

A man wearing a dark hat, glasses, a white shirt, a red tie, and a dark jacket is looking upwards with a slight smile. He is standing in front of a large, ornate stained glass window. The window features a central panel with a detailed illustration of a grapevine with clusters of purple and blue grapes, green leaves, and a blue ribbon-like vine. The window is set in a dark, possibly wooden or metal, frame with intricate carvings. The background is a warm, golden-brown color, suggesting an interior setting like a club or a grand building.

DESIGN!

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW SHERIDAN CLUB • No.158 • DECEMBER 2019

The real James Bond

Torquil Arbuthnot profiles 007—not the character in the films but the surprisingly down-to-earth one from the books

Home, Sweet Home

Ian White takes us on a tour of his favourite gin palaces

Party, party, party

Three Club socials this month that you don't want to miss

Von Grigory speaks

This shadowy denizen of Club meetings breaks his silence



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 4th December in the upstairs room at The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB, from 7pm until 11pm, when Adrian Prooth will talk nonsense to us. Specifically, he will deliver a talk he describes as, “A brief history of talking nonsense and why all good chaps and chappettes should practice this art.”

The Last Meeting

Our November event was privileged to feature a talk by none other than our Glorious Chairman himself, Torquil Arbuthnot. His subject was *Sundry Musings on the James Bond Novels* and the thrust was to establish what sort of person Fleming presented in the books, as opposed to the movies. The

“real” Bond was more human than the *ubermensch* of the silver screen—he drank and smoked too much and disliked foreigners. He didn’t jump in and out of bed with women, but tended to have just one affair per book, and

went to pieces when his short-lived wife was killed by Blofeld.

Bond had a strange obsession with brands—cars, clothing, etc.—though this may just have been Fleming’s writing style, where nothing is ever generic. A car is a specific car, a warship is a specific class with a specific arrangement of guns. And famously in *Casino Royale* he doesn’t just order a cocktail, he gives the barman the precise recipe (for a cocktail he later names the Vesper).

Many thanks to our Chairman for his observations. An essay version of this talk begins on page 4.





(Clockwise from above) Torquil with Blofeld (as played by Donald Pleasance); Scarheart opens proceedings; Torquil with a montage of book covers; Von Grigory and chum; Tim Eyre lights up the room with his pocket square; Lucky Henry does Blue Steel (grab the 2020 calendar now); the assembled company try to recreate the Bond movie opening credits animation; Mike Reynolds (l) and Francis Giordanella are just delighted to be dapper



More photos on Flickr at <https://bit.ly/2YanJkB>

SUNDRY MUSINGS ON THE JAMES BOND NOVELS

By Torquil
Arbuthnot

007

WHO IS JAMES BOND?

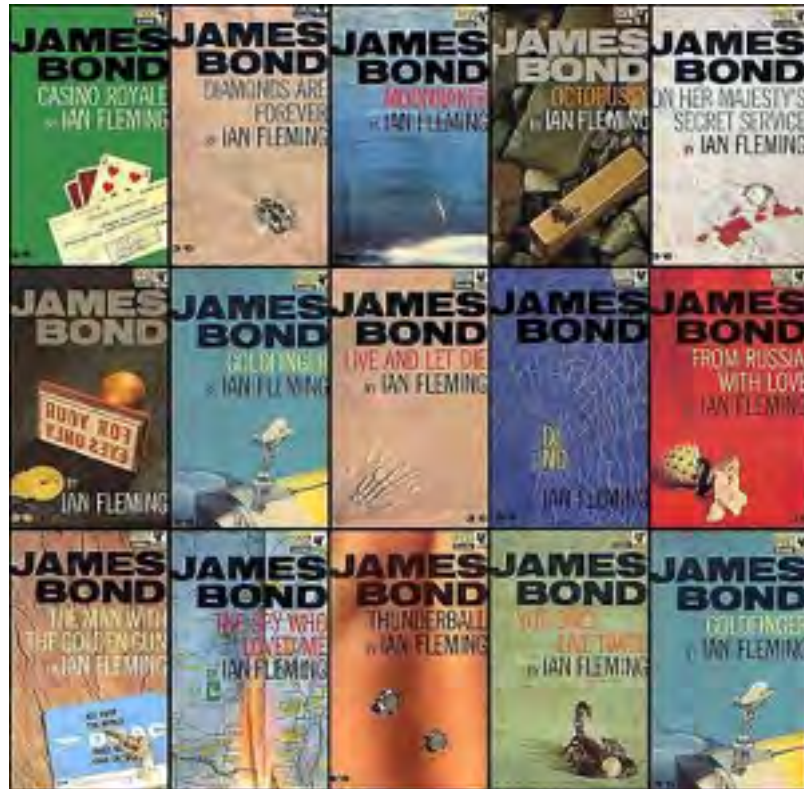
The first thing to say is that he is not the Bond of the James Bond films.

The James Bond of Ian Fleming's books is not a superman—he exercises, he takes cold showers, he practices his shooting, and he goes into training before a mission. Although he is the best shot in the Secret Service, he is not better than his instructor.

Bond's success as a fantasy figure depends in the first place on those attributes of his which are, so to speak, compulsory in his line of business: ability to stand pain, physical stamina, resourcefulness, bravery. But Fleming shows him as human: for instance, he has moments of non-bravery, such as twice when he's flying he has the non-rational fear that the aeroplane will crash.

Bond smokes, as one literary critic said, "enough to turn a regimental sergeant-major's cap-badge black." This at a time in the late 1950s and early 1960s when medical information about the perils of smoking was

being heavily publicised. Not only does he have his cigarettes made for him by Morlands of Grosvenor Street but they are of a Balkan and Turkish mixture with a



higher nicotine content than ordinary ciggies. And his average consumption is sixty a day.

There's a full medical report on Bond given at the start of *Thunderball*. His alcohol consumption is about a half-bottle of spirits (probably vodka) a day and he suffers from occasional headaches and spasms in the trapezius muscles. The amount promotes self-identification. We too could manage a half-bottle of Lidl own-brand vodka a day and manage occasional headaches and muscle spasms.

As to Bond's appearance, Fleming describes him as looking like Hoagy Carmichael. Ian



Fleming commissioned an image of Bond to help the *Daily Express* when they did a cartoon strip of *Live and Let Die*. The illustrator John McLusky actually considered Fleming's version too "outdated" and "pre-war" and changed Bond to give him a more masculine look. Fleming wanted Cary Grant or Richard Burton or David Niven to play Bond in the films.

Here are some telling descriptions of Bond that Ian Fleming drops into the novels: "...his features relapsed into a taciturn mask, ironical, brutal and cold."

In *From Russia With Love* Russian spies from SMERSH consider various photos of Bond: "It showed a dark young man sitting at a table outside a sunlit cafe. There was a tall glass beside him on the table and a soda-water siphon. The right forearm rested on the table and there was a cigarette between the fingers of the right hand that hung negligently down from the edge of the table... It was a dark, clean-cut face, with a three-inch scar showing whitely down the sunburned skin of the right cheek. The eyes were wide and level under straight, rather long black brows. The hair was black, parted on the left, and carelessly brushed so that a thick black comma fell down over the right eyebrow. The longish straight nose ran down to a short upper lip below which was a wide and finely drawn but cruel mouth. The line of the jaw was straight and firm... General G. held the photograph out at arm's length. Decision, authority, ruthlessness these qualities he could see."

And here's Bond playing baccarat in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*: "The table was becoming wary of this dark Englishman who played so quietly, wary of the half-smile of certitude on his rather



How Fleming saw Bond (left) and how the comic strip artist in the *Daily Express* chose to depict him instead

cruel mouth. Who was he? Where did he come from? What did he do?"

Well, he's the Byronic hero. He started life in the early 1800s as Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, he's Heathcliff in *Wuthering Heights*, Mr Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*, and Maxim de Winter in *Rebecca*. The Byronic hero is melancholy, lonely, a strapping physical specimen, has a fine but often ravaged countenance, he's dark and brooding in expression, has a cold and cynical veneer, and he is above all enigmatic, in possession of a sinister secret.

In *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* Bond's wife, Tracy, is murdered when they're en route to their honeymoon and he goes to pieces. In *You Only Live Twice* he actually cracks up. He's drinking heavily, hardly eating, sleeping badly, he's described as sitting on a park bench sweating profusely. He's also acquired another important item in his Byronic persona—a secret sorrow over a woman.

Bond is an Old Etonian but is sacked for having a



Bond's alma mater,
Fettes College



dalliance with a maid. He ends up at Fettes College, the so-called Eton of the North. He's non-aristocratic but can pass himself off as a Scottish baronet in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*. He fits in among the nobs when he goes to Blades Club. A natural aristocrat. Bond's relationship with the boatman Quarrel in *Dr No* is described as "that of a Scots laird with his head stalker; authority was unspoken and there was no room for servility."

He doesn't mingle with the herd. He's mildly snobbish about the masses. His view of foreigners is similar: Turks are furtive, stunted little men, Switzerland is a nation of secret alcoholics, Americans are immature, Koreans

are "rather lower than apes in the mammalian hierarchy", etc.

And, lastly, Bond is attractive to women, which really annoyed some critics of the novels. But, if one thinks about it, Bond usually is only involved with one woman per adventure. This isn't unusual if you consider what any reasonably well-off, personable, handsome male would acquire on a foreign holiday or on a trip abroad for his employer.

And he doesn't always get the girl. In *Casino Royale* he's set to marry Vesper Lynd but she commits suicide because she's actually a Russian agent. In *Moonraker* he thinks he's going to ride off into the sunset with Gala Brand. Nope; she tells him she's

engaged to another policeman. In *Diamonds Are Forever* he goes as far as moving Tiffany Case into his flat in Chelsea, but by the next novel we're told she found Bond impossible to live with and has returned to the USA to marry an American military man.

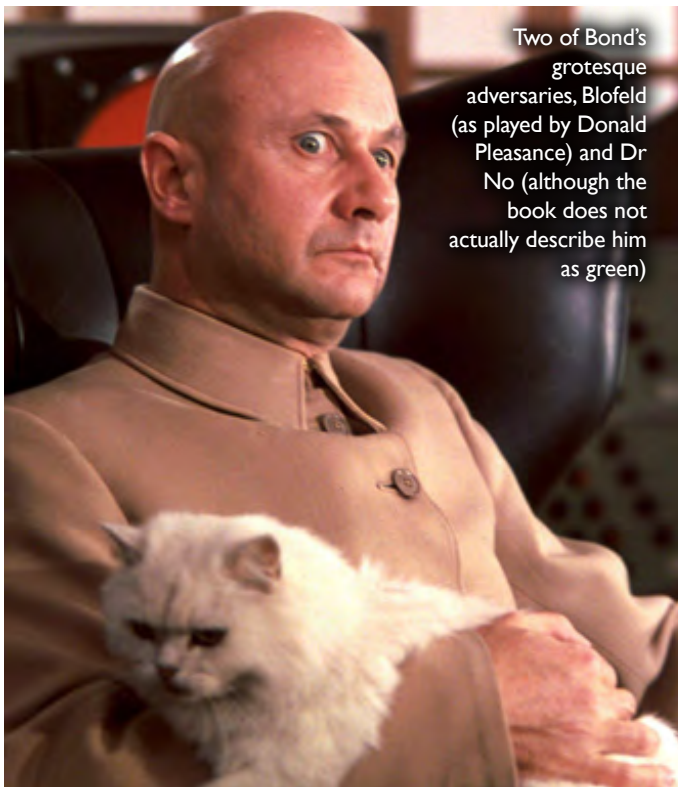
Bond Villains

All are physically grotesque. Even the villains with walk-on parts are pretty horrible. In *Goldfinger*, for instance, a gangster, Billy Ring, is described thus:

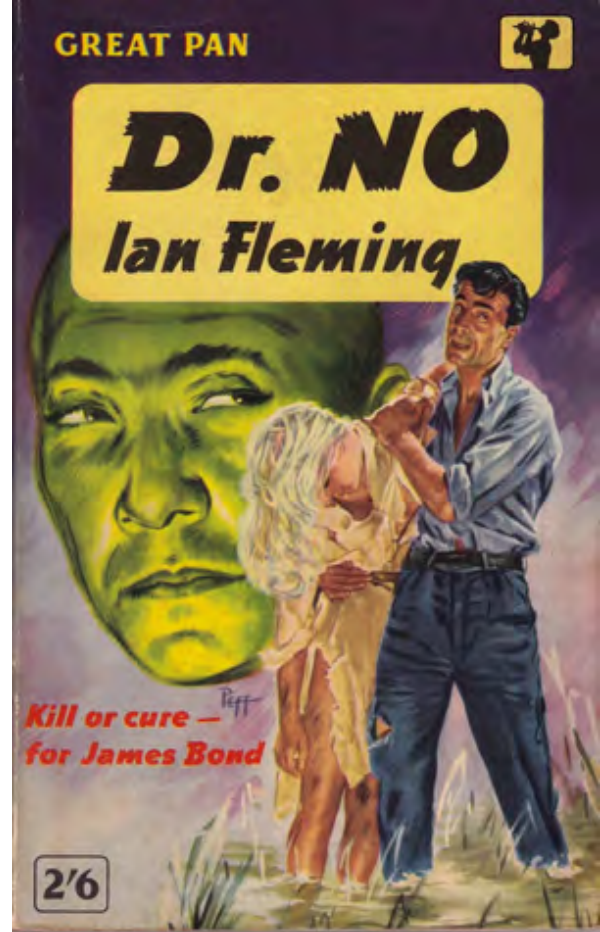
It was a face out of a nightmare and, as the face turned towards Bond, it knew it was, and watched Bond for

Two of the services that Bond has lost out to in matters romantic, the police and the US military





Two of Bond's grotesque adversaries, Blofeld (as played by Donald Pleasance) and Dr No (although the book does not actually describe him as green)



his reactions. It was a pale, pear-shaped, baby face with downy skin and a soft thatch of straw-coloured hair, but the eyes, which should have been pale blue, were a tawny brown. The whites showed all round the pupils and gave a mesmeric quality to the hard thoughtful stare, unsoftened by a tic in the right eyelid which made the right eye wink with the heart-beat. At some early stage in Mr Ring's career someone had cut off Mr Ring's lower lip perhaps he had talked too much and this had given him a permanent false smile like the grin of a Hallowe'en pumpkin.

Bond villains do have one thing in common: whatever the colour of their eyes they have a glint or flash of red in them.

Fleming isn't terribly consistent with his most well-known villain, Ernst Stavro Blofeld; for example, he is described as completely sexless in *Thunderball* but by *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* two years later he's sporting a syphilitic nose.

Although what superficially drives the villains is often simple—a lunatic hatred of England (Hugo Drax); or a simple desire to have 5 billion dollars in gold bullion (Auric Goldfinger)—what actually drives them is power. As the titular villain in *Dr No* explains:

Doctor No said, in the same soft resonant voice, "You are right, Mister Bond. That is just what I am, a maniac. All the greatest men are maniacs. They are possessed by a mania which drives them forward towards their goal.

The great scientists, the philosophers, the religious leaders all maniacs. What else but a blind singleness of purpose could have given focus to their genius, would have kept them in the groove of their purpose? Mania, my dear Mister Bond, is as priceless as genius. Dissipation of energy, fragmentation of vision, loss of momentum, the lack of follow-through, these are the vices of the herd." Doctor No sat slightly back in his chair. "I do not possess these vices. I am, as you correctly say, a maniac, a maniac, Mister Bond, with a mania for power. That"—the black holes glittered blankly at Bond through the contact lenses—"is the meaning of my life. That is why I am here. That is why you are here. That is why here exists."

So, what happens when Bond meets the head villain? The villain is a physically formidable man or woman, who's angry with you for something you've done, and gives you a good talking to. It's like going to see the headmaster or being carpeted by the managing director. In *Casino Royale* Le Chiffre says:

"My dear boy," Le Chiffre spoke like a father, "the game of Red Indians is over, quite over. You have stumbled by mischance into a game for grown-ups and you have already found it a painful experience. You are not equipped, my dear boy, to play games with adults and it was very foolish of your nanny in London to have sent you out here with your spade and bucket. Very foolish indeed and most unfortunate for you."



Usually the villain tells Bond, after his talk, that shooting's too good for him so has some weird manner of killing him (dragging him behind a speedboat over coral reefs in *Live and Let Die*, or making him go through an obstacle course with a giant squid in *Dr.No*). The villain also says he'd love to stick around and watch Bond in agony but unfortunately he's got some urgent evil genius business to be getting on with elsewhere.

One could argue that Bond's boss, the Head of the Secret Service, is also a part-villain. M's moral compass is certainly on the wobble sometimes. For instance, in *Moonraker* he enlists Bond to have a shufti at someone in his club who may be cheating at cards, and in the short story *For Your Eyes Only* he asks Bond if he wouldn't mind doing a job "off the books", as it were, killing some hoodlums who've killed some friends of his.

Snobbery and Status

There are an awful lot of objects and brand names in the James Bond books. Bond is such a fussy consumer that you get the impression that every minute not spent saving the world must have been devoted to studying catalogues and brochures. But the naming of objects and brands has a purpose. In *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*, for instance, Tracy drives a Lancia Flaminga Zagato Spyder



and not a Morris Minor. In the same book you have a Bombard rescue craft with a Thompson outboard motor, and this not only gives the reader a visual image but also provides a touch of banal reality. In *Thunderball* Giuseppe Petacchi hijacks a NATO bomber to steal an atomic bomb. We're told he intends to use part of his fee to buy a Ghia-bodied 3500 Maserati as seen at the Milan motor show. Rather than a souped-up Fiat 600.

Bond enjoys his food but is happy to have two ham sandwiches with stacks of mustard washed down with half of pint of Harper's bourbon on the rocks.

He gets a bit silly about bathroom stuff, for instance describing Pinaud Elixir as "that prince among shampoos" and sounding like a particularly inept advertising copywriter.

In *Moonraker* you get this cringeworthy description of Blades:



It was a sparkling scene. There were perhaps fifty men in the room, the majority in dinner jackets, all at ease with themselves and their surroundings, all stimulated by the peerless food and drink, all animated by a common interest—the prospect of high gambling, the grand slam, the ace pot, the key-throw in a 64 game at backgammon. There might be cheats or possible cheats amongst them, men who beat their wives, men with perverse instincts, greedy men, cowardly men, lying men; but the elegance of the room invested each one with a kind of aristocracy.

Imaginative Use of Information

The fantastic elements of the novels and storyline are bolted down to some sort of reality. As Kingsley Amis in his excellent book *The James Bond Dossier* says, “a gunboat in a well-written boys’ book can’t just be a gunboat, it must be of the Zulu class with five 4.7s arranged in two pairs for’ard and aft and a single one amidships. So that the gunboat can be fully there.” Fleming relies on a casually omniscient manner to convince us that what he’s saying, about things we’re not expert on, are true. Or at least believable.

For instance, if there were an international criminal cartel like SPECTRE they might use someone like Petacchi to steal a nuclear weapon. We suspend our disbelief because we get his earlier history in credible detail—his surrender to the Allies in the Second World War, not just with his plane but with his Focke-Wulf 200, one of the few of its type in the Italian air force, and

its load of the latest German pressure mines with the new Hexogen explosive (again, not just a new type of mine).

In the same novel we are told, “The motor yacht, *Disco Volante*, was a hydrofoil craft, built for Largo with SPECTRE funds by the Italian constructors, Leopoldo Rodrigues of Messina, the only firm in the world to have successfully adapted the Shertel-Sachsenberg system to commercial use.” Shertel-Sachsenberg is certainly an impressive brand name but, as Amis pointed out, no reader would ever know whether its system made the boat go faster, froze the ice for the cocktails or worked the flush lavatories on board.

Bond’s Guns

A firearms expert called Geoffrey Boothroyd corresponded with Ian Fleming about Bond’s choice of guns. He was politely disparaging about Fleming’s choice of guns in the novels. He famously described Bond’s beloved Beretta .25 as “a ladies’ gun”. Fleming later made the armourer in the Bond novels a Major Boothroyd.

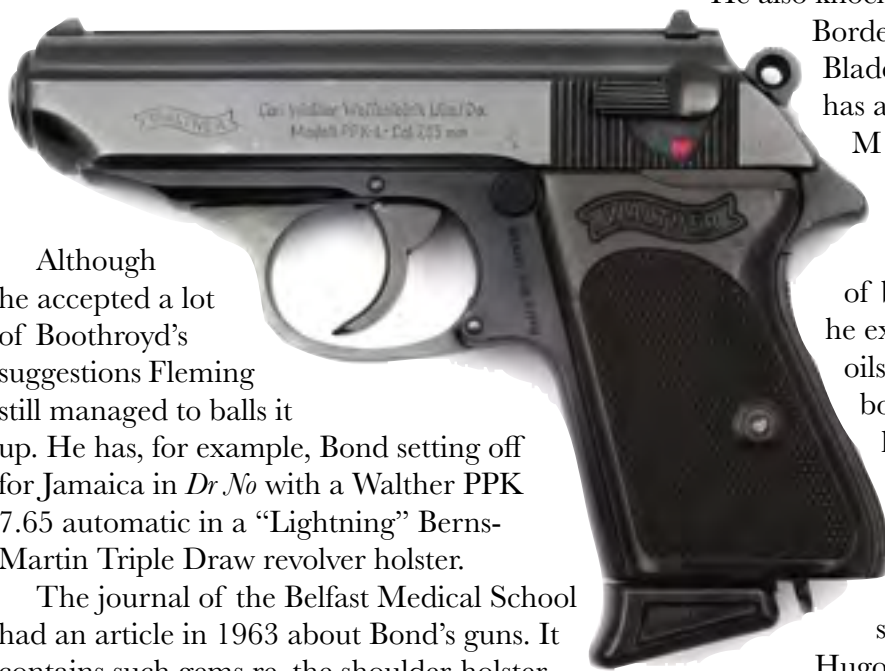
“Bond’s chamois leather pouch will be ideal for carrying a gun, but God help him if he has to get it out in a hurry,” Boothroyd wrote to Fleming. “The soft leather will snag and foul on the projecting parts of the gun and he will still be struggling to get the gun out when the other fellow is counting the holes in Bond’s tummy.”



Focke-Wulf 200



Beretta 418 .25 and
(below) Walther PPK



Although he accepted a lot of Boothroyd's suggestions Fleming still managed to balls it up. He has, for example, Bond setting off for Jamaica in *Dr No* with a Walther PPK 7.65 automatic in a "Lightning" Berns-Martin Triple Draw revolver holster.

The journal of the Belfast Medical School had an article in 1963 about Bond's guns. It contains such gems re. the shoulder-holster as, "Below his left armpit is where the up-to-date Secret Agent keeps his deodorant, not his gun." It also says of Fleming's assertion that Bond could never better "the magic second" in a quick draw, FBI agents are required to achieve a draw of no more than a quarter of a second.

I'd like to end with the opening set-piece from *Moonraker*. To set the scene, M calls Bond into his office and, in a roundabout way, asks Bond to help him out on a personal matter. M belongs to a gentleman's club called Blades that specialises in high-stakes gambling. One of its members is Sir Hugo Drax, a mysterious self-made millionaire who generously funded, out of his own pocket, an independent nuclear deterrent for the UK. Obviously, the Queen was so impressed she gave him a knighthood

and the green light to build his guided missile. After much puffing on his pipe M reveals that, "Sir Hugo Drax cheats at cards." It turns out his winning streak at bridge is suspect.

"I've agreed to help and," he looked levelly at Bond, "that's where you come in. You're the best card-player in the Service, or," he smiled ironically, "you should be after the casino jobs you've been on, and I remembered that we'd spent quite a lot of money putting you through a course in card-sharpping before you went after those Roumanians in Monte Carlo before the war."

Before he turns up at Blades Bond practises at home some sleight of hand with playing cards.

He also knocks back a half-carafe of white Bordeaux. When he meets M at Blades they play picquet and Bond has a vodka martini. Over dinner M and Bond split a bottle of vodka with their caviar (pre-war Wolfschmidt from Riga). Bond sprinkles some grains of black pepper in his vodka as he explains it helps take the fusel oils (whatever they are) to the bottom of the glass. Then Bond has a bottle of Champagne to himself with his lamb cutlets. A Dom Perignon '46. Then he has a couple of double brandies with his coffee. He sits down to play bridge with Hugo Drax, Drax's partner, and Bond has M at his partner.

Just before they sit down to play Bond says to M and the Chairman of Blades, "I shall need this if I'm going to keep my wits about me tonight." Bond then orders another bottle of Champagne. And just to make sure he's completely wanked he tips an envelope full of Bensedrine (amphetamines) into his Champagne. This is on top of the half-carafe of Bordeaux, the vodka Martini, the half bottle of neat vodka, the two bottles of Champagne, and the double brandies.

Needless to say Bond discovers how Drax is cheating. He's using a "shiner" when he deals. His shiner is a highly-polished cigarette case in front of him. As he deals the cards he glimpses them in the mirror-like surface of the cigarette case. Bond cheats the cheater by introducing

a rigged deck of cards when it's his deal. He then deals Drax what seems to be an impossibly good hand but is actually a trap. Apparently if you're a bridge player, which I'm not, it is rather an obvious trap. Bond bids seven Clubs and wins the game after racking up the stakes.

Conclusion

For those of you who have not read any of the James Bond novels, I encourage you to do so, as you're in for a treat. Just to give you a taster, here's the opening lines from *Goldfinger*:

James Bond, with two double bourbons inside him, sat in the final departure lounge of Miami Airport and thought about life and death.

It was part of his profession to kill people. He had never liked doing it and when he had to kill he did it as well as he knew how and forgot about it. As a secret agent who held the rare double-O prefix—the licence to kill in the Secret Service—it was his duty to be as cool about death as a surgeon. If it happened, it happened. Regret was unprofessional—worse, it was death-watch beetle in the soul.

And from *Casino Royale*:

The scent and smoke and sweat of a casino are nauseating at three in the morning. Then the soul-erosion produced by high gambling, a compost of greed and fear and nervous tension, becomes unbearable and the senses awake and revolt from it.



This page: everything that Bond drinks on the night he needs to "keep his wits about him" to beat Drax at cards



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.



Baron von Grigory

Name or preferred name?

Baron Von Grigory.

Where do you hail from?

Londinium.

Favourite cocktail?

Vesper Martini. [3 measures gin, 1 measure vodka,

1/2 measure Kina Lillet, lemon peel —Ed]

Most Chappist skill?

Smoking one's pipe.

Most Chappist possession?

My vintage Volkswagen.

Personal Motto?

Fear naught.

Favourite Quotes?

"It is during our darkest moment that we must focus to see the light." —Aristotle

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

I have a bunker! (Specifically it's a coal bunker, which I still use in the 21st century.)





That vintage VW beetle

How long have you been involved with the NSC?

Twelve years.

How did you hear about the Club to begin with?

From a young Lady called Michelle at The Blue Posts Pub, Newman Street, back in 2007.

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

The Chap Magazine. It's a Jolly good read

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

Stalin, Adolf Hitler and Sir Winston Churchill. It would be a right old ding-dong filled with cigar and pipe smoke, although Mr H. was a non-smoker apparently.

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?

At some point I will deliver a talk on *The History of the Tank.*

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.



Proof that he still burns coal (and wood) in the 21st century



Chewing the fat with the Earl of Essex at a NSC Club Night



Winning another prize at our WWI-themed party in 2013



Our first port of call, the Argyll Arms, an orgy of etched glass, carved wood and Art Nouveau moulded wallpaper. And, in case you had any doubts about the high cultural tone of the establishment, a bust of the Bard.



Home, Sweet Home

Ian White reports on his annual NSC pub crawl, which this year took in some opulently comfortable establishments around Oxford Circus and Holborn

*T*HIS YEAR'S CRAWL, on Saturday 9th November, took in some excellent Soho drinking dens, focusing as usual for these jaunts on fine historical premises.

The first public house was the **Argyll Arms** on Argyll Street, a busy pub right next to Oxford Circus tube station. To be sure of fitting everything in we made an earlyish start at 3pm, and eager drinkers from the Club were already in situ when I arrived. It's a great Victorian pub, ornately decorated and divided into a number of snugs. We retired to the back room.

A quick walk in the rain, down Carnaby street and snaking through back lanes, brought us to the **Duke of Argyll** on Brewer Street. This was the first pub of several that we would visit that the day run by the Sam Smiths brewery; this somewhat eccentric family-run chain offers keenly-priced beer and, in an attempt to foster convivial face-to-face interaction, they have no music and an official ban on both mobile phones and swearing. We retired to the carpeted upstairs dining salon where a couple of vacant tables allowed the creation of the traditional NSC tower of hats.



The Man with the Plan, Mr Ian White



Second stop, the Duke of Argyll



(Above) The main bar of the Duke of Argyle. Much of the space is screened into individual snugs, each accessing their own section of the bar; a characteristic of such “gin palace” pubs; (left) the traditional NSC Hat Stack; (below) more evidence of cultural loftiness.



Leaving the pub we spotted an irresistible photo opportunity outside one of the traditional quality Soho retail establishments that make the area so vibrantly characterful (see opposite).

The photo taken, we hurried on to the **Dog and Duck** on Bateman Street, where more drinkers joined our party. Those who managed to squeeze inside these tiny premises were treated to elaborate tilework including mosaics depicting dogs and ducks.

After a quick snifter we were off to the **Montagu Pyke** on Charing Cross Road. This building was formerly the Cambridge Circus Cinematograph Theatre (proprietor Mr Montagu Pyke) and later the last site of the famous Marquee Club: the walls are adorned

with musical instruments and posters in honour of this part of its history. Today the place is a large and lively Wetherspoon’s pub, the interior modern and quite different from the other pubs we had visited, but the stop was scheduled to relax and get some food courtesy of Mr Wetherspoon’s reasonably price dining menu.

Our stomachs lined, we





When in Rome...



The lush tilework of the Dog and Duck makes a rich backdrop for those who managed to squeeze inside (right)

proceeded to the **Angel** on St Giles High Street, another Sam Smiths establishment, multi-roomed and with an attractive tiled passageway at the side that was originally an entrance for carriages into a courtyard at the back.

Saving perhaps the best till last, our final port of call was the magnificent **Princess Louise** on High Holborn. It is again run by Sam Smiths, who have splendidly preserved and restored the interior, treating us to some of the finest examples of the Victorian art of public house decor. Members of the club retired to various snugs to enjoy beverages, until it was time to depart home.





(Above) The horror of the Montagu Pyke—the least said the better; (left) the Old World elegance of the Angel, within which was found (below) Old World conviviality



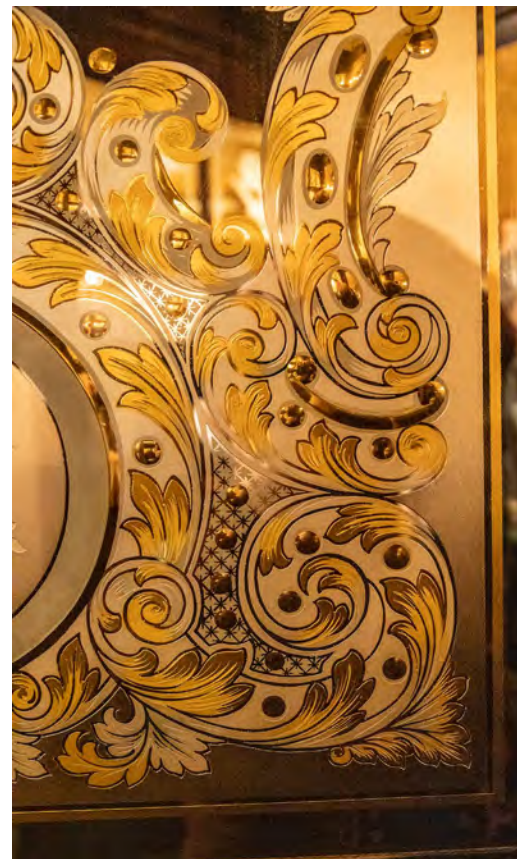


We pause for a slightly less tawdry group photo at the Angel

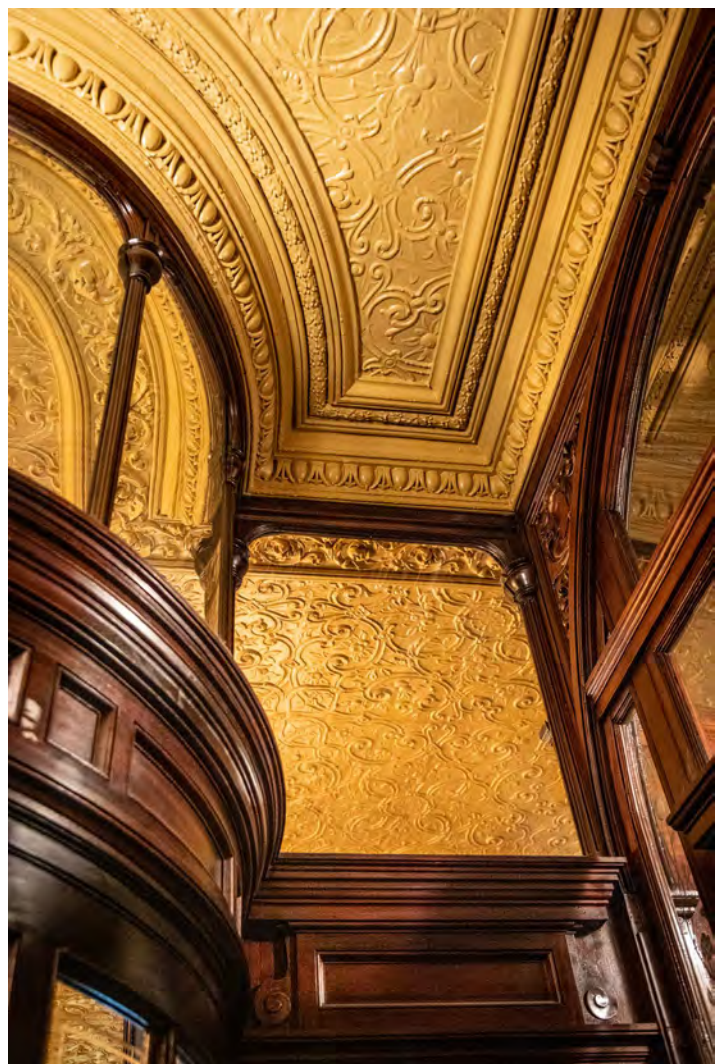


(Above) Gratuitous architectural porn showing the tiles in the alley outside the Angel (yes, the Austrian spy in the trenchcoat is still there), before off to the Princess Louise (right), whose sybaritic treasures begin on the exterior facade (below)





More delights from the interior of the Princess Louise. The wood and glass partitions were removed at some point to make it more open-plan, so the ones you see here are part of the restoration of about ten years ago, but I assume the ceiling mouldings and the wall tiles are original





After a bit of a hunt we did find stained glass windows representing some of the other Arts, but the one for Painting (top left) was the only one that was currently lit from behind (it was night-time by then)



I want to be evil



Saturday 7th December

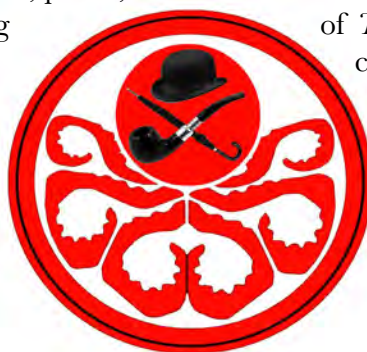
6–11pm

The Spy Bar, the Morpeth Arms, 58 Millbank, London SW1P 4RW

Dress: your favourite villain

Admission: free to NSC Members, £5 to guests (refundable if they join the club on the night)

The New Sheridan Club's annual Christmas party this Saturday has a whiff of villainy about it: our venue looks out across the Thames at the MI6 building and has a James Bond theme, so we're inviting you to come as your favourite Bad Guy. It doesn't have to be a Bond villain by any means: there is a vast vista of amorality to choose from, such as Al Capone, Vlad the Impaler, Fu Manchu, the Borgias, Caligula, Noel Edmonds, Nero, Commodus, Robespierre, the Krays, a Member of the Glorious Committee, Darth Vader, Mata Hari, Madame Defarge, wicked stepmother, pirate, femme fatale, black widow, "roaring girl", Bill Sykes, Jack the Ripper, cad or bounder, butler (as in "the butler did it"), Jesse James, Baron Samedi, Sheriff of Nottingham, Harold Shipman, Dick Dastardly, secret policeman, wicked squire...



There will be silly games to play, seen from the perspective of the villain rather than the hero, such as a race to steal the Crown Jewels, a competition to design your perfect villain's super-lair and a game to shoot those pesky ninjas who always invade your super-lair at the end of the movie (shortly before the whole place blows up).

There will be the usual Christmas Lucky Dip (or maybe an Unlucky Dip with nothing but live piranhas—we haven't decided yet) and of course there will be our traditional Grand Raffle, entry to which is free, but only to Members of the NSC (including anyone who joins on the night). Prizes include a henchman outfit (boiler suit, hard hat painted silver, etc), a world-shattering laser doomsday weapon, a black hat, an attaché case of money, biographies of the Devil, Al Capone and George Sanders, the collected writings of Aleister Crowley, the animated oeuvre of Dastardly and Muttley, a DVD of *The Krays*, a box of Black Magic chocolates, some Charles Addams cartoons, a ring with a secret compartment for poison, a statue of Baphomet, a bottle of WKD, the complete Fu Manchu stories and more...

NSC Annual Christmas Moot

Friday 20th 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. (This year we will be hampered by the fact that, according to Facebook, Mendrick

himself can't make it to the event, so an air of existential angst will doubtless hang over the proceedings.) This is, moreover, 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.



Top Hat in White Tie

Monday 30th December

6.20–8pm
BFI Southbank, Belvedere Road,
London SE1 8XT
Admission: Free

The BFI's publicity person is offering complimentary tickets to see *Top Hat* (1935) at the BFI Southbank on Monday 30th December—in return we make a spectacle of ourselves by turning up in full top hat and tails, or female equivalent. (I appreciate not everyone has full white tie—I'm sure that other period inspiration from the film can be taken. And obviously gentlemen would remove their top hats during the actual screening.) The showing is at 6.20pm, so we could arrange to go somewhere appropriate afterwards. I'm not sure how many comps I am allowed, so please email mrhartley@newsheridanclub.co.uk if you definitely want to attend. Comments would be appreciated indicating if you fancy going on afterwards and, if so, whether you fancy a meal out or just drinks. Unless someone has a brilliant idea for the perfect place, I'd probably be looking for somewhere near to the BFI.

Here are some of the films in the season: <https://www.bfimusicals.co.uk/films>. You can also get 2-for-1 on tickets to everything in the season (except *Tommy* and *Singing in the Rain*) using the code SHOW241.



CLUB NOTES

Club Tie Corner

A HEALTHY DOSE of actual ties among our Tie Spots this month, beginning with the majestic Jimmy Stewart on the right, who, I'm sure we'd all agree, is definitely Club material (spot by Actuarius). This page, clockwise from there, we have, on the right, this veteran of the Glorious Committee's personal bodyguard, observed by Ivan Debono; a real NSC tie proudly sported by David "Affability" Hollander, while swigging cocktails in Shinjuku, Tokyo; Mrs Merkel clearly suspects Mike Pompeo has no right to wear that tie (Debono again). Opposite page, clockwise from top left: Col. Cyrus Choke sends us "one of the club's 17th-century members from Amsterdam, Molly 'Vreugde Maken' Stuup"; Birgit Gebhardt observes that Rubens's 1618 portrait of Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian shows that "the 'tie around your head' style of Wodehouse's Drones Club clearly has some ancestry"; if you can tear your eyes away from James Rigby's complete lack of a tie you may appreciate his new scarf—£1.99 from a charity shop; Actuarius notes that even in black and white, George Sanders clearly sports a Club Tie in *The Whole Truth*; Frances Mitchell finds herself with two genuine Club Members in Paris.



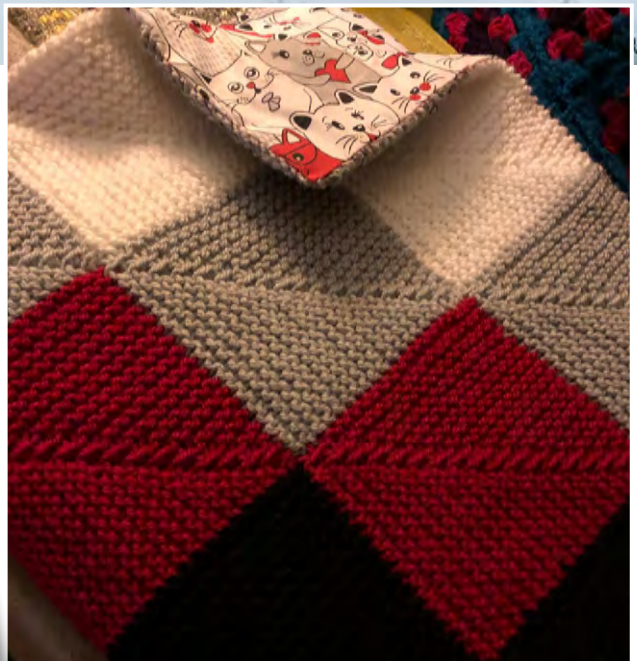


This page, clockwise from right: Benjamin Negroto notes that the French perfumer Fragonard clearly had the club in mind with its Christmas edition; a still from TV's *Miss Marple* adaptation (sent in by Stephen Myhill but spotted by others too); Frances Mitchell discovered these Club socks “for women and girls” from the 1940s; Mr Myhill spotted this new candidate for Club dressing gown while window shopping in Paris. Opposite page, clockwise from the top: Debono gets a bit carried away as he describes “the vast crowd, harmoniously and industriously united in single purpose, skilfully displaying our victorious colours, joyfully greets the arrival of the Glorious Committee For Life, expressing its undying gratitude and eternal loyalty to the Chairman”; Mr Myhill describes this as “the handiwork of the fragrant Mrs Myhill”, though whether it is a spontaneous artistic expression or whether Mrs Myhill has been forced into manufacturing for the nurseries of the Club’s lighthearted “Clone Army” project is unclear; James Rigby, with what he waggishly calls a “Club tier” spot (and I trust we will make a strong showing at the school’s evening of comedy vignettes—that’ll scare the bejesus out of them); Club boho jewellery (do we need that? If so, here it is) from Mrs H.; vintage Club custard advertising from Torquil.





Reuters/KCNA



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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 4th 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.

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.

Sunday Afternoon Swing with the Prospective Collective

Every Sunday

3.30–10pm, live music 4–6pm
Jamboree, 566 Cable Street, London E1W 3HB
Admission: Free on the door with a donation in
the hat, or free online advance booking at www.jamboreevenue.co.uk

Sunday Afternoon Swing is back at Jamboree
with The Prospective Collective, a band of
London-based jazz musicians who perform a
repertoire of classics.

An English Lady's Wardrobe

Until Sunday 1st March 2020
10am–5pm
Walker Art Gallery, William Brown Street,
Liverpool L3 8EL (0151 478 4199)
Admission: £9 from liverpoolmuseums.org.uk
Displaying more than 70 outfits, this new
exhibition explores shopping and style in
Liverpool during the interwar years. It offers
new insight into Liverpool's wealthy Tinne
family, showcasing clothing and accessories
purchased by Mrs Emily Margaret Tinne
(1886–1966). See last month's *Resign!* for more
details.

Shepherd Market Christmas Lights Ceremony

Thursday 5th December
6pm
Shepherd Market, Mayfair, London W1J 7PN
Admission: Free

The picturesque Mayfair “village” of
Shepherd Market is having its annual Christmas
party, with mulled wine, mince pies, live music
and the big unveiling of its Christmas lights.
Last year they were turned on by Dame Joan
Collins—this year the special guest is none
other than the Club's own Manthe Penton
Harrap (whom you may have seen being a
character on the TV series about Mayfair types,
with her parrot Sebastian). See <http://www.shepherdmarket.co.uk/news>.

Midnight Apothecary Christmas Parties

5th, 12th, 13th and 19th December
6–10.30pm
Brunel Museum, Railway Avenue, London
SE16 4LF
Admission: £15 for entry; £40 for entry with
street food and two cocktails; £375 group ticket
for ten people

Your friend and mine Tom Carradine will



Let Tom Carradine lead you down the rabbit hole, musically speaking

be leading a series of festive sing-a-longs at the bottom of the entrance shaft to Brunel's Victorian Thames tunnel at these events. Alongside the usual Yuletide fare there will also be wonderful cocktails, curated by Lottie Muir the "Cocktail Gardener", street food available and the opportunity to warm up around the campfire on the roof terrace (hot toddies and toasting marshmallows available). "Apparently," he says, "there's also a pre-show audio visual installation where a giant projection of Brunel introduces me to the stage!" See Design My Night.

Soane Lates: Hogarth After Hours

Fridays 6th December or 3rd January
Timed slots from 6 till 9pm
The Soane Museum, 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields,
London WC2A 3BP
Admission: £25 from soane.org

Explore the exhibition *Hogarth: Place and Progress* after normal opening hours, accompanied with a Sipsmith gin and tonic. The exhibition unites all of Hogarth's surviving painted series for the first time. Displayed throughout the idiosyncratic spaces of Sir John Soane's Museum, the exhibition demonstrates how Hogarth's "Modern Moral Subjects"

married the idea of progress with the moral geography of London. This special evening opening is a chance to see this exhibition and explore the Museum—a chappist wonderland of statues, paintings and architectural curios crammed into a house too small to hold it all—dramatically lit by spotlights. Tickets are available for arrival at either 6pm, 6.30, 7pm, 7.30 or 8pm and each slot lasts around an hour, including a tour led by one of the expert members of staff and a Sipsmith gin and tonic.

🎄 NSC Christmas Party:

I Want to Be Evil

Saturday 7th December

6–11pm

The Spy Bar, the Morpeth Arms, 58 Millbank,
London SW1P 4RW

Dress: your favourite villain

Admission: free to NSC Members, £5 to guests
(refundable if they join the club on the night)

See page 22.

Mr B. The Gentleman Rhymer:

Dandinistmas Tour

Thursday 12th December

8–11pm

The Prince Albert, 48 Trafalgar Street, Brighton
BN1 4ED

Admission: £10 from Ticketweb

Mr B., the Godfather of Chap-Hop himself—who has performed at many a NSC party—makes a home-town appearance, featuring songs from his legendary Christmas Album as well as other "non-season-specific classics". Support from Black Cat and the Boy.

Eccentric Club Christmas Dinner and Annual Friday 13th Dinner

Friday 13th December

7.13–10.13pm

The Eccentric Club, 27 Old Gloucester Street,
Bloomsbury, London, WC1N 3AX, United
Kingdom

Admission: £65 for a three-course dinner, plus
wine, coffee and petit fours

Dress: Black Tie and eccentrically glamorous
and tasteful evening wear

The Eccentric Club—founded in the 1780s
and revived in 1890—has had various internal
ructions and has moved around from one base
to another without permanent premises of its

MR. B THE GENTLEMAN RHYMER DANDINISTMAS

PLUS SUPPORT FROM
**BLACK CAT
& THE BOY**

TOUR

Join Brighton's very own Chap-Hop Superstar (TM) for festive frolics featuring songs from his legendary Christmas Album & other non season-specific classics.



'Sublime Genius'
The Independent

'Too funny and dope'
Nile Rodgers, Chic

'Unfathomably popular'
Brighton Latest 7

'Controversial'
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THE PRINCE ALBERT
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8PM THURS
12TH DEC

own, but it continues still and counts a number of NSC members among its own (as well as Prince Philip as patron). It seems to be in a particular state of flux at the moment, yet the annual Friday 13th Dinner/Christmas Dinner is still taking place (though I'm damned if I can work out where—all part of the eccentricity, I guess). You can learn more about the club at ecclub.co.uk.

The Candlelight Club: Christmas by Candlelight

Friday 13th and Saturday 14th December
7pm–12am

A secret central London location

Admission: £25 in advance

Dress: Prohibition dandies, gangsters and molls, peaky blinders, decadent aesthetes, 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. Celebrating the season of goodwill by candlelight 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. There will be live music from those Scandi-funsters the Swing'It Dixieband, plus hosting from cabaret cove Champagne Charlie, vintage DJs the Bee's Knees and a lot of baubles and snowflakes. 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*

The Collar Bar Xmas Special

Saturday 14th December

8pm–1am

The Horse & Stables, 122–124 Westminster Bridge Rd, London SE1 7RW

Admission: £8 from Billetto.co.uk

The soul of Harlem and the heart of Texas in the centre of London! Truck on down to London's newest vintage dance night hosted by Mr Blue Ruin, A. Jay Wade and Anna M. and dance to the finest Swing, Western Swing, Jazz, Ragtime and more from the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s.

A Christmas Paper Moon

Sunday 15th December

5–9pm

The Paper Moon, Hargrave Hall, Hargrave Road, London N19 5SP

Admission: £15 in advance from www.hotjazzrag.com, £18 on the door

Swing/Balboa dance night Christmas special, though note that there is no dance class this time, to allow for the other goodies: live music from the Man Overboard Quartet, vintage '78s spun by DJs Kid Krupa and Geoff Amabalino, and a dance cabaret.

The Krampus and the Old Dark Christmas

Tuesday 17th December

7–8.30pm

The Last Tuesday Society, 11 Mare Street, London E8 4RP

Admission: £15 in advance

In case you missed Philip Hancock's talk on Krampus at our own NSC meeting, here's a chance to explore the authentic folklore, history and contemporary practices associated with the Krampus with Al Ridenour, pre-eminent English-language expert on the subject. Ridenour's presentation, illustrated with slides, archival video (and a drop-in by a live Krampus) reveals how this often-misunderstood figure is connected to centuries-old witchcraft beliefs and an older, darker understanding of the Christmas season as a time offering access to the spirit world.

NSC Annual Christmas Moot

Friday 20th December

From 6pm till closing time

The Rising Sun, 38 Cloth Fair, London EC1A

7JQ

Admission: Free but bring beer money

See page 23.

Christmas Leave

Thursday 26th and Friday 27th December

10am–4pm

The Watercress line, Alresford Station, Station

Road, New Alresford, Hampshire SO24 9JG

Admission: Adults £19, children £10, family (two adults, two children) £48

Join civilian and military re-enactors to experience the atmosphere of a 1940s Christmas on the railway. On both 26th and 27th December, the Watercress Line's period stations will host re-enactors and the general

public enjoying wartime music, steam and seasonal merriment. Your ticket will include all day travel on the railway, and you can hop on and off at three of the stations enjoying the 1940s entertainment on offer, with live music at Alresford and Medstead and an ARP display at Alresford in the Cattle Dock, plus the Reading Room at Alresford Goods Shed with wartime game. More at watercressline.co.uk.

Black Tie Ballroom Club

Saturday 29th December

7–11.30pm

Colliers Wood Community Centre, 66–72 High Street, Colliers Wood, London SW192BY

Admission: £15–35 from Design My Night

Dress: Strictly black tie, smart vintage and evening wear

Dance the waltz, quickstep, foxtrot, tango, jive, rumba and Charleston to live music and a selection of pre-war records. You are welcome just to watch, or there's a "Learn to dance in a day class" for absolute beginners with musicality, and rusty dancers, from 10am to 4.30pm. There is no need to bring a partner.

More details at www.designmynight.com/london/whats-on/something-a-little-different-events/black-tie-ballroom-club.

White Tie Jaunt to see *Top Hat*

Monday 30th December

6.20pm–8pm

BFI Southbank

Admission: Free

See page 23.



A. Jay Wade and his band are waiting to give you a whuppin' of Western Swing at the Collar Bar

Members amuse themselves by demonstrating just how much smaller my hat size is than anyone else's head. Even Richard D'Astardly gets in on the act, despite the fact that (a) no one is allowed to photograph him and (b) he is already wearing a hat

