

ALBION EMPORIUM

The New Sheridan Club

Newsletter

XX • June 2008

PLUS:

Mad Dogs and Englishmen

Preparations begin for the summer party

Gordon Brettell

Real life rake and daredevil

What Whisky Is For

The first NSC tasting takes place

The 39 Steps

Club discount to see stage production

Albion Means Business

The Geovictwardian purveyor of all things British





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.

The Editor Writes

Greetings, Chumrades. This month I have so much exciting news that it is difficult to know where to start. A date and place have been set for this year's summer party, titled "Mad Dogs and Englishmen". It has the theme of the British abroad and, as usual, there will be performances, games, prizes and our famous Grand Raffle. So keep 19th July free.

The Club seems to be forging some fruitful links (if you'll pardon the mixed metaphor). Our connections with James Lock, the hatter's, led to our being approached by the people behind the light-hearted stage adaptation of *The 39 Steps*, offering us a discounted group outing to see it; see later in this issue for details. Albion, whose fizzog graces the cover of this newsletter, has also been distributing NSC promotional material in his shop; in fact on Saturday we delivered a small display to be erected in time for some official visits by gaggles of journalists at the beginning of this week.

Even our feature on Flt Lt Gordon Brettell has a strange origin: it was originally sent in to *Reader's Digest*, a magazine where Committee Member Mr Clayton Hartley earns his crust. Although not quite right for that publication, it immediately struck Mr Hartley as having a potential appeal for Members of this Club. He lost no time in cheating the author of all rights to the work, that you might be able to enjoy it.

The Next Meeting

The next Meeting of the New Sheridan Club will take place on Wednesday 4th June, 8pm-11pm, upstairs at The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB. This month, Mr Lee Sayer will address us on *The History of the Camera*.

The Last Meeting

At our May meeting, art historian Dr Jonathan Black treated us to an illustrated lecture on the artist Eric Kennington and his friendship with T.E. Lawrence. We learned of the hazards of drawing Arabs—one must avoid using just black and white, as these are the colours of Hell, and one must also shoulder the responsibility of supplying the portraits with souls on Judgement Day—and were treated to slides of many artworks, including a drawing of Lawrence that the great man himself considered too revealing to allow it to be reproduced in his own book. And we were left with the great question of why Kennington depicted Lawrence on his tomb dressed in Arab robes but with his feet crossed—in the style of a Crusader.

We were also graced with the presence of a number of new visitors, including Kacper and Avi who had found out about the Club from Albion's new Emporium, and Miss Sophie Jonas and Mr Ivor Fancie, of Burlesque Brunch fame.



(Above) Our guide, art historian Dr Jonathan Black; (right) the ghostly image of Lawrence dominates the room



(Left) Miss Hartley simpers for the lens, with Mrs Hartley in the background; (right) Scarheart welcomes new visitors; (below left) Miss Sophie Jonas reveals needlework that was apparently executed live on television



(Below) Guest Emily seems not to be too horrified by it all so far; (bottom) Kacper (on the left) and Avi recently joined, having learned about us in Albion's Emporium



(Left) the portrait that Lawrence himself deemed too revealing; (below left), the tomb with both Arab and Crusader elements; (below) the work *The Kensingtons at Laventie* (1915), painted on glass





ESSAYS OF NOTE AND WORTH

Flight Lieutenant Gordon Brettel DFC

By *Derrick W. Croisdale*

GORDON BRETTELL was born in Pyford, Surrey, in 1915. His father was lance-corporal in the Honorable Artillery Company but his principal occupation was a stockbroker; they were a well-off family. Brettell was educated privately, first at Sunningdale Preparatory School and then at Cheltenham College until he was 18. At 15, he almost died of mastoids but recovered, much to everyone's surprise.

It was only the first of many brushes with death in the 29 years of his life.

At Cheltenham he was a good all-rounder. He took part in debating competitions, rowed, played hockey, rugby and cricket and was captain of his house boxing team ("not a great boxer but pretty tough" was the college

assessment). He also sang in a college quartet. In his teens he took his younger brother to a fairground where there was a "wall of death", a cylindrical structure around the inside of which performers rode motorcycles on the vertical wall. At the end of the performance the audience was asked if anyone would like to have a go. Young Gordon immediately volunteered and amazed everyone by not only riding the motorbike conventionally but repeating his performance sitting on the handlebars.

He went up to Clare College, Cambridge, in 1934 and graduated three years later with a BA. At Cambridge he became secretary to the university Automobile Club and became passionately interested in car racing. This was to be his main interest up to the outbreak of the Second World War. After graduating he became a freelance author writing for boys' magazines and racing car journals. His favourite vehicle was an Austin Seven "Ulster" which he raced frequently at Brooklands. On one occasion his brakes failed halfway through a race but he pressed on and won by a comfortable margin. Another time he misjudged his speed negotiating one of the steeply banked bends and spun off the top, crashing to the ground. He sustained six bone fractures but was racing again within a month.

On the day Germany invaded Poland,



Brettell making history as the first driver to win a five-lap Campbell-circuit race, during the Whitsun Brooklands races, 1938

Gordon immediately went to the RAF Recruitment Office and enlisted for service as a pilot. Pending his call-up he worked at Vickers Ltd, Weybridge, on the production of the Wellington bomber. He was called up on 20th January 1940 and did his training at No.5 Service Flying Training School, RAF Bassingbourne. During his training he managed to wangle a flight for his younger brother serving in the Royal Artillery. They flew in a Miles Magister and "beat up" their parents' home in Chertsey, Surrey. His brother recalls that they dived at over 140mph—upon landing, Gordon apologised for not having dived faster, but the wings were supposed to come off at 140mph.

On 17th February 1941, Gordon got his wings and was commissioned Pilot Officer. His active service was mainly at Biggin Hill with squadrons 92, 124 and 111 flying Spitfires Mk VB. On

4th September he was severely wounded in the head in an action over France. Gordon wrote a detailed account of this action at the request of the Medical Officer who attended him. It was later published in the *Sunday Pictorial* and *Reader's Digest* under the title "There Were Too Many Huns", using the pen name Pilot Officer Stanley Hope. In the action he was pounced upon by ten ME109s; he managed to damage one enemy aircraft before being compelled to make good his escape by diving down to sea level where the Spitfire was slightly faster than the ME109F. His head wounds caused him to lose consciousness from time to time and blood obscured his vision. He expressed relief that he didn't have a date that night so he wouldn't let anyone down if he didn't make it back. But make it back he did, and made a respectable landing. The surgeon who operated on him gave him the pieces of metal he removed from



his skull as a memento. A later citation for his DFC states that after his injury "he resumed operational flying with renewed zest".

Gordon has been described variously as "a careful planner", "impetuous", "a ladies' man", "a gentleman and a gentle man who never lost his temper", "modest" and—by an American pilot who evaded capture after a later catastrophe for which Brettell was arguably to blame—"a great guy". Perhaps it was all these qualities that led to his court martial on 14th April 1942. Two weeks previously there had been an Officers' Mess party to which a number of WAAF's (Women's Auxiliary Air Force) had been invited. Gordon befriended one of the WAAF's who, late in the evening, said she would have to leave because transport was waiting to take them back to their airfield. Gordon must have exercised his charm because he persuaded her to stay the night and also

promised to get her back in time for morning parade. He was court martialled because, true to his word, he got her back—in his Spitfire. Dispensing with parachutes, he flew sitting on the WAAF's lap. The official record states, "Tried by General Court Martial at Biggin Hill on 14.4.42 under Sections 39A(1)(b) and 40 Air Force Act; that 'When on active service was likely to cause damage to aircraft by improperly and without authority carrying a passenger, neglected to wear his parachute harness contrary to Regulations'. Guilty. Sentence: severe reprimand."

On 2nd August he was posted to 133 Squadron as a flight commander. The squadron was in action almost every day. The busiest was on 19th August in support of the combined operation at Dieppe. Gordon was at readiness from four o'clock in the morning and took part in all four missions flown that day, finally touching down at nearly nine o'clock in the evening in bad visibility. The air fighting had been fierce but the squadron acquitted itself exceedingly well, destroying or damaging 16 enemy aircraft without any loss. In this action Gordon shot down a FW190.

No.133 Squadron was one of three "Eagle" squadrons in the RAF, comprised mostly of American volunteer pilots. The squadron had been formed in August 1941 under Squadron Leader George A. Brown, who famously addressed the young Americans: "Gentlemen, no Englishman is more appreciative than I to see you American volunteers over here to assist us in our fight. It is going to get a lot tougher as time goes by, so

take a good look around this room—because a year from now most of you will be dead." The young pilots were dumbstruck. In fact, in the following 13 months, 23 pilots were killed, 13 in action and 10 in accidents.

An emotional day was 19th August 1942, the date of the first raid by B17s of the United States Army Air Force (USAAF) on enemy-occupied Europe. No.133 Squadron was given the honour of escorting the 12 B17s in a raid on railway yards in Rouen, which they did without loss. The main hazard was the trigger-happy air gunners in the B17s, who couldn't tell the difference between Spitfires and ME109s. After being shot at on the return journey the squadron dived to sea level and left the B17s to go home alone.

At the beginning of September, the RAF began to re-equip the squadron in readiness for the transfer to the USAAF. To deal with the transfer formalities, the American Squadron Leader Carroll McColpin was summoned to London for a few days. His place was taken by Gordon Brettell.

On 26th September the squadron was to escort a group of B17s to Morlaix in Brittany. There was heavy cloud, but navigation was not going to be a problem as the squadron would be vectored by RAF Exeter. When they reached the rendezvous point there was no sign of the bombers, so they were ordered to circle and wait. In fact the B17s had left 20 minutes early but had not

bothered telling the RAF. Moreover, an unexpected 100mph wind at the operational height was rapidly carrying the squadron towards Brittany. By the time RAF Exeter realised what was happening, the Spitfires were

"109s came down on me from every corner of the sky and in no time I was in the centre of a large gaggle, consisting of nine or ten Messerschmits and one Spitfire—mine! I didn't care for the look of things and felt a bit anxious, although not actually frightened. I was acutely keyed up and highly interested. I hardly ever remember feeling frightened once a fight has started, though frequently on other occasions."

From 'There Were Too Many Huns', *Reader's Digest*, 1942

out of radio contact.


Brettell made two inexplicable decisions. The first was to keep circling after radio contact was lost. Eventually they did spot some B17s heading north, but by this time fuel was running low so he decided to abort and head for Bolt Head. His second odd decision was to take the whole squadron down out of the clouds to get bearings, when one plane would have done. They spotted the coastline and a large port that they took to be Plymouth. In fact it was Brest, the most heavily defended port on the Atlantic coast. In seconds, 11 of the 12 Spitfires were lost, either shot down or forced to crash-land or bale out from lack of fuel. Four pilots were killed, six were captured. One baled out, evaded capture and eventually made it back to England, having been jailed in Spain for a while. The twelfth plane had aborted earlier with engine trouble and crash landed near Kingsbridge.

Brettell's plane was hit by two cannon shells that reduced the port wing to a skeleton. Unable to bale out, he hit the ground at 200mph. He later spoke well of the German soldiers who extricated him from the wreckage

and administered morphia. He was well treated in hospital but delayed telling his parents about his injuries in case they were worried. By the time he was on the mend, however, he wrote, describing that he had "four broken ribs, three broken vertebrae, left shoulder blade broken, right sholder blade dislocated, a sprained knee, a large cut on my head, a very squashed-in chest, a ricked neck, two marvellous black eyes, a broken tooth. I also gathered that I had a fractured skull, but I think I must have misunderstood this because my head never felt the least bad... These ailments, though not individually serious, do look slightly formidable when lined up in a row." Less than a month after the crash, he said that all he felt was a little, rapidly vanishing stiffness.

Three days after he was shot down, Gordon was awarded the DFC, citing his 111 sorties over enemy-occupied territory and his great "keenness to engage the enemy". Meanwhile, Brettell himself was headed for Stalag Luft III, a POW camp for Allied airmen 100 miles south-east of Berlin.

He became a regular escapee. On one occasion he and a Belgian prisoner were

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Name: <u>BRETTCELL</u>															Staatsangehörigkeit: <u>England</u>														
Vorname: <u>Edward Gordon</u>															Dienstgrad: <u>F/Lt.</u>														
Geburtstag und -ort: <u>19.3.15, verweig.</u>															Truppenteil: <u>RAF</u> Komp. usw.:														
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Brettell's identity papers from Stalag Luft III

making for the Baltic Sea, hoping to sail for Sweden. It was winter and they came upon a wide frozen river. Unsure if it would hold their weight they crawled across on hands and knees, testing the strength of the ice as best they could. Eventually reaching the far side, exhausted and cold, they sat down for a rest. Almost at once they heard a rumbling—and a column of German army vehicles came driving down the middle of the river.

With each escape, Gordon was recaptured after a few days and sentenced to two weeks' solitary confinement in the "cooler". On one occasion he apologised to the Luftwaffe Commandant, Colonel Friedrich-Wilhelm von Lindeiner-Wildau, a professional and honourable soldier, for the trouble he might be causing him. The Colonel silenced him by striking the table with his fist and announcing that it was the *duty* of an officer to escape!

Gordon became a member of the forgery team which prepared documents for would-be escapees. He was an enthusiastic supporter of the planned escape by tunnel which would become known as the "Great Escape". The entrance to the tunnel, codenamed "Harry", was in the room Gordon shared with half a dozen other POWs. When the time was ripe for the escape, a ballot was held to determine who would be in the first batch to escape through the tunnel. Gordon was one of those selected.

On the night of 24th March 1944, 81 prisoners escaped through the tunnel. Gordon and two others were free for two nights but were recaptured after being reported by a suspicious railway booking clerk as they were making good progress for the Baltic.

Hitler was furious about the escape and ordered 50 of the escapees to be shot. Gordon was one of those selected and he was killed by Gestapo Captain Reinholt Bruchardt on 29th March on the outskirts of Danzig. The camp Commandant was arrested and charged with negligence. At his trial he was asked what he would have done if Hitler had ordered him to shoot the prisoners. He replied that he would rather have shot himself. He was sentenced to two years imprisonment. Not so fortunate were three German electricians: they were executed for allowing large quantities of wire to fall into the POWs' hands.

The cremated remains of the 50 escapees

were returned to Stalag Luft III. Colonel von Lindeiner, while awaiting his trial, paid for materials and tools to enable the POWs to build a stone memorial. This was completed towards the end of 1944 and on 4th December a remarkable ceremony was held. Attending were senior German officers, 15 POW officers representing the nations of the dead, members of the Swiss Legation, an Anglican and a Roman Catholic priest and a guard of honour of German soldiers. A POW bugler sounded "The Last Post" and the guard of honour fired a volley of shots. In the middle of a savagely-fought war, it was an act of great nobility and courage by the Germans who took part.

For his part in the escape, Gordon Brettell was mentioned in dispatches.

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Selling England by the Pound

ALBION, WHOM you may know from Club events and the Chap Olympics, has a new business venture, the doors of which were thrown open for the first time on 1st May. Albion Emporium sells groceries with one thing in common: "Everything we stock is British," says the man himself, "either British made or with a long association with Britain, such as Navy rum." You will find old-fashioned sweets and biscuits, preserves, cordials, country wines and some spirits.

Installed at 38 Tavistock Street, in London's "Theatreland", Albion is hoping for good passing trade from charmed tourists and culture-starved thespians alike, but the bulk of his turnover is expected to come from the basement room where hampers will be assembled. "Unlike most hamper companies, which just offer a few set hampers at various price points, we let the customer choose exactly what goes in," he explains. And there's choice when it comes to the hamper itself: in addition

to traditional wicker baskets, he is also planning to offer pirate chests, wooden tuck boxes and, for the spoony customer, romantic assemblages of heart-shaped items and containers, including a cardioid hip flask filled with your loved one's favourite tittle (I wonder how much Malibu and pineapple it actually holds..?).

At the back of the shop is the Refectory, where the footsore shopper can take tea in a genteel environment. In the future Albion will offer a take-away menu (presumably ploughman's lunches, Cornish pasties, etc.).

He is still experimenting with opening hours, though he is currently open seven days a week, and is assembling his workforce—on a recent visit I found Club Member Alfred Chapman now employed there. PR is being handled by Alexa Perrin, who previously took care of Hendrick's gin, so we can be sure the enterprise is in good hands.

For more details and developments, see www.thealbionemporium.co.uk.



(Clockwise from top left) A nascent customer is drawn to the window; the new shop, freshly stocked; various Green Men and dragons ward off shoplifters; hampers awaiting filling; Albion and Alfred in the Refectory



Club Brings Critical Tastebud to Bear on Whisky

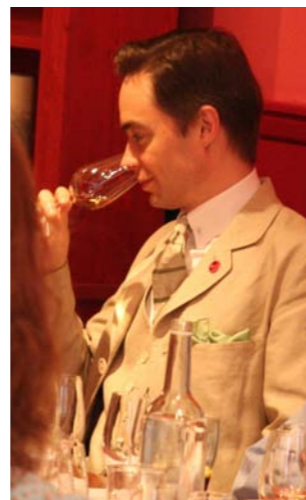
ALMOST A YEAR ago, Giles, our host at the Coach and Horses for The Last Gasper and an enthusiastic supporter of everything the Club stands for, suggested that he organise a whisky tasting for us. With the cobra-like speed and focus for which the NSC is famed, this event duly took place last month.

Those attending sampled five different spirits (if memory serves, Monkey Shoulder blended malt, Glenkinchie 10-year-old, Glenfiddich 15-year-old solera, Oban 14-year-old and Lagavulin 16-year-old), guided by a young chap named Alex, who actually used to work at the Coach and Horses (and seemed unable to resist the urge to get back behind the bar and help out later on).

We were then treated to a splendid three-course meal, including such Scottish-themed delights as cock-a-leekie soup, a herring and potato terrine, smoked salmon, duck served with haggis and whisky jellies.



(Clockwise from top) Crib sheets to identify the drams; a kilted Baron of Bermondsey; Hartley deploys his delicate nostrils; the whiskies await the NSC; (l-r) Kacper, Avi, Sophie Jonas and Ivor Fancie



TRINKET OF DREAMS!

Now *this* is a cocktail cabinet. I hadn't the courage to ask the price but I'll wager it was a factor in its remaining unsold by the end of the fair. Not only is the inside illuminated but between the upper and lower sections is a pull-out glass shelf on which to perpetrate your mixology.

Do you have a Trinket of Dreams? Why not write and share your lust?



(Top) The impressive facade of the main entrance; (above right) stall holders pack up at the end of the day; (below right) the perfect spot for a picnic on the banks of the moat; (below) the only way to travel to a vintage fair



A Palatial Day Out

ON 11TH MAY half a dozen Members paid a visit to Eltham Palace in south-east London. It's a treat under any circumstances, with wonderful Art Deco interiors as installed by the Courtaulds in the 1930s, but on this occasion the medieval great hall was also host to an Art Deco fair, where pedlars offered jewellery, clothes, prints, furniture and more. Prices tended to be on the steep side (so it was just as well that most of us quickly ran out of cash) but perfect weather and an agreeable picnic in the grounds made for a splendid day out.



The Cocktail Cabinet

Wherein Club Members eulogise their desert-island drink

The Gimlet

Horatio Scotney-Le Cheyne



If there is one thing guaranteed to strike fear in to the heart of any chap or chapette it is the prospect of three months of enforced tee-totalism. The horror! Well, that exact fate befell this hapless correspondent upon undertaking some charity

work in the dark jungles of British North Borneo. For weeks on end I could only dream of debauched nights of drunken revelry as I was hunched over a mess-tin of tepid rice.

The drink in hand during these misty-eyed fantasies? The noble Gimlet. Second only—some would say equal to—the Martini, this cocktail has a history shrouded in mystery and today divides connoisseurs as to how exactly it should be mixed.

The Gimlet is possibly named after the small, corkscrew-shaped tool that Royal Navy sailors used for tapping into kegs of lime juice. Since gin was a favourite libation, a little of it was bound to wind up in the lime juice eventually. The other theory behind the Gimlet's name is that Sir Thomas Desmond Gimlette, who joined the Royal Navy in 1879 as a Surgeon (retiring in 1913 as Surgeon General), induced his messmates to drink their anti-scurvy ration by mixing it with gin. The mixture caught on and, legend has it, the drink was named in his honour. (Add this to the daily rum ration and it is a wonder the Navy was ever sober long enough to conquer the High Seas, but I digress.)

Whichever story is true, the drink would not have come about or achieved its 20th-century prominence but for the 1867 patent of Lauchlin Rose's method of preserving lime juice

without the addition of alcohol. By 1879 Rose's Lime Juice Cordial was the standard for preserved lime juice aboard a British ship. Either way the Gimlet was born.

My first encounter with the Gimlet can be dated to one day a few years ago when, upon running out of tonic I began rooting about in the rear echelons of my drinks cabinet for a substitute. (My butler met with a sticky end shortly thereafter.) Disaster was narrowly averted upon the discovery of a dusty bottle of Rose's Lime Cordial. A quick browse through Mr. Tobias Steeds' tome, *Hollywood Cocktails* revealed the following recipe:

50ml Gin
25ml Rose's Lime Cordial

Pour the gin into a cocktail shaker filled with ice; add cordial to taste (2 parts gin, 1 part cordial is the norm). Shake sharply and pour in to a frosted martini glass.

Inevitably this perfectly simple recipe has been needlessly tinkered with over the years. For example, a 1928 recipe called for the addition of soda. (As any right-thinking aficionado will tell you, this is a Gin Rickey.) Such wrong-headedness will not be further entertained here. Still others have the Rose's substituted with fresh lime juice and simple syrup, the argument being that the use of fresh ingredients results in a superior cocktail.

Nonsense! The drink's appeal rests on the perfect balance between the kick of the gin and the sweetness of the cordial. The use of fresh lime juice and sugar arguably does not get this delicate balance right. Surely this is what the Cordial is for?

In the words of Terry Lennox in Raymond Chandler's *The Long Goodbye*, "A real gimlet is half gin and half Rose's Lime Juice and nothing else."

Quite so.



CLUB NOTES

Summer Party Date Announced

MAD DOGS AND ENGLISHMEN, the New Sheridan Club's summer party, will be held on Saturday 19th July. The theme will be the Colonial experience and the British abroad; think heat and dust, Colonial administrators going native, white mischief, interesting drug addictions, man's eternal Heart of Darkness and, oh, those damned drums!

The venue will be the oriental fleshpot that is Positively 4th Street at 119 Hampstead Road (near Warren Street tube station) in London—the only establishment I have visited that has robot punka-wallahs. Upstairs in the Long Bar there will be performers and fine cocktails; downstairs in the shady Opium Den will be games, assignations and the dissipation of hope in a billow of narcotic fumes. Kick-off is at 7pm and we have the place till 1am.

As usual, all are welcome. Admission is FREE to Members and £5 to non-Members, a sum which may be offset against Membership for those who choose to join on the night.

Arrangements are still in their infancy, but enticements will include:

- Our famous Grand Raffle (free to enter but only open to Members of the New Sheridan Club, including any who join on the night) where there will be hundreds of pounds worth of goodies to give away, including indispensable equipment for exploring, native artefacts, a hamper of comestibles to remind you of Blighty, a rubber plantation starter kit and, if it all goes wrong, a one-way ticket to the Foreign Legion barracks in Marseilles.

- Musical entertainments, including a Noel Coward singalong around the piano and the fabulous Mr B. the Gentleman Rhymer. I'm fairly confident we can get a performance out of poet Niall Spooner-Harvey (recent star of *that* video on YouTube), as he will be

celebrating his birthday with us on the night.

- Games, including a live tiger shoot, Pin the Sun-Downer on the Ex-Pat, and opportunities to test your knowledge of the Empire and your ability to plunder treasure from incredibly holy sites without falling foul of either the local people or the fabled Curse...

- Table-to-table missionary service
- The welcome return of the free Snuff Bar with 24 varieties to try
- Once again the cloakrooms will be stocked with exotic soaps, colognes, pomades, moustache wax, etc.

- Prizes will be awarded for grand futile gestures, such as building railways to nowhere through the jungle or dragging ships over mountains while listening to opera on the gramophone.

Special Theatre Offer for "The 39 Steps"

LONDON'S CRITERION Theatre has approached the Club offering to put on a special discount evening for us to see their light-hearted adaptation of John Buchan's *The Thirty-Nine Steps*. The proposed date is Friday 18th July—the day before the NSC party. Perhaps Country Members who were planning to come into Town for the party might wish to take in this stage production with us on the Friday.

Tickets for the occasion will be discounted from £42.50 to just £20. If you'd like to attend, please email mrhartley@newsheridanclub.co.uk so we can gauge the demand. For more details of the production direct your cabbage engine to www.love39steps.com.

Horatio Returns from Darkest Borneo

AT LAST, after months, Committee Member Mr Horatio Scotney-Le Cheyne has returned from his expedition into the heart of British North Borneo. (See page opposite for the harrowing tales of his nightly Gimlet fantasies.) Or at least he *claims* to be Horatio: you'd expect five

months in the jungle to leave its mark on a man—and dire have been the reports of Horatio's "going native", covering himself with brutal tattoos and even stepping out with no collar on—but privately it has been murmured that this could be an impostor, a cuckoo in our midst, as it were. Mrs S-LC seems happy enough, but we've all seen *The Return of Martin Guerre...* If anyone can think of a good way to test whether this man is the real Horatio Scotney-Le Cheyne, the Committee would be delighted to hear from you.

In the meantime we'll work on the assumption that it is he. He'll be presenting an illustrated lecture on his findings in Borneo later in the year.

Tie Stocks Run Low!

AS YOU ARE all aware, it is the privilege of the NSC Member to be allowed to purchase one of our 100% silk Club Ties, in the Club colours of black, red and silver and with a discreet "shadow weave" of the Club logo along the black stripe (see photograph opposite). Of the original batch of 70 we now have just one left. In order to get an idea of how many more to invest in, could anyone who would like to buy a tie please let Mr Hartley know at mrhartley@newsheridanclub.co.uk. The ties are excellent value at just £15 each.

Furbelows Take to the High Seas

IN A SHAMELESS plug, Mr Hartley would like to alert Members to the fact that The Furbelows, the beat combo in which both he and Member Miss Tabitha Maynard-Addersley perform, will be appearing at a pleasantly unusual event on Friday 6th June (next Friday). It is an annual party held by the band Whitestar on the Battersea Barge,

which is indeed a barge, floating on the Thames. If you've ever felt even the faintest vibrations of curiosity as to what The Furbelows are actually like live, then this is the ideal opportunity to find out. The bar is open from 7pm till 2am and the weather forecast is good for lolling on the top deck.

There are four bands in total, with the Furbelows on third at 9.30pm, followed by Whitestar at 10.15pm.

Oh, and don't be alarmed by the idea of going to a party on a boat, hosted by a band with the same name as the White Star Line, owners of the *Titanic*. The chances of being sunk by an iceberg on the Thames in June are less than 45%.

Tickets are £10 if you buy them from a Furbelow in advance, or £15 on the door. (Latest news: apparently you can secure £10 entry by telling the band you want it, even if they can't get a physical ticket to you. They



send your details to the host and you'll be on the list.) Alternatively you can buy tickets from TicketWeb but they seem to be £12.

See www.batterseabarge.com for details of how to get to the venue: nearest tube is Vauxhall (Exit 6) and apparently it's "behind the Fed Ex building".

For more details of The Furbelows, see www.myspace.com/thefurbelows.

New Member

WE'D LIKE to welcome Miss Isabel Von Appel into our ranks, as she has joined in the last month. She appears in the picture on page 11, sitting at the left end of the bench.



Forthcoming Events

Please check the Events page at www.newsheridanclub.co.uk for the latest details

White Mischief: Around the World in 80 Days

Saturday 7th June
8pm–3am
The Scala, 275 Pentonville Road, King's Cross, London
Tickets: See www.whitemischief.info

Their last "steampunk" night was apparently described by *Time Out* as "Event of the week, the month, the year!" and they are back. This time the theme is... well you can see it in the title. They've got musicians from Africa, Turkey, France—all the foreign places, really, plus all kinds of acrobats, snake charmers, burlesque dancers, the whole shebang. Sounds like a hoot.

Annual P.G. Wodehouse vs Sherlock Holmes Society Cricket Match

Sunday 22nd June
11.30am onwards
West Wycombe Cricket Ground, West Wycombe, Buckinghamshire

Admission: Free
Dress: Period schmutter not essential but will go down well

Ms Honoria Bellinger-Glossop has alerted us to this event. See www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk for details, which include the 1895 laws of cricket, by which the teams play. Previously there has been the option for visitors to field if they so desire but I do not know if that should be the case this year. There is a review of the 2006 match on the site which will best give attendees an idea of what to expect.

Parking is free should you motor up. Nearest railway station is High Wycombe from Birmingham and Marylebone directions. Ms Bellinger-Glossop can arrange 3 seats in her carriage to and from the ground on the day (if you email us we can forward applications for such charity), or cabs can be obtained at the station with ease.

In West Wycombe there is an establishment, The George and Dragon, which gives good tavern fayre and accommodation should anyone wish to arrive the night before, or be in the position to be able to stay on the Sunday night. Generally post match everyone retires to this hostelry, which is but a short walk from the ground, for sustenance before trekking homeward.

Aeneas Faversham Forever

Friday 27th June and Saturday 28th June
8pm
Greenwich Theatre, Crooms Hill, London SE10 8ES
Tickets: £14.50

Presented by Penny Dreadfuls, who call themselves a "Victorian sketch comedy troupe", *Aeneas Faversham Returns* was a sell-out success at Edinburgh last August. They have also had a wireless programme on Radio 7 recently, to which you can "listen again" at the Beeb's website. Anyway, this will be a preview of their 2008 Edinburgh show and it all strikes me as tremendously suitable for this Club. I can arrange to block book if people contact me soon, though I predict it will sell out very quickly, so I shan't hang around.

By the way, you might wish to join the Dreadfuls' Facebook group *I Believe in Eskimos*.



Until next time, Chumrades!
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FOR THE LATEST information on what the Club is up to and has done, who has been arrested, etc., have a squizz 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.