



PLUS:

- The scandal behind the Woolworth's story
 - Cally's 78 rpm compilation album
- The Club Summer Party announced

A Life On the Ocean Wave...

The annual
Oxford
punting
jaunt

The New Sheridan Club

Newsletter

XXXI • May 2009



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 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

I WRITE THIS having just returned from the annual Oxford punting jaunt—ah, the laughter of gilded youth mingling with the splash of punt poles, innocent pleasures in the open air, nature's honest bounty consumed in a sun-dappled arcadian grove. That was two days ago: now it's cold and rainy and we're all going to die from swine flu.

As it happens I fell ill the day after the punt trip (I did eat some ham...). I would like to think that no Member of the NSC could succumb to something called swine flu, as you presumably have to be a cad, rotter and blackguard to be vulnerable. However, on the off-chance that the disease is not that good a judge of character (it's from Mexico, where perhaps concepts of gentlemanly behaviour are different), I leave you with this advice supplied by *The News of the World* at the time of the 1918 flu epidemic:

“Wash inside nose with soap and water night and morning; force yourself to sneeze night and morning, then breath deeply. Do not wear a muffler; take sharp walks regularly and walk home from work; eat plenty of porridge.”

The Next Meeting

The next Club Meeting will take place on Wednesday 6th May in the upstairs room at

The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB, from 8pm until 11pm. Our guest speaker will be Eugenie Rhodes who will enchant us on the subject of *Faeries, Their History and Reputation*. I believe the talk will look at the Victorians' fascination with fairykind and will be illustrated with various fairy paintings from the period.

The Last Meeting

April's address was on the timely subject of Woolworth's, the chain which, in the UK, had just gone belly-up. Our speaker was the Earl of Essex (returning for his second visit to the crease as a Turn) and he described how the mighty global company was started by F. W. Woolworth, the son of a US potato farmer, who had the novel idea of putting goods on display rather than requiring customers to ask for what they wanted, and giving goods a fixed price, with no recourse to haggling. So successful was this concept that Woolworth became immensely wealthy, building himself a Xanadu-style mansion. Sadly, the fortune proved too much for his descendent, Barbara Hutton. Despite \$50 million landing in her lap, she sought happiness with unsuitable husbands and drug abuse, both of which habits drained even her prodigious resources.

Many thanks to the Earl for his talk. You can read an essay version of his address on page 4.



(Above) The Earl declaims; (left) a slide of Hutton with third husband Cary Grant; (below left, foreground) first-time appearance by Hugo Exxon-Valdez; (below right) the throng



(Above left) a rare sighting of David Saxby; (above) Fruity composes a question; (above right) Capt Coppice and Matthew Howard struggle with camera technology; (left) Seth looks suave while Compton-Bassett looks naughty; (right) Harold Graves and Willow take time out to quaff





Woolworth's

The Rise and Decline of a Five-and-Dime Dynasty

By *The Earl of Essex*

FRANK WINFIELD WOOLWORTH was born in 1852 in a modest farmhouse in Rodman, upper New York state. He was the son of a potato farmer but aspired to be a merchant and he worked for six years in a dry goods store. The first three months were unpaid, the owner exclaiming, "Why should I pay you for teaching you the business?"

While there he noticed that leftover items were priced at five cents and left on a table for customers to pick up—at a time when it was normal for the customer to hand the sales clerk a list of the things they wanted, rather than selecting the merchandise themselves.



F. W. Woolworth; (below) the house of his birth; (right) Frank (l) with Seymour Knox and Charles Woolworth



Woolworth liked the idea of the goods all being priced the same, so he borrowed \$300 and opened a store, where all the goods were on display and priced at five cents, in Utica, New York, on 22 February 1875. It failed within weeks.

Undeterred, he realised there should be a choice of prices, so he opened a second store in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in April 1875 with goods priced at five and ten cents. It was called The Five and Dime Store. This was successful and he and his brother Charles opened a large number of five and dime stores. Woolworth urged a lot of his family members and friends to become partners, including his old employer.

By now he had married Jennie Creighton in 1876 and had three daughters: Helena Maud Woolworth McCann, Edna Woolworth Hutton and Jessie May Woolworth Donahue.

The five and dime stores had separate names but in 1911 it was decided to bring them under the creator's name. And so the F. W. Woolworth company was incorporated with 586 stores. The business was now generating so much cash that Woolworth was able to build the company's headquarters in New York for \$13.5 million without recourse to borrowing. At the time it was the world's tallest building at 792 feet.

Woolworth's wealth also financed the building of Winfield Hall, in Glen Cove, Long Island, in 1916. The grounds required 70 full-time gardeners and the 56 rooms dozens of servants. The décor reflected his fascination with Egyptology,



The way shops were before Woolworth's (as seen in a still from *Kind Hearts and Coronets* (1949))

Napoleon and spiritualism. There was a huge pipe organ which, combined with a planetarium-style ceiling, created an eerie effect when he played it. The pink marble staircase which alone cost \$2 million.

For all his wealth Woolworth suffered an untimely death aged 66 in 1919. He had a fear of dentists and succumbed to complications following a tooth infection. He was interred in the family mausoleum.

Woolworth had pioneered the then unique concept of buying goods from manufacturers and putting them on display so customers could see and handle them, with a fixed price, negating the need for haggling. He felt the idea would work in Britain too, saying, "I believe that a good penny and sixpence store, run by a live Yankee, would be a sensation here." In fact when the first shop opened in Liverpool in 1909

everything was priced at thruppence and sixpence. He was there at the opening and it was a huge success.

Stores were opened in Preston, Manchester, Leeds, Hull and London over the next three years. At one point a new outlet opened every 17 days. The UK company eventually became larger and more successful than its American parent. In the 1920s local councils were begging Woolworth's to open in their towns.

The chain began selling records under its own name in 1923 and by the 1930s it was the No. 1 music retailer in the country with gramophones in stores so you could listen

before you bought.

From the first store toffees, boiled sweets and chocolate were sold by weight but in 1958 the company pioneered the concept of "pick and mix", with customers self-selecting confectionery. By the 1980s Woolworth's was Europe's largest confectioner.

The British company sold everything from stationery to garden furniture at reasonable

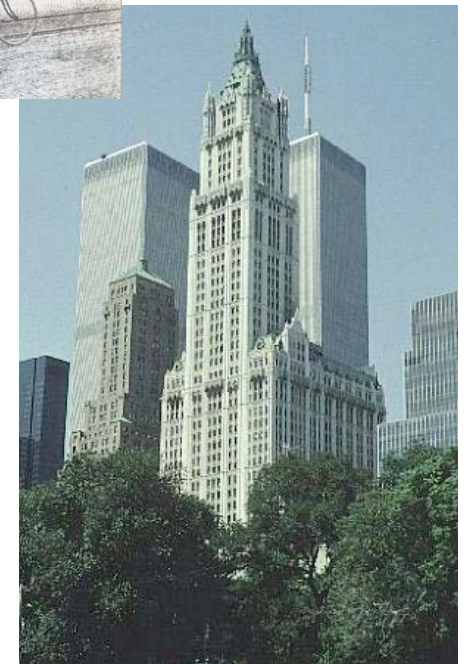
prices and became affectionately known as "Woollies". It came under separate British ownership in 1982 and was floated as a separate British company by its owners, Kingfisher, in 2001. However, it was downhill from here: falling sales led the company to sell its freehold stores to raise cash and after losses of £725 million in the first half of 2008 it fell into administration and eventual bankruptcy in January of this year. After failing to reach agreements with its bankers and landlords it now exists in name only, as an online shop.

In the States the company incorporated lunch counters as precursors to the modern shopping mall. The idea was widely copied and was a fixture in the down-towns of America in the first half of the 20th century.

In the 1960s the five



(Above) A Woolworth store in Watertown, NY, seemingly the establishment of Frank's old employer William Moore; now, the signs say, "Member of the Woolworth Syndicate" and "the birthplace of 5c and 10c stores"; (right) the Woolworth Building in New York City





Winfield Hall, F.W. Woolworth's mansion; (right) the mausoleum where he is interred



demise. Woolworth's changed its name to Venator and in October 2001 changed again to Footlocker Inc.

If F. W. Woolworth was a model of hard work, ingenuity and ambition, some of his descendents failed to live up to his example by a considerable measure—perhaps precisely because

and dime merged into the later discount store idea: Woolworth's created Woolco in 1962, along with competitors K-Mart, Target and Wal-Mart. With this increased competition Woolworth's lost its focus and its edge; the Woolco stores eventually closed in 1982, but continued in Canada until 1994, the remaining 144 shops being sold to Wal-Mart.

Woolworth's also created a number of other retail chains with specialist sporting goods and footwear, including Footlocker.

In July 1997 Woolworth's closed the remaining five and dime stores. The lower prices of the other big discount chains and the expansion of the grocery stores led to its



of the wealth into which they were born. Jimmy Donahue was the second son of Frank's daughter Jessie. His father James had received a dowry of \$5 million from Jessie and was a self-employed stockbroker with one major client—his wife. But he was an inveterate gambler and drunk who neglected his wayward son. He eventually committed suicide.

Jimmy was born in 1915. He had no employment to speak of and didn't really need any, though he was a sometime actor and producer. He was a roving ambassador, visiting

(Below) The Woolworth shop in Wavertree Road, Liverpool; (left) the window of London Road branch, Liverpool, 1931; (below right) Footlocker, the modern day incarnation



Woolworth stores. Barbara Hutton, his cousin, would finance these trips: "Would \$5,000 be enough for the week?" Although often pictured in the company of women he was a notoriously louche homosexual at a time when it was illegal. Through his society connections he befriended the Duke and Duchess of Windsor and was said to have been her lover for four years.

Barbara was the only daughter of Edna Woolworth Hutton and Franklyn Laws Hutton.

At birth she was dubbed the "Million Dollar Baby" but eventually, her troubled life made her better known as the "poor little rich girl". Her father was the wealthy co-founder of New York stock broking firm E. F. Hutton. She was also a niece by marriage of the magnate Marjorie Merriweather Post of General Foods.

Her father, although financially astute, was a compulsive womaniser,

(Right) Jimmy Donahue with the Duchess of Windsor



Barbara Hutton, photographed in 1931 before she was presented to George V

which drove her mother Edna to suicide. Barbara was only six when she discovered the body.

On her 21st birthday she inherited \$50 million from the Woolworth estate, the equivalent of \$1 billion today. Her father had abandoned her and she lived with various relatives and her governess "Tikki", who remained with her to the end. Her

closest friend and confidante was Jimmy Donahue.

As one of the wealthiest women in the world she had no need of a career and sought fulfilment in companionship—she was to marry seven times. In 1933 she married Prince Alexis Mdivani, a *soi-disant* Georgian prince, whom she divorced in 1935. He was a prince without money or a country, a recurring theme in Barbara's life. He belittled her, gambled and drank heavily and had many affairs. He netted several million in the divorce settlement but was to die soon after in a car crash.

In 1935 Barbara married the Danish Count Curt Heinrich Eberhard Erdmann Georg von Haugwitz-Hardenberg-Reventlow. He was extremely abusive to Barbara both verbally and physically, leading to a savage beating that left her in hospital and him in jail. He forced her to change her nationality to Danish so that he would have greater access to her money.

With him she had her only child, Lance, and



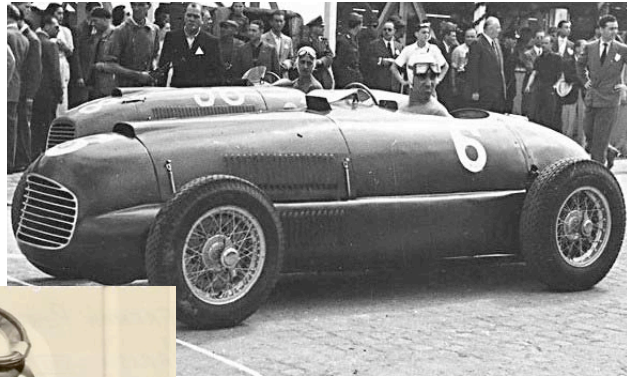
Barbara with Prince Alexis Mdivani

nearly died in the process, with the result that she could not have any more children. She drifted into drug abuse and anorexia, which was to haunt her for the rest of her life. They divorced in 1938. She gained custody of Lance but, like her father, left her child to be raised by a governess and private boarding schools.

In 1939 she moved to California as war threatened and there met and married Cary Grant. He was one of the biggest movie stars of the day. They were inevitably dubbed "Cash and Cary" by the press but Grant appears genuinely to have loved her and had no need of her money. However, he was unable to cope with her drug-induced mood swings and they divorced in 1945. He received no money in the settlement and they remained friends.

In 1947 she returned to Europe and bought a palace in Tangiers. In Paris she met Prince Igor Troubetzkoy, an expatriate Russian prince of very little means. She married him in Zurich in 1948. In the same year he was the driver of the first Ferrari ever to compete in a grand prix at Monaco and he later won the Targa Florio, the classic Sicilian road race. He

Husband number four, Troubetzkoy, seen right in an early Ferrari



in 1953, but this marriage was to last only 53 days—throughout which he carried on his affair with Zsa Zsa Gabor. Rubirosa, or "Rubi" as he was known, was a notorious gigolo and, allegedly, a political assassin. He supplemented his income by servicing rich women. Harold Robbins based the lead character in his book *The Adventurers* on him.

Rubi was prodigiously well endowed and had to have his tailors, Dunhill in New York, make specially cut trousers for him. An actress

described his weapon as "similar to a wooden pepper shaker, the kind you find in restaurants". To this day French diners supposedly refer to such pepper mills as "Rubirosas". As well as an adventurer and racing driver he was a tennis player and world-class polo player. He was romantically linked with Jane Mansfield, Ava Gardner, Eartha Kitt, Eva Peron and Veronica Lake. In the divorce

settlement he received five polo ponies, a private plane and the largest coffee plantation in the Dominican Republic. He was to die in his Ferrari in the early hours of the morning in the Bois de Boulogne in 1965.

In 1955 Barbara married an old friend, Baron Gottfried Alexander Maximilian Walter Kurt von Cramm, a tennis player. He was a double French Open champion and a national hero, but had refused to kowtow to the Nazi line. She had been instrumental in saving him from death after he'd been arrested on charges of homosexuality. However, after their marriage Barbara caught him in bed with another man



With Cary Grant, perhaps the only husband who really loved her

ultimately filed for divorce after Barbara attempted a drug-induced suicide.

She next married the Dominican diplomat playboy Porfirio Rubirosa



With the villainous Reventlow

and realised he would not be a comforting companion.

Her final husband would be the self-styled Prince Pierre Raymond Doan, who was more interested in her money and other men, with his brother writing her the love poems that she was known to favour. Shortly after this her son Lance was killed in a plane crash. He had recently met her after years away at boarding school and was extremely bitter at the way she had treated him.

Barbara spent her last years in a haze of alcohol and drugs, spending profusely until she was forced to sell her various assets including villas and tiaras at a fraction of their true worth. She was ultimately forced to send her servants to former friends for the return of gifts. Few complied.

Her last days were spent at the Beverly Hills Hotel, where she was a feature at the bar. She would be dressed in an evening gown, in all her jewels, with diamond bracelets and tiara, waiting for a gentlemen or lady to speak to her. They would often receive an expensive token of appreciation. In the end she was bedridden and when she died she had just \$3,500 in her bank account.

Barbara had left her family home, Winfield House in Regents Park, London, as the official residence of the US ambassador. It is perhaps appropriate that the first black American President, Barack Obama, has stayed there very recently, as the civil rights movement was started in the 1960s after blacks were refused service at a Woolworth's lunch counter.

So what of Woolworth's today? In Britain there only remain empty stores as a reminder of a once household name, but



(Above) With last husband Prince Pierre Raymond Doan; (right) No. 6, tennis player Gottfried von Cramm (l), with C. S. Rogers

the company still exists in the name of Footlocker. And Frank Woolworth's original concept lives on in the discount stores that exist today, and which continue to thrive in another economic downturn.



(Left) Playboy Rudi (l) with Barbara; (bottom) the wreckage of the crash that killed him; (below) Barbara's son Lance acquired a taste for racing from Troubetzkoy and was a friend of petrolhead James Dean. This is a Scarab, a car he developed himself





Oxford Punting Jaunt

TRULY THE GODS of affability, quaffability and doffability smile on the New Sheridan Club, for at the St George's Day punt 'n' picnic excursion to Oxford on Saturday 25th April—for the fifth year in a row—it didn't rain on us. And that was after a downpour was predicted. True, there was a dose of precipitation in the morning but by the time decent folk were squinting their hungover eyes in the mid-morning sun, all was dry.

In keeping with tradition, the early arrivals on Friday night met for a black-tie dinner. This was held for the second year at Luna Caprese, a modest Italian restaurant where *il patrone* ignores the printed menus and declaims a list of what's on—all of it very fresh, very lovely and just in that day. After porking out on pasta we stumbled about ten feet across the road to the Rose and Crown, one of Oxford's exquisite public houses.



Come Saturday morning the plan was to hit the covered market at 10am to stock up on picnic provisions, hit the Turf Tavern at 11am to wet the whistle then hit the boatyard at midday to set sail. I was not there to witness the NSC descend upon Oxford's premium victuallers like a horde of locusts, but by the time I sauntered into the Turf I received a flustered field telegram from Viscount Rushen announcing that they had purchased so much chow that they had to go straight to the boatyard. As it happens I bumped into Senior Sub and supped a pint with him before he took a train to London simply to pick up a valise of clothes that he had left at his Club. I can report that he seems very happy and relaxed in his latest incarnation as a Catholic studying theology at Oriel. As we chatted, up rolled a dapper figure who turned out to be Charles Rupert Bingley, on what I believe was his first

corporeal Club outing.

Charles and I toddled down to Magdalen Bridge boatyard to discover the NSC posse with a stack of provisions that made the warehouse shot at the end of *Citizen Kane* look like a couple of matchboxes. Duly loaded we lurched into the water aboard three punts. Having waited for everyone to embark we set off in convoy—only to receive a plaintive call from Chris Choy, who had managed to miss the boat. My punt, ably propelled by Cyril Browne, turned back to pick him up.

This left us dangerously behind the



(This page) The horror unfolds as our punt speeds towards Waveney's. Jason springs to help as Waveney is forced to jump on to our boat. Miraculously, no one was killed. (Opposite page, bottom) We're scarcely out of port before Guy Lazare is popping Champagne corks, while (top) Waveney comes to terms with punt technology



convoy and thus vulnerable to U-Boat wolfpacks. But we needn't have worried: around the first bend we came across one of the other boats, now nicely lodged sideways across the river. Such was the momentum that Cyril had got up, we had to look on helplessly as our vessel sped towards ramming them amidships. There was brief panic between Waveney and Jason Hippisley but, as you can see from the pictures, no one sank or was forced overboard.

Shortly after this we were joined by a fourth punt, bearing two chums of Sir Oliver's, Nigel Thomson and his companion Jayne. Jayne sported a dapper topper adorned with a feather, a dollar bill and various other talismanic objects, from which I assume she is a voodoo priestess—always a handy person to know, particularly on a picnic.

The next obstacle was the evil rollers. In order to negotiate the change in water level on either side of a weir, punts must be man-hauled

up metal rollers and back into the water again. This is currently made somewhat more difficult by the number of rollers that seem actually to be missing from the collection. No matter—we made a better job of it than most years, perhaps helped by the relatively small amount of slippery goose excrement strewn about to help you get a grip.

This put us in the home straight to the picnic site, an area chosen for, as much as anything, its proximity to some public conveniences. Pies were sliced, cheeses breached, olives speared and oysters shucked (after the damage done to my Laguiole folding knife last year, someone had the good sense to bring a proper oyster knife this time). And endless quantities of Champagne guzzled.

Perhaps the only thing constraining the rampant indulgence was the fact that part of the posse were keeping an eye on the time as they were taking the 6pm train back to London for Laurence Bennion's birthday bash. (I myself was also leaving at six, but taking a bus to Cheltenham to stand around in a room full of





(Clockwise from top left) Jessie supervises as the punts are held while we wait for the fourth boat; Dame Fforbes gives it some parasol; Nigel arrives (in the background); Rushen looks nervous while I (in grey) adopt a characteristic pose; Chris reflects how boats are one of his greatest fears. His other fear is being dumped on by a bird—something that happened spectacularly to Bingley as we drifted under a tree. It's a jungle out there; Waveney and Claudia imagine they're in Venice.



shifty musos to discover that the Furbelows had not in fact won the award for which we were nominated. Not that I'm bitter or anything.)

Come the hour, those staying in Oxford sloped off to the Oxford Union for tea and fiendishly cheap cocktails and, I gather, the London crowd continued their indulgence on the train, as well as at the eventual party.

All in all a fine day out: like St George and his dragon we once more defeated the rollers, we kept the Champagne industry afloat in straitened economic times and, for the first time, I think, no one fell in. And it didn't rain.

Thanks to Honoria Bellinger-Glossop for additional photos



(Top four) Waveney's crew show how to tackle the rollers; (top left) the Pimms patrol is ready; (above left) the iPod belts out Muggsy Spanier's version of *Sister Kate*; (left) Jason descends into a feral state; (right) Dame Fforbes considers her next move





(Top left) Charles Rupert Bingley (I) and Ensign Polyethyl brace themselves for the return journey; (above) in the hazy evening light the throng prepares to break camp; (left) not without a hint of melancholy, Waveney begins to return the baskets to the punts; (below) it's full steam ahead as the convoy heads back to civilisation, with Chris crooning sea shanties to keep our spirits up and Charles wondering how he's going to get the bird crap out of his blazer; (bottom left) Waveney has clearly encountered what Holmes would call a "two pipe problem"; (bottom right) it all proves too much for Chris who takes his own life rather than allow the day's festivities to end. Either that or he just passed out from the booze.



(Top left) Nigel entertains sweet memories of Oxford while (top right) Jayne puts a hex on the photographer (you didn't think those chicken feet were food, did you?); (above) Cyril reclines, satisfied; (above left) what's this over Waveney's shoulder? It's a portable drinks cabinet, of course, with four tessalating canisters for a variety of spirits and fortified wines; (left) the mob devours every edible crumb; (right) Rushen is convinced it is Pimms o'clock





The NSC Summer Party

WHAT COULD SUM UP the English summer better than the traditional village fête? So we are proud to present this year's New Sheridan Club party, **Tempting Fête**.

Stroll with us through a traditional English country fête—tombolas and lucky dips, cheese-rolling and prize vegetables, maypoles and bunting, Green Men, guess-the-weight-of-the-cake and, of course, the church roof fund.

From the opening of the fête by

the vicar, to the squire's evening sherry party, you'll find an idyllic English summer's day here (if not outside, where there will doubtless be a hailstorm).

As usual there will be performers, games and silly things to do. More details to come, but I can confirm that we will be entertained by the seemly yet foot-stomping sounds of **Mr B. the Gentleman Rhymer** and a demonstration of the Victorian walking-stick martial art of **Bartitsu**, plus some other performances in the pipeline.

There will be competitions for precision cheese-rolling, turnip jousting and guessing the weight of a cake. There will be a tombola with suitably lame prizes and a prize for the most

impressive vegetable brought along by a guest. And maybe something to do with identifying silhouettes of cows. And of course there will be the Grand Raffle, entry to which is free but to Members only, including any who join on the night. A list of the prizes will be coming soon.

The venue is very central, just a few minutes walk from Bank underground station. Smokers will be pleased to hear it has an outside decked area, which is also sheltered by awnings in the event of the inevitable downpour. The inside has the feel of a 1920s country manor. We shall be decking the halls with flowers and bunting and hope to install a maypole too.

There will be a menu of hearty traditional dishes with which to line your stomach before hitting the cider and mead.

I should point out that the arrangements are by no means set in stone, so if you have

any ideas or suggestions, wish to offer your

services or perhaps donate a Grand Raffle prize or a pig for which comers must attempt to climb a greasy pole then please get in touch.

Date: Saturday 4th July

Time: 7pm–1am

Place: The City Tavern, 29 Lawrence Lane, London EC2V 8DP

Admission: Members FREE, non-Members: £5 (which may be offset against Membership for those who join on the night)

Dress: Vicars, yokels, milk maids, blazers, boaters, scarecrows, suits of armour, downed Luftwaffe pilots in disguise, Green Men, morris men, disturbing pagan traditions...



The Sounds of Yesteryear

THOSE OF YOU WHO can remember as far back as Newsletter 29 in March will recall a review by Count Martindt Cally von Callomon of an interesting project called *Victrola Classics*. It is a CD compilation lovingly distilled from the authors' collection of 78rpm discs from the first half of the Twentieth Century, and from all over the world. It comes housed in what is in effect a hard-back book, most of the pages of which are filled with lovingly photographed labels and sleeves from these discs, plus related ephemera such as gramophone needle tins.

So taken was the Count by this idea that he has now produced his own version, harvested from his own extensive archives of 78rpm shellac, which he is offering for sale to Members of the New Sheridan Club. "I think that my worker-bees could hand crank these out and post them off for the princely sum of £3 sterling," he observes, "a King's Ransom to some, mere piffle to others."

Cally has managed to shoehorn 24 numbers on to this long player, and there is quite a mix here—plenty of swing and ragtime, such as the opener "Keep Your Temper" by the Gulf Coast Seven (1925) or "I Never Knew" by the KYXZ Novelty Band, and earthy blues too, such as the New Orleans tuba stomp of Lillian Glinn's "Shake It Down" from 1928 or the raw jug-band sound of "West Kinney Street Blues" by Skoodle-Dum-Doo & Sheffield.

There are mournful South American horns in the form of "La Rubia" from Felipe Valdes's orchestra from Havana or "Saluda A Panama" from Orquesta Victor Antilliana. Other numbers have more of a calypso feel, such as "Sh-Boom" by Trio Los Flamigos or the bed bug nightmare of "Cousin, Cousin, Scratch Here So For Me" by the Bamboo Orchestra. There are saccharin country violins on "My Cute Girl Sal" from Jack Cawley's Oklahoma Ridge Runners and gypsy jazz in 1937's



"Snaperoo" from Hawaiians the Waikiki Swingsters.

For me the oddest track is the blues work-out from Snoozer Quinn where a telephone rings halfway through. True, the cut is called "Snoozer's Telephone Blues" but I am convinced that the name came after the event and the whole thing was accidental. I was also interested to hear "Baba Yandekhe Jivala" by Ugandan Richard Wasike; I'm not sure exactly when it was recorded but to my ear it's already showing the distinctive rhythms and chord cycles of guitar music from this part of the world today.

The one thing that Cally was not enamoured of on *Victrola Classics* was the use of technology to remove the hisses, rumbles and crackles from the original recordings. If you feel the same way you'll be pleased to know that Cally has perpetrated no such electronic blasphemy and all background noise is present and correct.

If you'd like to purchase a copy of this fine collection, drop me an email at mrhartley@newsheridanclub.co.uk and I can establish from Cally how he would like to conduct the transaction.

I might also take the opportunity to draw your attention to *Now That's What I Call Stonebarrow, Vol. 1*, a compilation I put together from the extensive archives of Flt Lt Fruity Hatfield-Peverel featuring 28 numbers aired on the NSC group holiday to Stonebarrow at Christmas 2006. I can still make copies for anyone interested at a cost of £3. See the Year One News Archive on the NSC website.



You Mean They Can Make Wine in America?

A WINE COLUMN

By *Lainie Petersen*



A few columns ago I introduced my readers to Zinfandel, a popular grape here in the Former Colonies. Given that it meshes so well with traditional barbecue/picnic food, I thought it

appropriate to review another inexpensive Zinfandel prior to summer festivities. This Zin is produced by California-based Cline Cellars, a well-known maker of moderately priced wines of good quality.

Cline's 2007 Zinfandel boasts a strong nose of black cherries, black pepper, and a hint of cocoa. Unfortunately, the wine does not have the same impact on the palate: those expecting a powerhouse Zin will be disappointed. The



black cherry and spice remain, but are less distinct, and the finish is both slightly tart and moderately astringent. I do not recommend this as a "sipping wine".

Paired with food, however, the wine proves to be quite serviceable, and when partnered with dark chocolate, most delicious. I enjoyed it with a bacon sandwich: the slight sweetness of the wine proved a good foil to the salty bacon and the wine's astringency cleared my palate nicely. I then paired the wine with a square of Ghirardelli dark chocolate, a match that proved to be inspired: the black cherry and spice meshed well with the dark, slightly fruity, chocolate. The chocolate also negated the wine's somewhat disconcerting tartness, leaving a lovely lingering cherry-cocoa taste in its finish.

Name: Cline Zinfandel (Sonoma, CA)

Year: 2007

Food Pairing: Dark chocolate, grilled meats, bacon sandwiches, barbeque, pork dishes.

UK Distributor: The Wine Treasury (winetreasury.com). Earlier vintages may be found at farehamwinecellar.co.uk, wineofcourse.com and vinopoliswineclub.co.uk



The Cocktail Cabinet:

Wherein Members try to remember what they poured down their throats the night before and why they liked it

The Sweaty Mexican

Torquil Arbuthnot

I can't remember where I came across the mention of a drink called a Sweaty Mexican. Fortunately, soon after I read about the drink I had reason to travel to York where I met up with Nathaniel Slipper and Christopher Hankinshaw. The basic recipe for a Sweaty Mexican is to pour a healthy slug of tequila into a tumbler, and then add as many dashes of Tabasco sauce as will turn the drink a fetching shade of pink. The resulting cocktail is then thrown down the throat in one, accompanied by much coughing and spluttering.

Unfortunately finding a public house in York with a bottle of Tabasco sauce behind the bar proved a difficult quest. But eventually we found one, and spent a cheerful afternoon drinking Sweaty Mexicans and shouting "Ay, caramba!" at passers-by.

Since then I have found several variations of the drink bearing the name of the Sweaty Mexican. For instance, one variation calls for:

175ml Mexican beer (Sol or Corona)
1½ measures (37.5ml) tequila
Splash of Bacardi 151 proof rum

Fill a mug half way with beer. Splash the rum on the tequila in a shot glass, then light the spirits with a match. Drop the flaming shot glass into the mug. Add a slice of lime.

Another variant calls for equal measures of tequila, vodka (or rum) and Tabasco.

There is also a drink known as a Sweaty Mexican Lumberjack:

3 parts Yukon Jack (Canadian whisky blended

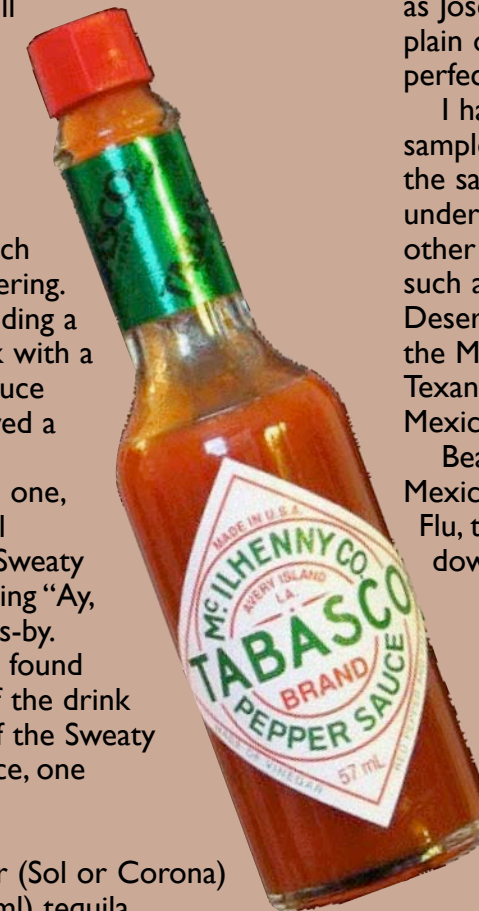
with honey)
1 part tequila
A dash of Tabasco

Substitute Jack Daniels for Yukon Jack and one has a Battery Acid...

Since this is a drink for knocking back in one, there's no need to splash out on expensive tequila. A common brand such as José Cuervo (the plain or the gold) is perfectly fine.

I have also sampled roughly the same drink under several other names such as the Desert Rose, the Mexican (or Texan) Prairie Fire and the Mexican Martini.

Bearing in mind the news coming out of Mexico about a world-wide pandemic of Swine Flu, this drink is probably a good way to wash down one's dose of Tamiflu or Relenza.





CLUB NOTES

New Members

I WOULD LIKE to fan with the cooling frond of NSC compatriotship Matthew Davis, a.k.a. The Decadent Gent, Sergeant N. Bartram and Major Mark Hiley, all of whom have joined the Club in the last month.

Forthcoming Events

FOR THE LATEST developments, see the Events page at www.newsheridanclub.co.uk.

Tricity Vogue and the Lost Band

Tuesday 5th May
Doors 6.15pm, show 8pm
Volupté, 9 Norwich St, London EC4A 1EJ
Admission: seated £10 (dining optional), standing £5

The cheeky songstress dubbed by *Time Out* “mistress of the ukulele” has a new show in which she attempts to fashion a band for herself from the audience. (Something tells me she may have seeded musos among the crowd, but who knows?) Saucy songs and a splash of burlesque. See www.tricityvogue.com and www.volupte-lounge.com.



Miss Tricity Vogue and her mysterious band



NSC Club Night

Wednesday 6th May
8pm–11pm
Upstairs, The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB
Members: Free
Non-Members: £2 (first visit free)
See page 2.

The Furbelows present Cirque de Crème Anglaise

Saturday 16th May
7.30pm–2am
The Cross Kings, 126 York Way, London N1 0AX (King’s Cross rail and tube)
Admission: £5

Perpetrated by The Furbelows, the beat combo that counts among its numbers Members Mr Clayton Hartley, Mr Neil McKeown and (some of the time) Miss Tabitha Maynard-Addersley, this is a regular night bringing together some of their favourite acts, a mostly musical evening that combines clangorous beatnik wailings with vaudeville, foppishness and much tongue-in-cheekery.



(Clock-wise from top left) Antony Elvin and friend; David Cronenberg’s Wife; No Cars; Fruity Hatfield-Peverel; two of The Furbelows



Tonight’s scintillating line-up features:

David Cronenberg’s Wife Gloomy, bluesy tunes accompany these blackly humorous tales of booze, sexual jealousy, runaway prams and lovelorn morgue workers. It’s been said that “if Jarvis Cocker remade *Twin Peaks*, this would be the soundtrack”. I’m pleased to say they will actually be launching their new single “The Fight Song” this very night at the Cirque.

Antony Elvin Bizarre acoustic performer who sings about dandies, scones, pipe tobacco and ladies. His stylistic pastiches range from Noel Coward to 60s lounge crooners and he has been spotted disporting on stage with The Mighty Boosh. You can glean a lot from his response when asked to perform: “I would love to cavort with you types. Let it be madly gay!”

No Cars Wilfully surreal and coquettish trio fronted by Japanese young ladies who sing

mostly about their favourite foods, often accompanied by strange manga cartoons. The last I saw them the lead singer exhorted us: “Hey! No rubbish clapping!”

All that and you get to see **The Furbelows** too, a band oft-liked to Nick Cave, the Divine Comedy and the Stooges, which A New Band a Day described as, “As much fun as a Playboy Playmate and twice as pleasant to listen to.” They were recently nominated for the Exposure Music Award for “Best Alternative Song”. Make of that what you will.

I’m also pleased to say that the Club’s very own **Flight Lieutenant “Fruity” Hatfield-Peverel** will be “DJing” into the night, probably spinning a strange mix from 1980s New Wave to rare ragtime 78s (we are currently working out how to amplify his wind-up gramophone).

For your £5 you also get a FREE, limited-edition badge and FREE custard creams! The



venue is rather jolly and they do good, reasonably priced food too.

Frock Me! Vintage Fashion Fair

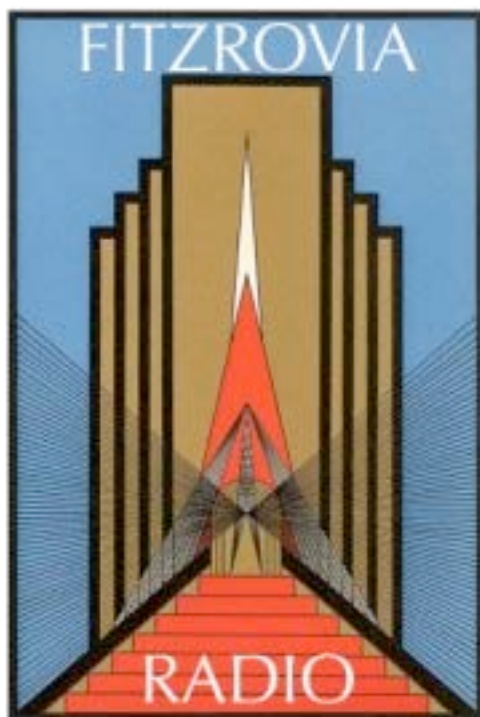
Sunday 17th May
11am–5.30pm
Chelsea Town Hall, King's Road, Chelsea, London SW3 5EZ
Admission: £3 (£1.50 students, children under 16 free)

Over 50 exhibitors will gather from all over the country (and a couple from France too) to sell you all manner of old clobber from Victorian underwear to 1950s corsets, from Edwardian smoking jackets to feather fans. More at www.frockmevintagefashion.com.

Vintage Fashion, Textiles and Accessories Fair

Sunday 17th May
8am–5pm
Hammersmith Town Hall, 380 Kensington High Street, London W14
Admission: £5 (£10 before 10am).

Yes, on the same day in the same town as Frock Me! I predict a rumble. Over a hundred leading vintage fashion clothing dealers, from all over the UK and abroad, will offer wares from 1800 to 1980. Visitors will also find an array of handbags, linen, lace,



Typical scenes at a Last Tuesday Society gig

embroidery, shoes, hats, gowns, chiffons, beaded dresses, textiles, needle work, necklaces, gloves, trimmings, fashion magazines, costume jewellery, feather boas, compacts, combs, fans, etc. Prices seem to be pretty reasonable.

The Fitzrovia Radio Hour

Thursday 21st May
8.30–11.30pm
The Haggerston, 438 Kingsland Road, London
Admission: £5
and Friday 29th May
7.30pm–12.30am

The Underglobe at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, London, exhibition entrance on Bankside

Another 1930s-style live radio broadcast from a cast of evening-dress-clad, cut-glass-accented thespians. The stirring tales this time depicted include "The Man Who Was Ten Minutes Late", "The Queen of Nimruth", "Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Norwood Builder" and "Miss Marion's Advice to the Recently Married". Expect much comic business with sound effects and imaginary sponsors.

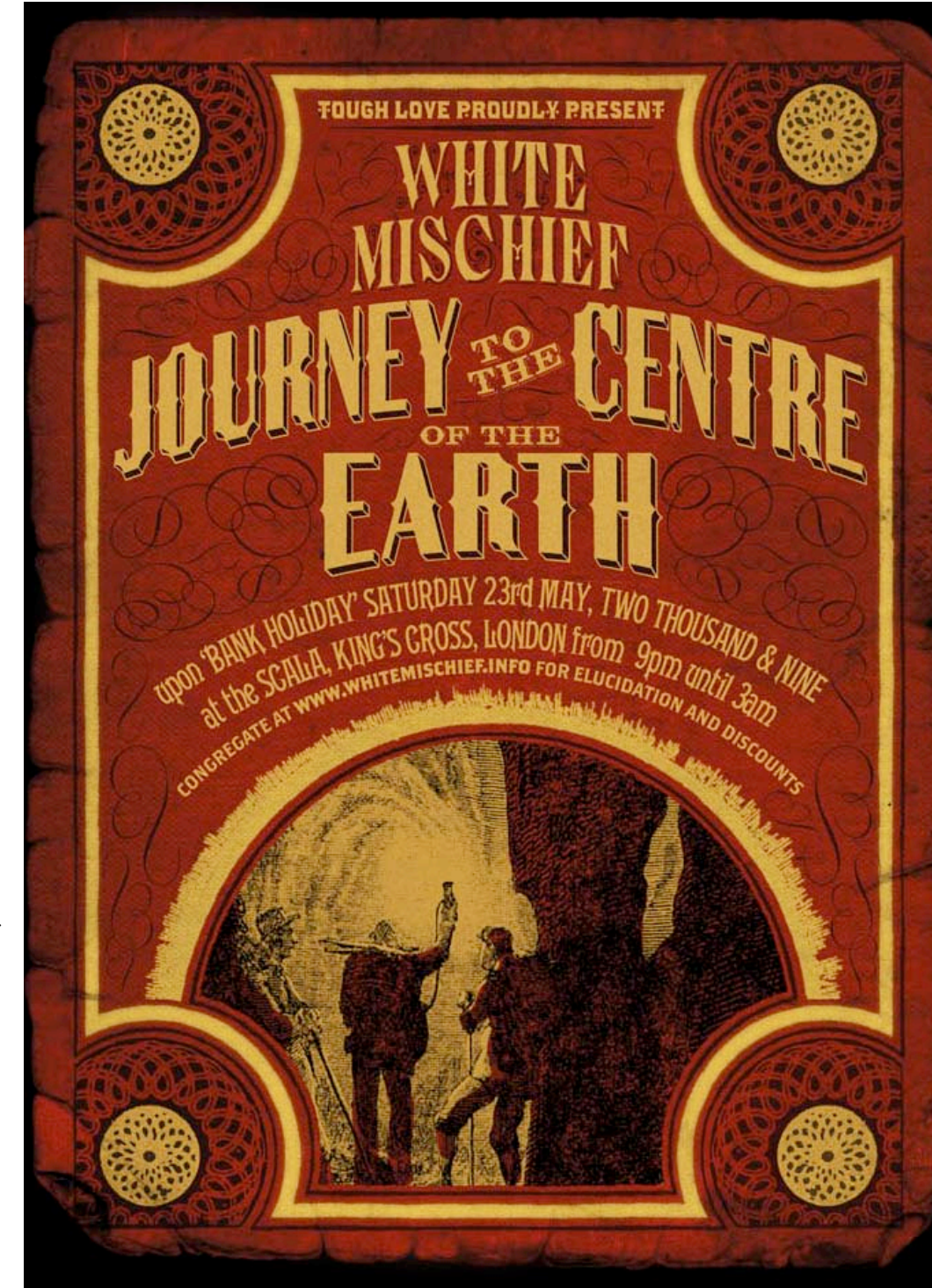
The Last Tuesday Society presents
Walpurgis Night, The Hendrick's Halloween Ball, Part I

Friday 22nd May
10pm–4am
The Bridge, Weston Street, London Bridge, London SE1
Admission: Currently £10 in advance (or £40 for five); to include the lecture: £15 (£50 for five)

Viktor and Suzette conjure up another evening of Hendrick's-fuelled stylish carnage. There is an optional lecture by Catherine Arnold on Necropolis: London and Its Dead at 8pm. After that the Ball proper will feature The Real Tuesday Weld performing their concept album *The London Book of the Dead*, the Trans Siberian Marching Band, the award-winning She'Koyokh Klezmer Ensemble, story-teller Giles Abbott relating the tale of Odin's fall illustrated by a performance from Syban V, Simon Warner recreating the silhouettes of J. M. Lavater, Kink Ink erotic life drawing, a pole-dancing school plus a boutique and special effects make-up to make you look like a fashionable corpse. There will also be DJ sets from none other than composer Michael Nyman, plus Russell Taylor, David Piper and Wade Crescent.

White Mischief presents
Journey to the Centre of the Earth

Saturday 23rd May
9pm–4am
The Scala, 275 Pentonville Road, King's Cross, London N1
Admission: Currently £14.95, though this may go up nearer the time.
Dress: Victoriana, steampunk, explorers, mad



scientists, giant mushrooms, etc.

A night of live music, curious vaudeville, vintage DJing, costumed characters, interactive theatre and mindboggling feats of derring-do, set across multiple rooms and hosted by the pop group Tough Love. Entertainment includes big band/hip hop fusionists The Correspondents, Top Shelf Jazz, cover stars of a recent issue of *The Chap* The Men Who Will Not Be Blamed for Nothing and roaming washboard minstrels The Bohemianauts. You've also got ukulele god (and former Cirque de Crème Anglaise star) Desmond O'Connor, aerialist Lydia Darling, a chainsaw juggler, bullet-catching and burlesque, plus the Fitzrovia Radio Hour (see opposite) and a Victorian peep show.

£5 ADMISSION THE FURBELOWS PRESENT A NIGHT OF RAW MUSIC & DARK HUMOUR

CIRQUE

DE CRÈME ANGLAISE



SATURDAY 16TH MAY
7.30PM UNTIL 2AM

FREE BADGE!
FREE CUSTARD CREAMS!

THE CROSS KINGS
126 YORK WAY, KING'S CROSS, LONDON N1 ONX

David Cronenberg's Wife

LAUNCHING THEIR NEW SINGLE 'THE FIGHT SONG' THIS VERY NIGHT!

Antony Elvin Ft. Lt. 'Fruity' Hatfield-Peverel
THE ANTIC TROUBADOUR SPINNING SHELLAC MYSTERIES OF THE ORIENT

No Cars