

PLUS:

The Tashes

Our annual facial hair cricket grudge match

Decoding Dresses

What early photos of a London Royal Ball tell us about the guests

Hitched!

Sophie Jonas and Andy Hill throw this year's most bohemian wedding

Cocktails for Ladies?

Sara Bridgman-Smith does the research so you don't have to

Eastern Spice

How the magic of Salon d'Été helped make **The Far Pavilions** our most successful party yet

The New Sheridan Club

Newsletter

XLVII • September 2010



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 Editor Writes

What a whirlwind the end of August was. Having hunted unsuccessfully for a suitable venue for our summer party we hit upon the idea, late in the day (the party was originally planned for June), of using the Salon d'Été (see Newsletter XLIV, June 2010). Then the venue for the Cirque de Crème Anglaise (yes, more superfluous French) closed down and I needed to find a new one quickly—and ended up holding the event at the same place the day before the NSC party. Then the morning after the party I was off on holiday...meaning you will probably get this magazine late. Apologies.

The Next Meeting

The next Club Meeting will take place on Wednesday 1st September in the upstairs room at The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB, from 8pm until 11pm. Our guest speaker will be author Mr Martyn Downer, who will spill the beans on *The Sultan of Zanzibar*, the story of Horace De Vere Cole, a life-long practical joker. As a student he pretended to be the Sultan of Zanzibar and persuaded the local mayor to give him and his retinue a civic reception. His greatest coup was in 1910 when he and his friends dressed in African outfits and claimed to be the Abyssinian royal family. In full costume, and speaking a made-up language that included the exclamation "Bunga! Bunga!", they wangled a tour of Royal Navy battleship HMS

Dreadnought. Mr Downer has recently published a book on De Vere and his exploits.

The Last Meeting

August's get-together was arguably one for the ladies, focusing as it did on (in the speaker's own words) "lovely ladies in pretty dresses".

In fact Evadne Raccat is not doing herself justice, as the oration was an interesting analysis of a moment in the social history of fashion. The talk looked at a ball held by the Duchess of Devonshire at her house on London's Piccadilly in 1897 in honour of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. The photographer James Lafayette set up a studio in a tent in the garden to photograph guests—much like at our own Far Pavilions party a couple of weeks ago (see pages 20–21)—meaning there are photographic records of the costumes, and it is on these that Evadne based her talk.

While men were strictly limited to historically accurate outfits (the dress code was simply pre-1815) the ladies were allowed far more latitude to be historical or merely contemporary with an historical nod, to show off wealth or be conservative, or to be daring under the banner of historicity. The way the different women responded tells us much about how they were choosing to present themselves within the code of Victorian society.

Many thanks to Evadne for her talk. You can find an essay version of the talk on page 4.



Marco Mega photographer



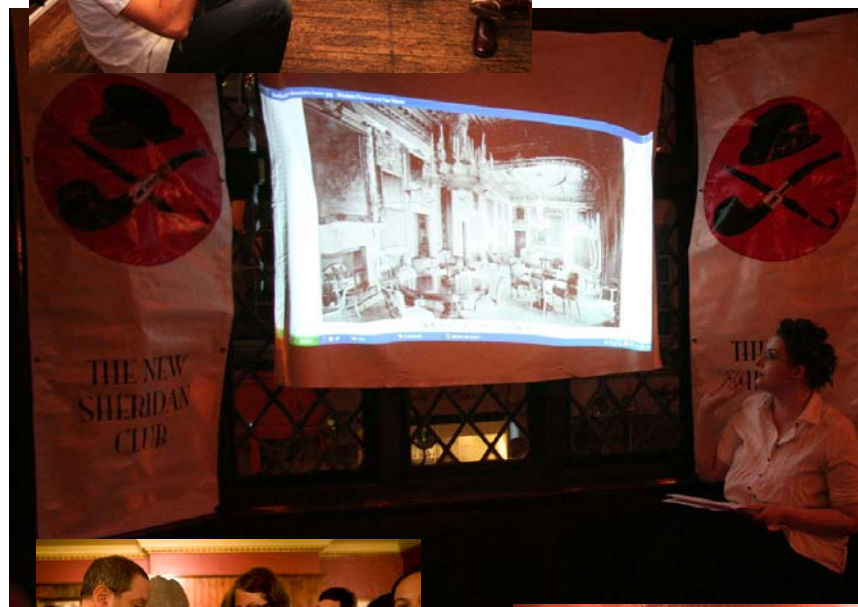
Luke Wenban and Stuart Waller trade aphorisms



(Below) Mai Britt Møller and David James Pile are now an item



(Left) Marco Mega, one of the many snappers working on "retro-socialising" projects



Evadne with a slide of Devonshire House's sumptuous interior

(Above) Jessie sells the NSC Christmas House concept (11th–18th December) to the crowd.



(Above) Jessie makes sure everyone sees Isabel's engagement ring.

Selected photos © Marco Mega



Marco Mega photographer

(Above) Evadne's rapt audience; (left) after The Wheatsheaf chucked us out, a posse went on to Bourne and Hollingsworth round the corner; (far left) the NSC hat and broly stack marks our tenure in the place



The Duchess of Devonshire's Ball



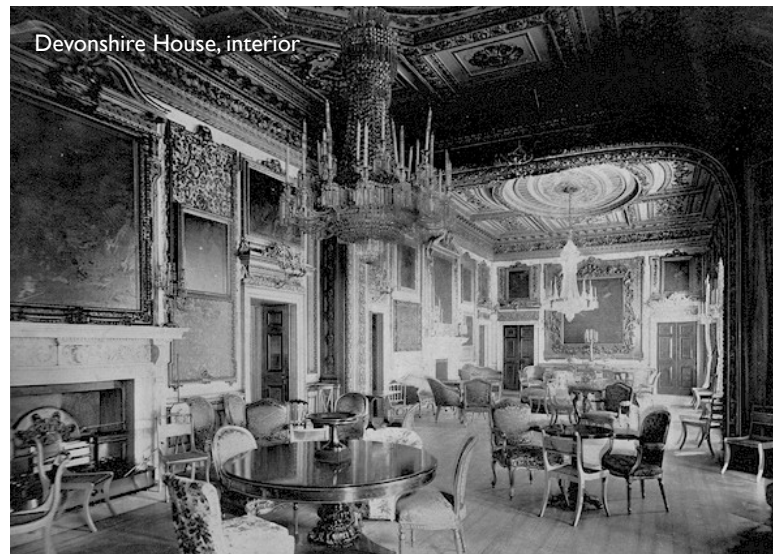
EARLY PHOTOGRAPHS OF WEALTHY VICTORIANS AT PLAY IN FANCY DRESS

By Evadne Raccat

“WHEN I WAS a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”

So says Corinthians. Unfortunately, I never have. When I was a child, I liked sparkly things and lovely women in pretty dresses and I still did when, at 18, I found Sophia Murphy's book *The Duchess of Devonshire's Ball* for sale at £2 in my local library; indeed, my interest just increased. It was the first time I saw photographs of people in real “historical” dress, rather than drawn or painted illustrations. These images struck me so forcibly that 11 years later I am here writing them. Childish things be damned!

The Duchess of Devonshire decided to give a ball to celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in July 1897. Louisa, known as the “Double Duchess” (she had been Duchess of Manchester and, on Manchester's death, married the Duke of Devonshire, having been his mistress for 30 years) was a rich and socially powerful woman. She had a grand house—



Devonshire House on Piccadilly—that faced The Ritz but was demolished in the 1920s, and decided it would be a very grand party. She invited over 700 people to dine and dance. An annex was built at the back of the house, the garden side, to hold the dining room. It sat 144 at a time, 12 people at 12 tables, who dined on a three-course meal that included Roasted Quail, Salmon Mousse, Ortolans in Aspic (a now endangered French song bird covered in a *gelée*) and ice cream.

There was the Blue Hungarian Band to play two-steps, gavottes and waltzes in the gold, white and blue ballroom. The garden was lit with lanterns and electric light, in the forecourt of the house there was a large “VR” monogram made of flowers also lit with electric lights. The inside of the house was hung with swags of flowers, including night flowering cactus, that had been brought from the glasshouses of Chatsworth, a dais had been erected at the end of the ballroom for the guests of honour to sit raised above the throng and the dinner tables had palms in the centre, sprouting through the table, an idea Louisa copied from the Savoy. The guests would start arriving at 10 and would have to be in situ by 11 when the Prince and Princess of Wales, Edward and Alexandra, and their entourage would arrive and the dancing and other activities would start. The party went on until about 4am.

There was not a great amount of innovation at this ball, particularly for a social group accustomed to invention within their entertainments—electric lights had been seen before, though the night flowering cactus was a clever touch. But three things made the ball

special and different: the scale, the lack of restrictions on dress and the photographic tent run by James Lafayette in the garden.

The historical and fancy dress ball had been re-introduced to high society by Queen Victoria in the 1840s. The “Masquerade” had been popular for centuries, but in the 18th century had acquired a reputation as a venue for immoral behaviour. Masques, where people covered their faces, were thought to promote abandon in behaviour. By the time Victoria held her first Costume Ball in 1842 the reputation of the costume party had been redeemed and its nature had changed—people did not cover their faces—and the themes of the events were taken from historical literature.

But the newly married Queen had assumed a public mantle of prudery and was very strict regarding the characters her guests portrayed. When, for example, she held a “Restoration” themed ball in the 1851 (her costume for which is the Royal Collection) she censored history by disallowing her guests to attend as any of Charles II's mistresses or Court rakes—there were no Castlemaines, Nellies or Wilmots at her party, no whores of either gender. She was also strict about the nature and qualities of dress: she encouraged historical accuracy and patriotic pride, even down to the very fabric used. Her first ball, a Medieval pageant where she represented Phillipa of Hainault and the Prince Consort Edward III, took place in 1842 when the economy of the country was unstable. Its subject harked back to a golden age in British History, and Victoria wanted all the costumes and fabrics to be of British manufacture, not only to boost the economy but to display the craftsmanship and skill of the British textile industry. Later balls were connected to golden ages of her immediate heirs—the Hanoverian “Bal Poudre” of 1845—or of the Monarchy in general—her Restoration ball of 1851.

Louisa's ball was different from this and many other balls, in that she only gave one stipulation about dress: that it should be from before 1815. By the 1890s costume balls had moved away from an antiquarian interest in historical accuracy towards theatricality and performance. And there was no squeamishness or sense of duty about the provenance of the clothes. London theatre had seen a boom in the late 1800s, with international stars such as

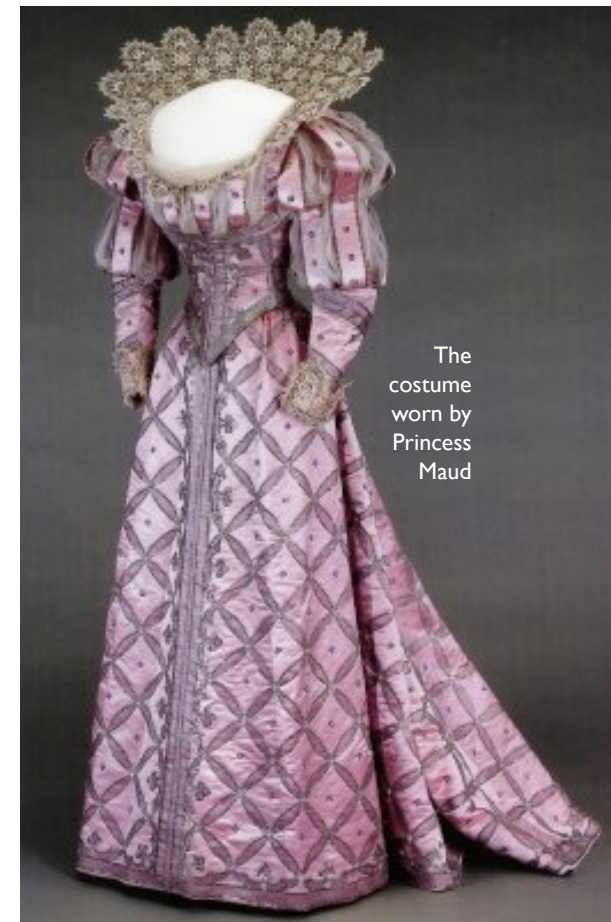
Sarah Bernhardt bringing European plays to the stage and professional beauties like Lillie Langtry becoming nationally and internationally famous. While other hostesses would organise “theatricals”—dances and tableaux in which their guests would display their characters and their clothes—Louisa did not do this, and the guests took it on themselves to do so. By the night of 2nd July there were formal “Courts” organised by theme: Camelot, Marie Antoinette and The Court of Louis XVI, the Exotics, The Court of Catherine The Great, Maria Theresa, Renaissance Italy and others, who were to process through the ball room displaying themselves, present themselves to the Royal Couple and

then stand to the side while the next group followed suit. Later they would dance “old fashioned” historical dances, in their groups.

I shall focus on the womens' costumes, as the men did not have as much choice as them—they could

not go in usual male evening dress or anything near contemporary clothes, so they tended to be as historically accurate as possible. The women, on the other hand, could get away with dress similar to their everyday clothing with details of historical dress merely superimposed—historicised contemporary dress. This is what interests me: who did something different and who stuck to being fashionable.

We begin with one of the few surviving items from the ball. It was worn by Princess Maud,



The costume worn by Princess Maud





Lady Ashburton as Enid



And the same outfit a few days later

future queen of Norway, and daughter of the Prince and Princess of Wales. Maud dressed as a Lady of the Court of Marguerite de Valois, who was played by her mother. All of the royal ladies and gentlemen came as 16th-century members of this French court. They nearly all got their costumes from the theatrical costumier Alias, of London, and they were all similar, contemporary in shape and colour, historical in detail. This dress does not have the triangular flat bodice and vast wide farthingale, rich colours and 3D quality of decoration that the 16th-century originals had. All of Alexandra's daughters were tight lacers, and followed her ideas about fashion—that it was ridiculous to spend vast amounts of money on clothes. The Royals were well and fashionably dressed, but they did not spend outrageously for this ball; they were “above” fashionable whims. Also, where it really counted, in gems and birth, they were rich and all of the ladies were encrusted.

Lady Ashburton went to the ball as Enid from Tennyson's

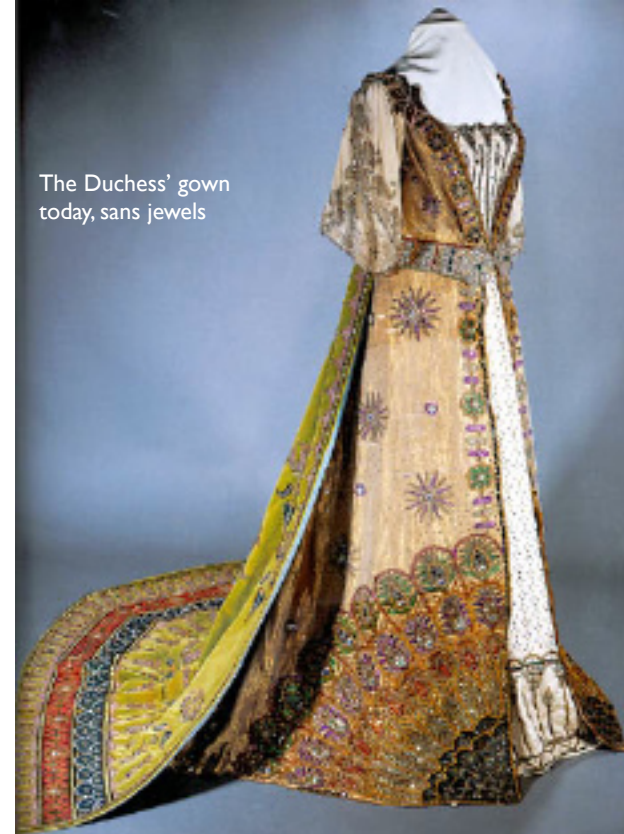
Idylls of the King, head to foot in variously textured white velvet with a tippet, veil, diadem and monogrammed gloves. Her hair was in a plait bound with pearls, her waist girdled with diamonds. Her large hanging sleeves and voluminous train contrasted with and thereby drew attention to her tiny waist. She was photographed by Lafayette on the night of the ball, against a backdrop with faux balustrade mimicking the grounds of Devonshire House.

A few days later, Lady Ashburton visited Lafayette's studio in London to be photographed in the costume again. However, this time she has stepped out of her character of Enid the Arthurian Maid and resumed being a woman

of society and fashion. Her veil is gone and her hair is tied back in a sophisticated chignon. She has lost her gloves and gained an expensive ostrich feather fan and she is displaying her person in a manner more commonly associated with actresses and *grande horizontales*, showing her tiny waist, slim wrists and elegant neck to greater advantage than in the photo of the ball



Daisy Warwick



The Duchess' gown today, sans jewels

night. This image shows her ball gown as an up-to-the minute fashion item, and its wearer as a contemporary beauty. The first of the two photos went in the great album of photogravure portraits that was produced in 1899 to celebrate this event—the original Facebook. The second image would have been used for private viewing.

Daisy, Countess Warwick headed the Court of Louis XVI as Marie Antoinette in a gown that she had commissioned from the Parisian fashion house Worth two years earlier for her own “Rococo” ball, held at Warwick Castle. Daisy was a leader of fashion and taste, and had been Prince Edward's mistress. Though she could well afford a new dress, Daisy chose to wear her “old” one for moral reasons. After her ball she was attacked in the newspapers for her prodigality, and having met the man who criticised her and who talked to her of the plight of the poor, she turned to socialism and eventually founded hospitals and teaching colleges for the disadvantaged of her county. Though the dress had been seen before, she was still mentioned in over ten newspapers in Britain and America and was allowed to lead her “court”. Her dress is a hybrid of historical accuracy and contemporary taste. The bodice and skirt were of pink and gold flowered brocade, the petticoat was white satin draped with chiffon and the train was turquoise velvet embroidered with gold fleur-de-lys. The shape of the bodice with its protruding bust and steep curve into the waist is wholly contemporary, but



The Duchess of Devonshire

the vast skirt with visible petticoat and low neck with near off the shoulder line was more 18th century—so much so that the Countess wore a modesty piece to hide her cleavage. While her hair was powdered, it was styled and frizzed in the manner of the time and this, combined with the deployment and style of her jewels, ties her to 1897. Her Kokoshnik tiara and *rivieres* of diamonds are wholly 1890s. Daisy did not use this full-length image, with its screen and rococo matte, in the great book of 1899, but a more intimate image of her head and shoulders, which focused the viewer on her eyes and noble throat, rather than how constrained in whale bone her figure was.

The hostess also went to Worth for her costume, but rather than being a “tragic heroine”, as Marie Antoinette was considered, Louisa came to the ball as Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra, an historical figure said to have been the founder of Babylon. She was a warrior



Lady Randolph Churchill,
Jennie Jerome



Theodora, Empress of Byzantium

flowing and light, with the crepe and tissue, the duchess wasn't a light lady. She was short and rotund, once a great beauty, but for this event, at 65 years old, she was heavily corseted—a stiff support from which her Worth gown could hang free—giving the appearance of flowing, exotic otherness. It was a bold gown. Only a lady of great status and confidence would wear it, and she did, being brought into the ball on a golden palanquin carried by “slaves” and set down in front of her most important guests, the Royal family. Her gown was mentioned in over 20 publications, including the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, something that would be almost unheard of for clothing worn by a lady over 60 today, unless it displayed something unsavoury.

The Duchess was not the only grand lady to wear something expensive and “other”. Jennie Jerome, Lady Randolph Churchill, the fizzy American mother of Winston, was two years a widow in 1897 and in her everyday dress she conformed to the norm as seen here (above left) in close fitting but unrevealing clothes. But for the ball, she decided to go as Theodora, former dancing girl and perhaps prostitute, who married well, becoming Empress of Byzantium. Theodora had been brought to public attention by Sardou's *Theodora*, starring Sarah Bernhardt. It



Jennie's Theo costume

queen. Her dress was designed by the theatrical costumier Attilio Commelli, and realised in Paris at vast expense. Beyond the beading that can be seen, the gown was also studded with emeralds, rubies, diamonds, amethysts, sapphires... The underskirt and bodice are made of *crêpe de Chine* sprinkled in silver, gold and pearls. The over-robe is made of sheer gold tissue, embroidered with star-like shapes filled with precious stones. The train is green velvet covered in a lotus flower design. The belt was jewelled too. The gown, now at Chatsworth, had all the precious stones removed so they could be re-set and worn again. Though it looks

was performed in 1884 and had an 1890 revival (her costume also survives). The most famous image of the real Theodora is a mid-6th century mosaic in the Basilica of San Vitale in Ravenna, and Bernhardt travelled to Ravenna for costume inspiration. But Jennie's costume does not follow her designs.

Though also made by Worth, Jennie's costume was designed by the French painter Jean Joseph Benjamin-Constant, who painted romanticised exotic themes, rather like Alma-Tadema but with stronger colours. Indeed elements of Jennie's ensemble were painted—the cherub heads at the bottom of her tabard. Her under-dress was of fine “Eastern” silk in cream and green, covered in silver *paillettes*, while her tabard was green and mauve satin embroidered in gold with diamonds. This costume was a sensation and a great step away from the contemporary curvy silhouette. To a great many modern people, tight, figure-hugging clothes with corsets, etc., are considered sexy. In the 1890s, these dresses were the norm. To Jennie's contemporaries, loose garments were considered *risqué*—the idea of a lack of physical



Sarah Bernhardt

restraint from corsetry, of flesh close at hand, easy to touch, only barely out of sight. It is the looseness of the garments, their similarity to shifts, undergarments and night wear that made them stimulating. The way they “hid” what was beneath. Many of the women went to the ball with such loose draperies, but most did not hide their figures as comprehensively as Jennie. Not only does the

tabard give her a near rectangular profile but the sleeves completely cover her arms—something the other exotic ladies did not do, including the Duchess of Devonshire.

But it was not this that drew comment, nor her loose hair (a lot of ladies took the opportunity of the ball to wear their hair loose, though most of these were younger or unmarried, not 43-year-old widows such as Jennie). The greatest source of comment was her headdress. Not its height or remarkable shape, nor its emerald and diamond decoration, but the pearl that hung from it to her nose, which was thought to give a “rather funny effect”.

Diarists and commentators may have found her costume amusing, but Jennie did not care. She met her second husband, George Cornwallis-West, who was 20 years younger than her, while wearing it in 1897. She continued to wear it to costume balls until 1911. And the Austrian Artist Emile Fuchs sculpted her wearing it in 1900.

At the ball there were three Cleopatras—two of them have been clearly identified, but the third may have been George Cornwallis-West's sister, the Princess Pless. The official serpent of the Nile, and leader of the “Oriental” parade was the Countess de Grey.

Gladys, The Countess de Grey, was a great patron of the arts, particularly opera, and was also considered to be “a character”—she held regular literary salons, was never discreet about her lovers and organised her group for the ball. De Grey was also influenced by Sardou and Bernhardt, taking as inspiration the 1892 production of *Cleopatra* (photos of which I've seen—and Bernhardt was more modestly dressed). She was said to have spent over

Emile Fuchs's sculpture of Jennie in her costume





The Countess De Grey

\$5000 on her gold and silver heavily beaded and jewelled tissue costume, with flowers and a gold ibis in her hair, pearls tangled through and hanging from it, a bare nape of neck, bare arms with tight metal “slave” armlets whose hardness contrasts with the soft nudity of her arm flesh and the lustre of the pearls that hang from her shoulders. She had flowers flowing down the right side of her dress, which was a loose pleated *khiton*, with a sash tied around the hips: what we would call a fashion forward nod to the low waistlines and strange shapes of the 1910s and 20s. Her train was held by a “slave” who followed her round the whole evening and who was considered intrinsic to her costume; she was the only person at the ball who did this. She also had a sceptre and a fan. The photograph above, posed after a Van Dyck painting of the Marchesa Elena Grimaldi of 1623 (who really did own her slave) and taken on the night, was not used in the album produced in 1899. That later photograph is with a different head dress, is full face, direct in gaze, without slave, seated on a faux marble seat against a seascape and heavily kholed. Not unlike Theda Bara in 1917.

While Countess de Grey followed the “theatrical”, suggestive, uncontrolled, exotic trend in costumes, like the duchess of Devonshire and Jennie Jerome, the second

recognised Cleopatra did not. Minnie Stevens, Mrs Arthur Paget, was a wealthy Bostonian who had married into British society. Like Daisy, Countess Warwick, she was a friend of the Prince of Wales, if not his mistress, and was an ardent philanthropist. She too went to Worth of Paris and spent a reputed \$6,000 on a costume that was very different from the other exotics, though made by the same designer.

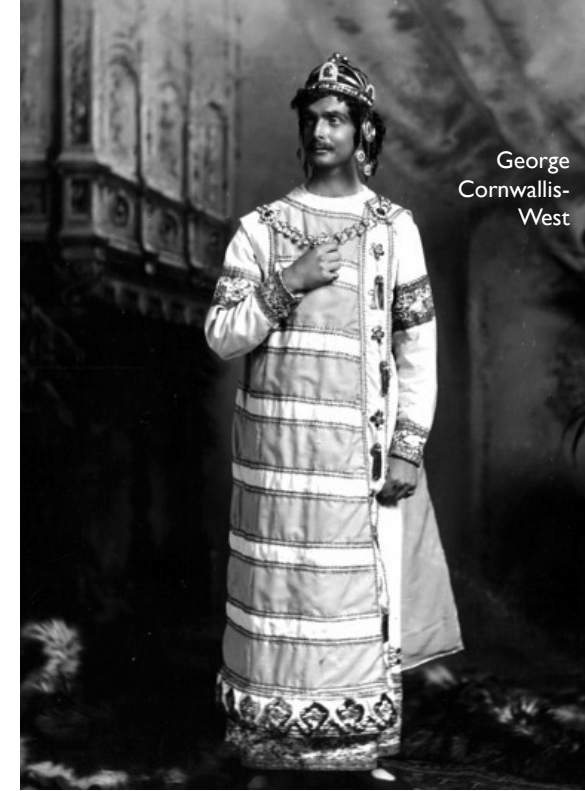
With Minnie’s dress, we return to where we started—contemporary style with a historical or, in this case, theatrical skin. The train was of black *crêpe de Chine*, embroidered with gold scarabs. The bodice, encrusted with gold and diamonds, was held up on the shoulders with straps of large emeralds. The square headdress was made of cloth of gold striped black and she is crowned with a gold ibis headdress the



Minnie Stevens

outstretched wings of which were of diamonds and sapphires. Around her hips she wears a tight, though flat, striped sash, over which hangs an ankle length girdle of emeralds. In mere description, it doesn’t sound much different from the others, but it is. The bodice is tightly fitting, as is the sash. The skirt is of limited volume and movement. It is a dress with greater “control” and decorum and though her arms are completely bare, as is her *décolletage*, this dress is less *risqué* and *avant garde* than Gladys de Grey’s. Minnie Stevens’ black and gold gown was reported on internationally. She did not use this image in the 1899 book either, but one that showed off her waist more prominently. The gown, when sold on her death in 1919, and devoid of it’s gems, went for £9.

The final costume I’ll focus on is that of the Princess of Pless, who went as the Queen of Sheba. The Princess wears a dress of purple and gold shot gauze. The train is a mass of red, purple, green, blue and white jewels, thickly encrusting medallions of raised gold. The dress is also set with turquoise ovals with engraved hieroglyphics. Over this she wears a sash of cloth of gold also heavily bejewelled and a massive pearl and diamond *sautoir*. The costume is topped off with an “Assyrian” headdress studded with



George Cornwallis-West

turquoises, emeralds and pearls, with jewels over either ear. The ensemble was described by the press as “a costume of the utmost magnificence”. It looks loose, but at the waist you can see shape and the boning beneath. She was very proud of her slim waist and the image reclining holding the enormous palm-leaf *pankha*, which displays this, was the one chosen for publication. The “airbrushed” *panka* and tiger skin are here a symbol of the orient and considered exotic, even though for us the latter has become a commonplace symbol of the Edwardian age.

The Princess had a train of “slaves” too—one of whom was her brother George Cornwallis-West, in make-up, and very unhappy that his lady friends did not seem to recognise him. He did not have his photo published in 1899.

Here ends, abruptly, my brief examination of female dress at the Duchess of Devonshire’s Jubilee Ball. It is but the tip of an iceberg of startling, exotic imagery created for one night

but captured and published so that we can see it today.



The Princess of Pless

Some items from Devonshire House will be auctioned at the Chatsworth Attic Sale organised by Sotheby’s. The public can view the 20,000 items from eight great houses (from books to furniture, carriages to wine) from 1st to 4th October in marquees in the grounds of Chatsworth House.

The Far Pavilions



THE CLUB'S ANNUAL SUMMER PARTY WAS A GLEEFUL ORGY OF COLONIAL HEDONISM IN A TROPICAL PARADISE

I'LL BE HONEST, our original idea for the NSC summer party theme was The Great British Seaside—knotted handkerchiefs, fish and chips, donkey rides, photographs of your face through a hole in a painted image. But we struggled to find a suitable venue in time (the party was originally scheduled for June). Then, as time was running out, it struck me that Salon d'Été, the nightclub set up by Ed Saperia in the spring, and employing the labour of other NSC Members Willow Tomkins and Will Sprunt, would be ideal if they'd let us use it.

The only potential hiccup was that we could not have exclusive use of the place—it would still be open to passing trade. For most venues this would kill the whole idea, as we wouldn't want the great jeans-and-

T-shirt-clad masses contaminating the place. But from its inception the idea of the Salon was to create a much classier environment than the wealthy-but-tacky Eurotrash club L'Equipe Anglaise downstairs. They wanted an old-fashioned supper club to attract a sophisticated crowd with a vintage dress sense. (In fact Luke, another of the men behind the Salon, told me, as he surveyed the eventual party, that this was



Rammi Glomp



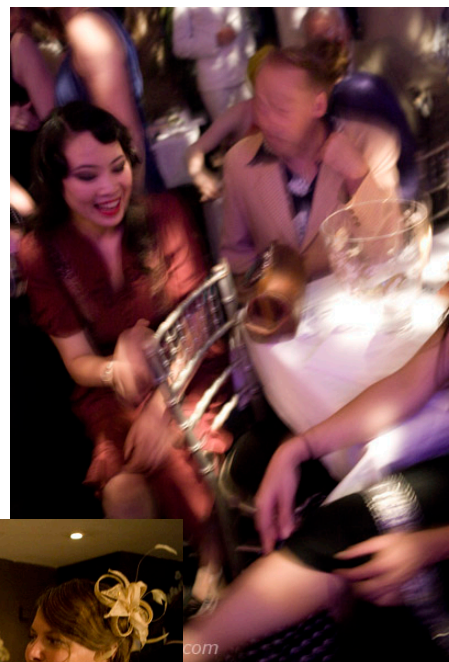
www.marcomega.com

NSC Chairman Torquil Arbuthnot has a twinkle in his eye as he's grappled by Mai Britt Møller

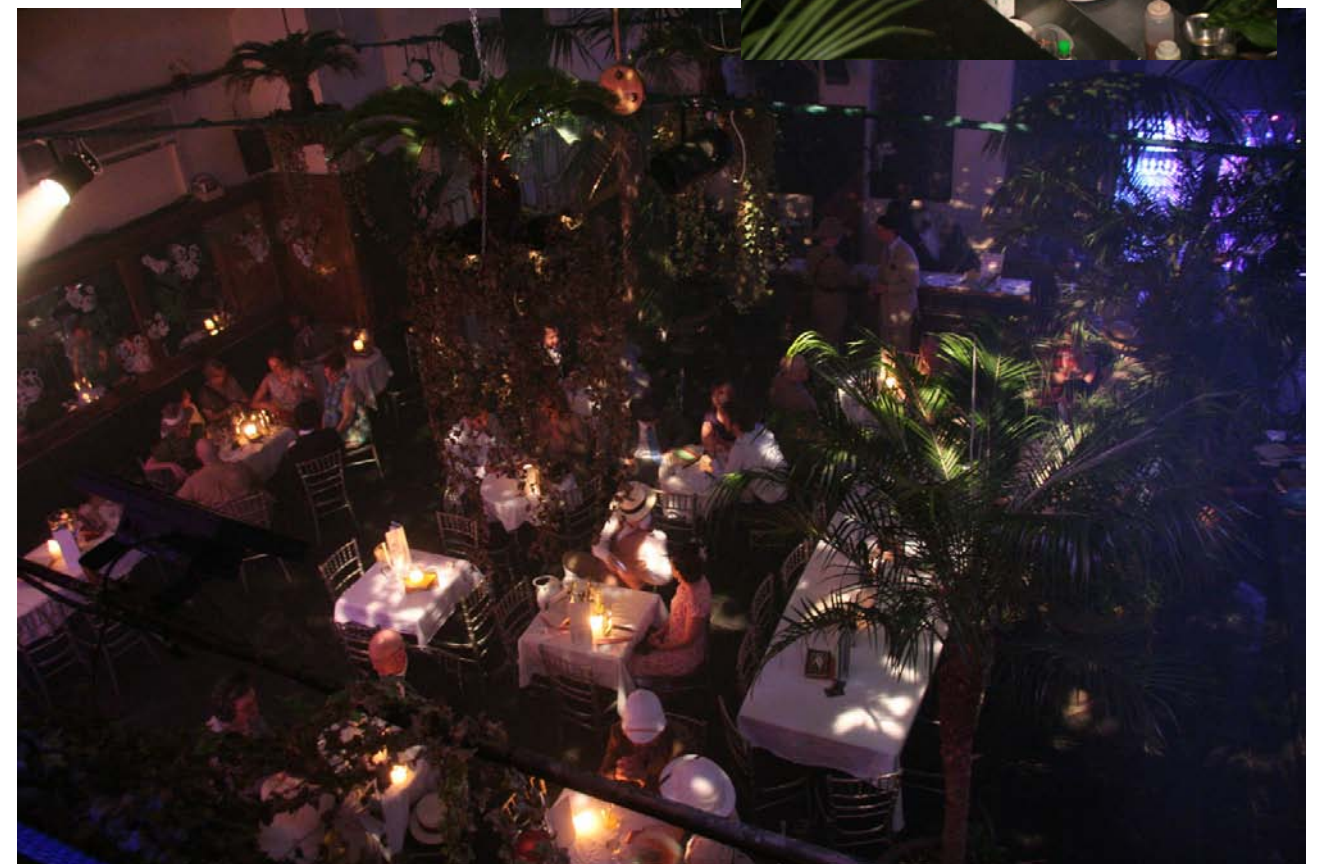
© Café Photo



(Top left) Waveney and Honoria; (top right) Marie Cleland and Damian on the right; (above) the lady is Mrs Pandora Harrison, who won the prize for best outfit; (above left) someone being snapped by Café Photo; (left) Louise in what looks suspiciously like my pith helmet; (right) this chap may have been overdoing the pipe



(far right) Yuan Li at the centre of a stylish maelstrom; (below) Sean is beginning to build up momentum; (below right) a guest tries to fan himself in the tropical climate; the heat and humidity did send a few guests insane but it was to be expected



(Top left) Dancing breaks out; (top right) Louise observes the Conte's blur of movement; (above) Mai and Lisa Prest; (left) Isabel sneaks a crafty fag outside; (right) Will Sprunt, left, and his team perform heroically in the kitchen; (below) the view from Fruity's lofty DJ booth



The Shaving With a Hangover Game To simulate this, guests had to shave a balloon against the clock without bursting it. (Above) Elena begins her winning attempt; (right) the Conte has a go; (top right) Louise makes a stab; (right) Hartley lathers up the target



Poppadom Clay Pigeon Shooting In the pictures to the right of the page you can see the target caught mid-air. (Clockwise from below) The Earl of Waveney has a crack; two shots of Anton Krause; Mrs H. takes aim; Goda Žalalyte lines up the sights; winner Max Holloway locks and loads

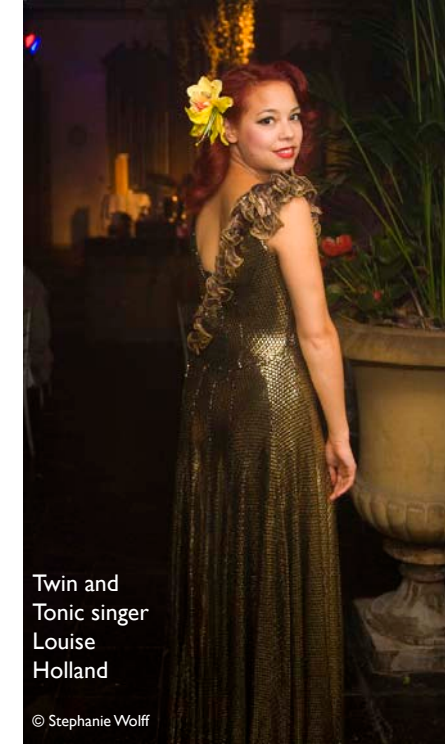


precisely how they had always envisioned the venue working.) So we gambled that the walk-in trade would be precisely the people we were catering for.

The Salon has a very central London location, along one side of Selfridges, a stone's throw from Bond Street tube. And once you get past the dark, nameless frontage you suddenly find yourself in an unexpected tropical paradise. The room used to be a church, given away by the tall, distinctive windows at the front. The DJ booth used to be the organ loft, though the organ pipes at the back of the stage are fake (built by Furbelows' front man Alex, as it happens). The high vaulted ceiling is actually glazed and, with this in mind, Ed and his team filled the place with tall palm trees, hanging baskets of ivy and a living canopy of vines overhead. A machine constantly squirts out mist, partly for the benefit of the plants but also because it creates cool lighting effects. There is even one huge spotlight (dubbed the "sun", I noted on the lighting control computer screen) that shines through the mist and the vines in spectacular rays.

There were so many photographers in the room that I didn't bother using my own camera much: my thanks go to Marco Mega, Stephanie Wolff, Yuan Li, Rammi Glomp, Honoria Bellinger-Glossop, Isabel von Appel, MC Fruity and Café Photo for the images on these pages, which I think give a pretty good impression of the beauty and the mayhem of the event.

Entertainment came not only from our own Fruity Hatfield-Peverel, DJing from his eyrie above the throng, but from the wonderful Twin and Tonic. Sadly for us, one of the twin sisters who front the band had recently had a baby and had not got back to performing yet, but the remaining Holland sister, Louise, and her band did a sterling job—as you



Twin and Tonic singer Louise Holland © Stephanie Wolff

can see by the pictures of manic dancing (top prize for which must go to Sean Rillo Raczka, who was like a Duracell bunny in his urge not only to unleash his happy feet but to get everyone else up on theirs too. Thanks also to those who held Sean upright and retrieved him when he crashed headlong through the doors of the tiny office space, scaring the life out of the waitress within.)

Our balloon shaving contest was won by a lady named Elena, who managed

to get all the foam off the balloon without bursting it in 55 seconds flat. It was rather a messy game, I admit. The poppadom clay pigeon shoot was a big success—frankly you lot just like shooting things, as far as I can tell. I'd fried up the poppadoms in the afternoon and they were frankly a bit soggy by the time we came to open fire with the famed NSC foam-dart gun, so it wasn't quite as explosive as I'd hoped; but one marksman did manage to punch a hole right through his target. Three contestants scored two hits out of two darts, and in the play-off the winner was Max Holloway, who plays saxophone in Twin and Tonic.

We had decided to keep the Grand Raffle relatively low key this time, given that we weren't sure how many of the people in the room would actually be NSC Members and therefore eligible. See pages 22–23 for details of our generous sponsors who made the whole thing possible. And a particular thank you to SW4 gin whose sponsorship enabled us to offer £4 G&Ts. In fact by midnight the bar manager announced

that we'd drunk all 12 bottles supplied by SW4 plus the five bottles that the venue had in stock. We also drank them out of beer and Pimms. Obviously the NSC encourages responsible drinking, but one can't help feeling a twinge or pride.



(l-r) Lisa Prest, Fleur de Guerre and Mai Brit Møller © Stephanie Wolff

Jennifer Gardener of Vanquish Drinks appeared as the White Fairy with her absinthe fountain, distributing samples of La Maison Fontaine, a new white absinthe from France



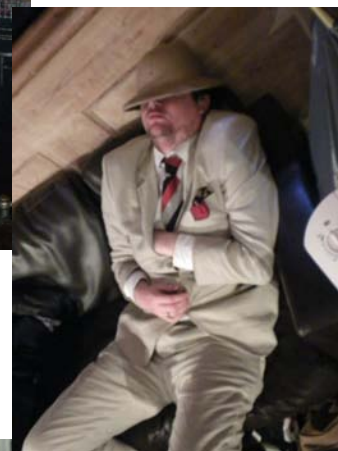
Marco Mega photographer



(Above) As Twin and Tonic play, the crowd cuts a rug



(Above) a band's eye view of the frugging audience; (left, l-r) Heather Morris, Yuan Li, Davina Quigley;



(below, l-r) Dickie Sampson, Robert Beckwith, Artemis Scarheart and Niall Spooner-Harvey; (right) later Artemis is overwhelmed by emotion and has a lie down in Fruity's DJ booth; (below right) Mai—who must win the prize for the most photographed person of the evening—with a somewhat bewildered looking Captain Coppice



© Stephanie Wolff

(Right, l-r) Chris Choy, Chico St Martin, Fruity Hatfield-Peverel and Salon d'Été owner Ed Saperia





Café Photo

One of the attractions on offer was a mobile photo studio (see my murky image left of Sean Raczka being photographed) run by Café Photo. I've printed a selection of their images here but you can see the rest at their website where you can buy prints, mugs, mousepads or royalty-free personal digital usage.



(Left) Miss Minna and Karen Hendry (right) MC Fruity; (bottom left) Chris Choy; (bottom) Charles Wolfenbloode; (bottom right) Anton Krause. (Can't identify the others, I'm afraid.)



Hartley of the Raj



The Conte di Lignano Sabbiadoro



Miss Marie Cleland



(Left) This couple photograph well but are clearly plotting murder (above) Compton-Bassett; (below) Niall and Isabel; (below right) Jo Webster-Burgess





A Word About Our Sponsors



THE STERLING PURVEYORS OF CHAPPIST REQUISITES WITHOUT WHOM THE PARTY WOULD HAVE BEEN MUCH LESS FUN

SW4 Gin

Given the colonial theme of the party we were delighted to be able to work with this new premium gin brand that has been specifically designed to go with tonic.

“SW4 London Distilled Gin, is a big and complex gin made in the style of the original London Dry Gins of the mid- to late-19th century,” explains Master Distiller Charles Maxwell, the man behind the gin. “It has 12 botanicals in its recipe, with juniper heavily predominant; behind that come the citrus and spice notes, from botanicals such as lemon peel and cassia, giving fullness and complexity. The whole is brought together by the orris powder.

“Distilled gins of this style pre-date the cocktail era of the early 20th century, which gave rise to the austere and less complex gins of that time. The older gins were made to show at their best when mixed with water, ginger beer and, most especially tonic, that eponymous drink of the British Empire. SW4 has taken this heritage and using up to date small batch distillation techniques brings you the 21st century version of the classic gin style.”

Wilson's of Sharrow

The Snuff Bar has been a feature of our parties since the Last Gasper tobacco-themed bash to mark the last night of smoking in public places. This time we were pleased to have as our sponsors Wilsons & Co. (Sharrow) Ltd, a firm who have been making snuff at Sharrow Mills near Sheffield since the mid-18th century and are still owned by the Wilson family, six generations on. In fact the precise recipes are known to only two members of the family in each generation. (I assume they have to travel in separate aeroplanes. And the company must live in fear that they'll have an argument and kill each other in a knife fight.) As well as traditional blends with names like Royal George, Jockey Club and Crumbs of Comfort they continue to innovate with new flavours such as rum and blackberry, vanilla and tangerine.

La Maison Fontaine Absinthe

A new ultra-premium white absinthe hand-crafted by gnarled artisans in the world's oldest absinthe stills, in Pontarlier, the ancient home of French absinthe. We were lucky enough to have Jenny Gardener from Vanquish Drinks come along with her portable absinthe fountain to distribute free samples of the drink. It's a smooth, complex tippie focusing on the anise, and proved so popular I virtually had to hose NSC Members out of the anteroom so we could commence the Grand Raffle draw.



Spencers Trousers

Based in Yorkshire's Upper Calder valley, this firm makes nothing but trouser, including breeks, plus twos and plus fours. All their garments are made to measure, to order, so you can choose the details you want—zip or button fly, belt loops or brace buttons, turn-ups or no, etc. They have a wide range of fabrics to choose from, including cotton moleskins and corduroys, wools, washable wools and tweeds. Prices range from £99 to £130 depending on the fabric.

Moreover, Spencers will happily copy an existing trouser, so if you've found a perfect pair of vintage Oxford bags they will copy them, them keep the pattern for repeat orders.

Spencers kindly provided a voucher good for one pair of trousers as a raffle prize, which was won by Mr Robert Beckwith.

Huality Tailoring

As outlined in Newsletter XLV (July 2010) Huality are a tailoring firm who will measure you in their fitting rooms then have your bespoke suit cut here, but stitched in Hong Kong, saving greatly on the overall cost without compromising quality. (They also do more affordable made-to-measure suits that are both cut and stitched abroad.)

Huality kindly provided a voucher good for one bespoke shirt worth £50, which was

won by Mr Sean Longden. I would also like to remind readers that, as NSC Members, you automatically qualify for a 5 per cent discount on all Huality purchases.

Pachacuti

Pachacuti sell genuine Panama hats that are not only good value in my opinion (I'm still wearing the “Colonial” I bought five years ago) but are also Fair Trade. They kindly provided a Panama as a Raffle Prize with an oriental looking hatband (see image) and it went to Honoria Bellinger-Glossop (who promptly bestowed it upon Waveney).

The name, incidentally, means “world upside down” in the Quecha language, signifying the company's endeavour to redress the production inequalities in the fashion industry by offering a fairer deal for traditional artisans in the Andes: the firm is now the main source of income for some 1,200 weavers, embroiderers, knitters, and hatters in Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia.



Murdock of London

At three London barber shops, at Old Street, Stafford Street in Mayfair, and within Liberty near Oxford Circus, Murdock offer traditional gentleman's grooming services and products, including moustache and beard trims and styling, manicures and full wet shaves. They describe themselves as having “a particular British sensibility” and were deemed by *The Times* to be “a one-stop shop for the discerning dandy”. They kindly offered two wet shave vouchers as prizes.

I WOULD ALSO like to thank **Sean Longden** for giving copies of all of his military history books as prizes and **James Laurie** for the book *Out in the Noonday Sun: Edwardians in the Tropics*, which was won by the one and only Compton-Bassett.



Hirsutes Take the Trophy by a Whisker!



THE TASHES: OFFICIAL MATCH REPORT

By William Maple Watermere

ON SATURDAY 21 AUGUST, Roehampton Vale provided the backdrop for another titanic tussle between the Hirsute Gentlemen and the Clean-Shaven Players as the Gentlemen saw off both the British summer weather and some disciplined late Clean-Shaven bowling to record their second successive victory.

Those arriving at the appointed time of 10.30am, might have legitimately wondered whether there would be any play at all once the



early morning sunshine had quickly given way to the thick cloud cover traditionally heralding the arrival of the Rugby Football season. The Tashes absentee list was also a long one: Fruity, Hallamshire-Smythe, Hartley, the Brassington family and Spooner-Harvey were all unavailable for selection. Similarly, Manx umpire Rushen and regular scorer Miss Hartley were otherwise engaged, and were greatly missed.

At 11am, long-standing Clean-Shaven captain, Hayes-Ballantyne arrived, having



clearly forgone his pre-match appointment with the barber's blade for an extra hour in bed, and two sides were hastily assembled. With the weather looking unpromising, the captains agreed on a 25-over match and, having won the toss, Hayes-Ballantyne elected to field. Amid damp overcast conditions, Artemis and Arbuthnot strode to the crease, determined to see off the new ball.

The first few overs suggested that scoring off the bat was likely to be a tricky proposition. The wind was causing the ball to drift across the batsman and tight bowling from Krause and Pauline in particular saw the Gentlemen make a slow start, with Scarheart surviving a couple of lbw appeals and Arbuthnot nicking a few of wider balls. Eventually the breakthrough came, as Arbuthnot was clean-bowled by Pauline for 5.

Next in was Stern, the Hirsute's dangerous batsman, and his attacking instincts soon saw him throwing the bat at the Clean-Shaven bowling from the first ball. At the other end, Scarheart's dogged resistance continued but eventually came to its natural conclusion when, after some determined hitting and some well-judged running, he spooned the ball to Choy off the bowling of Nicholas Cassidy for a gritty 6. Unfortunately, Stern struggled to connect with a number of wide off-side deliveries then virtually sat on his stumps while attempting to dispatch the slow bowling of Bunty to Roehampton Woods and was out hit wicket for 1.

Coming in at number four, Von Cromwell's innings was also short-lived. Having added a handful of singles to the score with some well-judged drives through the off-side, he was smartly caught by Hayes-Ballantyne off the bowling of the young Nicholas Cassidy for 3. At this stage the Hirsutes looked destined for collapse, but the fall of Von Cromwell and

Stern brought Waveney and Nippetweed to the crease, charged with righting the ship in the face of some accurate Clean-Shaven bowling. Waveney soon proved himself very capable in the role of anchor-man, as a combination of nonchalant pipe-smoking between overs, intelligent attacking strokes and resolute blocking saw the Gentlemen begin to recover as the ball began to age. Nippetweed also looked a different player to the defensive blocker of previous Tashes matches and contributed to a fine partnership built on measured stroke-making and cautious restraint. With this pair at the crease, the Hirsutes began to make rapid progress past the fifty-mark and towards the team hundred. The partnership was finally broken when Nippetweed was bowled by Pauline for 19 and Waveney rather harshly adjudged lbw playing no stroke for 17.

The final three overs saw Watermere and Essex struggle to add significantly to the score, and the innings came to a close with Essex run out off the final ball of the twenty-fifth over for 7, and Watermere finishing on 1 not out. The Hirsutes had made 110 from their innings at 4.4 runs per over. The pick of the Clean-Shaven



reach the victory target of 111 in quick time. The Hirsute bowling attack, however, were in no mood to let the Clean-Shaven openers, Chairman and Pauline, set the tone. Rotating the Hirsute bowling across the team, Watermere kept faith with the policy that had proved successful last year and, despite leaking a few runs early on as Pauline skilfully capitalised on gaps in the field, the breakthrough came pretty quickly as the Chairman's attacking intent was stifled as he was caught and bowled for 5 attempting to loft Watermere over the Pavilion boundary.

Anton came in next, but was soon dismissed lbw by Stern for 2. Pauline eventually fell in similar, if more unfortunate, fashion for 9 as a Von Cromwell ball that appeared to pitch outside leg before thumping the pad triggered a harsh lbw decision.

Next to the crease came Michael Cassidy, later accompanied by Nicholas Cassidy, who strode out having clearly decided that attack was the best form of defence on a pitch which seemed to be favouring the wind-assisted medium pace of Arbuthnot, Von Cromwell and Nippetweed. For twenty-five minutes, Michael Cassidy looked like he might win the match for the Clean-Shaven side single-handed as boundary after boundary seemed to rack up, the highlight being a huge six to the square-leg boundary. Nicholas Cassidy proved cautious support at the non-striker's end, and



the spectators responded with enthusiasm as father and son reignited Clean-Shaven hopes of victory. Then, seemingly out of nowhere, Watermere found an in-swinging Yorker that thudded into the pad of Michael Cassidy, and the umpire raised his finger to signal an lbw decision that, on another day, might have gone a different way. Michael Cassidy sportingly walked back to the pavilion for a potentially match-changing score of 25. Despite some good defensive strokes and some well-judged singles, Nicholas Cassidy followed in quick time, bowled by Von Cromwell for 4.

The game was now finely balanced. The Clean-Shaven Players were only 30 runs from victory with three batsmen left. It was all set for another close finish. Conscious of the need for steady scoring, Hayes-Ballantyne and Choy picked up where Michael Cassidy had left off, mixing some ambitious hitting with some quick running between the wickets. It was a strategy not without its risks, however, and Choy escaped a couple of run out scares while Hayes-Ballantyne presented a couple of difficult catching opportunities to the scattered Hirsute fieldsmen before being bowled by the slow accuracy of Arbuthnot for 8. With the Hirsutes only one wicket away from victory, Bunty stepped out to face a circle of close catchers secure in the knowledge that a safety-first approach would probably see them home; but the Hirsutes struggled to dislodge the final

The victorious Hirsute Gentlemen



The Hirsute victors applaud their opponents, while secretly despising them

pair as Choy scampered up and down the pitch and Bunty prodded the gaps in the field to good effect. Eventually, with the Clean-Shaven hundred up in the

eighteenth over, the final wicket partnership was severed by Nippetweed, who secured his only wicket with a straight ball that trapped Choy lbw for 6. At one minute to four, the umpire's finger went up and the Hirsute Gentlemen had secured their second successive Tashes victory.

Shortly after the team photographs and presentations, many of the players subsequently made their way over to the excellent NSC summer party, where Michael Cassidy's superb innings, Pauline's maiden over and Stern's comic dismissal were much discussed. This correspondent has no hesitation in awarding the man of the match accolade to Michael Cassidy for a devastating and highly effective translation of the "home-run" batting method to the red-ball game, and would like to thank all the players, spectators and officials for their attendance and enthusiasm. Hopefully next year will bring us better weather, a few more players and another exciting finish to remember. WMW

Hirsute Gentlemen Watermere, Stern, Arbuthnot, Scarheart, Nippetweed, Von Cromwell, Waveney, Essex

Clean-Shaven Players Hayes-Ballantyne, Chairman, Pauline, Krause, M. Cassidy, N. Cassidy, Choy, Bunty.

The defeated Clean-Shaven Players



A Wedding in Wonderland



MAD HATTERS AND PRETTY MAIDS ALL IN A ROW AT THIS YEAR'S MOST BOHEMIAN KNOT-TYING

YOU MAY KNOW NSC Member Sophie Jonas as exotic dancer Tenacity Flux, organiser of the Burlesque Brunch; you may know her as a designer of jewellery, wedding dresses and underwear; or you may know her as the force behind There May Be Truffles Ahead or Roaring For Teas. She is a many-talented conjuror, and on 28th August her latest creation



Mr and Mrs Hill. Andy's suit was a wedding present, run up for him on Savile Row



found the White Rabbit's, "Oh my ears and whiskers, how late it's getting!"

The gallery was swathed in swags of gauze containing dragonflies—which, as evening drew on, turned out to be lights. The dining room was dominated by vast montages of photographs of the couple, including many from NSC and Chap

events—though, perhaps wisely, few from Torture Gardens...

Of course Sophie had made her own dress, though head bridesmaid Nicole Wevers revealed that Sophie had actually changed her mind about which dress to wear about ten minutes before the



Note the special wedding jumparound created for the occasion

was her own wedding to Mr Andy Hill.

The setting was the stately Hatfield House which is just over the garden wall for Sophie and Andy. There was an *Alice In Wonderland* theme to the decorations—all made by Sophie herself, needless to say. The tables (named after characters from the books) were decorated with oversized playing cards and bouquets of wooden roses with chess pieces entwined. Someone had carefully spliced together footage from many different *Alice* films and TV adaptations. The order of service was peppered with quotes: under "The Ceremony" we had Alice asking, "I wonder if I have been changed in the night?... and under "Carriages: 11.30" we

wedding, swapping a frilly number for a long, straight, fitted gown that required walking from the knees down, in a Morticia Adams sort of a way. But the frilly dress made an appearance



(Above) The lengthy wedding procession; (above left) a variety of Jumperounds on display; (left) Sophie with daughter Wednesday; (below left) the usual NSC suspects (l-r) Torquil Arbuthnot, Fleur de Guerre, Miss Minna, plus Lisa Curry (a.k.a the Rocket Queen—not sure why) and Alison Tang (a.k.a. Miss Cherrylicious)

or their clothing, but it looks as if the garment wraps around the wearer's legs rather than requiring you to persuade junior to thrust his or her feet through tubes, and perhaps this is essential to its appeal. Anyway there were many of them in evidence, which made one feel as if one was at a Ninja training school.

In addition to the traditional discotheque a mobile casino had been erected and we were all given 100 dollars from the Bank of Sophie and Andy. Needless to say, Torquil rolled up his sleeves and set about relieving the rubes of their inheritances...

Sophie was given away by her brother Benjamin Blaine, and the entourage included five groomsmen, two pages and some nine bridesmaids.

Best man Edward Hill looked quite uncannily like his brother.

I believe that the happy couple are now on honeymoon in Sri Lanka. I'm sure all in the Club will join me in wishing them hearty congratulations and the best of luck.



nevertheless, as Sophie changed into it for her and Andy's first dance, an elaborately choreographed routine to Cameo's "Word Up".

Sophie's needlecraft is not limited to adult garb. She is the inventor of what I believe is called the Jumperound, a sort of kimono/wrap affair for kids. I know little about either children



(Top left) the bride and groom's elaborate first dance; (above right) Sophie and the Rocket Queen make shapes on the dance floor; (above left) Torquil meanwhile fleeces his fellow players at the poker table; (left) proof that Mrs H. and I were actually there; (below) Hatfield House as we left it. It is both old and big. **Thanks to Fleur, Alison, Nicole and Miss Minna for the photographs**



The Cocktail Cabinet

Wherein Members may chew over garnishes and mull over muddling

Cocktails for Ladies

By Sara Bridgman-Smith

I have often found myself caught off guard when asked, “What would you like to drink?” With a lack of insight, I’ve usually then found myself sipping a glass of orange juice, but longing for something more adventurous.

The world of cocktails, even just vintage ones, is vast and often expensive. So, after a couple of conversations with ladies in a similar situation, I decided to raid the cellar and the bookshelf and find drinks that I could recommend to female friends, to arm us with a list of choices—relatively straight-forward, easy-to-find choices—for those moments of ignorance and indecision. I hope that this brief introduction provides some insight into the big and vibrant world of cocktails.

White Lady (8/10)

1¾ shots gin, 1 shot triple sec, 1 shot lemon juice, 1 egg white, shaken with ice

This gin-based concoction was wonderfully smooth and, with its tart citrus flavour and creamy froth on top, was reminiscent of a lemon meringue pie, but without the excessive sweetness. I could easily see myself sipping and savouring one of these at any point in an evening, although I imagine those with a more refined palate may enjoy specifying their choice of gin to make it even better.

Harvey Wallbanger (7/10)

2 shots vodka, 3½ shots orange juice, ½ Shot Galliano, shaken and strained into an ice-filled glass Vodka, orange juice and Galliano come together to make a fruity long drink that probably won’t hang around long if you have a sweet tooth

and like the strong vanilla flavour. If you find sugary cocktails hard to swallow, Galliano L’Autentico, based on an older formulation, may be just the ticket: the vanilla is replaced by a subtle aniseed kick. Both variations are delicious with a slice of orange and, for a real treat, freshly squeezed juice. I found this easier to drink than the White Lady and wonderfully thirst-quenching.

Brandy Alexander (9.5/10)

1 shot brandy, 1¼ shots crème de cacao, 2½ shots double cream, shaken with ice

I have to admit to being less than enthusiastic about cocktails containing cream, and so I was quietly dreading the Brandy Alexander (which I know to be a favourite of Mr. B), but this one was a real surprise. A dusting of nutmeg and chocolate flake draws you into a combination of brandy, crème de cacao, and (in this case, double) cream that is silky and rich, with the warmth in the brandy slowly seeping through after the ice-cream beginning. A drink that could easily replace a dessert—and I like my desserts!

Simple Rum Cocktail

(6/10)

To a tumbler of crushed ice add 1½ shots dark or white rum, ¼ shot sugar syrup, ½ shot cola; squeeze in the juice of half a lime

With a glass of crushed ice, refreshing lime and a dash of cola, this cocktail brings back memories of many a summer evening. It’s an enjoyable to drink rum, both for fans of the spirit and novices. The other ingredients make the rum more palatable for a fresh face,

but if you don’t use a rum that you like on its own, this probably won’t be your favourite.

Sweet Martini (ladies only, according to the Esquire’s *Handbook for Hosts*) (8/10)



1 shots gin, 1 shot sweet red vermouth, orange bitters, shaken with ice

Mixed using Old Tom Gin—sweeter than its modern counterparts—this Martini was unexpectedly full of flavour, given its cool, clear exterior. It packs a punch, but the taste goes far beyond just alcohol; I found myself reminiscing on olives and pizza, making me think that it might serve quite well as an aperitif for an Italian meal. Its boldness means it won’t be to everyone’s taste, but it’s an unusual one to try, whatever your experiences of the dry martini.

Rusty Nail (8/10)

2½ shots whisky, ¾ shot Drambuie, over ice

As a fan of whisky, I was looking forward to this one and wasn’t disappointed: its combination of Drambuie, a honey and herb liqueur, and blended Scotch is a sweeter way to drink whisky without drowning it within a long drink. This would be a delightful drink to slowly sip by the fire at the end of a long day, feeling both the flames and the alcohol gradually warm you up.

Sidecar (9/10)

1½ shots cognac, 1 shot triple sec, 1 shot lemon juice, shaken with ice

Finally, we have the Sidecar: a deliciously smooth and fruity cocktail and another one that surprised me, as I’m not generally a fan of brandy. The Sidecar, however, is a short, revitalising drink (that is, nonetheless, relatively easy to manage) with a sharp finish that reminded me of sherbet. The flavours come together nicely and I believe I could quite happily order one of these at any point during an evening. This is my top pick for a ladies’ cocktail.

By scores alone, the Brandy Alexander was my favourite, but, unlike a good cup of tea, I feel that I would need to be in a specific mood to enjoy one as much as I did in this tasting. Therefore, the top spot in my list of cocktails for ladies has to be the Sidecar, followed by the Rusty Nail and The White Lady, with the Brandy Alexander reserved for those times when I’m after a sweet treat, but can’t manage dessert!

There are, of course, many, many other cocktails to try; why not ask a barman for a recommendation, starting with your favourite spirit as a base? Create your own, tailored list so that you never again find yourself, as I did, unarmed with the perfect drink for an evening.





The Circus Comes to the Cabaret



TROUBADOURS TEST AUDIENCE'S PATIENCE AT THE CIRQUE

THE CROSS KINGS, ancestral home of the Cirque de Crème Anglaise—that night of vaudevillean musical strangeness that usually features a handful of NSC Members—suddenly closed down last month, leaving me scrabbling to find a venue for the shows already booked. I was already talking to Ed Saperia to hold The Far Pavilions at the Salon d'Été so we decided to try the Cirque on 20th August there as well—the very night before the party.

Now, the Cross Kings was always peculiarly well suited. It was a well-established music venue where tweedy fops could wander without the batting of an eyelid. Within its cluttered, homely rooms it had a relaxed bohemian vibe that perfectly suited the light-hearted, untrendy thing we were trying to do, the spirit of a party rather than a nightclub. We shall miss it.

The Salon is a bit of a different proposition. It was always intended to embody a sophisticated, vintage-inflected supper club feel, high-end with drinks prices to match. Now, the Cirque likes a bit of cabaret in the mix. But unlike all the retro burlesque nights, our idea is a mixture of cabaret vamp and theatricality with the humorous, lunatic fringe of experimental pop/rock music. Whereas the Salon's usual musical fare is aimed at creating a recognisably period style, we're not trying to create anything recognisable at all—sometimes not even recognisably music. (In fact the overlap between the Cirque and the NSC is more to do with celebrating individual style in the face of bland fashion than it is to do with a focus on any particular period.)

The Salon's walk-in crowd were doubtless not expecting anything quite like it, but we started gently enough with the wonderful No Cars—the



Photos © Nick Morgan

only act so far to play the Cirque more than once. Normally a three-piece they had recently lost another drummer (allegedly she was sacked because she got a boyfriend, but you can never believe anything that lead singer Haruna says on stage). So they had reworked their material for a two-piece, with Haruna and Sachi taking it in turns to bang the drums as well as their usual guitar, bass and vocal chores. I particularly liked

Sachi's ankle bells, with which she could tap out the rhythm in a musically rather interesting way.

As usual the band illustrated their songs with inept cartoons displayed on a music stand. But this time we were also treated to a silent figure in a blank white mask who stood at the back of the stage and swayed to every song, waving a racoon glove puppet on one hand. On the song about tuna, he also produced some cut-out tuna fish on sticks.

The inter-song banter is a key part of any No Cars gig—Haruna plays up the Japanese naïf image, usually claiming to have flown over from Tokyo for that gig and alleging that the band met at school, on a farm or while working as geishas. This time she also insisted that they thought the gig was in North Korea but had been misinformed. Noting that the supper club crowd were getting on with their meals, she offered, "Oh, I see that everyone is eating. I hope we don't make you puke."

Next up were the Furbelows, hosts of the Cirque. True to our ramshackle tradition, singer Alex managed to kick out the guitarist's cable—twice—while stalking around stage. I think we appealed to as many people as we horrified, though I am told that we were rather loud.

The Lovely Eggs are a husband-and-wife duo, he playing drums, she strumming guitar and both singing. I love their stuff, sort of playground philosophy set to nursery rhyme melodies; it combines the deceptive (and actually quite profound) simplicity of Talking Heads with tunes that might not be out of place in a football chant but which therefore stick in your head. For their song about an olive, Holly came down into the audience and stood on a chair: one of the drunk Japanese party at the table took the opportunity to look up her skirt. Not sure if that means they liked the act or not.

Final act of the night was The Henry Road, a psychedelic rock act. With hindsight this was never going to work at the Salon, and I admit we lost the audience here. But overall I had many positive comments about the night and I am so glad that I got to do a Cirque at this amazing space.

Now, where am I going to hold the show I've got programmed for 12th November? If you happen to know of a dandy-friendly surrealist cabaret space in an accessible part of London, do let me know.



CLUB NOTES

New Members

AGAINST THE SUDDEN CHILL of approaching Autumn I would like to thrust the peeling but still sun-warmed hand of all-season camaraderie towards the following coves and covettes, all of whom have seen the NSC light in the last month: Rebecca Gilchrist, Robart Hoare, Jason B. Armstrong, Algernon "Tommy" Delauney, Michael Westmount-Fairside, Edward Marlowe, Jonty Ivanhoe Webster-Burgess, Declan Pattison, Mark Wallis, Ruth Laceby-Common, Mrs Claire Palmer and Miss Della Dusk.

Tea Fairy Blesses the Club

ON ACCOUNT OF HOW she lives in the Former Colonies—previously Chicago but now Oregon, I believe—Member Lainie Petersen (The Reverend Lainie Petersen, to be precise) has never made it to any NSC event. But we are clearly in her thoughts as she has kindly sorted out a tasty discount for Club members on tea.

Lainie used to write a column on US wines for this publication but she latterly switched her

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Clayton Hartley



Buster Keaton

Thanks to recent joiner Michael Westmount-Fairside for sending this photograph of me and querying its similarity to many well known images of deadpan slapstick comic genius Buster Keaton. "Could they perhaps be related?" he asks. "I think we should be told." Needless to say I contacted the Keaton estate to enquire after my inheritance but they threatened to call the police.

attention to tea and is a successful tea writer and blogger. She recently contacted me to say, "I have news of a little benefit for our Club Members. I've arranged with the good folks at Jing Tea (a UK tea company) to provide a code good for a one-time 10% discount on purchases from Jing's online store. The only limitations are that a Member can only use the code for one purchase and the tea must be shipped to an address within the UK." The code is **9128345**.

Last month *The Sunday Times* wrote: "It's time for tea to revamp its image and celebrate its charms. Enter Edward Eisler, the founder of JING Tea who is prepared to travel further than most in his quest for the perfect cup. His company already supplies some of the country's

finest restaurants and hotels including Heston Blumenthal's Fat Duck, The Lanesborough and Gordon Ramsay restaurants."

Thanks to Lainie for sorting that out. You can read some of her reviews of Jing tea here.



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.

🔴 NSC Club Night

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

👻 CREEPY FACT OF THE MONTH

Only today did I discover a creepy fact. Those of you who enjoyed our Far Pavilions party on 21st August may be interested to know that M. M. Kaye, who wrote the novel *The Far Pavilions* from which we stole the name of the party, was born in 1908—on 21st August...



The Heritage of London Trust presents

The Cries of London

Monday 6th September

7pm

St Gabriel's Church, Warwick Square, Pimlico, SW1V 2AD

Admission: £15 in advance from tara@heritageoflondon.com

Composer Rupert Bond conducts a concert inspired by London, including music by Orlando Gibbons and Henry Purcell, in the presence of HRH The Duke of Gloucester, KG, GCVO, to help launch the first Ride & Stride to raise money to preserve London Churches (the Ride & Stride event itself will take place on 11th September).

The Bowly Years: Megaphone to Microphone

Wednesday 8th

September

2.30pm

The Regent Centre, 51 High Street, Christchurch, Dorset BH23 1AS

Admission: £15, £10 concessions (Box office: 01202 499 199)

A stage production celebrating the life and career of 1930s crooner Al Bowly, from his barber shop in South Africa to London's swanky hotels and NBC radio in the US. featuring more than 40 songs recreated by the vocal talents of Australian Damion Scarcella.

🔴 Ruth and Oliver Hit Town

Friday 10th September

6pm till closing time

The Fitzroy Tavern, 16A Charlotte Street, London W1T 2LY (020 7580 3714)

Admission: Free

Oliver Lane and Ruth Laceby-Common have finally seen sense and are moving from Wolverhampton to London, and Fruity has organised a welcoming party for them at this

Fitzrovia watering hole a stone's throw from the Wheatsheaf where we have our regular monthly meetings. All welcome!

Die Freche Muse

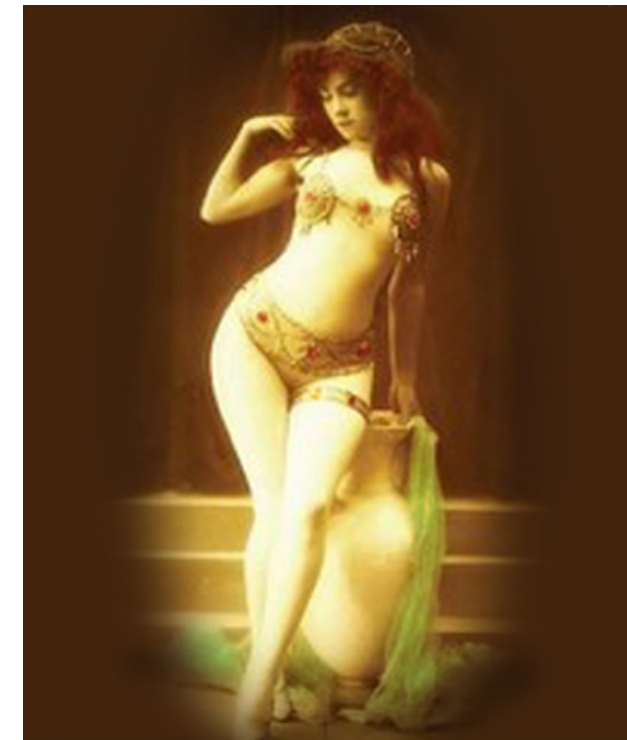
Friday 10th September

10pm–4am

Dalston Boys Club, 68 Boleyn Road, London N16 8JG

Admission: £9 in advance, £10 on the door
Dress: 1920s–40s

A retro/speakeasy/lounge sort of affair, described by host Baron Von Sanderson as "in the great tradition of European cabaret, irreverent, decadent, sexually ambivalent". Performers this time include burlesque dancers Millicent Binks, Marianne Cheesecake and Suri Sumatra, close-up magic from Magicmagic Wood, music from Tania Rocha singing Edith Piaf and disc jockeying from Richard Adamson. As it is a private venue the Baron needs a full guest list, so even if you are intending to pay on the door, please RSVP to die.freche.muse@gmail.com. I gather it may well sell out in advance.



Die Freche Muse

Weekend at the Asylum

5pm Friday 10th–5pm Sunday 12th September

A variety of venues across Lincoln, including The Lawns, Charlotte House and Victoria Inn, and Lincoln Castle

Admission: Tickets range from £22 to £53 in advance

The Premier Event for Steampunks in the UK, organised by the Victorian Steampunk Society. Authors, artists, dancers and lots of live music. Full day programmes and the biggest steampunk market in the UK, "The Bazaar Eclectica". More details at the website.



An artist's impression of the Bridport Hat Festival

SS Atlantica

Saturday 11th September
8pm–2am

Savoy Pier, London WC2

Admission: £15; see www.ssatlantica.com

Dress: “At-sea formalwear”

From the people behind Blitz Party, a party with the theme of a luxury liner circa 1931—on a real boat. There will be live bands, floorshows, cabaret acts, casino tables, deck games and lashings of Champagne and cocktails. Arrive from 8pm; the boat sets sail for an hour at 9pm.

Saturday Night Swing Club

Saturday 11th September
7.30pm–2am

City Firefly Bar, 18 Old Bailey, London EC4M 7EP

(Nearest tube: St Pauls; overground: City Thameslink)

Admission: £12/£11 LSDS members

Dress: Glamorous retro or modern

52nd Street Jump and the London Swing Dance Society present three floors of dancing to DJs including residents Dr Swing and Mr Kicks. In the Alhambra Lounge you’ll find rhythm and blues, jump jive, boogie woogie and swing; in the Savoy Club you can receive taster classes in dances from the 1920s and 1930s; and in the Rendezvous Ballroom you will be treated to the dance music of the 1920s to the 1950s. All guests also get a free £3 drinks voucher. More at 52ndstreetjump.co.uk.

Hula Boogie

Sunday 19th September
7.30 till late

South London Pacific, 340 Kennington Road,

London SE11 4LD (020 7820 9189)

Admission: £7

Voted Best Club Night in the 2009 EasyJet Readers’ Awards, this is a music and dance night set in an extraordinarily-styled Tiki bar in south London. Listen to music from the 1930s to the 1940s; get there early for the Jive class (7.30–8pm) or Hukilau Hula dance class (8–8.15pm)—no partner or experience necessary. More details at the Hula Boogie website.

The Bridport Hat Festival

Friday 17th–Sunday 19th September

Various venues in Bridport, Dorset

A mixed bag of largely family-friendly activities, loosely based around tifers. There are musical performances (Hank Wangford, bluesman Jim Reynolds and ska monsters One Step Beyond), tango dancing, a cocktail evening, exhibits from the Stockport Museum of Hatting plus a hat market every day at the Arts Centre and Electric Palace. On Saturday morning you will have your chance to appear in a “mass hat photo”. More details will be announced, so keep your peepers on www.bridporthatfest.org.

Goodwood Revival

Friday 17th–Sunday 19th September

Goodwood House, Goodwood, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 0PX

Admission: From £35 for a day and £107 for the whole weekend plus a host of extra costs if you want grandstand access, a space to pitch a tent, permission to breathe, etc. See the website for the full menu of exciting fees.

The Goodwood Revival is the world’s most popular historic motor race meeting and the only event of its kind to be staged in the romantic time capsule of the Fifties and Sixties. As well as recreating the golden era of motor sport, the Revival offers exceptional wheel-to-wheel racing around a classic circuit, untouched by the modern world. The Revival relives the glory days of Goodwood Motor Circuit, which ranked alongside Silverstone as Britain’s leading racing venue throughout its active years between 1948 and 1966. During this time, it hosted contemporary racing of all kinds, including Formula One, the famous Goodwood Nine Hours race and the celebrated Tourist Trophy sports car race.

Now, for three days each September, the

circuit stages an historic race meeting for the kind of cars and motorcycles that would have competed at Goodwood between 1948 and 1966. The circuit echoes to the spine-tingling bark of golden-age Grand Prix cars from the Fifties and Sixties, thundering sports and GT cars, as well as historic saloon cars and little-seen Formula Juniors. Many of these important historic racing cars are driven by famous faces from motor sport past and present. Sir Stirling Moss, John Surtees, Sir Jack Brabham, Phil Hill, Derek Bell, David Coulthard, Damon Hill, Gerhard Berger, Johnny Herbert, Wayne Gardner, Giacomo Agostini and the late, great Barry Sheene have all taken part at the Revival.

Darkteaser’s Garter Lounge

Sunday 19th September

7.00–11.30pm

The Leamington Assembly, Spencer Street, Leamington Spa, CV31

Admission: £20 in advance only

Those with a taste for burlesque might like to investigate Darkteaser’s Garter Lounge show, this coming at you from Leamington Spa’s sumptuous art deco Assembly. As a further treat the 1950s diner Dockers is offering 10% discount to anyone with a ticket to the show for some pre-strip chow and if you need to kip over the Falstaff Hotel

are also offering a special discount. Tonight’s show stars Darkteaser herself, Vicky Butterfly, Lalla Morte, Lady Ane Angel, Red Sarah, Veronika Valentine, Chrys Columbine, Joe Black, Emerald Ace, Starla Haze, Lexi Sexx and Bam Bam Blue plus dark, operatic cabaret From Nara Taylor and Metal Pete Compèred By the Divine Miss Em.

Kinetoscope: Silent and Early Cinema

Thursday 23rd September

7.30pm–12.30am

The George Tavern, 373 Commercial Road, London E1 0LA

Admission: FREE

A new monthly night celebrating silent and early cinema at the splendidly eclectic and artistic George Tavern. This month it is Dickens Before Sound, a unique collection of early adaptations of one Britain’s favourite authors.

Clerkenwell Vintage Fashion Fair

Sunday 26th September

Trade 10.30am, public 11am–4.30pm

The Urdang, The Old Finsbury Town Hall, Rosebury Avenue, London EC1R 4RP

Admission £5 before 11am, £4 thereafter

A relatively new vintage fashion and textile event, which *Time Out* apparently describes as “one not to be missed”. “Come and hand-pick your look from a fine selection of beautiful vintage clothes, shoes, handbags, hats, gloves, textiles and jewellery from the 1800s–1980s,” they say. “Without costing the earth both financially and environmentally. Organiser Savitri is an award winner with 18 years international experience in the fashion, film, advertising and music industry.” There is a changing room, an alterations booth and a café.



An everyday scene at the Goodwood Revival



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FOR THE LATEST information on what the Club is up to, who has been arrested, etc., have a squizz at www.newsheridanclub.co.uk. For more photos of Club events go to www.flickr.com/sheridanclub. Those of a technological bent can befriend us electrically at www.myspace.com/newsheridanclub or indeed www.facebook.com.