

Blade on the feather

Messing about in boats at the annual Oxford punt picnic

PLUS:

All about Pimm's

The history and practical deployment of this famous fruit cup

London's grey soul

A psychogeographical peek at one corner of the capital

The New Sheridan Club

Newsletter

LVI • June 2011



The New Sheridan Club traditionally meets in the upstairs room of The Wheatsheaf, just off Oxford Street. The Wheatsheaf is one of Fitzrovia's historic pubs, a one-time haunt of Dylan Thomas, George Orwell, Augustus John and Julian Maclaren-Ross. In fact Thomas met his wife Caitlin in The Wheatsheaf and, legend has it, he was known to flash at women there as well. Fitzrovia's associations with literature go back to the eighteenth century. In the twentieth century both Woolf and Shaw lived in Fitzroy Square; Pound and Lewis launched *Blast!* at the Restaurant de la Tour Eiffel in Percy Street. John Buchan lived in Portland Place and in *The Thirty-Nine Steps* Richard Hannay has a flat there. Both Lawrences (D.H. and T.E.) took rooms there, as did Aleister Crowley, Wilfred Owen, Rupert Brooke and Katherine Mansfield.

The Next Meeting

The next Club Meeting will take place on Wednesday 1st June in the upstairs room at The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB, from 8pm until 11pm. In keeping with what could be perceived as something of an obsession with Nazis among our speakers, "Chuckles" Younghusband will thrill us with an account, accompanied by pictures both still and moving, of the life and remarkable exploits of Hanna Reitsch—enthusiastic and unrepentant Nazi; pin-up girl of the Third Reich; only female holder of the Iron Cross First Class; and test-pilot extraordinaire.

Reitsch was the first woman to fly a helicopter, a rocket plane and a jet fighter, and set over forty aviation altitude and endurance records. Several of her international gliding records stand to this day. She test-flew a manned version of the V-1 that had killed several other test pilots and daringly landed a light aircraft in the middle of Berlin as the Red Army was overrunning it. Up to her death in 1970 she continued to wear the diamond-encrusted Iron Cross that Hitler had given her.

The Last Meeting

At our May meeting Mr Robert Kingham, a friend of Captain Coppice's and a guest to the Club, treated us to a talk on *The "Grey Soul" of London*. Although presented with slides, this was actually based on a walking talk that

was commissioned from Mr Kingham by the Museum of London, as part of its season of *Urban Myths*.

"He who cannot find wonder, mystery, awe, the sense of a new world and an undiscovered realm in the places by the Gray's Inn Road will never find those secrets elsewhere," said Welsh author and mystic Arthur Machen. "It is a district both devious and obscure, and I suppose that its twisting streets and unexpected squares of dusty trees will all come to ruin before they are intelligently explored." Attempting to prevent this seems to have been Mr Kingham's starting point.

Mr Kingham previously performed *Align* at the Museum of London, "a hallucinatory journey along a straight line through the psychogeography and myth of London".

You can find a brief essay by Mr Kingham (previously published as a blog post) on his subject and the experience of conducting the walks beginning on page 4.

If you're keen to hear more about the obscurer aspects of London's history, there is a lecture entitled *Lost London* at the Hunterian Museum on Thursday 9th June at 7pm, looking at Aldwych, Holborn and Lincoln's Inn Fields before it was changed dramatically by wartime bombings and the construction of the Kingsway. (The Hunterian itself, the museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, is in this area and lost much of its collection to a Nazi bomb.)



(Above and right) Mr Kingham makes his point; (below) Rachel "Two Drinks" Downer gets stuck in; (below right) Mr Beckwith looks inscrutable

(B&W photos by Michael Westmount-Fairside)



(Above) a rapt audience member; (below) Mr Newlove tells that joke about the piano-playing squid that is always such a hit with the ladies



(Above) Compton-Bassett pours his heart out to Fleur de Guerre; (Right) Curé Michael Silver studies the latest NSC Newsletter; (below) Lord Rupert holds court and explains the appeal of Satanism to some frightened-looking neophytes



I HAVE CAUGHT strange glimpses of a walk through Finsbury out of the corner of my eye since reading Peter Ackroyd's *Biography of London*. For him, its streets were an archetype: not “grand or imposing”, nor “squalid or desolate”, but instead seeming “to contain the grey soul of London, that slightly smoky and dingy quality which has hovered over the city for many hundreds of years”. Furthermore, he wrote of the fascination its streets held for Arthur Machen (1863–1947), a writer whose stories often combined a love for London with a deep fear of it, intermingled with a common theme of sinister ancient pre-Christian horrors lurking just beneath the surface of modern life. When I moved offices to Holborn in summer 2010, Finsbury came within mooching distance; and so when the Museum of London asked me to write and conduct a tour as part of its *Urban Myths* season in April 2011, I was determined to tread these streets as Machen had done 130 years earlier:

Sadler's Wells. You can see the landmarks—Mount Pleasant Post Office, Old Finsbury Town Hall—from a bus going up Rosebery Avenue, a road which cut a swathe through the old Mount Pleasant slums in the 1880s: one of the last things old Joseph Bazalgette signed off before he retired. Or, from the tube at Angel, you might emerge above ground and make your way to the theatre along a brief stretch of the Great North Road where thousand-strong herds of cattle were once driven across the country to Smithfield, and like Machen you might snatch glimpses of “short flights of steps which lead to mysterious alleys or passages or byways going to nowhere in particular”. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a trip to Sadler's Wells entailed a risky journey across the fields of old Iseldon (Islington). On moonless nights you were liable to be robbed; travellers would wait at pubs on the edge until a group had assembled, and then engage a patrol of linkmen to light them across the fields.

WALKING THROUGH THE GREY SOUL OF LONDON

Looking up at the stars

*It was not until the winter was well advanced that he began to explore the region in which he lived... sometimes eating his luncheon in odd corners, in the bulging parlours of eighteenth-century taverns that still fronted the surging sea of modern streets, or perhaps in brand new “publics” on the broken borders of the brickfields, smelling of the clay from which they had swollen. He found waste by-places behind railway embankments where he could smoke his pipe sheltered from the wind... As he went farther afield a sense of immensity slowly grew upon him; it was as if, from the little island of his room, that one friendly place, he pushed out into the grey unknown, into a city that for him was uninhabited as the desert. **The Hill of Dreams** (1895–97)*

Machen had restlessly traipsed across most of the new red brick suburbs. What kept drawing him back to this place?

Today, unless you live or work there, the only reason for visiting Finsbury might be a trip to

Sadler's Wells was only one of many places of entertainment clustered around these fields, often springing up around chalybeate wells, the waters of which offered a veneer of health and respectability. The pleasures of the pleasure gardens became a secular pilgrimage. Listen to the opening lines of Ned Ward's “A Walk to Islington” from 1699, and you can hear Chaucer's April showers:

In Holiday-Time, when the Ladies of London Walk out with their Spouses, or think themselves Undone; When Whores have a more than an ord'nary Itching To visit the Fields, and so Ramble a Bitching; When Vigorous Youth the young Damsel engages In Meadowes, on Haycocks, or under the Hedges; [...] Then I, like my Neighbours, to sweeten my Life, Took a walk in the Fields; but for want of a Wife, Was forc'd to take up with a Lady of Pleasure, Who I turn'd off at Will, and enjoy'd at my Leisure: We saunter'd about near the New-River-



By Robert Kingham

Photographs © Alasdair Mackenzie 2011



Head, Where we prattled and tatted, tho' what 'twas we said, If you'd have me Discover, indeed I must fail-you, Because 'twas on Business improper to tell-you.

As well as the ladies of pleasure, many others who lived in the locality lived off the entertainment industry, including Joseph Grimaldi, and Henry Carey, the songwriter. Carey was the illegitimate son of the Marquis of Halifax, and the great grandfather of Edmund Kean. He lived on Warner Street. Carey was most famous for “Sally in Our Alley”, a song about a shoemaker’s apprentice wooing his sweetheart with a visit to Bedlam, the puppet shows, the “ups and downs” (or flying chairs), and “all the elegancies of Moorfields; and from thence proceeding to the Farthing Pye House he gave her a collation of buns, cheesecakes, stuffed beef, and bottled ale”.

Two centuries later, in 1931, Gracie Fields lived at 30 Myddleton Square while she was filming *Sally in Our Alley*, with its signature tune a reference to Carey’s original. Carey wrote many pieces for Sadler’s Wells, including a drama called *Chrononhotonthologos*, subtitled “the Most Tragical Tragedy that ever was Tragedized by any Company of Tragedians”, and which features a character called Aldiborontiphoscophornio. Sadly, Carey was found hanged in his house in Warner Street on 4 October 1743, with “one halfpenny in his pocket”. It seems that only after his death was his most famous poem first performed to music: it was “God Save The King”. Nowadays only the first verse gets an airing. The sixth verse, “May he sedition hush/And, like a torrent, rush/Rebellious Scots to crush” is not really on-message.

The place has changed in many ways since Machen trod the streets, scraping a living as a writer in the 1880s. He looked “with a kind of pleasure on a very doorstep, on a doorstep approaching a shabby grey house of 1810 or thereabouts”. These same grey houses, a short walk from the City, have been thoroughly gentrified and now command seven figures. Yet, appropriately for an area where many different seeds of radicalism germinated through the ages (including Henry Hunt and the Chartists, and Lenin), these houses now sit cheek by jowl with some of the proudest post-war social housing projects, many designed by Berthold Lubetkin.

Yet Machen’s descriptions are still very recognisable and, as he noted at the time, visitors to the area may well experience strange sensations that time has not passed; or, perhaps, that events are cyclical. When Machen or his characters (who are often autobiographical) start to become lost in the swirl of London, it is the same labyrinth that trapped Thomas de Quincey, pennilessly wandering eighty years earlier. I had been pacing Thomas de Quincey’s streets as research for a film I made with Phil O’Donnell about de Quincey’s love for Ann; now, pacing Machen’s streets, walking and walking to wear away the worries of work and family, it was all too easy to identify with these two forlorn pedestrians. They were no *flâneurs*, no louche observers of the city as spectacle; for them, there was an obsession and a compulsion to walk and walk, as if one day they could out-walk the city. De Quincey almost could: in the early nineteenth century he was able to gaze longingly at the moonlit woods glimpsed north of Oxford Street, a symbol of his romanticised rural past. By the end of the nineteenth century, Machen could not:

*“I am free at last from this mighty and stony wilderness!”
And then suddenly, as I turned a corner the raw red rows
of houses would confront me, and I knew that I was still
in the labyrinth.*

In 2011, as we walk the streets, comforted by ales and anecdotes, are we the *flâneurs*? Are we voyeurs of history?

I don’t think so. The ever-present danger is of treating history as a medley of rattling good yarns, and lulling ourselves into believing that it can teach us nothing: that foolish things happened to other people a long time ago, and we are not prone to repeat their mistakes. As a character in *A Fragment of Life* puts it, “We are not called to sit as the spectators in a theatre, there to watch the play performed before us, but we are rather summoned to stand in the very scene itself, and there fervently to enact our parts in a great and wonderful mystery.” London is not our little theatre.

And this, I think, is where the word “psychogeography” is misleading. It has, of late, as Danny Birchall pointed out, been over-used as a hip way of saying “local history”. I don’t think I’d offer to take people on a Machen



Robert conducting one of his walks

psychogeography walk, not unless they enjoyed being hungry, cold and alienated. (Perhaps I could acclimatise them with a Chatterton Garret Experience.) No: I do local history. I will keep the ales and anecdotes, and lay off the shouty performance art, as what I'm really about is sharing the love of history that, sadly, I discovered fairly late, having not particularly experienced it at school. No, love is the wrong word. It suggests that I wander around wearing long scarves, hugging worn editions of Hugh Trevor-Roper. Wonder is a better word.

De Quincey and Machen sensed the immensity of London. They tried to conceive of it in their minds as a sea, or as a constellation. The sensation of gazing back on the immensity of Time, of which London history is but one facet yet seems to contain its own infinity within it, is not so different from looking up at the stars.

Once the stars have you—then comes astronomy, then comes astrophysics, then comes discipline and the furtherance of knowledge. And so with history: without that initial wonder, there would be no analysis, no scholarship, no striving for application and lessons learnt. If psychogeography is self-reflexively registering the obscure influences of the city in order to find out more about yourself, then local history calls for slightly more selflessness, and, like standing under the stars, makes you feel rather small and insignificant, yet, possibly, imbued with a greater sense of context and place. This was certainly my experience with Finsbury: there came a point where I had to stop, where I had to admit that only a lifetime would achieve more than scratching the surface. Machen himself wrote that no man has ever seen London, in the same way “that no man hath seen God at any time”, and (quoting Tennyson) “if any man could see

a grain of wheat as it is in its essence, he would instantly become a raging maniac”:

*There is wonder in everything and everywhere, wonder above all in this great town that has grown up so vast that no man can know it, nay, nor even begin to know it! [...] We see appearances and outward shows of things, symbols of all sorts; but we behold no essences, nor could we bear to behold them, if it were possible to do so. [...] No; we see nothing at all; though poets catch strange glimpses of reality, now and then, out of the corners of their eyes. **The London Adventure or the Art of Wandering** (1924)*

I am afraid that you will have to walk with me and see Finsbury for yourself to understand Machen's glimpses of reality. It's been worth the shoe leather.

Robert's walks are now over, but watch the Museum of London website in case any extra dates are scheduled.



A Call to Charms

I received a letter from thespian NSC Member Mr Callum Coates, in which he mentioned:

On 10th July The Soho Festival is to be held in St Anne's church gardens to raise money for the Save Soho Campaign—apparently Soho is in danger of being bought up soulless corporations. Anyway, they are very keen to have a bit of eccentric glamour and would very much like a strong NSC presence. It's early days yet to know what's on offer but I do know it's only £5 entrance! There may be a mini Chap Olympics, certainly dancing and booze. More news to follow!

It turns out that the Soho Festival has quite a history. This from the website Soho Memories:

A fair was first held in Soho in 1883, and then intermittently, including a fair and market held in aid of the Soho Hospital for Women in 1939. The fair was revived in 1955 and then continued as an annual event. In 1955 the fair was organised by the Soho Association and was inspired particularly by its chairman, Gaston Berlement, the well known landlord of York Minister public house (now the French House restaurant) in Dean Street. The 1955 fair lasted five days, from 10th to 15th July, and was based primarily in Golden Square, with outlying events in St Anne's Garden, St Anne's House and Richmond Mews. The fair featured many aspects of a typical country fair with a mayoral opening, procession of floats, beauty pageant and Punch and Judy show. However, the unique character of Soho was reflected in



some of the other events including a street race for waiters, poetry reading, jazz, folk and dance performances.

The Soho Festival as it is now called continues to be held as an annual event organised by the Soho Society each July in the grounds of St Anne's Garden. Among the attractions on offer are a range of food stalls, bric-a-brac stalls, live music and entertainment, including face painting, alpine horn blowing and spaghetti eating competitions.

More information on the festival can be found on the website of the Soho Society. (For £30 you can even have your own stall.)

(Above and left) The 1955 Soho Festival featured a limbo dancer and jazz musicians. By 2010 the music hadn't changed much, though some of the costumes on display may not be immediately to hand in an NSC Member's wardrobe





Messing About In Boats



THE ANNUAL OXFORD
PUNT N' PICNIC

By Artemis Scarheart

AND SO IT CAME to pass that another Punting trip to Oxford happened on 7th May. This year the weather was forecast to be truly horrendous—torrential rain for most if not all of the day, wind, squalls and possibly even minor meteor showers. Plans for an emergency boat-themed pub crawl around Oxford were hatched in an all-night meeting by the Glorious Committee and it was feared attendance would suffer.

However—as is consistently proved time and

time again—the gods love the NSC. Although there was rain during the night and on the morning itself (at 09:18 it was “raining heavily” according to our man in the quad, Senior Sub) by the time the well-attired rabble had gathered at The Turf Tavern there was blue sky and drying ground.

After several eye openers, breakfast cigars and “hail fellow well mets” we trooped to our traditional boat house at Magdalen Bridge to relieve them of the pride of their fleet. This year it was five fully laden punts and one rowboat, the rowboat being a necessity as this year two French journalists were embedded in the expedition as they were following Fleur de Guerre for some Gallic newspaper. The hacks themselves were well attired in blazers and seemed interested and bemused by *les rosbeefs* and our charming ways. Or perhaps they just approved of people enjoying good wine early in the day and wearing fine clothes with no visible sign of financial support.

The punts pushed out upriver with Edward Marlowe and Scarheart in the rowboat bringing

up the rear to loot those boats which overturned and fish bodies out of the water. As the Earl of Waveney managed to lose his pole at one point this rearguard proved itself worthy of the title Heroes of the River by their fast retrieval of this essential bit of kit.

At the rollers the usual team spirit overcame the manual labour and, sans journalists, for they left us at this point, we arrived at the traditional picnic spot to find several Members waiting for us and a camp was swiftly set up on the, by now, rather dry grass. For our convenience the nearby toilets had been closed and would reopen in 12 months time.

It was at this point that Viscount Rushen got chatting to a fellow walking his dog. Being a politician, Rushen asked him what he did and the gentleman explained that he taught at Oxford, “Which subject?” “Biology” “Oh really, what’s it like? Are you any good?”, etc. After some more pleasant chit-chat the unrecognised author of *The God Delusion*, Richard Dawkins FRS, FRSL, walked off after his first meeting with the New



Compton-Basset brings up the rear in a rowing boat



The Earl of Waveney punts Helena and the Conte away from the boat house

Sheridan Club. Clearly some of these new-fangled scientific theories have not yet reached the Manx.

After several hours of drinking, feasting and revelry it was time to return to Oxford for

drinking, feasting and revelry. This year Senior Sub had joined us without his rusty steed and so punted one of our fine craft back, with a new crew accompanying Scarheart in the Hero Boat, Lord Compton-Basset on oars and the Duke of Tipa as an RMS Titanicesque lookout.

It was shortly after we started to return that the river took her yearly toll from the Club, as is her wont, and it was Sir Oliver who fell into the Cherwell (twice), thus slaking her thirst and sparing the rest of us. Neither dunking seemed to dampen his spirits though and it was in good humour that all boats returned safe and sound (though full of empty bottles) to the bridge.

Some now departed for Town while others stayed on in Oxford at the Turf Tavern and it was just after we were all under cover that the sky opened and a deluge began. The sacrifice had not been in vain and another splendid year was had by all.



The Magdalen Bridge boat house, before the NSC denuded it of boats



Addendum One: Stories were circulating that the Conte di Lignano Sabbiadoro had been arrested for disorderliness on his train home and thrown in the cells for a night after some mysterious event at Didcot Parkway (perhaps related to his heroic intake of Champagne). It appears that in fact he was just frogmarched away, given a talking to by the rozzers and allowed to catch the last train back.



(Clockwise from above) Will Smith and Annika Caswell, both tailors, you know; a punt is hauled over the dreaded rollers, though at least the area seems unusually free of goose poo this time; Scarheart pops a cork—you will see that Champagne features heavily in these photos; Scarheart and Edward Marlowe building up to ramming speed; Misses Fleur de Guerre (l) and Jeni Siggs; Laurence Bennion and Catherine Baxter join Compton-Bassett in a waterborne snifter

(Above) Rushen is suddenly filled with the joys of spring; (below, left and right) the emptier the punt the easier it is to pull over the rollers—but you want someone in it when it hits the river again, or you'll be left on the bank watching it drift away. Here the Earl of Waveney leaps into the boat at the last minute...





Addendum Two: The cost this year was £25 per person. If you only paid the original £20 that was asked for and missed the appeal for another fiver, please slip it to Mr Scarheart the next time you see him.

(Left) Fleur, Jeni, Rachel and C-B look nervous in Capt. Coppice's hands...



While C-B dreams of roast duck recipes (above), Jeni instead decides to feed the bird a "bacon crispie"



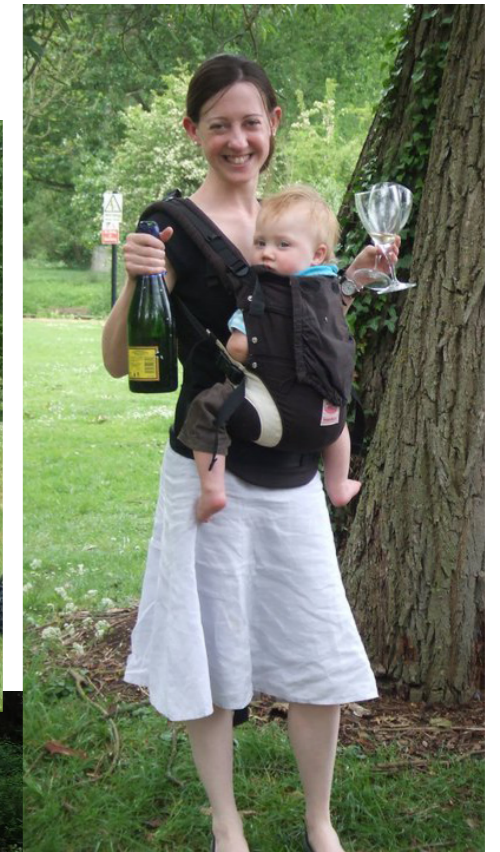
(Above) There is always time to stop for a drink



While his father's face is a mask of nautical concentration, young William contentedly contemplates the novel experience of being punted (he has been on the NSC punt trip before but probably doesn't remember)



(Above) Rushen loses a Champagne cork to the foliage; (right) Charles Henry Wolfenblood maintains impossibly high sartorial standards; (far right) Seonaid gets William into good habits early on



Photos: Charles Wolfenblood, Fleur de Guerre, Edward Marlowe, Paul Chamberlain, Dr James Blah and Honoria Bellingher-Glossop



(Clockwise from above) Curé Michael Silver nods off post-feast; instinctively the punting party knows when it is time to stop and have a picnic; C-B looks understandably pleased to find a bottle of Bolly in his hand. I told you Champagne featured heavily



(Above) A rare sighting of Senior Sub out of his clerk's cell; (right) a rather different-looking Sir Oliver, post immersion (he fell in twice, I'm told); (below) safely back in The Turf, a scene reminiscent of *Ice Cold in Alex*



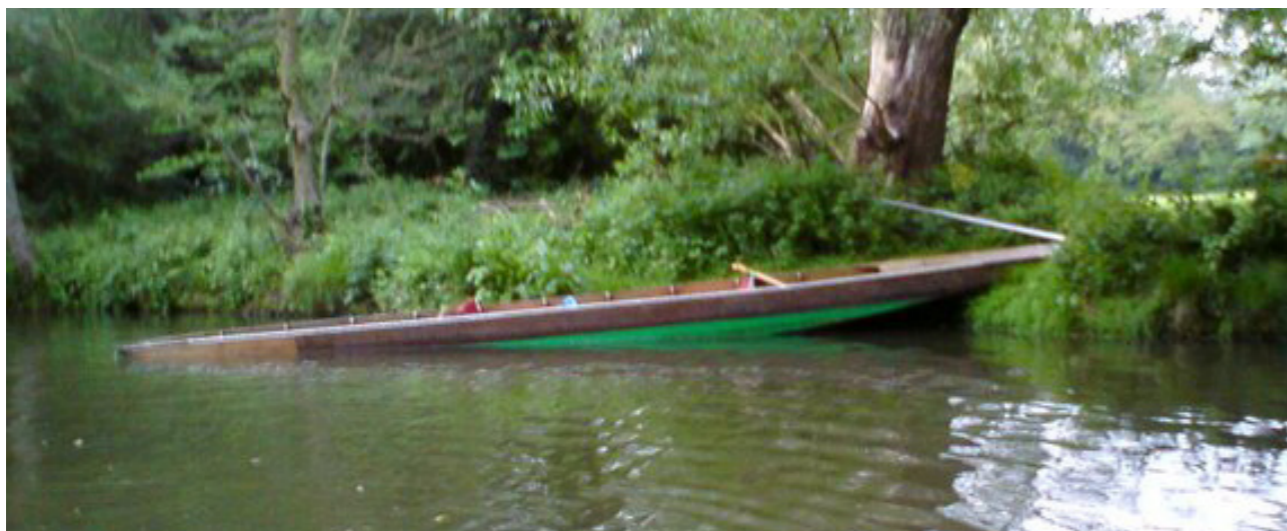
(Clockwise from above) Fleur, Jeni and Edward Marlowe prepare to make with the *petits fours*; (l-r) Sir Oliver, Scarheart, Waveney, Wolfenblood, Lord Rupert and Capt. Coppice; Scarheart takes the oars; I believe this is Sir Oliver's punt, though whether he beached his vessel with a head of speed or hauled it up from land I do not know



(Above) What more can a fellow want on a pleasant spring day? A jug of Pimm's and a packet of Sobranie Cocktails; (left) in The Turf (l-r) Will Smith, Lord Rupert, the Earl of Waveney, Senior Sub, Artemis Scarheart and Honoria Bellinger-Glossop



Addendum Three: As we can now put a man on The Moon, this year some moving images were captured of part of the day. See the Members souls captured here and here.



The Cocktail Cabinet

Wherein Members muse about booze

The Fruit Cup

by David Bridgman-Smith

With the beginning of summer and a season of outdoor events about to start, I thought it was time to look at that quintessential English drink, the Fruit Cup, and its best-known example: Pimm's. A fruit cup is a spirit-based (most commonly gin) drink that is flavoured with herbs, spices and citrus peel. It is usually served as a long drink with lemonade or ginger ale, ice and a fruit garnish. The more familiar example is Pimm's, but varieties are also made by Plymouth, Lamb & Wyatt and pretty much every UK supermarket.

Pimm's

This brand started life in 1840 in James Pimm's Oyster Bar, which was housed in a building that had been a tavern since 1499. Pimm's No. 1 was originally served by the pint in pewter tankards and was made available in other establishments in 1859. Although the first bottle

was not sold until 1865, the cost was three shillings, which is approximately equivalent to £14.00 in 2011 pounds sterling.

The 1890s saw Pimm's exported around the Empire to Sri Lanka, Constantinople and Cape Town. In 1851, a Scotch-based cup (No. 2) was introduced and, to counterbalance the reliance upon warm weather sales, a brandy (No. 3) and a (dark) rum (No. 4) were also released. A rye-based version (No. 5) was released in Canada. In 1964, the rye version was introduced to the UK as well, as was No. 6 (vodka).

In 1966, a Pimm's and lemonade premix was introduced in Australia and then in the UK in 1968. This had limited success initially, although was relaunched in the UK in 1990.

Brand consolidation took place in 1970 after Pimm's was bought by The Distillery Company, and cups No. 2–5 were all discontinued. Originally, the vodka cup (No. 6) was also discontinued, but as the chairman's wife had a soft spot for the variety she persuaded him to continue making it in limited quantities. So production only ceased for a few months. In those days, Pimm's was bottled at 30% ABV rather than the 25% of today.

Today, No. 1 (gin) and No. 6 (vodka) are still made, in addition to Winter Pimm's, which is a brandy-based variation of No. 3 with added fruit and spice.

Serving Pimm's

There is a lot of debate on how to serve Pimm's, especially on what garnish to use. In the early days of the brand, the bottles suggested using lemon and borage, a Mediterranean herb with edible flowers and leaves. It used to be given to Roman soldiers to boost their courage; in his 1597 *The Herball, or Generall Historie of Plantes*, John Gerard writes that "the floures of Borrage put into wine make men and women glad and merry, driving away all sadnesse, dulnesse



A rare collection of vintage Pimm's bottles—sadly missing the No. 2

and melancholy". Arguably wine does that anyway, but borage's use as a booze garnish clearly has a long history. The leaves taste a bit like cucumber.

Later, however, the borage was replaced in the serving suggestions with cucumber, orange, lime and mint. In the last ten years, strawberry has been added as well, much to the chagrin of the "Pro-Borage Anti-Strawberry Pressure Group", whose aim is to remove the strawberry reference from the bottle; so far their only success was to get borage to become "herb of the week" at Waitrose a few years ago.

My serving

I like a 3:1 ratio of Pimm's to mixer and I'm equally happy with lemonade or ginger ale. But, as this is the Cocktail Cabinet, I decided to try something a little bit special: Rose Lemonade by Fentiman's. My chosen garnish was rather extensive: cucumber, mint, lemon, orange and lime. The result was a fruit cup that was a little sharper and less sweet than most and there was a very light hint of Turkish delight from the Rose Lemonade at the end.

My top Pimm's tips:

1. Plenty of ice is key; Pimm's No. 1 needs to be served cold
2. The garnish really does make a difference, as it freshens the drink up; even if it's just a lemon slice and mint leaves or even basil (as I used once).



Diageo's recent heavy-handed "quintessentially English" marketing strategy allegedly included unleashing £500,000 of branded bunting in preparation for the royal wedding

3. Avoid using a flat bottle of lemonade or ginger ale, as these really can make the drink rather dull.

For more musings on booze, see the NSC's **Institute for Alcoholic Experimentation**



CLUB NOTES

New Members

AS THE WASPS of brash uncouthness and disposable inelegance hover around the picnic of Old-World charm, I would like to swing the rolled newspaper of civilised conviviality over the plates of the following pleasure-seekers, all of whom have fallen for the appeals of New Sheridan Club Membership in the last month: Jack Harris, Lady Lea Reynolds, Darren E. Lewis, Katherine Gibson, Kelly Ellis, Pippa De Winter, Antonio Schiavon, Jeffrey Brown and Michael Esdaile Walker.

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

Cecil Beaton—Malice in Wonderland

Wednesday 1st June
6pm
The Last Tuesday Society, 11 Mare Street, London E8 8RP
Admission: Apparently “£4–12”. Can you choose?
Part of the series of lectures at Viktor Wynd’s Little Shop of Horrors, delivered in this case by Hugo Vickers. More details at the Last Tuesday Society website.

🔴 New Sheridan Club Picnic

Saturday 4th June
From 1pm
St James’s Park, London
Admission: Free but bring food and booze
A fairly spontaneous event, to celebrate the arrival of summer. Some members will also be watching Trooping the Colour at Horse Guards beforehand. For details see the Facebook event. If you turn up on the day and can’t find everyone contact Artemis Scarheart on 07780 603434.

Swing for Skin

Saturday 4th June
7–11pm
HMS Belfast, Morgan’s Lane, Tooley Street, London
Admission: £30 in advance, £35 on the door
A 1940s-themed tea dance in aid of DEBRA UK. They’ll be getting into the Blitz spirit and uniting to overcome EB (Epidermolysis Bullosa), and having jolly good fun while they do it. Included in the ticket price are two free drinks, food, vintage hair and make-up styling for the ladies (and any gents who want to indulge), and the chance to tour the HMS Belfast—which would usually cost over £13. There will be a raffle with prizes from Lulu Guinness, Helen Rochfort, Hotel Chocolat, BLOOM Gin, Lilly Lewis Millinery and more.
Inspect www.swingforskin.com for details.

Lost London, 1870–1945

Thursday 9th June
7pm
The Hunterian Museum, The Royal College of Surgeons, 35–43 Lincoln’s Inn Fields, London WC2A 3PE
Admission: £5 (booking is essential: 020 78696560)
Using stunning photographs from his best-selling book *Lost London 1870–1945*, Philip Davies will explain how Victorian London was transformed into a great Imperial capital before the devastation of wartime bombing altered it forever. The talk features images of Holborn, Aldwych and Lincoln’s Inn Fields before the construction of Kingsway, the largest single clearance of London since the Great Fire. Ticket holders will also have access to the museum and college library from 6–7pm.

Wilde, Coward and Tennant—Three Decadent Lives

Wednesday 15th June
6pm
The Last Tuesday Society, 11 Mare Street, London E8 8RP
Admission: Apparently “£4–12”. Do you get to choose?
Part of the series of lectures at Viktor Wynd’s Little Shop of Horrors, delivered this time by Philip Hoare. More details at the Last Tuesday Society website.

Double R Club

Thursday 16th June
8pm–11.45pm
Bethnal Green Working Men’s Club, Pollard Row, London, E2 6NB (020 7739 2727)
Admission: £10
A night of “Lynchian” (as in David) cabaret and burlesque packaged with music described as “twisted rock and roll, sinister jazz and wailing junk blues”. Sounds scary but our Chairman Torquil Arbuthnot vouches that it’s a very good night. We are advised that “the availability of tables is released to our mailing list one week before the event. To join our mailing list please email therrclub@gmail.com with ‘mail list’ in the subject box”.

Wyndstock

Saturday 25th June
Pylewell Park, The New Forest
Admission: £60
Viktor Wynd and Mark Holdstock of Bourne and Hollingsworth take over a country pile for a weekend for an almighty house party. Tickets include camping and dining, various games, fireworks, etc. Travel details are complex but shuttles buses, coaches and even a helicopter have been laid on. More details at www.wyndstock.com. I think this one is sold out now but there will be another on 27th August.

The Cake Walk Revival

Sunday 26th June
From 6pm
The Palm Court, Alexandra Palace, Wood Green, London N22 7AY
Admission: £5



Dance to live swing-era jazz music inside Alexandra Palace’s stunning Palm Court. You could almost be in Poirot. Take the train to Alexandra Palace rail station (From King’s Cross via Finsbury Park) and walk up the hill, or go to Wood Green tube. The W3 bus stops at both stations every 5–10 minutes and takes you to the Palm Court entrance. Enter via the Phoenix Bar.

The Chap Olympiad

Saturday 16th July
From 12pm
Bedford Square Gardens, Bloomsbury, London WC1
Admission: £15 in advance
The annual festival of foppish tomfoolery, where games include the Martini Relay, Cucumber Sandwich Discus and Umbrella Jousting, where trying is frowned upon and cheating is encouraged. Organised by *The Chap* magazine, this is a highlight of the Chappist calendar. See www.thechapolympiad.com for further details as they emerge.

Captured at last month's Club Night:
the very moment when Matthew
Howard has a brilliant idea...

(Photo by Michael Westmount-Fairside)



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.

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