

DESIGN!

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE NEW SHERIDAN CLUB • No.152 • MAY 2019

Slaughter on the Water

Find out who fell in at this year's punting trip

The need for Tweed, 2019

Stephen Myhill's dispatches from the annual Tweed Run cycle tour

There'll always be a Sheffield

Giles Culpepper gives the straight dope on his adopted home city

Ships, sips and PG Tips

Frances Mitchell reports on her waterborne tea party



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 June in the upstairs room at The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB, from 7pm until 11pm, when George Tudor-Hart will deliver *How and Why to Enjoy DIY Cruise Sailing*, a talk about cruise sailing on boats between 27 feet and 45 feet that one sails oneself. "I will talk about why to do it, how to do it, a brief explanation of how a boat works and how it can magically sail against the wind—and the recent history of this innovation which happened only around 1850—how much it costs to crew or charter a boat for yourself, sleeping

and washing and cooking arrangements on board, how to arrange one's first trip to suit different individuals' needs and allay their fears, and how many would-be yachties who have too much money to spend get it all wrong. I have been sailing for about 25 years (with interruptions when I was living in China and Vietnam). I have captained a boat five times, and have been crew on about 40 or 50 voyages around the Solent, Devon and Cornwall, Scotland, France, Greece, Croatia, Thailand, the Canary Islands and Turkey."

The Last Meeting

Our speaker last month was Giles Culpepper, a longtime Member giving his first talk. His subject was Sheffield, the city where he grew up (although he wasn't actually born there so, he claims, the natives will never accept him as one of their own). It was a broad sweep through history and culture, from Classical times to the city's establishment as the centre of the steelmaking industry (an area in which, contrary to what many may assume, it still plays a major role), to iconic modern sons of Sheffield such as Peter Stringfellow, Michael Palin and, of course, Sean Bean. We also learned about the Luv-Duck Line, a geographical division on one side of which people will call you "love" and on the other "duck". Many thanks to Giles for his passionate presentation.

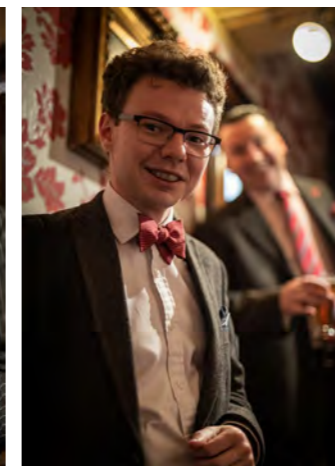
An essay version of the talk begins on page 4.



(Left) Chairman Torquil opens proceedings; (above) Giles whips up some audience participation; (below) the crowd have not yet turned ugly; (below left) apparently Sheffield is haunted by this film



(Below, left to right) Mark Christopher, William Cole, Ian White; (right) George Tudor Hart



(Below) Luca explains the plan for the heist; (left) Howard corrupts the youth



THE CITY OF SHEFFIELD

HOME OF THE HOWARDS, RULEMAKING AND WORLD-FAMOUS PEOPLE OF WHOM YOU'VE NEVER HEARD

A transcript of **Giles Culpepper's** address to the Club last month

AFTER NINE LONG YEARS of New Sheridan membership, some months ago the thought occurred to me that there is a subject upon which I could give a talk. A subject which might just entertain such an exclusive and sophisticated audience. Unfortunately, I couldn't find such an audience. So, I'm here tonight in front of the Wednesday night rabble.

I have had numerous ideas for subjects over the years. However, I felt that "My life with The Chairman at Lord's", "Brentford's relationship with the Third Reich revisited", and "Swinging with Mark Gidman", would merely state the obvious plus possibly just the obscene.

Hence, I would like to address you on the subject of, "The City of Sheffield: Home of the Howards, Rulemaking and World-Famous

People of Whom You've Never Heard."

I would like to start this evening by saying "Ehhh ooop", "How do?" and "Yeh jokinn kiddaw". Already some members of the audience are recoiling in fright. It has just dawned upon them that yes, I am Northern.

First of all, I would like to go round the room and ask what is the first word that comes into peoples' heads when I mention 'Sheffield'?

[At this point various people shouted "steel", while Bobby started on an anecdote of some thousand words.]

I think when Sheffield comes to mind, most people of my age probably think of the 1997 film *The Full Monty*. For those that haven't seen this picture, it's a story about five unemployed steel workers who decide to become strippers to raise money. The film was a smash hit at the

UK box office. It was even nominated for four Oscars and actually won one for Best Original Musical or Comedy Score.

While the film was very popular in Sheffield, there were concerns that it portrayed an out-of-date picture of the city. Sheffield during the 1990s had invested

considerable sums in an attempt to present a post-industrial image/brand to the wider world. Well, they told a few people in Rotherham.

At the start of the movie the viewer is shown footage from a promotional film produced by the city council in the early 1970s entitled *Sheffield, a City on the Move*. The film has since come to be seen as a misguidedly optimistic prophecy of the city's fortunes. Its focus on steel is almost a jinx as I'm reliably informed that 1970 was the first year that school-leavers couldn't automatically expect to get jobs in the steel industry. It was also the first time post-war that unemployment started to become a major concern in the city.

One thing is for certain: *The Full Monty* was a damn sight better than the 1996 embarrassment *When Saturday Comes*, a film starring local international acting hero Sean Bean, as a continually failing footballer who eventually comes good for Sheffield United FC. In real life, Mr Bean and myself are both followers of "Uuuunited" or "The Blades" as we're commonly known. Despite my 35 years of loyalty to Sheffield's "red and white", I have never managed to watch the motion picture all the way through.

The other great film production concerning the city was the 1984 film *Threads*. This picture focused on the aftermath of nuclear war in Sheffield. It was a council-backed film, and my year at school was the first not to be shown this piece of unashamed propaganda. Naturally, we asked to watch it anyway. In one memorable scene we were greeted with the sight of our headteacher's wife running across one of the



The Full Monty



Threads: shameless propaganda for Sheffield

major pedestrianised streets in Sheffield whilst screaming her head off.

Returning briefly to Mr Bean, the aforementioned actor played Alec Trevelyan (formerly 006) in the first Pierce Brosnan outing as James Bond, *Goldeneye*. The Bean adopts a Received Pronunciation accent throughout the film or does he? Should you have some spare time I would direct you to watch the action





scenes from this film. Shall we just say that whenever The Bean has to speak and run, his accent reverts to his native Sheffield staccato brogue and not the Queen's English (God bless you Ma'am).

Mr Bean was in theory up for the part of James Bond. However, one of the reasons supposedly cited against him was that he said he'd refuse to talk "posh" during the endless rounds of film-selling PR.

Since we've got side-tracked on to actors, let's quickly remind ourselves of some of Sheffield's other acting talent, all of whom are pictured in traditional Sheffield dress:

1. **Michael Palin**—complete with Essex moustache.
2. **Peter Stringfellow**—no comment required.
3. **Maurice Coldbourne**—star of *Howard's Way*, who inconveniently died in real life, thus bringing the series to something of a lacklustre ending.
4. **Brian Glover**—born in Sheffield though he identified as a native of Barnsley (poor chap).
5. **Patrick McGoohan**—The Prisoner was born in New Amsterdam but was raised in Sheffield.
6. **Brian Blessed**—his character's name in the film *Flash Gordon* is Vulcan. Vulcan is the Roman god of fire and also the patron god of Sheffield. A statue of Vulcan sits on top of Sheffield Town Hall and adorns many other buildings in the city.

Let's put the thespos to one side before we become too distracted. It is my intention tonight to probably reinforce some of those stereotypes concerning the city. I may also break a few, throw up some facts that may be of interest to



Anyway, we move on swiftly. The first thing we need to know is: where is Sheffield? The city sits on the eastern foothills of The Pennines, in the valleys of the River Don and its four tributaries, the Loxley, the Porter Brook, the Rivelin and the Sheaf.

The location of the city near so much water is very important for all sorts of reasons. Its fundamental role in the history of the city is that it provides power. The power of water from the Middle Ages onwards has allowed the iron and coal mined near the city to travel and the former to be transformed into steel.

Why is Sheffield called Sheffield you ask? The area now occupied by the city is believed to have been inhabited since at least the late Upper Paleolithic period, about 12,800 years ago. The earliest evidence of human occupation in the Sheffield area was found at Creswell Crags to the east of the city. In the Iron Age the area became the southernmost territory of the Pennine tribe called the Brigantes. It is this tribe who are thought to

you and perhaps just baffle. I may also lob in some red herrings. Here, fishy fishy...

You will be relieved to know, that I don't just intend to give you a potted history of the city's 5,000 years since its foundation by Romulus the dyslexic map-reader. Firstly, I feel I should give you a bit of quick personal context. A sort of speaker's disclaimer.

I was not born in Sheffield. I merely moved there when I was three (feel free to guess what year that was). This means that I speak of Sheffield as a foreigner. I am definitely not a local. I cannot call myself a "Sheffielder". I've been known to commit the cardinal crime of trying to enter Sheffielders' houses via the front door.

People also think I'm a Yorkshireman. I'm not. I was born in God's county of Lancashire. My 20 years living, on and off, in Sheffield saw me largely consumed with missionary work to the ignorant White Rose fraternity. The Sheffield accent I sometimes display is merely a bit of a ruse to lull you into a false sense of comfort about my background.

have constructed several hill forts in and around Sheffield.

One of these forts is known as Carl Wark. This is also the pseudonym historically given if you're asked for a name by a member of the Sheffield Constabulary.

Sheffield appears in the Domesday book as "Escafeld" and is described as open land on the River Sheaf. The Sheaf is a tributary of the Don. The Don takes its name from the Old English for a boundary. So, Sheffield started out as open land that was on a boundary, likely the one between the ancient kingdoms of Mercia and Northumbria.

Boundaries are a very important thing to Sheffield. At a place called Dore, five miles southwest of the city centre lies a stone commemorating a momentous occasion in English history. The name Dore in Old English surprisingly means "door"! The village was considered a gateway or pass between two kingdoms. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle contains the earliest written record of Dore, recording that in 827 King Egbert of Wessex led his army



to the village to receive the submission of King Eanred of Northumbria, thereby establishing his overlordship over the whole of Anglo-Saxon Britain. It can therefore be argued (but usually isn't in most history books) that Egbert became the first king of all England at Dore. Egbert hasn't had a massive impact since. I did attend the only school in the country named after him.

Now let's return to the thorny topic of boundaries. What do Sheffield, Manchester, London, Liverpool, Newcastle, Glasgow, Bristol and Birmingham have in common, but not Leeds, Norwich, Southampton or Cardiff?

They all sit on historic county border lines. In many cases, these are defined by



rivers.

Going way back in time, Sheffield sat in Hallamshire, a name today you'll hear associated with a parliamentary constituency, a hospital and a Company of Cutlers. In Anglo-Saxon times, Hallamshire was the most southerly of the "small shires" of the Kingdom of Northumbria.

Hallamshire disappears in medieval times under the first Ted Heath administration and becomes the southern boundary of Yorkshire. More specifically, it becomes the southern boundary of the West Riding of Yorkshire. Incidentally, "riding" means a third in Norse. The area below it became Derbyshire.

You've heard of Sykes-Picot line and the Mason-Dixon line. In Sheffield the city has a verbal scar running across it known as the Luv-Duck line. Everybody from north of the line (which corresponds with the old boundary of Hallamshire and of Yorkshire up till 1925) addresses everybody else as "Luv". Those dwelling south of the line address other people as "Duck". I should like to point out as with the clean air act (introduced by the city council in 1958 compared to elsewhere in the UK 1963) Sheffield is ahead of the nation with its use of non-gender determining forms of address. "Luv" can apply to man, woman, child and indeed any person you're not sure about. In fact, it can be addressed to anybody who isn't from Leeds.

The boundary of Sheffield and Yorkshire starts to move south in the 1920s to embrace the fact the city is expanding further into the hills as the residents reach over 500,000. This is just over five times what the population had been a



What's left of Sheffield Manor, one-time hangout of Mary, Queen of Scots (inset)



The majestic Master Cutler

is the 7:29 departure from Sheffield and 16:57 departure from London St Pancras. This used to be a mainly first-class service. Though this has been scaled down. There are now two other services named the "South Yorkshireman" and the exotically named "Sheffield Continental" to take the strain.

During the 1740s, a form of the crucible steel process was discovered that allowed the manufacture of a better quality of steel than had previously been possible. In about the

century beforehand.

I'm conscious that the patience of my readership is growing thin. Much as I'd like to lecture you on Sheffield's history, I'm going to skip over most of it. However, there are a quick few facts worth knowing.

After the Norman Conquest Sheffield gained a castle and a manor house. From 1570 to 1584, Mary, Queen of Scots, was imprisoned in Sheffield Castle and Sheffield Manor. I'm afraid that the Manor and the Castle don't survive in any great way, Oliver Cromwell having objected to both. Sheffield Manor has a council estate named after it and a park. You're welcome to visit both. I recommend a trip via the South Yorkshire Police helicopter, which would avoid you actually having to come into contact with any residents.

Sheffield was already noted for the production of knives, as mentioned in Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, and by the early 1600s, it had become the main centre of cutlery manufacture in England outside London. This industry was overseen by the Company of Cutlers in Hallamshire based at the Cutler's Hall. The Company currently has 447 members and is headed by a Master Cutler.

Train spotters will know that the Master Cutler

same period, a technique was developed for fusing thin sheets of silver onto copper ingots to produce silver plating. This became widely known as Sheffield plate

In 1915, Sheffield man Harry Brearley announced that he had invented a so-called "non-rusting" steel that did not stain. It later became known as Stainless Steel, revolutionising the steel industry and Sheffield's steel production.

This is all very well, but what would visiting Sheffield be like for you, the members of the New Sheridan Club? What would you encounter? What would you enjoy?

Let us first consider the physical impact upon your senses. If you travelled from the west perhaps you'd be in agreement with Nicholas Pevsner. In 1959 he wrote, "none of the big cities of England has such majestic surroundings



All this a couple of hours' walk from the city centre



The Sheffield FC squad of 1876

as Sheffield”.

The late John Betjeman was familiar with Sheffield. He lived in the city intermittently. In Sheffield, he fanned the flames of an affair with Lady Elizabeth Cavendish, daughter of the tenth Duke of Devonshire and in old age spent time as a stroke patient in The Royal Hallamshire Hospital. He was very fond of Sheffield, especially the well-heeled suburb of Broomhill. He said it was “the prettiest suburb in England”.

Sheffield’s great stroke of luck is to have Britain’s first national park on its doorstep and indeed within its boundaries. It’s literally possible in a couple of hours to walk from the inner city to rocky edges that form the backdrop for Jane Austen and the like. Purple heather-clad moors are visible from most parts of the city.

The consequence of this close relationship to dales and moorland is reflected in Sheffield’s emphasis on greenery within its urban core. Where other cities are covered in grand buildings paid for by philanthropic types, Sheffield is full of donated parks. Its huge amount of trees have recently become controversial politically. The matter even making the national news. A feat not achieved since the Yorkshire Ripper was apprehended outside the University of Sheffield. Naturally, it took an intelligent Sheffield copper to nick a revolting man from Leeds.

Sheffield along with Rome is supposedly built on seven hills. I actually think there are eight, but this is not a place for precise measurements other than in industry. In Sheffield “somat”, or “something” as you would say, is considered a technical term.

There is more than greenery when you visit Sheffield. If you alight from the railway at what was once called Sheffield Midland station and manage to swerve the very good pub The Sheffield Tap on platform 1B, you’d then find yourself walking up the hill to see the Town Hall which represents what is commonly regarded as the centre of the city. The first thing you’d probably come across en route is the Howard Arms public house. The unfortunate fact is that much of Sheffield is owned by the Howard family. The Dukes of Norfolk have historically owned great tracts of land and the pubs that aren’t named after them usually have reference to the Cavendish family who reside nearby at Chatsworth. The head of the Cavendish tribe is the Duke of Devonshire. See John Betjeman for details.

Sheffield is one of the great beer cities of Britain, if not the world. Since the disappearance of the big three breweries in the city (Whitbread, Wards, and Stones) micro-breweries and mid-tiers have taken over. The CAMRA listings replicate the Old Testament in length. So, if you don’t come for the countryside, come for the beer.

And if you don’t come for the beer or the countryside you can come for the sport. The Crucible Theatre has seen men in clip-on bow ties shuffling round green baize since the snooker world championships arrived in 1977.

There’s also football. FIFA recognises Sheffield FC as the world’s oldest surviving independent football club—that is, the oldest club not associated with an institution such as a school, hospital or university. It was founded in 1857. The club initially played Sheffield rules,

a code of its own devising. These rules went on to influence those of the England Football Association (1863) heavily, including handball, free kicks, corners and throw-ins.

The big derby is against Hallam FC who are recognised as the second oldest club. They play the Sheffield derby when they’re in the same division.

God’s team Sheffield United FC play the Steel-City derby against the other lot whom I won’t mention.

The Blades (whom we mentioned some years back) play at Bramall Lane which is a ground that boasts a lot of firsts. It hosted the final of the Youdan Cup in 1867, the world’s first football tournament. Along with the Kennington Oval it’s the only ground to have hosted a football and a cricket international. It also hosted the first floodlit match and several matches between the Sheffield and London Football Associations that led to the unification of their respective rules. It is the oldest major stadium in the world still to be hosting professional association football matches. In 2021 it is set to host a third international sport when the Rugby League World Cup visits.

Sheffield did have the largest athletics track in the country which hosted the World student games in 1991. The debt will be paid off in 2024. The stadium has been demolished and replaced with an Olympic legacy park with a plastic pitch and portacabins. The slogan of 1991 was “It’s our year”. Still, we did get Jessica Ennis, who somehow became Olympic and World champion despite going to my school. King Egbert was proud in

the afterlife.

My school also produced the current England cricket captain Joe Root. Despite this, Yorkshire haven’t played cricket in Sheffield since 1996.

Coming back to one of our many tangents, it’s possible you might fly into Doncaster Sheffield Robin Hood Airport. Yep that catchy short name. In many legends Robin Hood is said to have been a displaced son of the lord of Hallamshire, who at this period in history resided at his manor at Loxley.

The small village of Loxley is now a suburb of western Sheffield. A 1637 survey by John Harrison of the estates in or near Sheffield belonging to the Earl of Arundel states that, “a place called little Haggas croft in Loxley Firth contained the foundation of a house or cottage where Robin Hood was born”.

All this may be utter nonsense, but it doesn’t half cheese off people from neighbouring Nottinghamshire.

I thought I’d finish with cuisine. Those who were present on the night of my talk then got the opportunity to taste some Henderson’s Relish. I managed to smuggle a bottle out of the city. Far superior in taste to many more widely known condiments. A delicious liquid topping to pretty much anything.

So, we’ve had some geography, some history, notable people, and some of you have had a literal taste of Sheffield. May I thank you for your time and encourage you to leave by the back door.



Sheffield's finest: Henderson's Relish and (below) Jessica Ennis-Hill



Slaughter on the Water

It's punting time and the hungry river prepares to gorge

SO THE AEONS WHEEL and the gods harbour deep grudges, and it is spring again and time for the New Sheridan Club trip to go punting in Oxford. In fact this annual tradition is so ancient it predates the NSC itself, spawned from primordial ad hoc meetings via the original Chap Room chatroom—the club absorbed it just as early Christians tried to absorb pagan rites and celebrations they found among the peoples they hoped to convert. Rites the dark truth of which

they could never have grasped. So it is with the annual Punt, Picnic 'n' Plunge. The old folk know the River God must be satisfied—each year one punter from our number becomes the sacrifice as he or she tumbles into the waters. In fact Scarheart has for some years been running a sweepstake: each participant chips in a pound and gets a number. These numbers are randomly assigned to all the people present. When someone falls in, the person holding the number that corresponds

to the sacrificial victim wins the kitty. And yet last year no one fell in. (Actually Rowan did, but she was two years old and hadn't been registered in the sweepstake.) According to Scarheart the money would roll over into this year's game—and yet where was Scarheart this time? Mysteriously unable to attend. And the money? Apparently just “resting” in his bank account.

Because this is England the weather is hugely unpredictable at this time of year: we have had scorching sun and cannonades of hailstones (possibly both on the same day). All eyes were on Stuart Mitchell, our resident meteorology guru (he works for the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts). Official scryers predicted chilly temperatures of 10 degrees but kept changing their minds about whether it would rain or not. Stuart, however, tried to explain to us that blanket forecasts for the whole area meant little, and showed us a phone app that plotted weather fronts as they moved towards and away from your position. Tense times.

Seven of us who were in town the day before fulfilled another tradition, meeting for a black-tie dinner at the Cherwell Boathouse restaurant.



(Above) We meet for a pre-punt snifter in the Bear Inn, its walls covered in ties; (below) the bowler that would later save my bonce



(Above) the punters convene at the boatyard; (below) our vessels await; (bottom) newcomer James (centre) with Frances and Chico



(It's not cheap but actually pretty good value for the quality.) An agreeable time was had. Stuart Turner arrived on a bicycle that folded down the size of a matchbox and Stuart Mitchell advised us when to leave on the grounds that it would rain in 16 minutes. (Whether or not it did rain on you in 16 minutes turned out to depend on which way you turned out of the restaurant.) All seemed right with the world. Surely the gods would smile on us the next day?

Saturday morning looked crisp but sunny. In the morning Sheridanites emerged from their burrows and picked through the city's comestibles emporia like industrious ants. At a cheese shop in the covered market the man serving asked what the occasion was, as mine was the third NSC lapel badge he'd spotted in there that day. Come 11am the antediluvian pull of beer drew us to the Bear Inn for a pre-punting sharpener. By now our numbers had swelled to 14. (For many years the meeting point was the Turf Tavern until The Incident, when the incumbent landlord took exception to our presence, balked at selling us food and drink at opening time, then had a hissy fit when he spotted one of our number eating his own sausage roll while seated at one of the pub's outdoor tables. Scarheart declared that we would never set foot in the place again. Had it been the old days in Heidelberg the matter would have ended more gorily, but these are less manly times. Scarheart did, however, write the



brewery a stiff letter. On cardboard.) The Bear has the distinction of walls adorned with a huge collection of club ties—before you ask, we did offer an NSC example but they long ago ran out of space for any new additions.

From the pub it was a short lope down to the Magdalen Bridge Boathouse. Here we were joined by Jessie and Caroline and the Beckwiths, taking our number to 20 including three junior deckhands. The weather god was keeping us on our toes, having sprinkled us with rain a few times already, but we decided to shake our fists at Olympus, take to our boats and head upriver.

At the first stop-off, a point by Magdalen Fellows' Garden where we always tie up alongside a sign that says "NO MOORING" for a group photograph, we discussed our ultimate destination.

Traditionally we punt up to the rollers—literal metal rollers up which you can haul the flat-bottomed boats to a higher section of river—move up and carry on to the High Bridge, where we tie up and have a picnic. But for several years now the water has been too high, flooding the area around the rollers, making it impossible to disembark. This year those punting declared that the current was not so strong. But the wind was keen. Robert pointed out that once you got up the

rollers you were on an exposed plain, whereas down in the lush lowlands before the rollers we were sheltered by a screen of trees. So we decided just to head straight for the same picnic spot as last time.

As we laid out our picnic blankets and newcomer James cranked up his portable gramophone, the sky strobed between crystalline sunrays and iron-grey clouds. We soon realised that when Stuart Mitchell put his (distinctly un-Chappist) anorak on it meant a shower was imminent and we should cover the picnic items. At one point we retreated under a large tree till the sprinkling was over. But the rain never lasted long and we had plenty of time to stuff our faces with pies and Prosecco.

As it approached 5pm it occurred to us that we needed to get the boats back by 6pm, so we loaded up squiffily and pushed our vessels out into the



(Above) We moor temporarily by the Magdalen Fellows' Garden, so that all the boats can catch up and form a convoy, and to take a group photo (below)



(Top) Frances and the Conte shelter from the drizzle as we set off; (above) Ivan Debono brims with optimistic zeal; (below) Stewart's boat poses for a police photograph against a ruler for scale



hungry waters. This was traditionally the point where, undone by alcohol, punters were more likely to overbalance and plunge into the arms of the Naiads. On the plus side the current was with us going back, making it easier to propel and steer the boat—though Stuart Mitchell still managed to thrust his punt pole into a tree, dislodging a branch which scraped his knuckles as it fell, then landed on my head. Fortunately I was wearing a bowler hat which took the brunt of the impact.

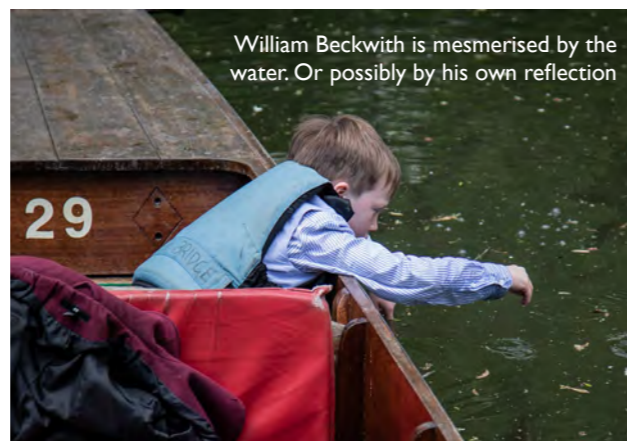
In a trice the boatyard was in sight and our punters, now seasoned, expertly steered their boats into the moorings, with plenty of time to spare. But what was this? It quickly emerged that not one person had tumbled into the drink. Can the gods be denied two years in a row? Perhaps Scarheart had kept us safe by feverishly sacrificing rare animals in his mystic tower? Perhaps Robert's sweet singing and melodious strumming of the ukulele had placated the deities? Or perhaps the ziplock plastic bags that Stuart Turner had wisely distributed for the protection of mobile phones had taken all the fun out of the divine dunkings? Whatever the meaning of it, woe betide anyone who ventures on to the water this time next year. (Date to be announced shortly.)

So cocky were we feeling that for our traditional post-punting pint or three we even ventured to the Turf. (Sorry, Scarheart, but the Mitchells were staying there anyway.)

And all was well.



(Above and below) Having discussed tactics we return to the boats and carry on upriver



William Beckwith is mesmerised by the water. Or possibly by his own reflection



(Top) We reach our goal and hurriedly set up camp before the heavens open; (above) James delights with his gramophone. Notice anything odd? That's right, his moustache has vanished



(Above) Robert attempts to placate the elemental dieties through the power of song; (left) during a particularly vigorous rain shower we take shelter under an ancient tree





As we head back downriver, the current on our side, there is some jockeying for position



(Above) As the shadows lengthen the sunlight dapples idyllically through the leaves; (below) Jack takes his turn at punting chores; (right) our journey ends as we reach the boatyard once more; (below right) our adventure over, what remains but to quaff and share seafarers' tales in the mead hall?



(Left and below) The jockeying doesn't last long, as Robert effortlessly passes our boat



THE TWEED RUN

Stephen 'Scoops' Myhill reports on 'a day of fizz and chafing'

WITH THE PUNT, Picnic 'n' Plunge happening at the same time (see pages 12–19), the NSC presence at this year's Tweed Run was understandably smaller, but the day was no less enjoyable for that. The start and finish point was Bourne and Hollingsworth's HQ in Clerkenwell, where friends old and new met, mingled and eyed up the rides and raiments on display. Beyond the ranks of card-carrying Sheridanites, there were of course many familiar faces from Pandora Harrison's Olympian winners' enclosure, including Champagne Charlie, Tom Carradine, Bunny, Katie Holt, Hanson Leatherby and Alistair Wilson-Gough.

The route took us into the City, passing the Old Bailey and St Paul's, much to the delight and bemusement of the first of many groups of tourists, including those trapped on open-top buses surrounded by the slow-moving tide of tweed.

We continued over Southwark Bridge and through the back streets of Borough. One of the delights of the Tweed Run is that it takes you through streets, mews and squares that you've never noticed before—however long you've been in the city.

Our tea stop was the gardens of the Imperial War Museum. After such a chilly start, everyone was looking forward to a hot cuppa. Oh dear. No doubt

informed by last year's scorcher, B and H had laid on cups of iced tea by the yard. A good idea somewhat undermined by the British weather. Many people taking a cold libation at this point opted for alcohol.

After tea, we headed back towards the centre of town, going over Westminster Bridge and making our way past Buck House via Birdcage Walk. It was there at one set of traffic lights that I heard a spectator ask a participant, "Did you get dressed in the dark?" Most ungallant. The response, "Oh, I've toned it down for today," settled that cad's particular hash.

On through St James's, Piccadilly, Burlington Gardens and into Soho and Fitzrovia. Our next goal was St Pancras Gardens where we lunched. The last time we used this park for lunch, the queue for the one toilet was as long as a Leonard

Cohen song, so full marks to B and H for providing some porta-loos. Having said that, the blustery conditions meant that gents using the completely exposed plastic pissoire had to take account of the wind direction to avoid unpleasantness.

It was also at the lunch stop that the NSC numbers (comprising Lord Hare, Dr Tim Eyre, Philip Hancock—whose quote provides the subtitle of this piece—and your correspondent) were augmented by the arrival of the non-riding but impressively



picnic-toting Contessa Di Campari.

After a brief homage to the infamous *pavé* of the Paris-Roubaix cycle race (aka a bunch of cobbles on the back streets of Euston) we found ourselves back at Clerkenwell, where we were joined by another non-combatant in the shape of Sally Sweetlove. Ms Sweetlove had chosen an afternoon of free alcohol on a river trip over 11 bumpy miles on London's roads. Can't think why.

As we waited for the awards ceremony, the weather turned particularly unpleasant. At one point we seemed to be attempting a world record for how many people could get under one tiny gazebo. All was going well until the gazebo blew away. I think the lack of a queue at the beer tent spoke volumes for the conditions and people's desire to get indoors.

It would be remiss not to mention the heroes of the day—the marshals. Without them the Tweed Run would not happen, so a huge "chapeau" to all of them.

Another year, another Cordings rosette. My thanks to comrades for the company, conversation and hot soup. My apologies to anyone I failed to mention, and equally to those who were hoping to go undetected. Until the next one...





(Above, l-r) David Hodson, Ambassador for the People's Republic of South Yorkshire, with a gift of Henderson's Relish—a delicacy seldom seen south of the Rother Valley; Champagne Charlie and Philip Hancock; Katie Holt's attention to detail meant matching stocking seams



(Clockwise from top left) Berner's Mews, something of a bottleneck on the day; the winner of this year's Most Dashing Dame award; two Olympians, but they don't like to talk about it; massed ranks of mobile eccentrics bemuse bystanders; NSC cove Gary Grønnestad does his best to blend in with the background



(Above) Louise Holland rocks an Anyone-for-tennis? look; (above left) perhaps the offer of ice cream was a bad call on a damp, chilly day; (left) the New Sheridan Club peloton (l-r): Philip Hancock, Lord Hare, Tim Eyre, the Contessa di Campari; the author

All photos by the author and Jim Moore



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.



Ernie Isa Samat

Name or preferred name?

Ernie.

Why that nom de plume?

Once I hated it so much that I considered changing it. As a teen, I thought it old fashioned and boring.

Where do you hail from?

Stanmore Hill, London. Parents packed up sticks

from Singapore back in the 1960s. My mixed heritage is comprised of India (Punjab), Ceylon (Tamil), Indonesia (Sulawesi) and the Cocos Islands. Apparently I'm 5/8ths Indian. Confused? I still am.

Favourite cocktail?

Singapore Sling. Initially a lady's drink, men soon caught on. Pink in colour, sweet but deceptively potent. A rich man's Snakebite!

Most Chappist skill?

A "living historian", portraying the RAF of colour from the Commonwealth, who actively took part in World War Two.

Most Chappist possession?

A bespoke summerhouse based on a 1930s Malayan colonial house.

Personal Motto?

"Never look back, walk tall, look fine."

Favourite Quotes?

"All women should be told they are pretty, even if they aren't." *[Marilyn Monroe? -Ed]*

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

I went to the same school as David Baddiel, Sacha Baron Cohen, Matt Lucas, Mark Kermode, Brian Sewell and Damon Hill (Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School).

How long have you been involved with the NSC?



Since 2004 *[the old Sheridan Club, as the NSC only launched in 2006 -Ed]*.

How did you hear about the Club to begin with?

Through Sigmund Oakeshott, son of Lib Dem peer Lord Oakeshott. We met at a fetish club. He was impressed with my original WWII Panzer uniform.

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

Singapore Sling...it has Gin in it, innit.

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

1. Brian John Edward "Sandy" Lane DFC was a fighter pilot and flying ace of the RAF during the Battle of Britain. He was deemed a failure prior to joining the RAF and, unlike some officers, who could be a bit snobbish, he knew everyone in his command by their first names, no matter how lowly their rank or status. Truly a gentleman.

2. Clive Dunn. To this day, my mannerisms are practically based on him. I had the privilege to meet him.

3. My grandfather, Dr Abdul Samat bin Pagak, the first Muslim/Malay doctor in South East Asia to gain a Doctorate. Why?

- He gave free medicine to the poor;
- During the Japanese occupation in Singapore he survived torture and death threats on refusing to tend their wounded soldiers;
- He armed Indonesian Independence fighters in exchange for diamonds, rubies, sapphires etc. (Dad would say that weapons were seen under



furniture and by morning these "rocks" would appear!); and

- He was a founder of Indonesian independence from the Dutch via the United Nation in New Delhi in 1947.

What gave him the strength and courage to do what he did? Dad said he cared more for people than his family.

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?
Afraid not, as I'm too shy to be on stage...unless the audience have their backs towards me!

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.

13 Sheridanites in a Boat

Frances Mitchell reports on a waterborne tea party



Our intrepid travellers assemble

“THERE IS NOTHING—absolutely nothing—half so much worth doing as messing about in boats.”

So wrote the author of *The Wind in the Willows*, Kenneth Graham. With this in mind, on 27th of May, 11 intrepid NSC members donned their tweeds, hats and stripey blazers, packed some emergency Kendal Mint Cake and, steeling themselves to endure the rigours of the GWR and M4 on a Bank Holiday Monday, set off for Reading. Upon arrival they met up with resident Berkshire NSC members Frances and Stuart Mitchell for a boat trip and afternoon tea on the Thames, following in the footsteps (or should that be wake?) of Ratty and Mole.

Their vessel was a modern, wide-beam canal barge, built in 2012, called Whittington's Tea Barge named in honour of its owner's illustrious ancestor Dick Whittington, 14th-century Lord Mayor of London and hero of many a Christmas pantomime. Resident next to Reading Bridge, the barge opens for a limited season, only leaving its mooring for private charters and a few special public sailings. The NSC were fortunate to secure a booking and exclusive use.

Luckily the weather and river gods were looking favourably upon the Club. The day was



The cosy interior of Whittington's Tea Barge



The Tea Barge at its moorings



(Left to right) Mark Christopher, Stuart Mitchell, Pandora Harrison, Andrew Harrison

dry and sunny and the organiser's worst fear—that a spell of heavy rain would increase the river flow and cause the river authorities to close it to pleasure craft—proved unfounded. Our party set sail promptly at 2.30pm, travelling upstream to Mapledurham, while stuffing themselves with tea, sandwiches and cake, of which there was an abundance.

Immediately the club members were seated the boat owners, Andrew and Lesley, brought out large pots of real loose-leaf tea which were refilled constantly throughout the trip. As the



No shortage of tea and sandwiches

boat rolled under the second of Reading's two Thames Bridges, our party were able to look across at some of the area's most exclusive and expensive houses. Most of these properties have boat houses (and the occasional helipad) that are larger than the Victorian terraced cottages in which many of Reading's residents live.

The opposite (South or Berkshire bank) is home to numerous swans, geese and other waterfowl. On this small stretch of the river nests the largest concentration of swans on the Thames and is a good place from which to view the annual Swan Upping ceremony, held on the river every July. There are no fancy houses to view on this side; just a pleasant park area and fields, where Reading's famous rock festival is held. What the wealthy residents of the North



Stuart Mitchell is mother

spoiling their view, can best be gleaned from the barrage of “Angry-of-Tunbridge-Wells”-type letters filling the pages of the local press in the weeks preceding the event.

As NSC members were admiring the view, the crew of the tea barge could be seen preparing food in the galley and soon appeared carrying cake stands loaded with freshly made sandwiches. Not the well-manicured, elegant fingers that one gets in grander establishments, but hearty, well-stuffed triangles, of which there seemed to be an endless supply, cut from locally-sourced artisan bread.

While they ate, our group could see the landscape changing. As the boat left the urban area the river channel narrowed, with dense trees leaning over the banks on either side, their roots submerged in the water like a British equivalent of a mangrove forest. As one Sheridanite put it, the view from the bow was reminiscent of the film *Apocalypse Now*. Standing there, you half expected to see a flight of helicopters emerging from the trees, with Wagner’s “The Ride of the Valkyries” booming overhead.

However, no helicopters appeared. Instead a batch of freshly-baked scones was brought from the galley along with ample supplies of jam and clotted cream. As the only West Country man present, Devonian member Mark Gidman was called upon to adjudicate in the inevitable



Ridade enjoying a transcendental cup of tea (and rocking a Holly Golightly look)



Bob the Lobster makes his traditional appearance

or Oxford Bank (why is the North bank always the most desirable side of the Thames?) make of the annual invasion of the “great unwashed”

debate on which should be spread on the scone first, jam or cream? The Devon way (jam first) is the correct way. Only in Cornwall apparently

is the cream applied first. Interestingly a straw poll among the NSC members revealed a definite gender divide: the ladies mostly favouring the Cornish way and the gentlemen the Devon way.

After this most of the passengers went up on to the open bow to watch the crew use the current generated by the lock to turn the boat skillfully around. (This should be compulsory viewing for anyone trying to punt at the annual Punt, Picnic ‘n’ Plunge.) Through the trees could be seen the chimneys of Mapledurham House, reputedly Toad Hall in *The Wind in Willows*, looking exactly as it does in E.H. Shepherd’s famous illustrations. After the turning of the barge the passengers were recalled to their seats and a large candlelit cheesecake was brought out and presented to Linda Laubscher who’s birthday it was. This was served in large slices, along with plates of smaller pastries, before members retired, replete, to the bow to rest and enjoy the view as we cruised back to the jetty.



One of Reading’s more impressive waterside residences

Unusually—or should that read “uniquely”?—for a New Sheridan trip, no alcohol was consumed during the cruise despite there being a small bar on board and no corkage charged for passengers wishing to bring their own. However, several members accompanied the Mitchells back to their home, where they fortified themselves with a glass or two before embarking on the journey back to town.

whittingtons-teabarge.co.uk
www.facebook.com/whittingtonsteabarge

About 75 clicks above the Do Lung Bridge, our boat leaves the town and pushes on toward’s man’s eternal heart of darkness

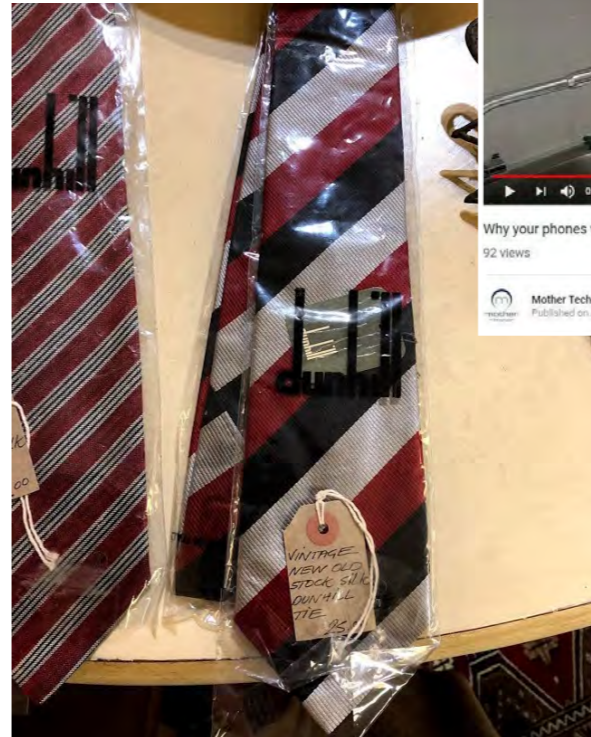


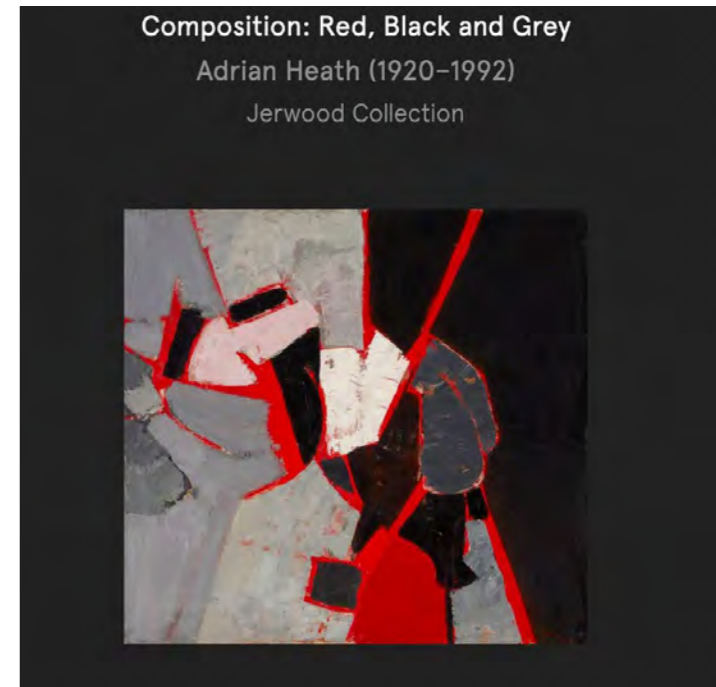


CLUB NOTES

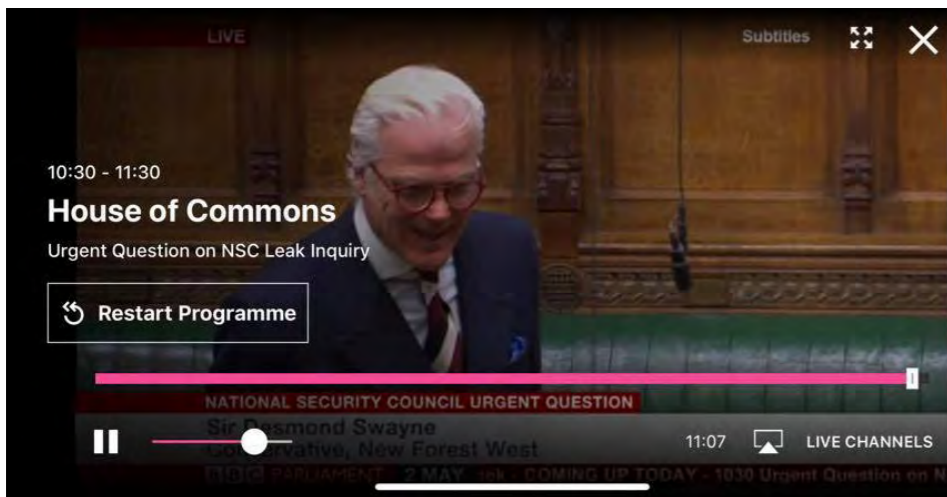
Club Tie Corner

THERE HAS BEEN a flurry of activity, with Ivan Debono, Frances Mitchell and Col. Cyrus Choke seemingly vying for the status of greatest purveyor of spurious Club connections. This page, clockwise from right: “Andrea Mantegna (attrib.), Glorious Renaissance Committee Member (known as ‘Il Grande Sheridanano’, better known as The Martyrdom of St Christopher),” reckons Debono; Betty Grable (in *Three for the Show*, 1952) from Col. Choke, who also offers Hugh Laurie as Bertie Wooster in Club tie; Benjamin Negroto notes the Club affiliation of Flora MacDonald, saviour of Bonnie Prince Charlie. Opposite page, clockwise from top left: Frances found this hairclip at home; Christopher Wyles sends this still from his own video, so we can assume the tie is genuine; the Earl of Waveney submits this reassuring snap of Vincent Price; Frances has found both of these NSC dresses; offering a glimpse of the second of our genuine NSC ties, James Rigby sends this cutting about himself from *Goldie* (“the independent magazine for a stylish life after 40”); and finally Stephen Myhill’s eye was caught by this “new old stock” Dunhill tie in the New Forest.





This page, clockwise from top left: Col. Choke makes this observation about NSC "infiltration of US charities"; John D. Slocum has noticed that Douglas Fairbanks, while visiting Charlie Chaplin on the set of *The Circus* (1927) is clearly sporting Club silk; Matthew Howard is distracted from Commons questions about the Huawei leak by the fact that Sir Desmond Swaine is wearing a Club tie; meanwhile Stuart Turner draws our attention to the Club colours splashed across this Action Man Nazi sentry box. Opposite page, clockwise from top left: Debono kicks it up a gear with this stylish drinkware and this artwork; Miss Minna spotted these Club bobble hats in Sainsbury's; Debono, once more, was taken by these blazer buttons; Stuart Turner again, this time with a Vivienne Westwood design for Club servants; finally Debono returns with this practical folding chair.



Club Tie Corner Bonus

CLUBMAN VISCOUNT RUSHEN (in everyday life the Speaker of the House of Keys—the Manx Parliament) has supplied these photos, proving, as he puts it, that “wearing your Sheridan Club tie is a surefire way to meet world leaders...”



Caroline Eliades

New Members

WE WARMLY WELCOME Sally Franklyn, an opera singer by day, who was brought along to a Club meeting by Andrew Fish and signed up at once, and Caroline Eliades, from Las Vegas, who enjoys sewing and Last Word cocktails,



Sally Franklyn with fellow Club Member Andrew Fish



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 June
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.

The Golden Era of Jazz

Every Thursday
7pm
Jamboree, 566 Cable Street, London E1W 3HB
Admission: Free before 8pm, £4 between 8 and 9.30, £5 after that
A weekly night of 1920s jazz and 1930s



swing presented by clarinetist Ewan Bleach with various guests.

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.

Holiday Camp

Friday 7th June
7–10.30pm
The Jericho Tavern, 56 Walton Street, Oxford OX2 6AE
Admission: £10 from Wegottickets

Summer knees-up from high-energy jazz/swing/jive/



THE ORIGINAL RABBIT FOOT SEASM BAND'S HOLIDAY CAMP

ORFSB LIVE + MOOGEMAN + JOHNNY LOUCHE : JERICHO TAVERN 7 JUNE 2019. £10 2019

boogie combo the Original Rabbit's Foot Spasm Band (veterans of the Candlelight Club), plus guest Moogiemann and DJ Johnny Louche.

The Chap 20th Anniversary Party

Saturday 8th June
8pm–2am
The Vaults, Leake Street, London SE1 7NN
Admission: £10 including a complimentary cocktail in advance



Celebrate 20 years of *The Chap* magazine this Saturday

The Chap magazine, which arguably started it all, celebrates 20 years in print, and 100 issues, with a party. It will take place in a side room in Bourne & Hollingsworth's Blitz Party (B&H have a long association with *The Chap*, having hosted the Chap Olympics for many years plus the Chap Balls back when they happened). Your ticket gets you access to the whole of the B&H event, plus a wristband yielding ingress to the Chap room with its own roster of entertainment. Your ticket includes a complimentary Chap cocktail. See www.designmynight.com/london/event-space/waterloo/the-vaults/the-chap-magazine-birthday-party.

Indigo 25th Birthday

Saturday 8th June
8pm–3am
Paper Dress Vintage, 352a Mare Street, Hackney Central, London E8 1HR
Admission: £7.70 in advance

Count Indigo, the ambassador of lounge invites you to the bordello of a thousand swingers. It's a quarter of a century since

Indigo launched the easy listening renaissance with a night at Madame Jojo's. So don your favourite cocktail attire and saunter from the past into the future with a fanfare of hits from the 1950s through to the 1970s. From 9pm there will be live acts: Mike Flowers & The Sounds Superb Singers! (PA mini set); Count Indigo himself; and The Men Who Fell To Earth (a "Booker T. and the MGs play Bowie" covers band)—even better than it sounds). DJing will be Martin Green (Smashing/Workers Playtime), Paul Putner (Regency Rooms), Special Kay (Spiritland/Duckie).

London Burlesque Festival

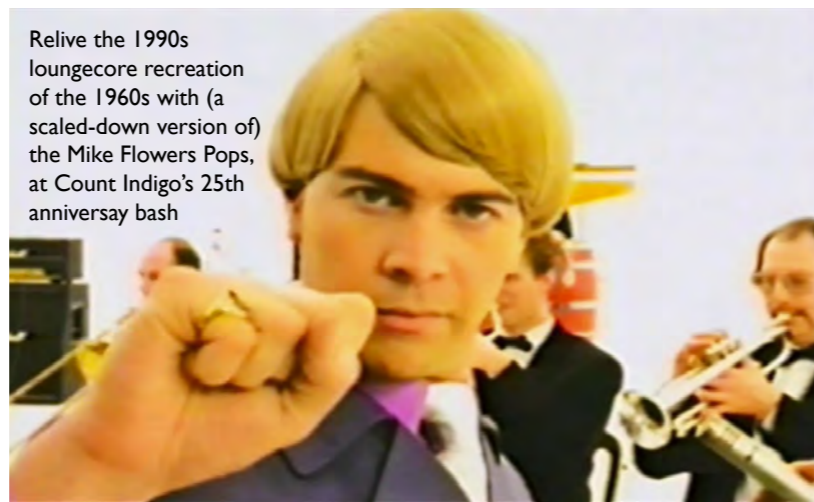
14th, 15th, 28th, 29th June
7pm
Bush Hall, 310 Uxbridge Road, London W12 7LJ; and Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL
Admission: £22.50–£45

Chaz Royal's rolling burlesque pageant has been running since April but the last four dates are this month: *Danger Strip Show* on the 14th, *Big Burlesque Day Out* (daytime event) and *Burlesque, Gin and Jazz* on the 15th, then two doses of *Best of the Fest* on 28th and 29th. So if burlesque is your thing, check out the full schedule at www.londonburlesquefest.com/june-schedule.

The Candlelight Club

Friday 15th June
7pm–12am
A secret central London location
Admission: £25 in advance
Dress: Prohibition dandies, swells, gangsters and molls, degenerate aristos and decadent aesthetes,

Relive the 1990s loungecore recreation of the 1960s with (a scaled-down version of) the Mike Flowers Pops, at Count Indigo's 25th anniversary bash



Hatmosphere Pop-Up Hat Shop
Saturday 15th– Friday 28th June
10am–7.30pm (6pm Saturdays and Sundays)
X Terrace, 238 Old Brompton Road, Kensington, London SW5 0DE

With summer weddings and Royal Ascot in mind, this pop-up shop offers over 350 hats from 50 independent milliners (prices from £70, it says here). Seems to be exclusively ladies' hats, though. See www.xterrace.com.



Soak yourself in some Prohibition-era decadence at the Candlelight Club, featuring the Silver Ghosts (above)

Enjoy the vista of tiffers at Hatmosphere



corrupt politicians and the Smart Set In the Know

London's award-winning immersive 1920s-themed speakeasy party, with live jazz, cabaret and cocktails in a secret London venue filled with candles.

This time the mighty seven-piece Silver Ghosts will be shaking up a cocktail of swing to get your feet moving, and that imp of the perverse Champagne Charlie will be adding some cabaret sparkle. When the band aren't playing DJs the Bee's Knees will be spinning vintage shellac.

Ticket-holders receive an email two days before, revealing the secret location. More at www.thecandlelightclub.com.

"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*

After a few drinks, Andrew Fish can invent whole new Bartitsu moves

