

# AGE OF EMPIRE

Matthew Howard  
revisits the ambitious  
British Empire  
Exhibition of 1924

## **Umbrella Man**

Tim Eyre on the role of a brolly  
in the assassination of JFK

## **The Wickedest Man in San Francisco**

Torquil Arbuthnot on the brutally  
witty writings of Ambrose Bierce

## **Legs eleven**

A peek into the world  
of a man called Bingo

## **Here for the beer**

Ian White takes us on the  
annual NSC pub crawl

**THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW SHERIDAN CLUB • No. 181 • NOVEMBER 2021**

# RESIGN!



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 3rd November** in the upstairs room of the Wheatsheaf pub at 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB.

This month our speaker will be Luca Jellinek, who will tease us with a talk intriguingly titled, *Three outrageous notions you were warned about in school*. "There are three pieces of received wisdom common to survivors of late 20th-century formal

can't make it in person as well as recording the video to upload later. The YouTube link to watch live is <https://youtu.be/1ObBTgny2BU>.

There is a Facebook event for this meeting at [www.facebook.com/events/983137028934485](https://www.facebook.com/events/983137028934485).

### The Last Meeting

October quivered in anticipation as Matthew Howard returned to the podium for the latest in his unique brand of knowingly off-colour lectures. In fact this outing was probably less un-PC than most, looking at the British Empire Exhibition of 1924, offering a potted history of how Britain came to have an empire and why, in 1924, it felt the urge to have an exhibition celebrating it. Howard looked at the physical and architectural challenges and explored the parts of the structures that still remain. He detailed some of the curiosities on display, such as the Palace of Beauty, where actresses and models stood on display dressed as beautiful women from history, or the dairy section of the Canadian pavilion where you could see a life-size sculpture of the Prince of Wales rendered in butter. He did not gloss over, for example, the marginalisation of women and ethnic minorities within the organisation of the event, but nevertheless noted the significance of an achievement that attracted 27 million visitors.

A video of the talk can be found on the New Sheridan Club YouTube channel. An essay version begins on page 4.



Let Luca Jellinek tickle your synapses with his talk (no, I'm none the wiser either)

education. I would like to challenge them, tonight," he elaborates. "Causation and correlation are more closely entwined than many think. The dark ages were really dark; and beauty is not really in the eye of the beholder."

Once again we will be attempting to live-stream the talk from the pub for the benefit of those who



Rudimentary filming technology allows us to live-stream the talks

(Above) Torquil kicks things off; (below) the rapt through devours Howard's words



(Above and left) Howard warms to his subject; (right) Jonny Haart and Marcus Walters bring some debonair dash to proceedings



(Left) Robert Beckwith (l) and Gomez Zephyr; (far left) new bug David, who has yet to sign up but at least is dressed properly this month; (below left) Andrew Fish with Baron von Rukavina swilling in the background; (below) Pri Kali has returned from her stint living in a cabin in the woods in Finland



# THE BRITISH EMPIRE EXHIBITION

By Matthew Howard

**F**OR THOSE OF YOU who have attended my talks on previous occasions, I feel it only fair to warn you that this essay has been researched with the usual level of academic rigour as you might expect of me, and does not cover quite as many elements of empire as might be covered in other talks elsewhere being held this month (fig.1).

I make no claims that this is comprehensive, or indeed representative. However, I hope you learn something this evening, if not quite as much as Diane Abbot might wish.

We are here to revisit the British Empire Exhibition of 1924–5. But for the sake of some background, before we examine why such an exhibition was held, we must first consider why Britain had an empire worth turning into a theme park for a two year jamboree of nationalistic imperialism.

I shall do this in a somewhat Janet and John fashion for you all—I've spoken here before, and I know that's how the members like it...

So, in simple terms, what precisely is an empire? (Fig.2) An empire is a term used to describe a group of territories ruled by one single ruler or state (fig.3). Empires are built by countries that wish to control lands outside of their borders. Those lands can be close by or even thousands of miles away—for example, the Roman Empire (fig.4) from the 1st to the 5th centuries stretched all the way from Britain to Egypt. However, the question asks itself: why, precisely, did Britain want an empire?

The 16th Century is often referred to as the Age of Discovery—new thinking about the world and better shipbuilding—led to more exploration and the discovery of new lands (fig.5). England, in what is now our harmonious Great Britain (fig.6), wanted more land overseas where it could build new communities, known as colonies. These colonies would provide England

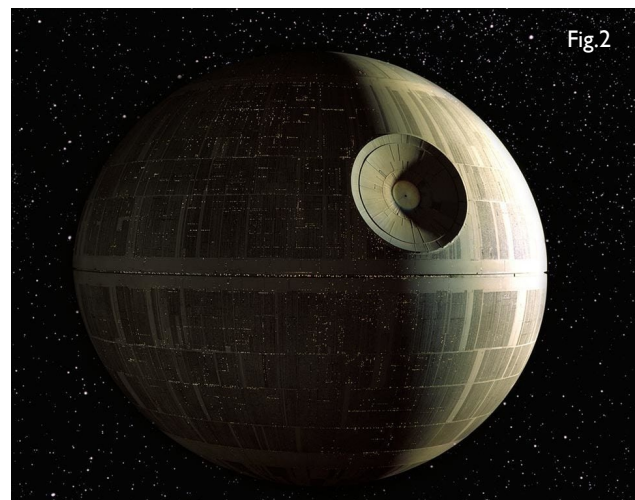




Fig.4

with valuable materials, like metal, sugar and tobacco, which they could also sell to other countries. The colonies also offered money-making opportunities for wealthy Englishmen and provided England's poor and unemployed with new places to live and new jobs.



Fig.5

The first English colonies were in North America, at the time known as the "New World". In 1585, the famous explorer Sir Walter Raleigh, who later invented the pushbike, tried and failed to build an English settlement, and it wasn't until 1607 that Captain John Smith (fig.7) founded the first permanent English colony at Jamestown in Virginia.



Fig.6

Over time, the English would claim more and more territories. This sometimes meant fighting with other European nations to take over their colonies (fig.8).

Over the course of the 17th and 18th centuries, England gained major colonies in North America and further south in the West Indies, today known as the Caribbean Islands, although not always... (fig.9).

Trading settlements were also created in India by a company called the East India Company. The EIC became so powerful, it allowed England to control the trade of luxury goods like spices, cotton, silk and tea from India and China.



Fig.7

The years 1775–83 were a turning point in British history, as the nation lost a huge part of its empire in the American War of Independence. Feeling "American" rather than "British", and resentful of sending money back to Britain, 13 colonies in North America united and fought to be free from British rule. With the help of Spain, France and the Netherlands, they won the war, and gained independence, becoming the United States of America. This



Fig.8



Fig.9



Fig.10



Fig.11



Fig.12

marked the end of what is now called the “First British Empire”.

Although Britain had lost a huge part of its North American territories, it claimed new lands in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, forming the “Second British Empire”. Colonies were founded in parts of Australia, and later Trinidad and Ceylon, Singapore and Hong Kong (China) as well as other parts of Asia.

From 1881 to 1902, Britain competed with other European empire-builders in what became known as the “Scramble for Africa”. By the early 1900s, huge parts of Africa—including Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria and large areas of southern Africa—all came under British rule. The British Empire was larger and more powerful than ever. At its height in 1922 (fig.10), it was the largest empire the world had ever seen, covering around a quarter of Earth’s land surface and ruling over 458 million people. As such, Britain thought it might like to hold an exhibition to mark such global domination.

The Empire comes in for much criticism in certain circles nowadays, but when it was being built British people largely believed they were doing the right thing. In their eyes, they were improving and developing lands and bringing order to countries which—due to the prevailing attitude of many people at the time—they



Fig.14



Fig.15



Fig.16



Fig.17



Fig.18

thought were “uncivilised” and “backward” (fig.11). Thankfully, attitudes which prevailed at the time of Empire have changed among most British people nowadays. I say most... (fig.12).

Which brings us neatly to the subject of our talk this evening: the British Empire Exhibition of 1924–5 (fig.13).

Held in 1924 “to stimulate trade, strengthen bonds that bind mother Country to her Sister States and Daughters, to bring into closer contact the one with each other, to enable all who owe allegiance to the British flag to meet on common ground and learn to know each other” (fig.14), the British Empire Exhibition was the largest exhibition ever staged anywhere in the world, costing some £10 million to create.

In the days before cheap international travel became the blight of those whose warrior-like tendencies tend to be prefixed by the somewhat damning “eco” (fig.15), the only way to see the delights of the Empire for the majority of the people of the United Kingdom was to visit the British Empire Exhibition, certainly in the 1920s. Early commercially available televisions (without commercials, it goes without saying) were some way off the radar until John Logie Baird came up with his big idea, although it would be another 50 years until *Mahabharat* (fig.16) and *Neighbours* (fig.17) reached our screens, showing us what life was really like in the more far-flung outposts of

the Empire (fig.18).

With such factors to the fore, the exhibition was a resounding success. It was opened on St George's Day in 1924 by King George V and Queen Mary, and of the 58 countries the British Empire contained in 1924, 56 were represented.

In fig.19 we see what are described as "Principal types of mankind", many of whom were represented at the exhibition, and many of which I imagine, even today, would still appear particularly exotic. Especially in Brent.

Only Gambia (fig.20, in which a visit by the British administrator to a native chief necessitates a military band) and Gibraltar saw fit not to show their wears, peanuts and ape faeces not being thought by the respective countries' boards of trade as sufficient to entice tourists to visit in the 1920s.

The Exhibition ran over the summers of 1924 and 1925, and attracted a colossal 27 million visitors through the gates of what is now part of the People's Republic of Brent. It was administered by many of the great and the good of their day, thoughtfully depicted in glorious black and white over seven moderately indulgent pages in the

official Exhibition guide (fig.21). Many

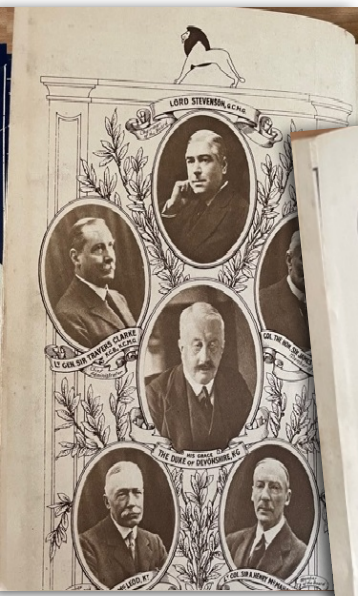


Fig.21





Fig.22



Fig.23

appear to have had a good war, based on their survival and rank if nothing else, and 28 of the 51 had some form of facial hair (the majority sporting impressive “Kitcheners”). A mere two were ladies, one, a Mrs C.C. Grove, being seen fit for the position of Secretary of the Womens Section.

Mrs Grove (fig.22) doesn’t look particularly happy with her lot, I must say. Then again, as the women’s liberation movement didn’t really make much headway until the late 1960s, I doubt they gave her much to do except make the tea.

In spite of its Empire-wide remit, only one non-white face (fig.23) appears among the dignitaries. *Plus ça change, plus c’est la meme chose*, as they say in the Equality and Human Rights Commission even today. Especially in France, one might easily imagine.

This gentleman was perhaps introduced to add some diversity—it was the 1920s, after all. I note from other documents examined that his input to the planning meetings was minimal, however. I imagine he may have been rarely called because the

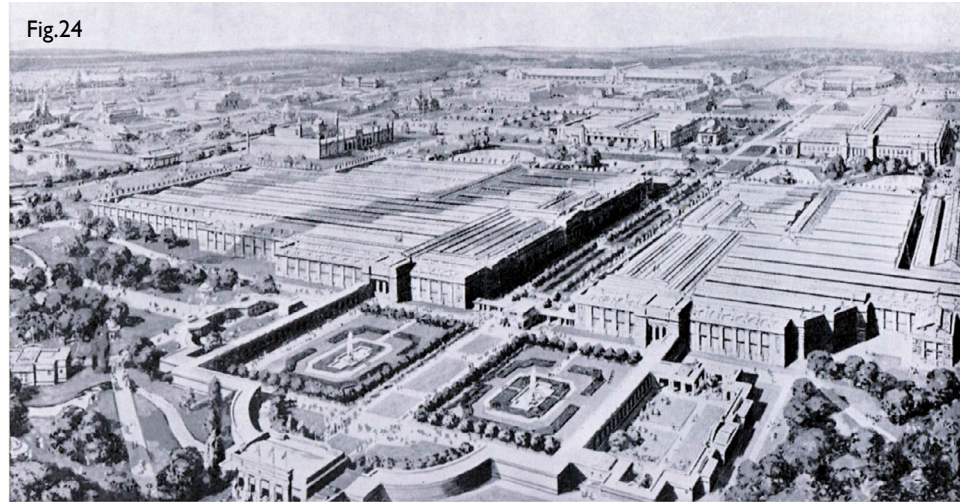


Fig.24

Chairman could not pronounce his name.

Fig.24 shows the exhibition site. Wembley Park tube station would be bottom left, and the stadium is at about 2 o'clock. The 56 Exhibition

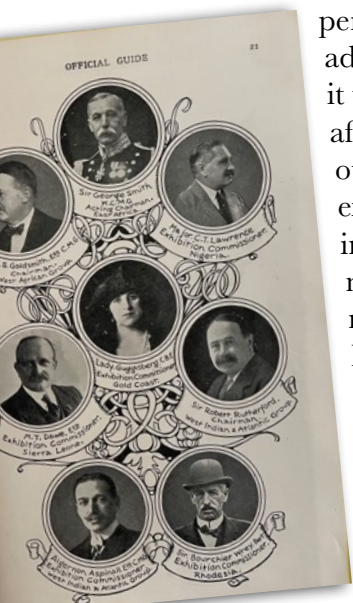


Fig.25

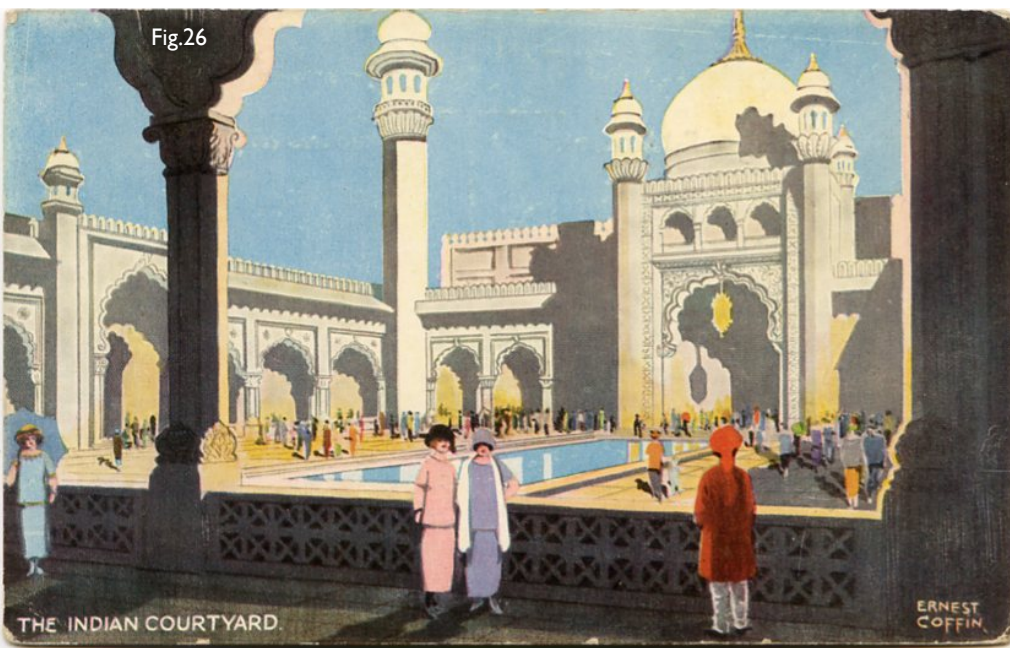


Fig.26

the incentive of the host country was sharpened to show their nation in the most imaginative and entertaining style.

Food, transport, flora and fauna seemed to feature quite heavily in almost every Pavilion. Cinemas also proved popular, with the modus operandi of “save money on expensive exhibits by showing cinema graphic representations of the diverse experiences you might encounter if you had the time, money and wherewithal to visit” seeming to have been almost universally adopted.

There were, however, several notable highlights. These included the Pavilion of the Tanganyika Territory (formerly known as German East Africa), which showed exhibits of coffee and sisal, the latter becoming the base constituent for the bristle dart board first produced some 8 years after the exhibition commenced. Queues must have formed as far as Neasden see such wondrous bounty close at hand.

By way of contrast, the grounds of the New Zealand



Fig.27

Pavilion (fig.27) featured an actual carved Maori House in the gardens, which was apparently originally completed in 1874 on the ratification of peace between two tribes that had previously been at war for many years. Quite what the indigenous warrior classes thought of this



Fig.28

pavilions seemed to contain much of a muchness (figs 25 and 26)—think your average county show, but on a grander scale and you will probably get some idea. However, with admission charges for the majority of the Pavilions, one can imagine



Fig.29



Fig.31

shameless bout of imperialist looting some 50 years later is not recorded, but one can imagine they were not best pleased—if only judging by their subsequent competitive nature on the field of rugby union (fig.28).

With the exception of the Empire Stadium, the Palaces of Industry (fig.29) and Engineering were the two largest edifices constructed for the exhibition. The shell of the Palace of Industry is the only building from the exhibition remaining on the site today (fig.30), while the Palace of Engineering contained the largest display of plant and machinery ever seen under one roof, and the organisers were keen to display something to interest everyone—even women, it would appear, “who will no doubt be particularly interested in the practical demonstrations of the use of electricity in the home” (fig.31).

The Exhibition guide, which was readily available on the site for a price, listed in its



Fig.30



Fig.32

contents “1001 highlights”, which no visitor with significantly more spare time and money than was generally the prevailing case in the 1920s should miss.

These included a “sheep sheering shed” (fig.32), which presumably proved to be quite a burden to anyone working on the information desk encumbered with a speech impediment.

For their entertainment and viewing pleasure, children from south London could look on in wonder at the biggest knife in the world in the Palace of Industry, containing a mind boggling 1,924 blades (fig.33), “one for each year of the Christian era”. A full-sized sculpture in butter of the most stylish (later to be) Nazi sympathiser to ever be King, the Prince of Wales (depicted on horseback), was also created, would you believe, and for those with a keen interest in craftsmanship at its most dexterous, you could observe a pearl necklace being produced entirely by hand, courtesy a lady from Ceylon.



Fig.33



Fig.34

natural resemblance to the women they were intended to represent (fig.36). These included Nell Gwynne, Madame Pompadour, Cleopatra and Mary, Queen of Scots, but sadly, not the Empress of India (fig.37), who failed to make the cut on this occasion. Tutankhamen's Tomb, complete with reproduction artefacts,



Fig.35

For the less cerebral visitor, the exhibition included an amusement park (fig.34), which purported to be the “largest and most comprehensive pleasure park known to history”. Highlights were said to include “Dodgem, a new electric attraction” (fig.35), and a children’s section featuring games of Bunty Pulls the Strings, Swanee River and Christmas Trees. With attractions such as these, it’s little wonder that the exhibition attracted 27 million visitors. All this for 6d. How could one refuse?

Visitors of a more lecherous nature could ogle women for their perverted pleasure in what was known as the Palace of Beauty, an exhibit showing “living presentments of the ten most beautiful women known to history”, the girls having been chosen for their



Fig.36

Dante's Beatrice and Cleopatra behind the scenes at the Palace of Beauty.



Fig.37

was also recreated, presumably without the “hassle” provided by befez-ed hawkers making a nuisance of themselves one might have encountered in Egypt, offering “hospitality” and poor quality un-priced mother-of-pearl boxes to the unsuspecting visitor.

Among the more notable of exhibits at the fairground was an attraction called the “Death Ring” (fig.38), something the guide describes as “a “cup-shaped steel cage, in which a motorcyclist, sometimes three, ride round the top of the

track in a horizontal position and parallel to the ground”. No mention is made in the guide as to whether any of the riders actually fell to their death, but no motorcyclist could surely demonstrate greater love for the Empire than sacrificing his own life for the entertainment of others (fig.39).

The highlight of the Exhibition site was, of course, the stadium itself (fig.40). The guide boasts that “there is not in all England

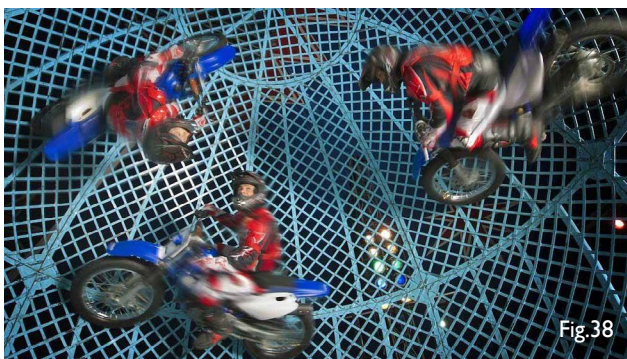


Fig.38



Fig.39



Fig.40

No. 21

STADIUM  
BRITISH EMPIRE EXHIBITION, WEMBLEY

Photo  
Campbell Gray

a modern building that can compete with the Empire Stadium in the effect it creates upon the mind of the spectator”. The “Stadium season” at the exhibition began with Empire Week, which featured concerts of massed bands and the Empire Thanksgiving Service, which presumably did exactly what it said on the poster. Other highlights included a choir of 10,000, the world’s largest gathering of trained voices, which played five times at the exhibition during the summer of 1924. An international rodeo, held in the arena for two weeks in June 1924, attracted many of the world’s finest rodeo riders, no doubt enticed by the opportunity to win a share of the £20,000 in prizes which were awarded during the fortnight.

A much-heralded “Pageant of Empire”, featuring what were described as “dramatic representations of the most thrilling episodes in the history of the Empire”, was also among the Stadium’s highlights (fig.41). One presumes that the Indian famines of the late 19th century, in which at least 10 million people died (fig.42), and the Balfour declaration of 1917, to name but two minor blemishes on Britannia’s otherwise faultless complexion, were conveniently airbrushed from the version of the Empire’s history depicted in the pageant.

In spite of the success of the Exhibition itself, the majority of the buildings which made up the exhibition site were only ever intended to be temporary constructions, destined to be sold for scrap following the exhibition’s closure in 1925. Of the main buildings on the site, the



Fig.41

Queen Elizabeth attending old St. Paul's after the defeat of the Armada

EVERY EVENING

21st JULY TO 9th AUGUST AT 8.0 p.m.  
11th AUGUST TO 30th AUGUST AT 7.30 p.m.

Palace of Engineering (fig.43) survived until the early 1970s and the British Government Pavilion, described by Sir John Betjeman as “the grandest palace of them all”, until 1973, just after his visit to the pavilion during the filming of *Metroland*. The Palace of Arts survived until December 2004, spending its latter years as a theatrical props warehouse. Today, only the Palace of Industry survives, masquerading as distribution depot for the Home Delivery Network, the only clues to its previous use being

the repeating lions head corbels which adorn the building’s façade (fig.44).

Somewhat surprisingly, the centrepiece of the exhibition, the Empire Stadium (the name stuck until 1972, subsequently re-branded as Wembley Stadium), was also due to be destroyed after

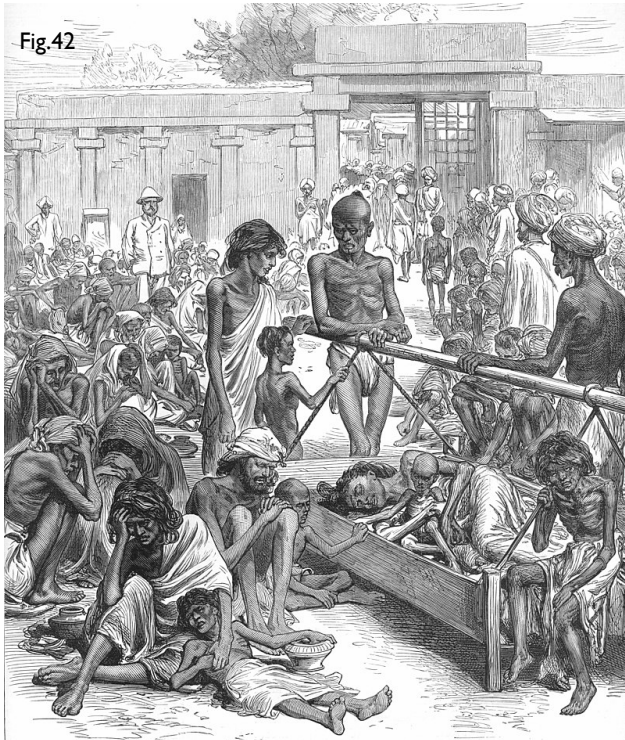


Fig.42



Fig.44



Fig.45



Fig.43

Interior Palace of Engineering  
BRITISH EMPIRE EXHIBITION, WEMBLEY.

the exhibition. It was saved from demolition by a Scot, Sir James Stevenson, which seems somewhat ironic as the stadium was almost destroyed by Scots (fig.45) following their football team’s victory over England in 1977 in the much-lamented Home Internationals association football

tournament. Razed to the ground in 2003, only to be replaced by the modern soulless construction (fig.46) which now stands on the same site, the old “Wembley” is much missed, if only for the sight of the twin towers one viewed



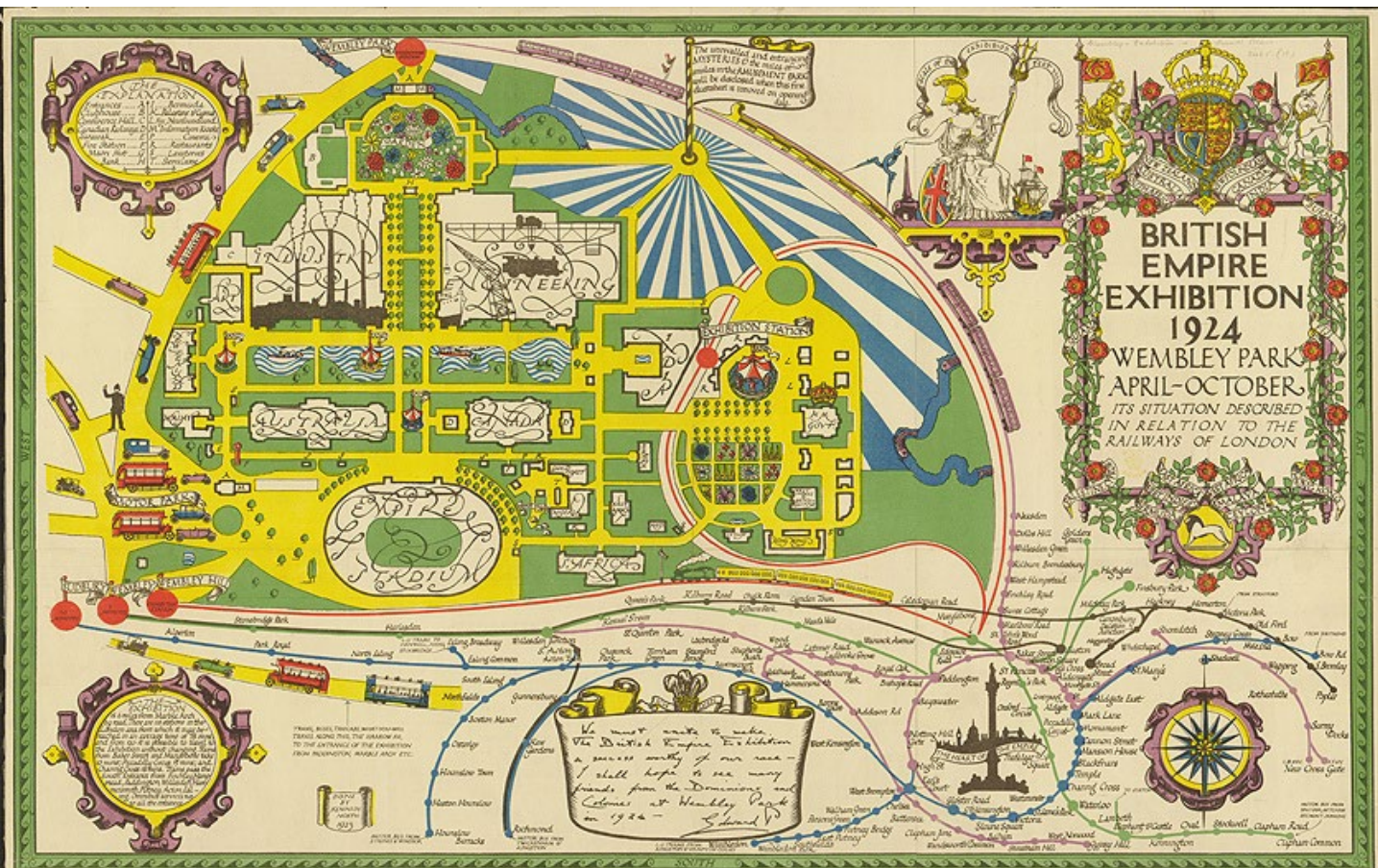
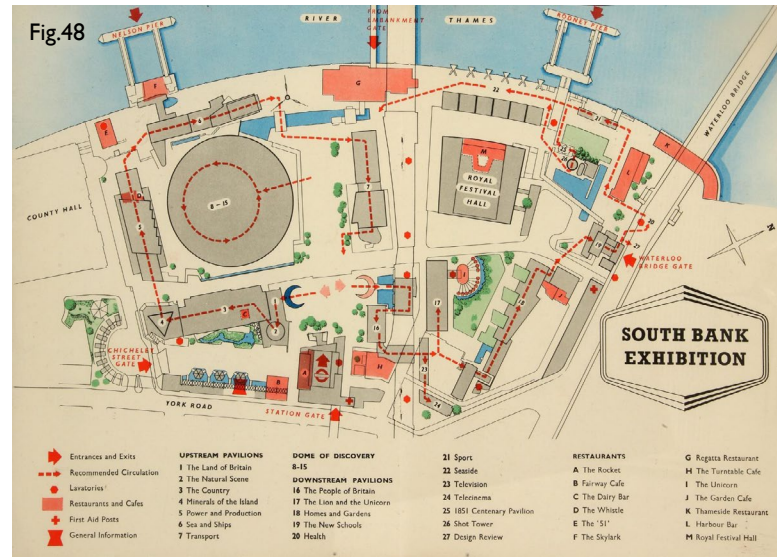
Fig.46



Fig.47

when approaching the stadium from Wembley Park Station (fig.47).

I hope this essay has given you some sort of flavour of the British Empire Exhibition. As we have seen, the intrinsic nature of it could perhaps be perceived as somewhat sexist and imperialistic. However, due to prevailing attitudes of the day, one might readily surmise that such actions seemed to be pretty much par for the course. It is interesting to note that of the other subsequent national exhibitions held in Britain, the Festival of Britain (fig.48) and the Millennium Experience at the Dome attracted a mere six million and six and a half million visitors respectively. The British Empire Exhibition must have been a jolly good show.



# Umbrella Man

## AND THE ASSASSINATION OF JFK

By Tim Eyre

**O**N 22ND NOVEMBER 1963, President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas as he rode in an open-top limousine. Kennedy's alleged murderer was Lee Harvey Oswald. Dallas police arrested Oswald in a cinema within two hours of the assassination. Two days later, nightclub owner Jack Ruby shot Oswald dead as police escorted the suspect from the city gaol to the county gaol. Oswald's pre-trial demise has led to the event receiving a great deal of scrutiny and more than a few conspiracy theories.

When any real-life event is subjected to intense scrutiny, unexpected elements will appear. The assassination of John F. Kennedy is no exception. This article focuses on one particularly puzzling figure that appears in the many photographs and movies taken of the event: a man raising an open black umbrella on the famous grassy knoll close to the site of the assassination, just as Kennedy's car approached.

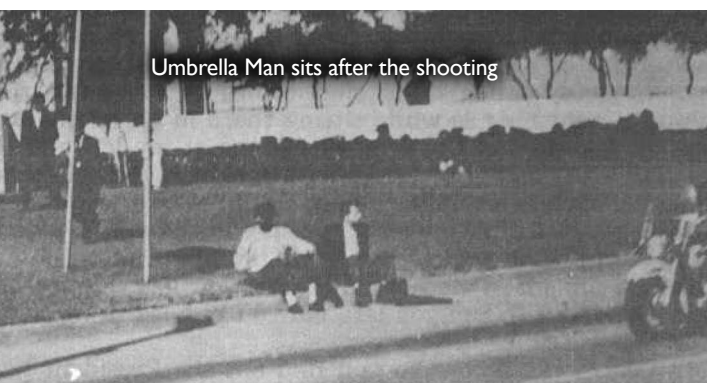
Of course, members of the New Sheridan Club will know that a gentleman never unfurls his umbrella, even in the heaviest of rainstorms. However, this convention was not the source of observers' puzzlement; in Dallas it is not considered in the least outré to open



The Kennedy motorcade



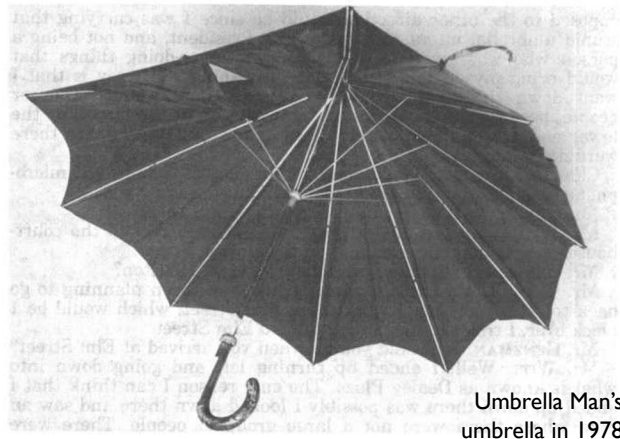
Here and below, Umbrella Man as the motorcade passes



Umbrella Man sits after the shooting







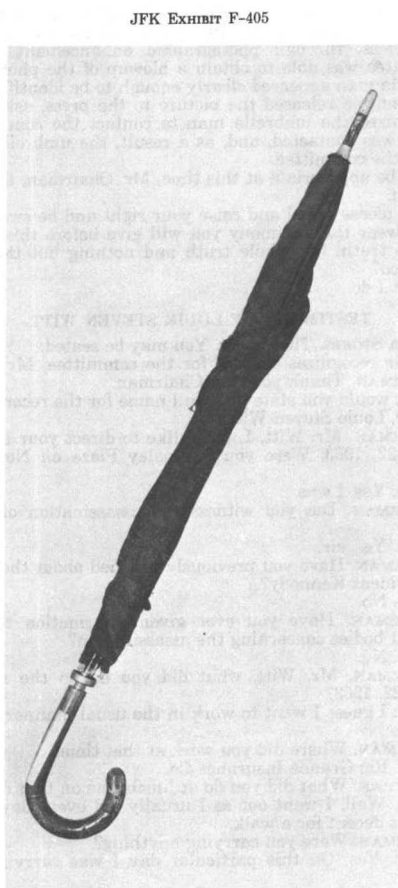
man holding a black umbrella provides the assassin with a signal to shoot by the simple expedient of moving his umbrella up and down. The idea is as preposterous as it is entertaining; a moment's thought would offer a signal that was equally visible but less conspicuous. However, *The X-Files* does us a service here by putting conspiracy theories about the assassination of President Kennedy where they belong: in the company of stories about alien

one's broly and it is entirely expected that one might do so should rain fall. (Rather more rain falls in Dallas than in London.) However, November 1963 saw little rainfall in Dallas and the weather at the time of the assassination was warm and sunny. Why then was there a man standing close to the site of the assassination, bearing an accessory that was an entirely unnecessary encumbrance?

The 1990s televisual series *The X-Files* provided a fictional answer to this mystery. The seventh episode of the fourth series was entitled *Musings of a Cigarette Smoking Man* and first aired on 17 November 1996. This episode depicted the eponymous individual in his younger years shooting President Kennedy from the cover of a drain culvert. A

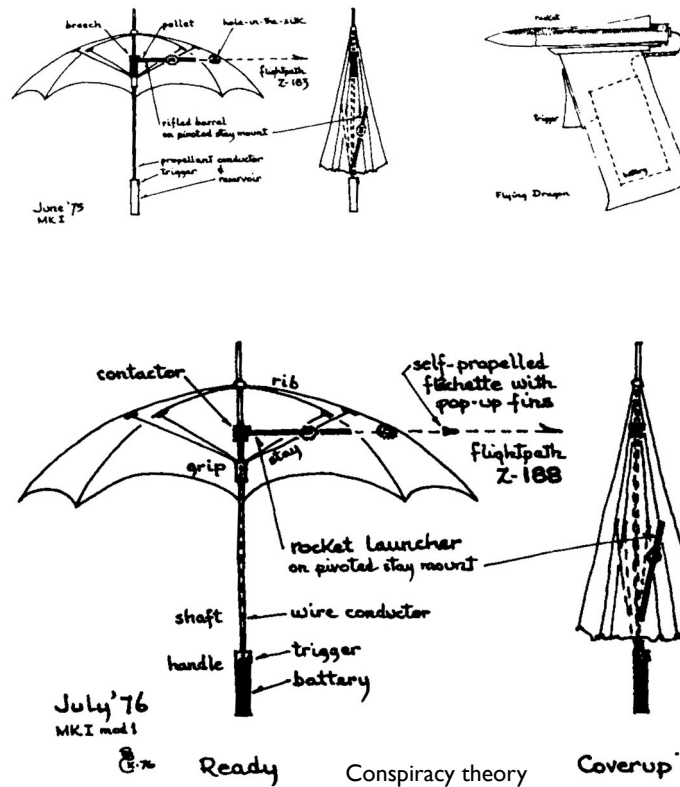
abductions, sewer monsters and telepathy. As if to underscore this point, the same episode posits that the same individual also assassinated Martin Luther King and fixed a variety of high-profile sporting events.

Speculation as to a possible role for the bearer of an unexplained umbrella in President Kennedy's assassination simmered for years. The unknown individual became known as "Umbrella Man", a prosaic moniker similar to that of other mysterious characters that emerged during the close study of footage of the tragic event, such as Badge Man and Babushka Lady. In 1978 the United States House Select Committee on Assassinations appealed to the American public for Umbrella Man to come forward and testify. So it



was that a fellow by the name of Louie Steven Witt reluctantly visited Washington, DC, to explain why he had been standing under an open umbrella on a sunny day just yards away from President Kennedy as the unfortunate leader met his demise.

Mr Witt brought with him to Washington the umbrella he had been holding as the volley of shots rang out over Dealey Plaza in 1963. The authorities assigned the umbrella exhibit number JFK-405. The idea that someone could own an umbrella for 15 years without losing it was perhaps the only part of Mr Witt's testimony that was not entirely credible. Under oath, Mr Witt described how he had once heard during a coffee break chat that the umbrella was a sore spot with the Kennedy family. Being of a conservative bent, he had taken the opportunity of Kennedy's visit to heckle a liberal president. He had picked up his umbrella as he set out on his daily lunch break



walk. Mr Witt explained that he was not inclined to draw attention to himself and so had strolled down to Dealey Plaza where the crowds were thinner. Here he stood on what became known as the grassy knoll. When the motorcade appeared, Mr Witt unfurled his brolly while walking forwards towards the road. The umbrella's canopy obscured his view of the assassination

but the sound of shots followed by shrieking and crying made him aware that something terrible had happened.

Mr Witt had sat on the edge of the grassy knoll for a few minutes as he recovered from the shock. He testified that he had the feeling of a practical joke gone sour. A photograph had captured this moment, with another man sitting next to Mr Witt. This photograph had generated much speculation, including an idea that the man next to Umbrella Man was carrying a walkie-talkie with which to communicate the



Joseph P. Kennedy



Chamberlain with Hitler

success of the assassination to co-conspirators. Mr Witt testified that he had heard the man say something like, "They done shot them folks." Mr Witt had not noticed the man holding any kind of commun-



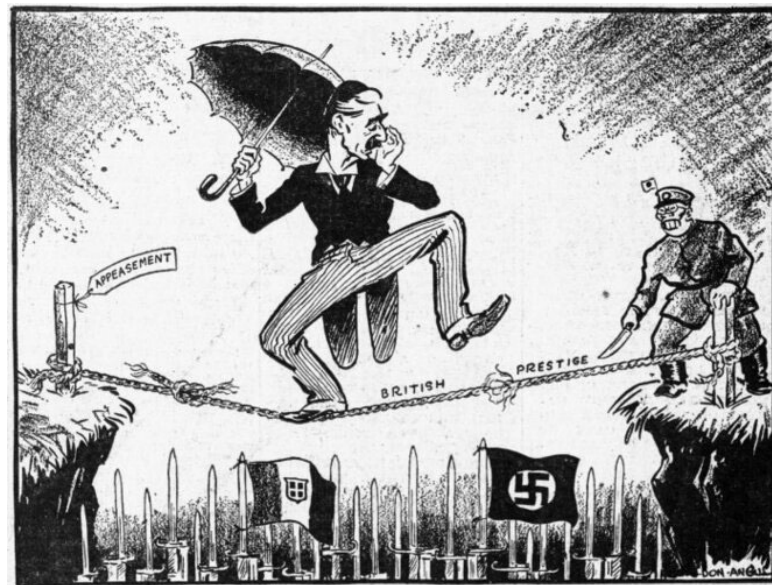
This page: contemporary cartoons lampooning Chamberlain

ication gadget, nor had Mr Witt consciously said anything to his neighbour. After a short while, Mr Witt returned to work. It was only there that he learned that the president had been shot.

Thus it became clear that those who researched the assassination had been building castles in the air with respect to Umbrella Man. In truth, he was an ordinary fellow who had casually decided to take the opportunity to make a mild heckle just as Kennedy's visit took a tragic turn.

In the world of Chappism, it is no surprise to see the umbrella used as an instrument of dissent. Mr Witt's broolly-based protest was an inadvertent act of Anarcho-Dandyism committed nearly 40 years before Messrs Temple and Darkwood published that most excellent volume *The Chap Manifesto*. Nonetheless, one might reasonably wonder why umbrellas were a sufficiently sore point with the Kennedy family that a canopy on a stick might be used as a device to heckle the president.

The source of the family's embarrassment was President John F. Kennedy's father, Joseph P. Kennedy. This man had served as United States Ambassador to the Court of St James's (that is to say, the United Kingdom) from March 1938 until October 1940. During this time Joseph P. Kennedy had supported Neville Chamberlain's policy of appeasement towards Nazi Germany. One of Chamberlain's trademarks was to carry an umbrella. As a result, the umbrella became a symbol of British appeasement and was widely deployed in the media in the months that followed the notorious Munich Agreement of September 1938. Joseph P. Kennedy's political reputation never recovered from his stance at this time. As a result, umbrellas were a touchy subject with the Kennedy clan.



In his testimony, Mr Witt stated that he was only vaguely aware of the reason that umbrellas riled members of the Kennedy dynasty. He was not even especially determined in his heckling. Yet his mundane actions fed a great deal of speculation. At the end of his testimony he stated, "I think if the *Guinness Book of World Records* had a category for people who were at the wrong place at the wrong time, doing the wrong thing, I would be number one in that position, without even a close runner-up."

Those wishing to read more about the association of the umbrella with Chamberlain's policy of appeasement may wish to read the academic paper "Neville Chamberlain's Umbrella: 'Object' Lessons in the History of Appeasement" in the peer-reviewed journal *Twentieth Century British History*, Volume 27, Issue 3, pages 357-388. ISSN 1477-4674. A webular search will readily unearth an electronic version. Mr Witt's testimony can be read in full at <https://tinyurl.com/ydejz5gb>.

# 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.*



## Bingo

### **Name or preferred name?**

David Campbell-Pittard or "Bingo"

### **Why that nickname or nom de plume?**

The Wodehousian character I most resemble.

### **Where do you hail from?**

Originally Portsmouth (but as Wellington so nearly said: "just because one is born in a barn it does not make one a horse"). I now reside in a slightly more salubrious gated-community in Aldwick, on the Sussex Riviera

### **Favourite cocktail?**

Brandy Alexander (by the ladle full).

### **Most Chappist skill?**

An inability to pass a charity shop without being compelled to enter (on the off-chance that an appropriate hat is contained therein).

### **Most Chappist possession?**

My Two-Decanter Betjemann Tantalus.

### **Personal Motto?**

Vi Coactus (under duress).

### **Favourite quotes?**

"Utah! Get me two" —Angelo

Pappas, *Point Break* (1991)

"Win if you can, lose if you must, but always cheat!" —Gorgeous George, US professional wrestler

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

Owing to a spurious "moving violation" (and

subsequent failure to attend our hearing at the Flagstaff Courthouse), my chum and I are fugitives from the State of Arizona.

**How long have you been involved with the NSC?**

Six thoroughly splendid years.

**How did you hear about the Club to begin with?**

After attending my first Chap Olympiad with my chum 'Chuffy' Boswell I sought out a suitable collective from the pages of Google.

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

For the readers among us, *The Cemetery of Forgotten Books* a tetralogy by Carlos Ruiz Zafón—a feast for the soul. For the wine drinkers, Apothic Red "Winemaker's Blend" (£9 from Sainsbury's)—a feast for the liver.

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

Jack Hargreaves—his *Out of Town* show was a childhood favorite.



I cannot hear "Recuerdos de la Alhambra" without being spirited back to evenings sat cross-legged with my father, being mesmerized by all wonder of fantastic gadgets. Jack's melodious voice is a creamy remnant of an England we should treasure.

- Peter Dinklage—he deserves a good meal to show him that there are many of us who know, and care, that he was the original singer of "Walking in the Air" in *The Snowman*, and not that oily tick Aled Jones.

- Scarlett Johansson—I just think she would be very accommodating when it came to loading the dishwasher...

**Favourite Member of the Glorious Committee?**

Answer: Artemis Scarheart.

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

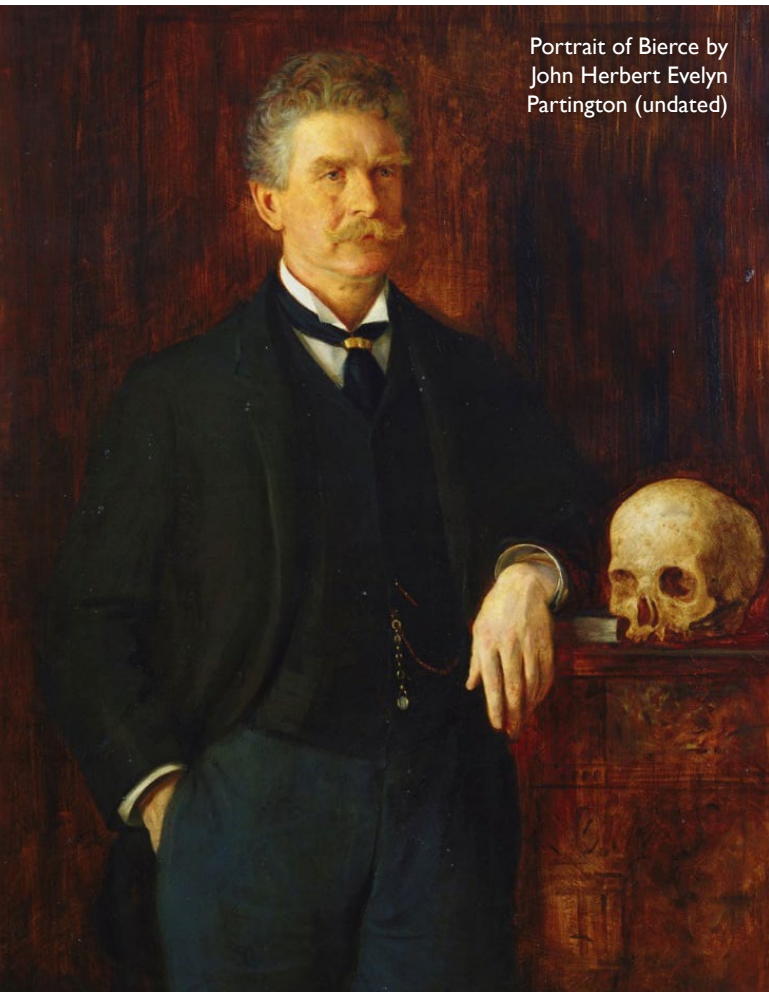
I assume you refer to a turn at the lectern? Not really my style, I'm more of an enraptured onlooker than presenter—but if pushed (and suitably well-oiled) I'm happy to lead the audience in a performance of *Bohemian Rhapsody*. Does that count?

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.



# AMBROSE BIERCE

By Torquil Arbuthnot



Portrait of Bierce by John Herbert Evelyn Partington (undated)

**A**MBROSE BIERCE was born in Meigs County, Ohio in 1842. His parents were farmers and he was the tenth of 13 children, all of whom were given names beginning with “A” at their father’s insistence: in order of birth, the Bierce siblings were Abigail, Amelia, Ann, Addison, Aurelius, Augustus, Almeda, Andrew, Albert, Ambrose, Arthur, Adelia, and

Aurelia. The family moved to Indiana, where Bierce went to high school. Bierce became a printer’s devil (apprentice) on a local abolitionist newspaper. He later attended the Kentucky Military Institute, until a student set fire to it.

At the outbreak of the American Civil War, he enlisted in the Union army. He fought bravely in numerous military engagements, including the battles of Shiloh and Chickamauga and in Sherman’s March to the Sea. He participated in the Western Virginia campaign (1861), was present at the “first battle” at Philippi and received newspaper attention for his daring rescue, under fire, of a badly wounded comrade at the Battle of Rich Mountain.

In February 1862 he was commissioned First Lieutenant and served on the staff of General William Babcock Hazen as a topographical engineer, making maps of likely battlefields. In June 1864, he sustained a serious head wound at the Battle of Kennesaw Mountain, and spent the rest of the summer on furlough, returning to active duty in September. He was discharged from the army in January 1865. His military career resumed, however, when in mid-1866 he rejoined General Hazen as part of the latter’s expedition to inspect military outposts across the Great Plains. The expedition proceeded by horseback and wagon from Omaha, Nebraska, arriving towards year’s end in San Francisco.

**“HANDKERCHIEF, n. A small square of silk or linen, used in various ignoble offices about the face and especially serviceable at funerals to conceal the lack of tears.”**

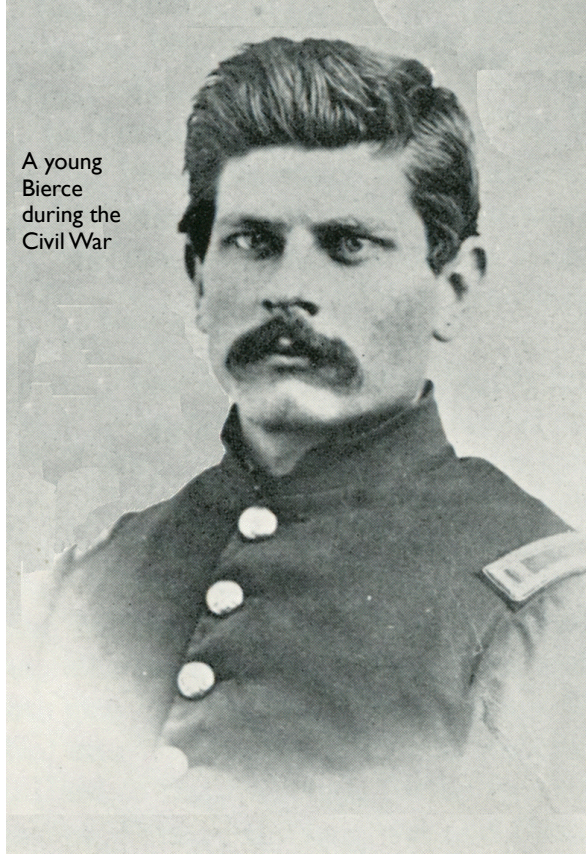
– *The Devil’s Dictionary*

In San Francisco, Bierce was awarded the rank of brevet major before resigning from the Army. He remained in San Francisco for many years, eventually becoming famous as a contributor or editor of a number of local newspapers and

periodicals, including *The San Francisco News Letter*, *The Argonaut*, the *Overland Monthly*, *The Californian* and *The Wasp*. Bierce became something of a noted figure in California's literary society, forming friendships with Mark Twain, Bret Harte, and Joaquin Miller.

In 1872 Bierce and his wife moved to England where, during a three-year stay, he wrote for *Fun* and *Figaro* magazines, acquiring the nickname "Bitter Bierce." He also edited the *Lantern* for the exiled French empress Eugénie. His first three books of sketches—*Nuggets and Dust Panned Out in California* (1872),

A young Bierce during the Civil War



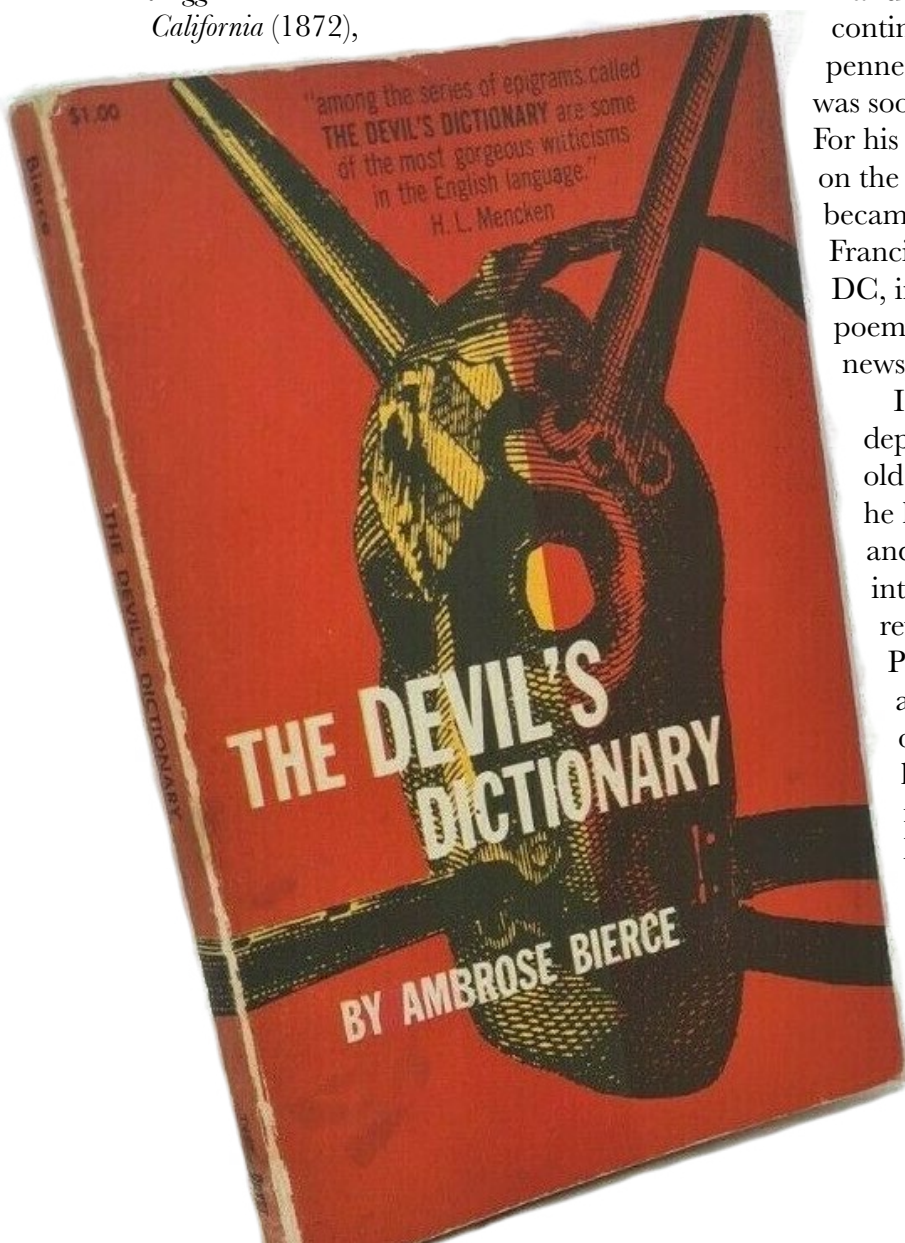
*The Fiend's Delight* (1873), and *Cobwebs from an Empty Skull* (1874)—were published during this period.

When the English climate aggravated Bierce's asthma he returned to San Francisco. From 1879 to 1880, he travelled to Rockerville and Deadwood in the Dakota Territory, to try his hand as local manager for a New York mining company, but when the company failed he returned to San Francisco and resumed

his career in journalism.

In 1887 he began writing for William Randolph Hearst's *San Francisco Examiner*, continuing the "Prattler" column he had penned for the *Argonaut* and the *Wasp*. Bierce was soon the literary arbiter of the West Coast. For his sardonic wit and damning observations on the personalities and events of the day, he became known as "the wickedest man in San Francisco." Bierce relocated to Washington, DC, in 1896, where he continued to publish poems, essays, epigrams, and short stories in newspapers and magazines.

In October 1913 Bierce, then aged 71, departed Washington for a tour of his old Civil War battlefields. By December he had proceeded through Louisiana and Texas, crossing by way of El Paso into Mexico, which was in the throes of revolution. In Ciudad Juárez he joined Pancho Villa's army as an observer, and in that role he witnessed the Battle of Tierra Blanca. Bierce is known to have accompanied Villa's army as far as the city of Chihuahua. His last known communication with the world was a letter he wrote there to Blanche Partington, a close friend, dated 26th December 1913. After closing this letter by saying, "As to me, I leave here tomorrow for an unknown destination," he vanished without



a trace. Oral tradition in Sierra Mojada, Coahuila, documented by the priest James Lienert, states that Bierce was executed by a firing squad in the town cemetery there.

However, Bierce's friend and biographer Walter Neale noted that in 1913, Bierce had not ridden for quite some time, was suffering from serious asthma, and had been severely critical of Pancho Villa. Neale concludes that it would have been highly unlikely for Bierce to have gone to Mexico and joined up with Villa. However, despite a lack of hard evidence that Bierce had gone to Mexico, there is also none that he had not. Some believed he had simply chosen to disappear and lived in anonymity—or died in an insane asylum. Another theory concluded that Bierce deliberately concealed his true whereabouts when he finally went to a selected location in the Grand Canyon and committed suicide. His end is a mystery, but a reasonable conjecture is that he was killed in the siege of Ojinaga in January 1914.

In one of his final letters Bierce wrote, "Good-bye. If you hear of my being stood up against a Mexican stone wall and shot to rags,

please know that I think it is a pretty good way to depart this life. It beats old age, disease, or falling down the cellar stairs. To be a Gringo in Mexico—ah, that is euthanasia!"

His most striking fictional effects depend on an adept manipulation of the reader viewpoint: a bloody battlefield seen through the eyes of a deaf child in "Chickamauga", the deceptive escape dreamed by a man about to be hanged in "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge", and the shifting perspectives of "The Death of Halpin Frayser". The classic Biercian narrative includes a marked use of black humour, particularly in the ironic and hideous deaths his protagonists often suffer. The brutal satire Bierce employed in his journalism appears as plain brutality in his fiction, and critics have both condemned and praised his imagination as among the most vicious and morbid in American literature. One critic summed him up: "Bierce was never a great writer. He has painful faults of vulgarity and cheapness of imagination. But his style, for one thing, will preserve him; and the purity of his misanthropy, too, will help to keep him alive."



Still from Robert Enrico's 1962 film version of "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge", which aired on TV's *The Twilight Zone* in 1964



# The Annual NSC Pub Crawl

By Ian White

**T**HIS YEAR'S CRAWL, on **Saturday 13th November**, takes in Blackheath and its lofty heath, Greenwich Park with its stunning views and Greenwich waterfront, with a mix of premises old and new.

Most pubs serve food so attendees can grab a quick bite to eat when they desire. This trip can be done all on foot, although there are some transport options if some attendees require conveyance for parts of it. As usual this is a trip to visit some fine premises—there is no requirement to over-indulge as on some pub crawls of yesteryear. Please drink responsibly, as and when you desire.

Here is the itinerary with approximate timings so you can join and leave at any point. The nearest station to our start is Blackheath, with trains from Charing Cross/London Bridge.

3pm–3.50pm

**Zerodegrees**, 29–31 Montpelier Vale, Blackheath, London SE3 0TJ

The in-house brewery designed along German lines is fully visible inside. Full-scale restaurant facilities are available with open-to-view kitchen and pizza oven.

4pm–4.50pm

**The Princess of Wales**, 1a Montpelier Row, Blackheath, London SE3 0RL

Rebuilt around 1865 by the Cator Blackheath Estates, this boasts a magnificent bar-back on the left-hand bar, one of the oldest surviving bar-backs in the country.

From here we amble across Greenwich Park before it closes at 6pm.

5.30pm–6.30pm

**The Plume of Feathers**, 19 Park Vista, Greenwich, London SE10 9LZ

Parts of this pub date from 1691. It is built from brick with green glazed tiles on the ground floor and render above. The bar fittings date from the 1930s with a canted fielded panelled counter.

6.45pm–8ish pm

**The Trafalgar Tavern**, Park Row, London SE10 9NW

An impressive pub, dating from 1830 and Grade II listed, the Trafalgar Tavern sits right on the Thames and was frequented by Charles Dickens. Following the First World War the Tavern became home to aged seaman and during the Second World War it was used as flats for naval officers. Finally, in 1968, this inspiring venue was restored to its Victorian grandeur.

From here we walk along the Thames to our final pub:

8.30pm–11pm

**The Sail Loft**, 11 Victoria Parade, Greenwich, London SE10 9FR

A complete contrast—a modern-build pub on the Thames, with commanding views of the Thames and Canary Wharf.

Home: trains from Greenwich rail station or Cutty Sark DLR





# *Fruity Hatfield-Peverel*

IT IS WITH very great sadness that I have to announce the passing of Flt Lt Fruity Hatfield-Peverel—or Michael Mansell, as he was known to the authorities. Fruity was a founding member of the New Sheridan Club, prominent in its activities and with innate Chappist sensibilities that helped forge the shape of the club in those early days. He had a strong love for England in what he saw as its golden age and keenly collected vintage objects and ephemera that encapsulated this era—as anyone who visited his crammed flat will know. He even had plans to write a book on the subject.

Fruity's shrewd collector's eye was matched by a collector's ear: at one of the "Sheridan Christmas House" weeks away he did some impromptu DJing, which led to his becoming the house DJ at the Candlelight Club when it started in 2010. He would probably still be in that role now if it weren't for the illness that made him stop in 2012.

Sadly Fruity was always plagued by health problems, including ankylosing spondylitis



which affected the movement of his neck and back. This, combined with an infection and complications with drugs he had to take, caused him to become something of a recluse, but he occasionally popped up on Facebook. We live ten minutes from him, and if we dropped in on the off-chance he was always happy to welcome us with a cup of tea in his small garden. The last time I saw him was in a group jaunt to Dungeness, though members may remember him at our Louche

Luau party in 2018, and I was pleased at what seemed the beginning of a re-emergence. However, during lockdown I gather his health took a turn for the worse, with a hospital stay and further complications, to which he ultimately succumbed.

Fruity was one of a kind, always bubbling with interest in, and opinions and theories about, history, culture, society and life in general. He was also a devoted godfather to his namesake Michaela. He was a natural Chap and will be sorely missed.





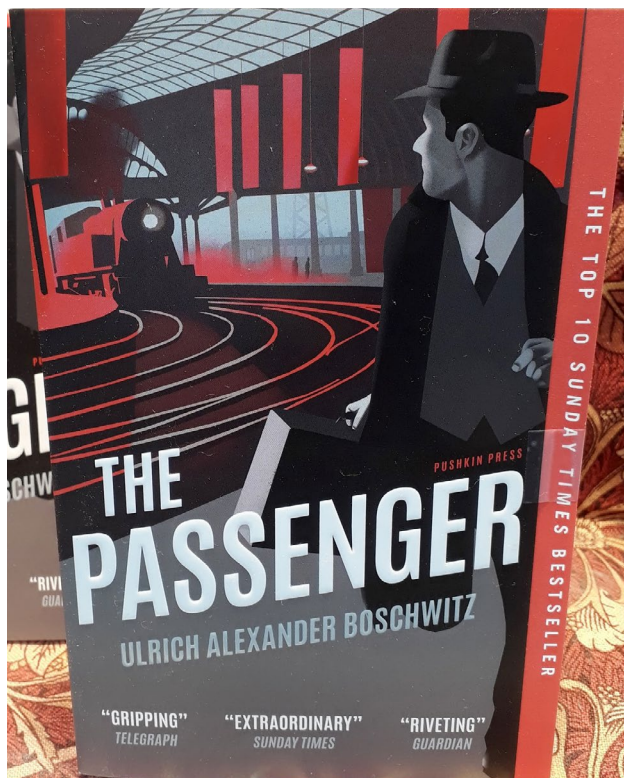
## CLUB NOTES

### New Members

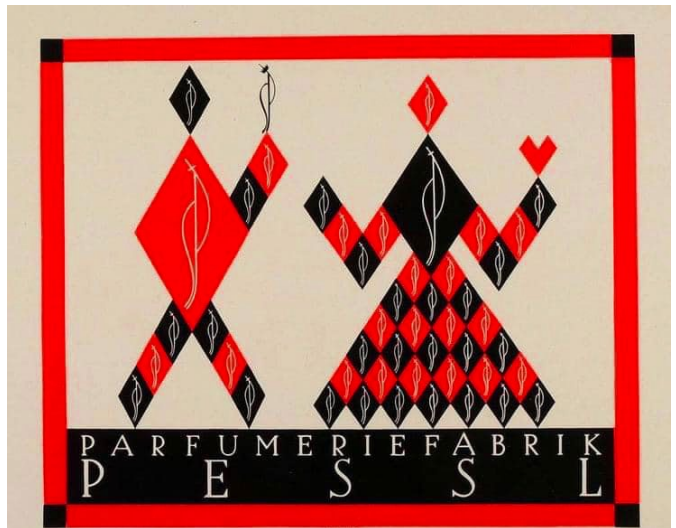
JUST ONE NEW bug this time, Stephen Barber from London. He describes himself as a retired septuagenarian and declines to submit a photograph of himself, but explains: “I usually subscribe to the Groucho Marx theory of club membership. In this case I am making an exception for two reasons. I first encountered the club when I attended the recent Alex Mendham concert at Conway Hall and enjoyed the evening. I have always been a throw-back and even while growing up in the 60s and 70s preferred the music of the 30s and 40s. During the evening I had the opportunity to chat with several other members of the audience who told me about the NSC and its penchant for that era.” He modestly gives his special skills or areas of expertise as “none” but he likes a Manhattan cocktail, lives ten minutes from the Wheatsheaf and has the same hat size as me, so he’s clearly a good fellow.

### Club Tie Corner

A FAIR NUMBER of actual ties this time, including this still from *Minder* (middle right, from Matthew Howard) and this scene from Mark Christopher in which the civil servant standing behind two UK Cabinet Secretaries, Sir Robert Armstrong and Sir Robin Butler, is clearly a Member (bottom right). This book jacket (top right) from Ivan Debono has Chappist tendencies, although the fellow’s own tie is plain black. Facing page, clockwise from top left: 1928 poster for a Viennese menswear shop, spotted on the Art Deco Era Motor and Fashion Facebook group; 1980s Superman in Club Silk from Bruce Partington-Plans; our own Viscount Rushen in his day job as Speaker of the Isle of Man parliament; Nixon’s second Attorney General Richard Kleindienst, from Stephen Smith; Col. Choke, always digging dirt, has evidence of a



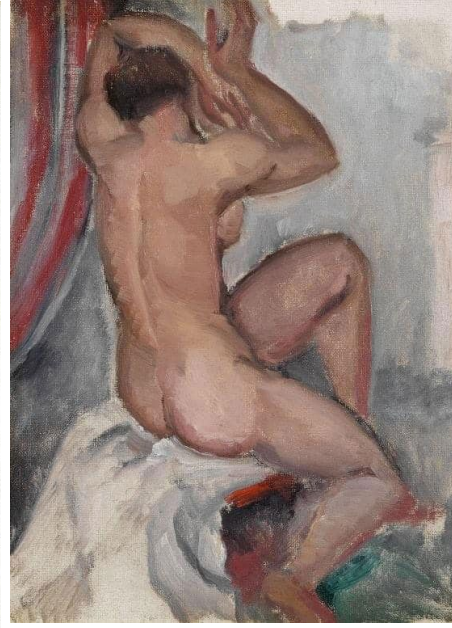
Club stake in an Austrian perfume brand; a matching set of knits, spotted in a charity shop by James Rigby; Iris Apfel shows her Club sympathies, as decoded by Suzanne Coles.





The NSC transport hub now includes (clockwise from below) a spaceship from Debono, this futuristic car from Paul van der Hart; a Club barge, for which you'll have to look carefully in the Bacino di San Marco, immortalised by Canaletto (Debono again); our own rather jaunty-looking tank (Debono's been drunk at the drawing board again); and even our own railway station, lovingly maintained by Viscount Rushen. Facing page, clockwise from top left: Stephen Smith is convinced this vision in *The Bear in Woodstock* is an analogue of the dusty plaques





in provincial hotels proudly announcing that the local Rotary meets there; Debono sees meaning in Serge Poliakoff's *Composition rouge, grise et noire*; the sitter in Dorothea Maetzel-Johannsen's study of sartorial angst is clinging on to some Chappist dignity, as spotted by Col. Choke, who also offers this aggressive Club rug; Ed Marlowe, meanwhile has found the definitive Club baker's boy cap; more largesse for the Club's art collection, as Col. Choke observes, "Having survived The Terror, the Glorious Committee's speeches and general bread roll throwing at club dinners was nothing to her;" it's taken David Pittard's keen eye to realise the Papa Lazarou is a Member; Col. Choke is also responsible for this tender portrait of Amos, head of the Club's cattle rustling operations in Dakota





## 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](http://www.newsheridanclub.co.uk) plus our Facebook page.

### 🚫 NSC Club Night

Wednesday 3rd November

7pm–11pm

The upstairs room at the Wheatsheaf,  
25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB

Admission: Free

See page 2. Luca Jellinek will tease us with a talk intriguingly titled, *Three outrageous notions you were warned about in school*. “There are three pieces of received wisdom common to survivors of late 20th-century formal education. I would like to challenge them, tonight,” he elaborates. “Causation and correlation are more closely entwined than many think. The dark ages were really dark; and beauty is not really in the eye of

the beholder.”

Once again we will be attempting to live-stream the talk from the pub for the benefit of those who can’t make it in person—as ever at the mercy of the Wheatsheaf’s wifi—as well as recording the video to upload later. The YouTube link to watch live is <https://youtu.be/1ObBTgny2BU>.

### **Remember, Remember the ‘Tache of Movember**

Until 30th November

Your face

Admission: Free but you might like to donate to Movember

Although all Club Members don’t like to talk about the extensive charity work they do, Movember is upon us. At the suggestion of Baron Solf we are hoping to see more beards and moustaches in the effort to raise a few guineas for good causes.

The rules:

- 1) One must be cleanshaven on 31st October or 1st November.
- 2) Choice of facial hair is traditionally a moustache, however all forms are acceptable.
- 3) Ladies and gentlemen can partake.
- 4) Photographic updates are welcome but more important is that first and final photos are a must. (Best to upload to the Facebook event though if you aren’t on Facebook you could just email them to us.)

5) A donation to Movember to those who can afford to in current climes.

We may have a vote for best and worst (in jest) effort for which there shall be a small prize.

### **Kingsley & Co Literary Festival**

Saturday 6th November

10am–3pm

Kingsley & Co, Strand Shopping Centre, Bootle, L20 4SZ

Anyone of a steampunk persuasion who finds themselves in the Bootle area this Saturday might consider this. Organiser Tish Toglet

## EXPLORE THE PAST AT



Bootle Children's  
Literary Festival 2021



Chitty Chitty  
Bang Bang Trike



Professor Elemental



Take a ride in our  
Time Machine

Featuring Story Workshops, Victorian games and  
Steampunk Guests and local authors!

**Saturday 6th November**

Kingsley&Co,

Strand Shopping Centre, Bootle, L20 4SW





Wallow in decadent plays at the Albany Theatre

### **The East London Furniture Flea**

Sunday 7th November  
10.30am–4.30pm  
York Hall, 5–15 Old Ford Road, Bethnal Green, London, E2 9PJ  
Admission: £5 from 10.30am, £4 from 11.30am from Ticket Tailor

Returning after the Covid hiatus, Vintage Furniture Flea

of the Liverpool League of Gentlemen (And Extraordinary Ladies) volunteers at a children's steampunk bookshop (yes, apparently there is such a thing) which is having a children's literary festival (seemingly part of a wider Bootle Literary Festival running from Thursday to Saturday). They are asking for steampunks to come and do their usual stuff including tea- and parasol-duelling and general promenading around. Contact Tish via the Facebook event if you'd like to take part. Anyone in steampunk attire gets free tea and biscuits. Professor Elemental will be doing a free gig in the evening at the Locke and Key pub.

### **Clerkenwell Vintage Fashion Fair**

Sunday 7th November  
11am–5pm  
Freemason's Hall, 60 Great Queen Street, London WC2B 5AE  
Admission: £5 per day (£3 for students) or £7.50 for a weekend pass from Eventbrite

After months of running events virtually via Instagram, the Clerkenwell Vintage Fashion Fair returns to Covent Garden at the Freemasons Hall with more than 50 dealers in vintage fashion, accessories, trimmings and textiles from the 1900s onwards, alongside designer labels from Biba, Ossie Clark and Dior to YSL, Chanel and more.

There will be an on-the-spot alterations team to help make purchases fit or you can bring items you already own to be revamped. There will also be food and refreshments served all day in Freemasons Hall cafe.

There will be Health & Safety measures in place on the day and, owing to restrictions on numbers, you may be asked to wait before entering. For this reason it may be a good idea to buy your ticket in advance.

focuses on mid-century furniture homewares as a combination of quality and affordability, as opposed to expensive reproductions. Expect to see chairs, tables and more by giants like Ercol and G-Plan, cocktail glasses and barware and kitchenalia, textiles and fabrics, sewing machines, cameras, record players and radios, posters and magazines, lampshades, mirrors, toys, telephones, ceramics, lighting and more.

### **Barrelhouse Hot Jazz Jam**

Sundays 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th November  
8.30–11.30pm  
The Barrelhouse, 33 Gordon Road, Bristol, BS8 1AW  
Admission: Free

Seeing out your weekend and seeing in the coming week with a Sunday night dose of hot jazz and cocktails. Preemptively cast aside those Monday blues with the aid of the Barrelhouse's weekly Hot Jazz Jam, hosted by Jack Calloway and selected members of the Parlophonians Orchestra. Bring your instruments, bring your dance partners and be sure to cool yourself off with the help of the infamous Jack Calloway cocktail...

### **Decadent Plays: A Rehearsed Reading**

Wednesday 10th November  
6.30–8pm  
The Albany Theatre, Douglas Way, Deptford, London SE8 4AG  
Admission: Free, but booking essential from the theatre's website

A one-night-only rehearsed reading of "decadent" plays, courtesy of the British Association of Decadent Studies.

While commonly associated with hedonism and excess, the word "decadence" has a much richer set of connotations, including a taste for

decay, delight in uncommon sexual and cultural practices, and the upturning of moral hierarchies.

For this event, BADS has selected some of the most innovative scenes from Remy de Gourmont's *Lilith* (1892), in a new translation by Dan Rebellato; the first act of Jean Lorrain's *Ennoia* (1905), translated into English for the first time by Jennifer Higgins; Djuna Barnes's brilliant one-act play *The Dove* (1923); and a little-known text that was well ahead of its time by Izumi Kyōka called *Kerria Japonica* (1923). The curators and translators will also be offering short introductions to each of the performed texts.

### Some Like It Swing

Friday 12th November

7.30–11.30pm

Genesis Cinema, 93–95 Mile End Road, London E1 4UJ

Admission: £5 for the lesson (prebooking recommended from [genesiscinema.co.uk](http://genesiscinema.co.uk)); social dance is free

Dress: 1940s

Genesis Cinema and SwingdanceUK invite you to a monthly swing dancing night where you can learn the steps at the beginners class, enjoy some cocktails and Lindy Hop till you drop:



Gasping for a pint? You only have to wait until the 13th and you can drink in five pubs in one day

7.30pm: Beginners Lindy Hop class with Simon and Anna (£5)

8.30pm: Dancing with resident DJ Mr Kicks (free); all welcome.

### 🚫 Annual NSC Pub Crawl

Saturday 13th November

3–11pm

Various hostelrys in Blackheath and Greenwich, London

Admission: Free but bring money for beer

Club Member and CAMRA stalwart Mr Ian White will be conducting his annual New Sheridan Club pub crawl. See page 25 for details.

### 🚫 NSC Virtual Pub Quiz

Wednesday 17th November

7.45pm

Online via Zoom

Admission: Free

Despite the return to monthly corporeal

meetings at the Wheatsheaf, there is still an interest in the virtual pub quizzes held during lockdown, so for now we will continue them on a monthly basis, on the third Wednesday of the month (balancing our Club Nights which are on the first Wednesday).

This time your host will be Cyril Browne. You'll need the (free) Zoom app installed, which should launch automatically when you click on the meeting's weblink. (You can go directly via Zoom: the meeting ID is 879 0116 0711 and the



Love the glamour and hedonism of the 1920s? Relive it at the Candlelight Club

passcode is 544646.) The quiz starts at 8pm, though the meeting convenes about 15 minutes earlier to allow people to register their teams if they haven't already done so. The quiz will have six rounds with an interval, and each team can play their joker on one round in advance, which doubles the points they receive for that round.

### **The Candlelight Club**

Friday 19th and Saturday 20th November

7pm–12am

A secret location in central London

Admission: £25 in advance

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

The Candlelight Club is a clandestine pop-up 1920s speakeasy, in a secret London venue lit by candles. Each event offers a one-off cocktail menu with special themes, plus live period jazz bands and vintage vinylism for your dancing pleasure. Ticket holders get an email two days before revealing the location.

As the nights draw in and the party season kicks off, we'll be warming up the dance floor with live music from those Nordic funsters the Swing'It Dixieband, hugely successful on the jazz and festival scene across Europe. Want to know what Disney songs sound like in a Dixieland style? You're about to find out.

Hosting, of course, will be the Lord of Cabaret misrule, Champagne Charlie, with a slap, a tickle and a saucy song. When the band aren't playing DJs the Bee's Knees will be spinning vintage vinyl into the night. There will also be a pop-up vintage jewellery store, a fortune teller and a roaming photographer.

In addition to the main cocktail bar, our famous rum, absinthe and cigar bar will be selling genuine Havana cigars to smoke in our private garden. You can reserve a table with Champagne, to which you can also add food



Ever wished you could hear Mark Christopher waffle about clothes? My friend, your dream has come true

from a menu of snacks and sharing platters.

“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*

### **Unsuitable: The End of Sartorialism?**

Friday 19th November

8–10pm

The Tea House Theatre, 139 Vauxhall Walk, London SE11 5HL

Admission: £10

Join the NSC's own Mark Christopher and Jason Von Rukovina for the first in a series of evenings of lively, entertaining, and informative dialogues on a whole host of topics, beginning with “Unsuitable” where our hosts will discuss contemporary dress and deportment and ask if it's the end of sartorialism.

### **Bishopsgate Swing**

Sunday 21st November

6.30–10.30pm

Bishopsgate Insitute, 230 Bishopsgate, London EC2M 4QD

Swing dance night in partnership with Swing Patrol, with live music from Palace Avenue Swing. Prebooked tickets only, from [www.bishopsgate.org.uk/whats-on/activity/211017-bishopsgate-swing](http://www.bishopsgate.org.uk/whats-on/activity/211017-bishopsgate-swing). It sounds as if they are still being pretty cautious re. Covid, so read the T&Cs on the website.



RIP Fruity Hatfield-Peverel (see pages 26–27). This was taken on the narrow-gauge railway in Dungeness, the last time I saw him. (Photo courtesy of Rachel Effeny)