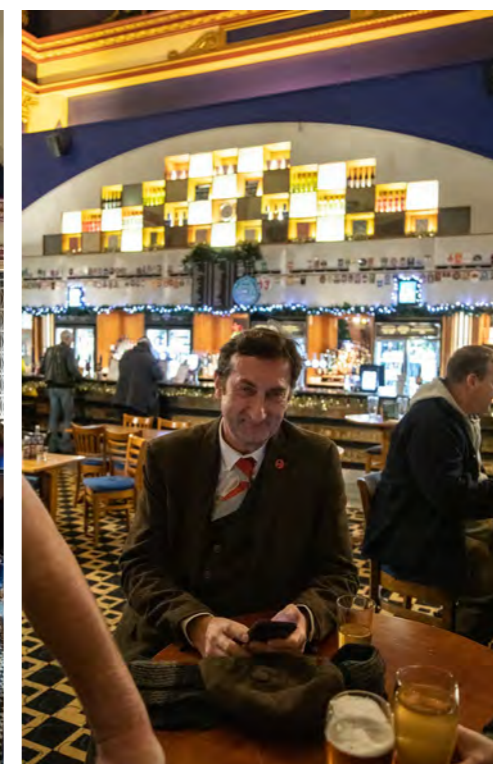
A bus along the South Circular for a few stops takes us to the Blythe Hill Tavern, a small Victorian corner pub, already very lively for a Saturday afternoon with loads of regulars enjoying various sporting events on screens in the three rooms. Wood panelling, a wealth of sporting memorabilia and a garden with a big mural made for another photo opportunity. More from By The Horns brewery, in the form of a porter,



(Opposite page)
The Catford
Bridge Tavern; (this
page) the Catford
Constitutional
Club (featuring
Bob the Lobster)



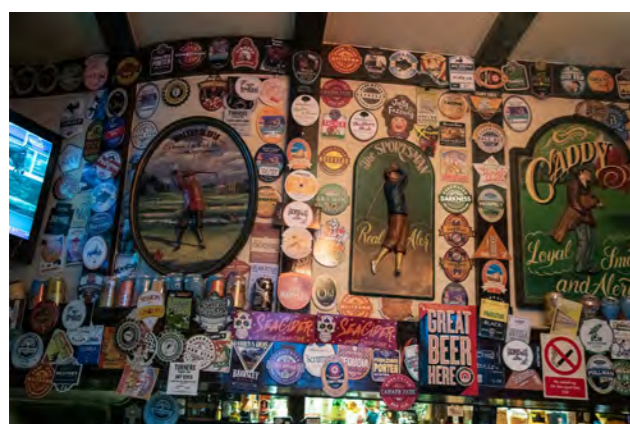
plus a number of interesting ciders (including one aged in rum barrels). Another bus takes us to the Capitol in Forest Hill. This imposing former cinema is now a Wetherspoons with a Grade II listed Art Deco interior.



(Opposite page) Catford and the Blythe Hill Tavern; (left and below) the Capitol



More Sheridanites joined our crawl at this point taking advantage of Wetherspoons hospitality to tuck into some food.



A walk to help digest dinner along the south Circular, past the Horniman Museum—worth a look even if only for its famous stuffed Walrus—then on to another bus into Dulwich, only a few miles away but a complete contrast to Catford. Dulwich is a village in south London, with large houses and white-painted fences. It was the turn of The Crown and Greyhound to be graced by the club. This pub was built in 1900 and its sprawling multi-roomed premises are Grade II listed.



A short ramble and final bus took us to the Half Moon in Herne Hill, yet another Grade II listed building. This too was a former music pub, but was badly flooded after a large water main bust a few years ago. A big restoration was undertaken and it is now a stylish gastro-pub, retaining the fine original interior.

The evening set in until it was time to depart, concluding another fine crawl that introduced our members to several splendid pubs way south of the River.



(Rest of this page) The Crown and Greyhound and the Half Moon—sorry it gets a bit hazy from now on



CLUB NOTES

New Members

WE WELCOME TWO new Members this month—compared to recent months they hail from relatively close to home. Simon “Badger” Montgomery is entrenched at Yateley, Hampshire while Jack Calloway is loitering in Bristol. What key facts should you know about them? Simon’s favourite cocktail is the Dark and Stormy—rum, lime and ginger beer. (In fact legally it should be Gosling’s rum, one of the few instances where a spirit brand has a copyright on a cocktail name; another is the Bacardi Cocktail, rum, lime juice and grenadine, which, the New York Supreme Court ruled in 1936, must be made with Bacardi to be called a Bacardi Cocktail.) Jack’s favourite cocktail is one that was created for, and named after, him. See pages 30–31 for more details.)



Simon Montgomery

Some Liked It Hot

MANY THANKS TO the British Film Institute for inviting us along to a complimentary screening of the comedy classic *Some Like It Hot* last month (as indeed they did for *Pandora’s Box* in the spring). It was a limited run of a new 4K digital restoration and our posse turned up in full fig, as you can imagine. (Actually you don’t have to imagine it as there is a photo right here: particular mention goes to Matthew Howard for his Tony Curtis impression.) Although made in 1959, the film, also starring Marilyn Monroe and Jack Lemmon, is set in 1929 and begins with Lemmon and Curtis as down-at-heel musicians who accidentally witness a gang slaying. On the run from the mob they have no choice but to dress as women and join an all-girl band...



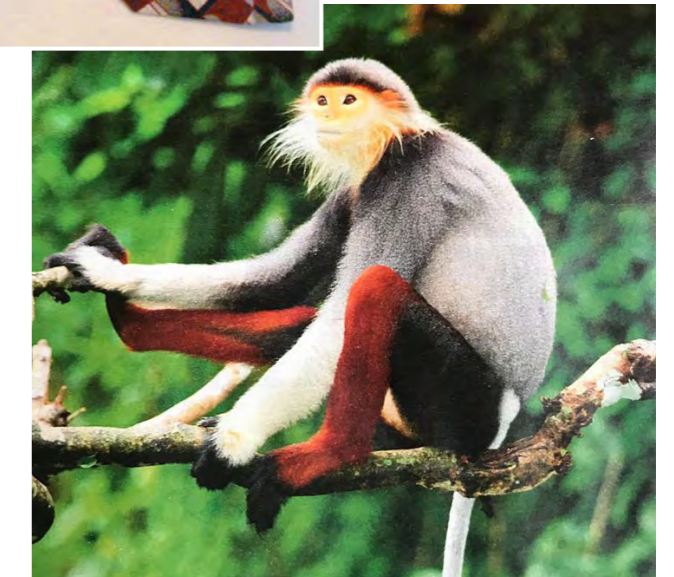
Note Mr Howard’s attention to detail in the sock department



Club Tie Corner

A HEALTHY BLEND of actual ties and wild cards this month. Left we have a CNN weatherman courtesy of Will Smith and, below him, the sinister Prof. Dent from *Dr No*, who clearly owes his position to Membership. Slightly more off piste is this Art Deco deconstruction, perhaps for weekend wear, from Benjamin Roberts-Jones. Diverging a bit we have a Club umbrella (something we have actually considered, though not quite in this design), spotted by Charles

Tsua, and the Club’s gospel choir, caught rehearsing by Actuarious. And finally, Ellie Halley has noticed that the Club even has its own monkey (a red-shanked douc, for the zoologically curious).





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 5th December
7pm–11pm (lecture around 8pm)
Upstairs, The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place,
London W1T 1JB
Members: Free
Non-Members: £2 (first visit free)
See page 2.

Night and Day: 1930s Fashion and Photographs

Until 20th January
Tuesdays–Saturdays, 11am–6pm (Thursdays till 8pm), Sundays 11am–5pm
The Fashion and Textile Museum,
83 Bermondsey Street, London SE1 3XF
Admission: £9.90 (£8.80 concs, £7 students)

Following the success of 2017's *1920s Jazz Age: Fashion and Photographs*, the museum are following up with this exhibition. As a decade of design, the 1930s saw off the excess of the Jazz Age and ushered in the utilitarianism of World War II. As the flapper grew up, so too did her fashions. The new silhouettes of the 1930s played with the hard-edged chic seen in the Art Deco and Moderne styles, the unexpected as seen in the surrealists and the sensuality of silver screen sirens. The exhibition explores



the day and evening styles of the decade, complemented by photographs of the stars who championed them. With fashion as the lens, *Night and Day: 1930s Fashion and Photographs* traverses the great period of social change that was the 1930s.

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 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

Mr B. considers the set list for his Christmas Special



Have a Jazz Age Christmas at the Candlelight Club

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.

Mr B. the Gentleman Rhymer Christmas Special

Sunday 9th December
6.30–9.30pm
Wonderbar, 877 Leytonstone High Road,
London E11 1HR
Admission: £10 in advance

Seasonal knees-up from Mr.B, who will always be close to the Club's heart (he has performed at many of our parties). He began his Chap-Hop career in the summer of 2007 when he decided to bring elements of his previous incarnations (UK rapper, jump-up breaks producer, banjolele maverick and dandy) together and create a genre. Since then he has travelled the world, from Surrey to Osaka, Banstead to Berlin, Middlesborough to Minneapolis, Norway to New York and the Edinburgh Fringe to Glastonbury bringing his beats, rhymes and manners. As well as songs about cricket, pipe smoking, high society and interfering with livestock. His videos have garnered millions of views on YouTube and his media appearances have included Rapping

for Jeremy Paxman on Newsnight, playing live on BBC Radio One for Rob Da Bank, Nick Grimshaw and Scott Mills, on Radio Two for Claudia Winkleman and Steve Lamacq, 6Music for Tom Robinson and Shaun Keaveny and for Zoe Ball on Sky Arts. He was also once on the front page of the *Wall Street Journal* and was described by the *Daily Mail* as “Controversial”.

The Candlelight Club: Christmas by Candlelight

Friday 14th & Saturday 15th December
7pm–12am

A secret central London location
Admission: £25 in advance

Dress: Prohibition dandies, swells, gangsters and molls, degenerate aristos and decadent aesthetes, corrupt politicians and the Smart Set In the Know

A 1920s clandestine speakeasy party in a secret London venue lit by candles, with live jazz bands, cabaret and vintage vinylism. Like a lot of folk in the 1920s, the Candlelight Club is not about to let Prohibition spoil Christmas! So it'll be celebrating the season of goodwill at a secret tinsel-toned party where the jingling of sleigh bells will mingle with the clinking of cocktail glasses, where for one night the cop and the gangster will lay down their Tommy guns and share a toast.

Live music will come from the Silver Ghosts, with hosting by Santa's little helper Champagne

NSC Annual Christmas Moot

Saturday 21st December
From 6pm till closing time
The Rising Sun, 38 Cloth Fair,
London EC1A 7JQ
Admission: Free but bring beer money

The New Sheridan Club traditional pre-Christmas get-together, with the primary aim of checking that Lord Mendrick is not dead yet. (He spends the year working in an educational sweat shop in the Far East and only gets to return to Blighty at Christmas.) Your last chance for some Chappist conviviality before having to spend the next week watching *Ben Hur* and the *Sound of Music* and dodging sherry-fuelled fist-fights with relatives.



Charlie and vintage vinylism from DJs Holly and Jojo of the Bee's Knees. Guests receive an email two days before revealing the secret location and are encouraged to dress in 1920s outfits—so pull on your flapper dress, let the giggle-water flow and get ready to Charleston. More at www.thecandlelightclub.com.

Note that Saturday night has now sold out. "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*

Black Tie Ballroom Club

Friday 14th December
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 smart vintage attire

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 venue 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.

The Coco Club

Saturday 15th December
7.30–11.30pm
Stage Theatre Plaza Suite, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1ZZ
Admission: £19 from stagesevenoaks.co.uk

Visit the Coco Club and drift back to the 1930s, the golden age of British Dance Band music. Take to the floor at the Art Deco style Stag Plaza and dance to the music of fabulous period orchestras such as Jack Hylton, Carroll Gibbons, Ambrose and Lew Stone, and singers like Al Bowly. The highlight of the night will be three performances by the fabulous Brandyn Shaw and his Radio Rhythm Makers. Glamour is a byword for the night, and so black/white-tie, evening or cocktail dress are encouraged, and this, combined with the music and dancing, provide the atmosphere for a truly memorable evening. This friendly evening integrates people of all age groups, and the level of dancing is varied, so anyone can move around the floor just as it suits them. There also several eventful

novelty dances that have become firm favourites.

Great Gatsby House Party

Friday 28th December
7.45–11pm
Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regents Park Road,
London NW1 7AY
Admission: £16 in advance

The Art Deco Orchestra return to the Kennedy Hall for another night of hot jazz and dance music from the 1920s and 1930s. Featuring the music of the bands of Jack Hylton, Duke Ellington, Ambrose, Paul Whiteman etc. Dancing, party games, licensed bar. Fancy/period dress encouraged.

The Candlelight Club's New Year's Eve Party

Monday 31st December
7pm–2am

A secret central London location
Admission: £45–60 in advance
Dress: Prohibition dandies, swells, gangsters and molls, degenerate aristos and decadent aesthetes, corrupt politicians and the Smart Set In the Know

See above. No one knew how to party like the Jazz Age crowd, so what better way to see in the new year than by reliving the glamour and romance of the 1920s? We'll be counting down to midnight in the traditional way but before and after there will be cabaret from Champagne Charlie, live music from the Bubbly Boys, vintage DJing from Baroness Jojo, Charleston dance routines from the Gatsby Girls and a glimpse into what 2019 has in store from our fortune tellers Lucius and Foxglove.



At a hectic time of year Ian White enjoys a moment of Zen-like calm, with only the gentle settling of the head on his pint to mark the passage of time. See more action shots from this years NSC Pub Crawl on pages 32-35.

