

The New Sheridan Club

Newsletter

XVI

The Editor Writes:

HELLO AND SIT yourself down. Pour yourself a drink and peruse this latest NSC Newsletter. At this early point I would draw your attention to the fact that the NSC Newsletter has contributions from Members in it again this month—something we are always keen to have.

So if you are off on a jolly, have a tall story of your heroism or something interesting to say please write to Mr Scarheart to get your piece published. This is your Club so the more input we have from Members the better.

The Next Meeting

The next Meeting of the New Sheridan Club will take place on Wednesday 5th

FOR THE LATEST information on what the Club is up to and has done, have a gander at www.newsheridanclub.co.uk. For those of a more technological bent, you can also help spread the word by becoming a “friend” of the NSC in its “Myspace” incarnation at www.myspace.com/newsheridanclub There is also a “Facebook” page but how you get there I have no idea.

We dare not vouch for those who link to our “Myspace” and “Facebook” pages but most of them seem to be good eggs.

March, 8pm–11pm, upstairs at The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB. This month, Mr David Bridgman-Smith will, we hope, this time succeed in tantalising us with his musings on *The Martini—A Brief History with Some Fascinating Facts, a Martini Analogy and an Answer to That All-Important Question, To Stir Or To Shake?*

The February Meeting

In February, Mrs H. was telling us all about famed dandy James McNeill Whistler and his bizarre relationship with one of his patrons, Frederick Leyland. Frankly, Leyland emerges as admirably level-headed and indulgent of the preening Whistler—and just as well, in a way, as the end result was what is widely regarded as a masterpiece of interior decoration, the famed Peacock Room.

The fact that the end result was incredibly far from the original plan and yet remained so beautiful is a warning to all those who try to restrain tradesmen from following their artistic bent. So if your builder, plumber or house painter wants a little more time and a bit more money to finish the job let them –



The New Sheridan Club traditionally meets in the upstairs room of the Wheatsheaf pub 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 here and, legend has it, he was known to flash at women in here 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 here, as did Aleister Crowley, Wilfred Owen, Rupert Brooke and Katherine Mansfield.

you never know what a masterpiece you may get.

Of course this masterpiece now resides abroad but it does look most splendid and better that it lives on somewhere rather than be destroyed by philistines.



ESSAYS OF NOTE AND WORTH

The Eight Kinds of Drunkenesse

(From Pierce Penilesse, His Supplication to the Divell, by Thomas Nashe published 1592 and brought to our attention here by Mr Arbuthnot)

The first is Ape drunke, and he leapes, and sings, and hollowes, and daunceth for the heauens.

The second is Lion drunke, and he flings the pots about the house, calls his Hostesse whore, breakes the glasse windowes with his dagger, and is apt to quarrel with any man that speaks to him.

The third is Swine drunke, heauy, lumpish, and sleepe, and cries for a little more drinke, and a few more cloathes.

The fourth is Sheepe drunke, wise in his owne conceipt, when he cannot bring foorth a right word.

The fifth is Mawdlen drunke, when a fellowe will weepe for kindnes in the midst of his Ale, and kisse you, saying; by God Captaine I loue thee, goe thy waies thou dost not thinke so often of me as I do of thee, I would (if it pleased GOD) I could not loue thee so well as I doo, and then he puts his finger in his eie, and cries.

The sixt is Martin drunke, when a man is drunke and drinckes himselfe sober ere he stirre.

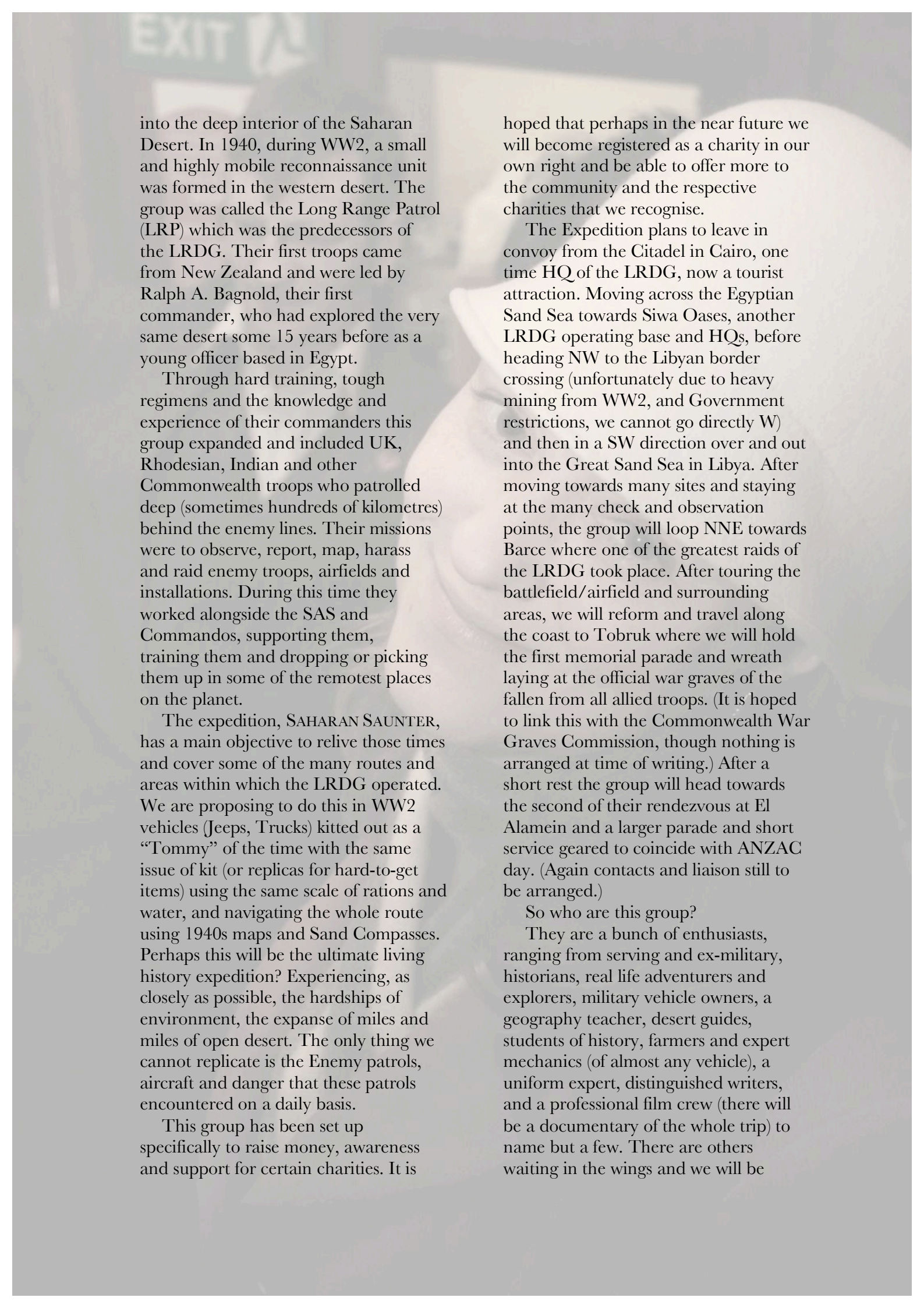
The seauenth is Goate drunke, when in his drunkennes he hath no minde but on Lechery.

The eighth is Foxe drunke, when he is craftie drunke, as many of the Dutch men bee.

Expedition SAHARAN SAUNTER 2009

By Major G.A.W.

Following in the footsteps (or wheel ruts) of the legendary Long Range Desert Group (LRDG) a group of military enthusiasts are forming up and attempting to mount an expedition



into the deep interior of the Saharan Desert. In 1940, during WW2, a small and highly mobile reconnaissance unit was formed in the western desert. The group was called the Long Range Patrol (LRP) which was the predecessors of the LRDG. Their first troops came from New Zealand and were led by Ralph A. Bagnold, their first commander, who had explored the very same desert some 15 years before as a young officer based in Egypt.

Through hard training, tough regimens and the knowledge and experience of their commanders this group expanded and included UK, Rhodesian, Indian and other Commonwealth troops who patrolled deep (sometimes hundreds of kilometres) behind the enemy lines. Their missions were to observe, report, map, harass and raid enemy troops, airfields and installations. During this time they worked alongside the SAS and Commandos, supporting them, training them and dropping or picking them up in some of the remotest places on the planet.

The expedition, SAHARAN SAUNTER, has a main objective to relive those times and cover some of the many routes and areas within which the LRDG operated. We are proposing to do this in WW2 vehicles (Jeeps, Trucks) kitted out as a "Tommy" of the time with the same issue of kit (or replicas for hard-to-get items) using the same scale of rations and water, and navigating the whole route using 1940s maps and Sand Compasses. Perhaps this will be the ultimate living history expedition? Experiencing, as closely as possible, the hardships of environment, the expanse of miles and miles of open desert. The only thing we cannot replicate is the Enemy patrols, aircraft and danger that these patrols encountered on a daily basis.

This group has been set up specifically to raise money, awareness and support for certain charities. It is

hoped that perhaps in the near future we will become registered as a charity in our own right and be able to offer more to the community and the respective charities that we recognise.

The Expedition plans to leave in convoy from the Citadel in Cairo, one time HQ of the LRDG, now a tourist attraction. Moving across the Egyptian Sand Sea towards Siwa Oases, another LRDG operating base and HQs, before heading NW to the Libyan border crossing (unfortunately due to heavy mining from WW2, and Government restrictions, we cannot go directly W) and then in a SW direction over and out into the Great Sand Sea in Libya. After moving towards many sites and staying at the many check and observation points, the group will loop NNE towards Barce where one of the greatest raids of the LRDG took place. After touring the battlefield/airfield and surrounding areas, we will reform and travel along the coast to Tobruk where we will hold the first memorial parade and wreath laying at the official war graves of the fallen from all allied troops. (It is hoped to link this with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, though nothing is arranged at time of writing.) After a short rest the group will head towards the second of their rendezvous at El Alamein and a larger parade and short service geared to coincide with ANZAC day. (Again contacts and liaison still to be arranged.)

So who are this group?

They are a bunch of enthusiasts, ranging from serving and ex-military, historians, real life adventurers and explorers, military vehicle owners, a geography teacher, desert guides, students of history, farmers and expert mechanics (of almost any vehicle), a uniform expert, distinguished writers, and a professional film crew (there will be a documentary of the whole trip) to name but a few. There are others waiting in the wings and we will be

looking at the full Orbat soon. All have an excellent range of skills. Their Biographical information will appear on the group website (www.wdr.org). The group is based in two main geographical areas, half a world apart: here in the UK and in New Zealand.

In keeping with the Regimental system we have named the group the WW2 Western Desert Recce Group (WDRG) to give some identity and recognition for these gallant men and women.

At present, there are approximately 20 people involved, with an even split between UK and NZ. We are hoping to attract other historians and vehicles from the US of A (again representative of the American involvement in the desert). There will be jeeps, light and heavy trucks as well as a modern support vehicle, to allow greater flexibility to the camera crew and attached Libyan guides.

As it is an enormous logistical operation, just to get all there and back again, it will take a lot of funding and sponsorship. The group are actively trying to attract this through various means and would welcome backers and supporters to be part of this adventure.

If anyone is interested in this expedition and would like to be a major sponsor there will be maximum publicity and use of logos, links and information on all expedition literature and within the proposed expedition documentary.

We can be contacted via the website at www.wdr.org or via our personal email addresses:

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Responsible for European and USA members

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Bernard Shapiro

Group Joint Leader and Expedition
Co-ordinator NZ

Responsible for NZ, Far East,
Australasia, Pacific

raelreddh@paradise.net.nz

Telephone 0 64 3 9428599 (Intl tel NZ)

A Trip to Town or How We Made the Most of NSC Winnings

By Actuarious

It all started just before Christmas when The Memsahib won vouchers for the theatre at the rather excellent NSC Christmas party, *Murder, Mystery and Mince Pies at Sheridan Towers*. Having solemnly sworn to use them for *The Mousetrap* (I had noticed young Scarheart slipping something into a couple of glasses of Champagne as “insurance”) we arranged to head up to Town on the weekend of 16th February.

Coincidentally this was of course the weekend after Saint Valentine’s Day, allowing for the killing of two birds with one stone—as it were.

With us late away on Friday due to a tardy tradesman coming to fix the boiler, the portents weren’t terribly good. However, once we were fed, watered and settled into the Art Deco splendour of the Paddington Hilton things were decidedly looking up. Saturday morning therefore saw us up late before a relaxed trip over to The Rivoli to meet with our fellow Sheridanites.

Such a pleasant change from our usual, unseemly, early rise to get into London from sunny Bognor for morning cocktails. There was a fine turnout (allaying the fears of the waiter that The Memsahib had, in a moment of diva-esque selfishness, annexed the end of the room for herself) and soon the drink and conversation flowed in equal quantity as well as, indeed, quality.

Old Clayton re-established his qualifications for holding the post of Committee Member, illustrating his extreme decadence by consuming pure

gold leaf having selected the “Ritz 100” cocktail. Witty banter ebbed, flowed and generally ran around the table like an excited puppy as the talk turned to hookahs, the Chap Olympics and Torquil’s legendarily heroic alcoholic intake.

At one point the suggestion was made (possibly by Clayton—I was fast disappearing into my own alcoholic fug by this stage) of raising a “pals” battalion to help out in Iraq. Scarheart was immediately enthused by this, his gimlet eye (the left one) sparkling with the imagined glory of sending the boys “over the top” from the safety of a subterranean gin palace tunnelled into the side of a trench. A name was chosen—The 4th Mounted Dipsomaniacs—and all seemed set. Unfortunately, true to the founding principles, “the Old Incomprehensibles” were not only formed but also disbanded within the time it takes to consume a single cocktail—due to rowdy and disreputable behaviour within the ranks.

So ended their glorious, if excessively brief, history. During our sojourn within The Ritz’s hidden Deco oasis we were unfortunately denied the sight of the Curé blessing a Bellini, but divine providence must have smiled upon us as we appear to have been under-charged! We have yet to see, though, whether we will ever be admitted into The Rivoli again.

With cheerful goodbyes we disbanded into the chill afternoon air and The Memsahib and I went on to the Dali exhibition. For myself, once you have seen one engraving of a masturbating hunch-back midget with a ram’s head for a penis, you’ve seen them all. However The Memsahib enjoyed it, romantic soul that she is, and that’s what matters. This was followed by a marvellous meal in the lantern festooned China Town (Chinese New Year having been a scant week beforehand) with Miss Minna and Torquil, thence on to

the theatre!

Unfortunately, being sworn to secrecy at the end, I can’t tell you an awful lot about the play. St Martin’s theatre is surprisingly small for London but delightful and would be the jewel of anywhere in the provinces. Our seats, in the front row and the middle of the Dress Circle, were the best for seeing the play but a tad vertiginous when moving to and from the bar.

The cast—I’m guessing not the original one from 50 years ago—were rather good and on the whole it was most enjoyable. It was a good job I hadn’t worn my hat with my dark overcoat and light scarf because...hang on there’s someone at the door...oh, its you. Wait, no I wasn’t going to tell them...No, I wouldn’t...Stop..!



CLUB NOTES

The Golden Secret

On 2nd February, a hand-picked group of Club Members experienced a terrifying roller coaster ride of cerebral challenge and emotional exhilaration. Assembling at Gordons Wine Bar for a briefing (and bucks fizz, sherry and wine) they started out on the trail of a murdered Military Intelligence Section Five Agent and a consignment of gold.

After decoding a mysterious letter found on his body they were led to meet a mysterious contact. This then led to more codes, drink, more clues, drink, more locations, Russian translations, more drink and finally the horrifying truth itself—that London was on the verge of being destroyed by a Nazi Coven of mystics armed with an atomic device! And time was of the essence!

After several deaths, plot twists and much show leather the final clues were found in the British Museum and the

National Portrait Gallery and disaster narrowly avoided. A successful outing for a more ambitious treasure hunt. Many lessons were learned by the organisers (such as do not present red herring documents in foreign languages as players will spend hours decoding them) which should lead to an annual treasure hunt of ever increasing complexity.

The Burlesque Brunch

Miss Sophie Jonas' second Sunday lunchtime "sausages n' stockings" outing on 3rd February was a great success. Once more your ticket bought you a hearty brunch and three top notch burlesque performances—this time from Miss Ruby Rose, Miss Diva Hollywood and Miss Red Sarah.

In addition, the famous Brunch Belles modelled Miss Jonas' own fashion creations. This time, however, one of the Belles had to pull out at the last moment, so the lovely Fleur de Guerre, who had come to carry the Bruncherette's tray of goodies, ended up stepping in. And, in addition to the eccentric "Not Cricket" pub quiz, the strange game of Orange Battle took much bigger role in events than last time, with a whole tournament taking place involving almost everyone at the event.

For endless daguerrotypes of the event, see the Club's Flickr page (www.flickr.com/sheridanclub).

Events Happening Soon:

The Black Cotton Club

Saturday 8th March

10pm

Volupte, 7–9 Norwich Street, London EC4A

Admission: £10 before 11pm, £12

Dress: Ravishing and refined, in a 1920s–1940s glamour stylee, I imagine

A regular club night devoted to the gangster jazz (well, more specifically,

"hot house swing, gypsy jazz, race rhythms, valentino vibes, reefer rhumba, cowboy swing, be-bop jump and balboa bounce". I hope that means more to you than it does to me).

Holiday in Harlem

Saturday 8th March

8.30pm–1.30am

Civic Suite, Wandsworth Town Hall, Wandsworth High Street, London SW18 2PU

Admission: £18 in advance online, £25 on the door, if available

A one-off night of swing music, 1930s/40s-style glamour and much more in a period venue with huge sprung wooden dance floor. There will be a live band, DJs, cabaret, dance competitions, a vintage stall and a vintage hair parlour.

The Burlesque Brunch

Sunday 30th March

11am–9.30pm

The Railway Tavern, 15 Liverpool Street, London EC2M 7NX

Tickets: £26 for a full day including brunch, or £13 for a half day from 2pm on (no brunch), only in advance from www.sophiejonasdesigns.co.uk (in the Cornucopia section)

Dress: Something retro, perhaps a little louche, or just what you're still wearing from the night before

Now a bi-monthly event, the Burlesque Brunch is the brain child of the tenacious Miss Tenacity Flux, burlesque performer, baker and designer of ladythings.

Your ticket buys you a 10-and-a-half-hour assault on your senses, sanity and self-control: the day begins with a hearty brunch from 12pm to 2pm (included in the ticket price).

During brunch there will be a table-to-table fashion show of vintage-style lingerie designed by Miss Flux's alter ego

Miss Sophie Jonas and, I'll warrant, much dabbing at fevered brows with spotted handkerchiefs.

During the afternoon there will be burlesque performers—this time Miss Vicky Butterfly, Miss Rose Thorne and the mysterious Darkteaser who was sadly prevented from making it last time—the Bruncherette, with her tray of delights, and the “Not Cricket” pub quiz, the tie-breaker for which is always the bizarre fruit-based game of Orange Battle.



IF YOU HAVE any ideas or suggestions for Club events or articles for this Newsletter, then do not hesitate to get in touch with Mr Scarheart. We are always keen to hear from the Members, whether it is information on interesting events and nights or suggestions for this Newsletter. Remember that the NSC is happy to promote events that you yourself are involved with



Until next time Chumrades!

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