



The Sheridan Club

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# Newsletter

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LXII • December 2011

## Tinker, Tailor, Dandy, Spy

Who is the mole in the NSC?  
Our Christmas party aims to  
find out

**PLUS:**

**Around  
the world by  
penny farthing**

Joff Summerfield on  
his bicycling feat

**Secrets of a Great  
Cocktail Party**

Our mixology sage  
reveals all

**Hatless in Seattle**

One Member brings the  
bowler to the primitive  
people of Washington





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 7th December in the upstairs room at The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB, from 7pm until 11pm, when the Right Reverend Septimus Theophilus Dee, former Bishop of Matabeleland, ably assisted by Mr Ronald Jeremiah, the noted Shakespearean actor, will purge us of all misconceptions regarding *Vice and Lewdness in Georgian London: A Cautionary Lecture*.

### The Last Meeting

We don't normally allow road vehicles into Club meetings but at our November meet our speaker was Mr Joff Summerfield, a chap who has pedalled all the way round the world on a pennyfarthing bicycle which he made himself, modelled on a Victorian design. Greenwich man Joff spent two and a half years on the trip—beginning and ending at the Greenwich meridian—camping where he could and frequently relying on the kindness of strangers, who were unsurprisingly fascinated by his mode of transport. (The only low point was on the roads of New Zealand where for some reason some truckers take delight in trying to knock cyclists off the road—eventually succeeding in Joff's case, leaving him by the roadside with a broken wrist.) Best of all, he completed the whole 22,000-mile journey wearing a pith helmet. Joff visited 23 countries, averaging 40

miles a day, crossing the Himalayas at 17,000ft, entering China without a permit, sneaking into Tibet by night and taking in landmarks like the Taj Mahal and the Grand Canyon. In Australia he raced in the Penny Farthing World Championships and came second in the “novice” category. He is the first man to cycle around the world on a pennyfarthing since Thomas Stevens in 1884–6.

Before our talk began, Isabel asked to share a letter with us, drafted by someone on the customer helpdesk where she works but never, as you will understand, actually sent:

*Dear Mr Smith,*

*Thank you for your letter of 27th June and the accompanying Spectacle Voucher. I'm afraid you've been stitched up, sir. Stitched up like a deep gash on pancake day.*

*We cannot offer you so much as a penny for this so-called “voucher”, which your wily optician has cunningly palmed back into your court. We suggest that you take the matter up with Vision Express in Leeds, and hope their northern goodwill might allow them to throw a few coins of reimbursement your way in exchange for the voucher.*

*As for the enclosed proof of purchase—why, it proves nothing more than the fact that you are a baboon! An ass of the highest brainlessness!*

*In closing, we must ask that you kindly refrain from future correspondence with our organisation, as we have neither the time nor the inclination to deal with such goggle-headed drivels.*

*Yours sincerely,  
Company Helpdesk*



(Left) Scarheart, the Curé and Fiona assess the merits of the new NSC scarf; (right) Isabel reads out a scurrilous email; (below) Joff and his trusty mount; (below left) Pandora raises a small point of order; (below that) l-r Alexandra, Col. Cyrus Choke, German, Matthew “The Chairman” Howard, Compton-Bassett



(Left) Matthew attempts *droit du seigneur*; (right) Joff faces a tough crowd; (below right) Rob Loveday resplendent in his Club Tie; (below far left) Richard Evans spies his next victim



(Right) At the end of the evening Joff prepares to cycle home; (far right) into the traffic he goes; (below) Ella and Isabel are doubtless discussing kittens



Apologies for the low-grade photos: camera battery died, so I had to resort to my phone...



# Around the World on Tuppence Ha'penny

ACTUALLY JOFF SUMMERFIELD managed to live on just £5 a day during his two and a half years peddling around the globe on a pennyfarthing he made himself. Rather upliftingly he was able to rely on the kindness of strangers a great deal for food and shelter (which more or less makes up for the times he was robbed or deliberately run off the road). Here are a selection of the many snaps with which Joff documented his trip. See more at his online diary.



Crossing into Hungary; here and in Slovakia the people were extraordinarily friendly, with every other car hooting a greeting. In Belgrade Joff was stopped by the local paper for an interview. (Right) The only other pennyfarthing Joff saw in Europe was this one in a Hungarian museum. I think he ought to get that knee looked at...



(Above) Running out of road in Germany; (below) on the King Charles Bridge in Prague, very early in the morning



Joff crossed the Channel from Harwich to here, the Hook of Holland. A month before he was due to set off, a lamp had dropped off his bike and fell into the spokes, catapulting him over the handlebars and breaking his arm. He still left on schedule; (below) camping in Holland



(Left) In Serbia Joff is invited to join these chaps in their traditional venison and pork stew.



(Right) making the Serbian papers; (below) being adopted by the Dudin winery for a couple of days; (left) tasting the product







(Above left) Terry the Tortoise, whom Joff rescued from the motorway shortly after entering Greece. Shortly after that the Greek police had strong words with him for riding a pennyfarthing on the motorway. (Above) Sneaking the bike into an amphitheatre. (Left) The pith helmet had many uses, such as protecting the cyclist's head from the sun and rain. Blown into a barrier, Joff landed in a heap and was skimmed by a lorry tyre—that's what the mark on the pith helmet is! (Below) the Blue Mosque in Istanbul



(Above left) at Gordion Joff finds what he insists is the Gordian Knot; (above) the salt lake Tuz Golu; (left) the underground city of Kaymakli, home of the world's coolest police station (right)



In southern Turkey Joff decides to take his bike to the mountain of Nemrut Dagı. He is told it is impossible with the bike—and towards the end he had to get off and push, sometimes just ten steps at a time before resting. But he made it to the top, 7,080 feet. (Right) At the summit, with its ancient statues. (Below) Sunset on Nemrut Dagı.



From Istanbul Joff took the ferry south to Yalova where he found silent roads and orchards bursting with peaches, plums, apples and pears. The road is part of the old Silk Route and also part of the route taken by Thomas Stevens (left). (Far left top) With the tea man in front of Aya Sofya. (Far left bottom) In the course of a day the colours changed as the land became hotter and drier.



(Right) At Erzurum two shepherds wake Joff with a gift of a sunflower head bursting with seeds; (below) the route so far: the lower line in Europe is Joff's failed earlier attempt in 2003 when he got as far as Budapest—this journey is actually his third go







Joff planned to push on into Iran but, coming out of Erzurum, he was plagued by terrible exhaustion, possibly because of the altitude. A change of route was in order and he flew to Cairns in Australia for some lower-altitude riding. (Right)

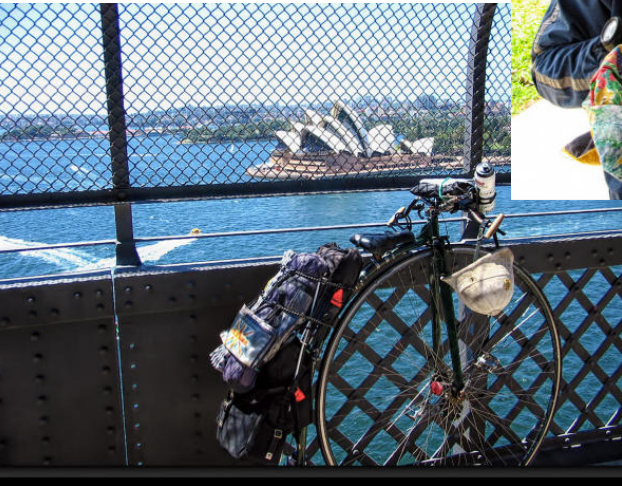
Mission Beach; (below) a baby kangaroo he met in the rest area; (below) Joff become the British entry



at a downhill mountain bike meet; (bottom) a group of bikers Joff befriended on Magnetic Island



(Above left) This New Zealand railway line was so quiet and rusty-looking (and the surrounding land so boggy) that Joff spent the night on it; (above right) by contrast, Kiwi roads were dangerous, some truckers deliberately targeting Joff: successfully in the end



(Above) Sydney Opera House



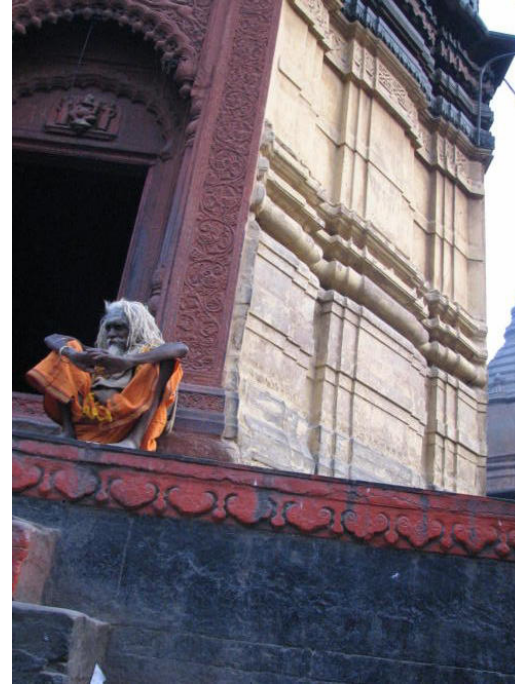
(Below) Peddling across the outback; (left and below left) On Tasmania Joff was able to take part in the World Pennyfarthing Championships!



China begins with the splendours of Beijing (above left, the Heavenly Gate of Peace) and the Great Wall (above), but it is the region where the pennyfarthing causes the most undisguised curiosity (above left). There are plenty of other cycles as company (left), but toiling in the traffic- and coal-dust-polluted air is not easy (right)







(Above) A contemplative Sadhu; (above right) at the Taj Mahal; (right) Cambodia's Ankor Wat, where the jungle has reclaimed an ancient city and the pennyfarthing finds shelter; (below) a stylish Buddha

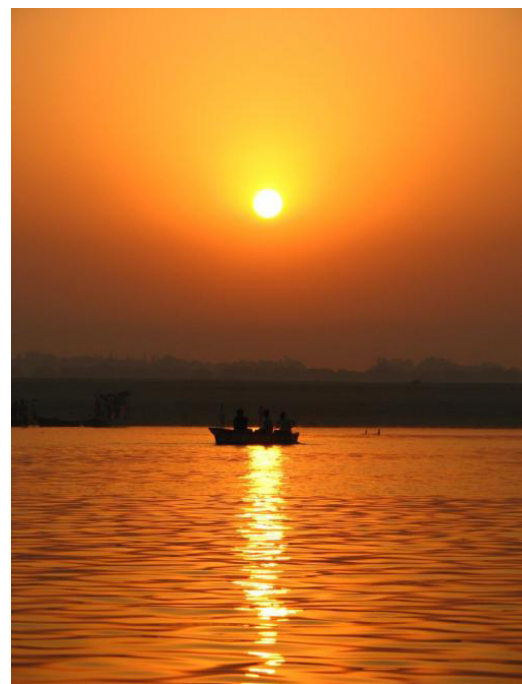
(Top) At 14,641 feet the Lama La pass is spectacular but offers very thin air; (above right) the Dungda Pass is a mere 14,400 feet; (above) this Tibetan family take Joff in and feed him well; (right) some splendid Tibetan tashes; (far right) leaving Shigatse



(Right) On the road to Everest a rock fall is only stopped from killing Joff by his trusty pith helmet



(Above left) Leaving Kathmandu mud becomes an issue; (above) dinner time, Tibet style: (left) entering India, Joff meets his first elephant; (right) daybreak on the Ganges



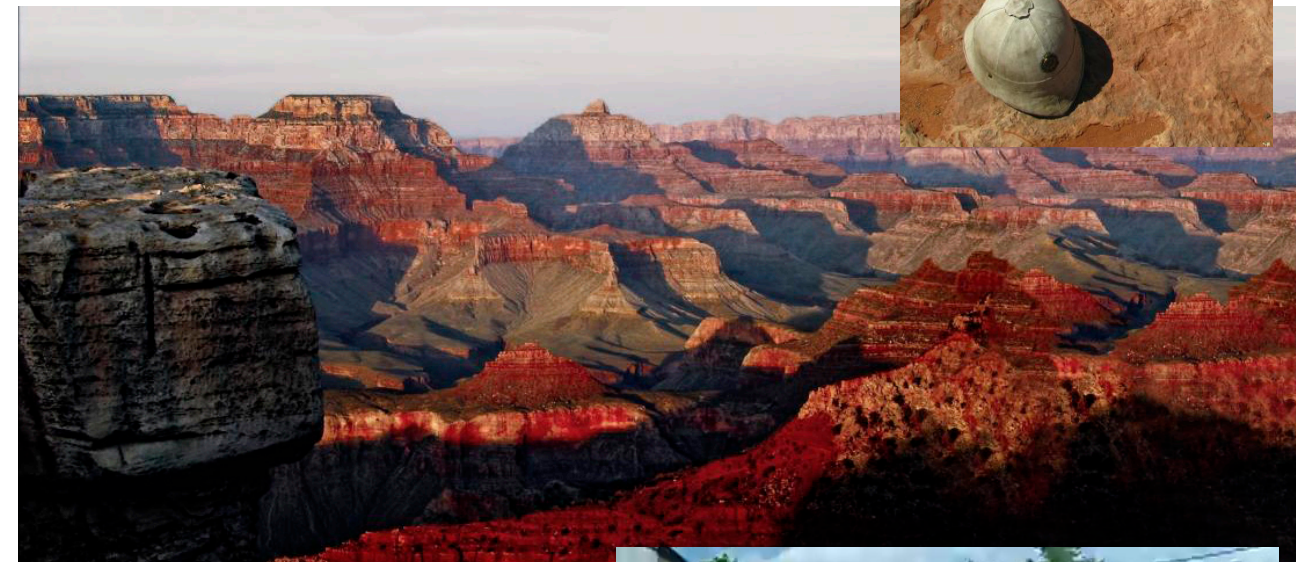
(Left) Malaysian road signs don't inspire confidence. Joff actually made the effort to learn some Malay, but was met by blank stares. It turned out he'd learned Burmese by mistake. (Below) against the odds, in Malaysia Joff comes across another pennyfarthing; (right) there was no way to carry years' worth of spares, so Joff cut and glued ordinary bicycle tyres to fit his unusual wheels. The spokes were also made of two normal spokes joined in the middle with a threaded brass widget







Arriving in San Francisco, Joff is hosted by fellow pennyfarthing riders



(Above) The Grand Canyon; (inset) a dinosaur footprint at Monument Valley; (right) now you know where the world prairie chicken capital is; (below) at the Wheelmen meet a fetching blue pith helmet



(Above) Click on this image to see an amusing video; (right) pastor John's Christian Bike Hostel; (below) hijinks at the American Wheelmen national meet in Dover, Delaware



(This page) In America Joff travelled east from San Francisco to Washington DC, encountering friendly cowboys, ghost mining towns and helpful cyclist Oliver who cheerfully agreed to pull out Joff's painful tooth using tools from a bike repair kit—with his budget of £5 a day, there is no way Joff could have afforded American dentistry



(Below) Massed pennyfarthings at the Wheelmen meet



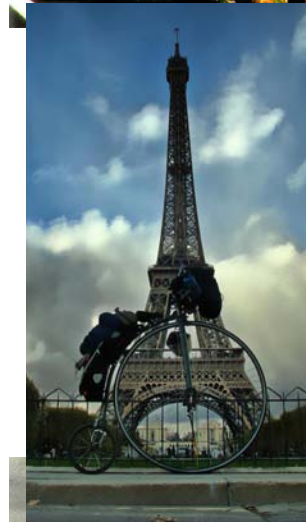
(Below) DC at last, and the pennyfarthing poses before the Capitol building







(Above, l-r) Niagra Falls, then on to Toronto, before flying to Portugal, here in front of the Tower of Belem, Lisbon



(Above, l-r) Spain; a village in France; cycle club in Lyon; (left) Paris at last and the Eiffel Tower; (right) a cow shed provides shelter by a French country lane (it is November 2008 by now); (below left) Calais—the end is in site; (below) a phone box marks English soil; (bottom right) after two and a half years Joff is back where he started, Greenwich Market.



**All photographs © Joff Summerfield.** To see more, have a peak at Joff's online diary and his website, from which you can also buy copies of the book he wrote about his last adventure, crossing the US by Morris Minor. To see Joff interviewed on *This Morning* click here. To see him freewheeling into Death Valley click here. (Doing it with your legs over the handlebars is actually safest: if you fall you land on your feet...)

# Tinker, Tailor, Dandy, Spy

Pay attention—I will say this only once.

## The New Sheridan Club Christmas Party

Saturday 10th December

7pm–12am

The Punch Tavern, 99 Fleet Street, London EC4Y 1DE (020 7353 6658)

Admission: NSC Members FREE; non-Members £5

There's no easy way to put this: there is a mole in the Club, right at the heart, feeding secrets to our enemies. Our only option is a mole hunt, under the cover of a Christmas party. The theme of this "party" will be dapper spies and debonaire double agents—James Bond, George Smiley, Mata Hari, Anthony Blunt, the Scarlet Pimpernel... We're looking for international men and women of mystery to help with a puzzle that's tougher to crack than the Armani Code. But as you enter the Russian Sector be aware—no one is who they appear to be. Challenges you will encounter include:

- Silly games, with prizes, such as **Berlin Wall Jenga** and our **James Bond Opening Credits Shooting Game**. And **I Spy**, of course.
- **Arbitrary prizes** for Best Costume, Best Spy Gadjet, etc.
- A **Lucky Dip**—thrust in your hand and pull out a mystery object. Keep your wits about

you: it may look like a piece of tat that fell out of a cheap Chinese cracker but does it really contain a hidden message, disguised espionage equipment or a dose of deadly poison? Probably not. But it *could* have done.

- Entertainment from **Christian Lee** ("The King of Comedy Magic"—*Time Out*), giving us a masterclass in misdirection and subterfuge.
- Our usual complimentary **Snuff Bar**.
- The bathrooms will be stocked with fine soaps, pomades and moustache wax.
- And of course our famous **Grand Raffle**, open to members of the New Sheridan Club,



The famous gun-barrel sequence that appears at the beginning of every Bond film. I'd assumed the figure was always in black tie, but in the Sean Connery ones (mostly acted by a stunt man) he actually wears a grey lounge suit and cheeky pork pie hat.

including anyone who joins up on the night.

Non-Members are very welcome, at an admission price of just £5, which is refundable if they join the NSC on the night. The pub will be serving food, but only until 8pm. For the latest developments and training resources, see the Facebook event.





## Dispatch From Abroad



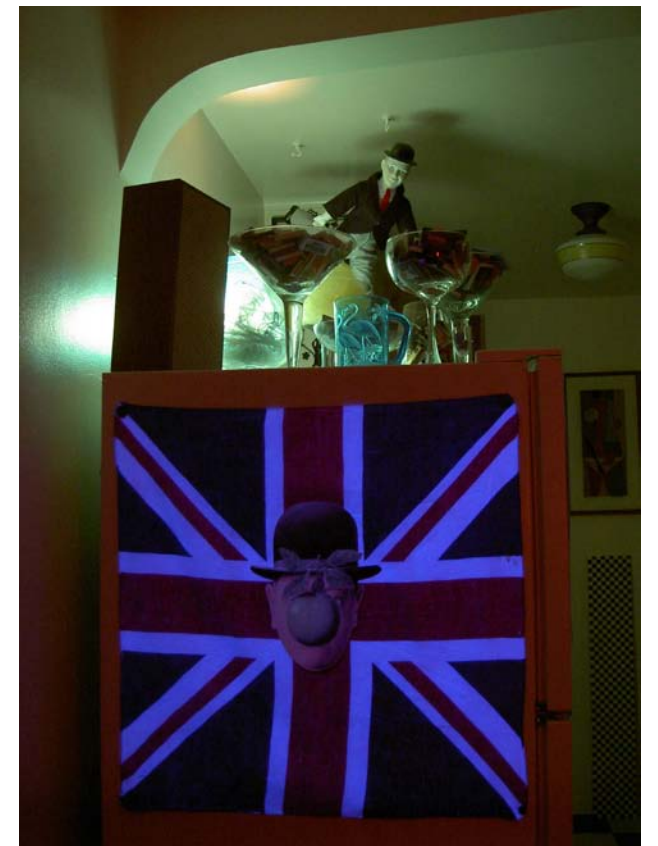
SEATTLE OUTPOST MAKES HEADWAY

*By Russell Scheidelman*

AS THE ONLY current NSC member residing in Seattle, Washington, on practically the opposite side of the globe from the Club's London epicentre, I am obliged to use whatever means come to hand to promote NSC values here in this remote and barbarous corner. To that end I have converted a part of my one-bedroom flat, in a 1920s brownstone building, into a home bar with a speakeasy atmosphere. I call this bar of mine "The Blue Flamingo Lounge," and I've fitted it with a hodgepodge of rattan and Mid-Century Modern furniture, exotica knick-knacks, and flamingo effigies (preferably blue).

This fall, however, I had the alcohol-induced inspiration to graft upon the original theme of mythical birds a second theme fetishizing bowler hats, and have accordingly rechristened my apartment-bar as "The Blue Flamingo Lounge & Bowler Hat Club." To inaugurate this change in identity, a "Bowler Hat Party" was held there in late October. The approximately 35 guests in attendance wore elegant evening attire, or costumes that called for bowler hats. A local photographer, Rick Carroll, was on hand to provide visual documentation by means of sepia-toned portraits that he shot and printed in a makeshift studio installed in the bedroom. (You can see one example on the facing page.)

I did the honors of pouring cocktails at the bar, with a drink repertoire on the one hand emphasizing such British



favorites as Pimm's Cups and gin and tonics (for which I provided custom-made swizzlesticks with small derbies on top) and on the other hand such obscure cocktail classics as The Derby, a whiskey drink, and The Brown Derby, using rum. (There are actually several cocktails named "The Derby," but the version I selected consists of 1 part bourbon, 1/2 part sweet vermouth, 1/2 part orange curacao, and 3/4







part freshly squeezed lime juice, shaken and strained into a stemmed glass; while The Brown Derby comes in 2 varieties, of which I chose the following formula: 2 ounces dark rum, 1 ounce freshly squeezed lime juice, and a teaspoon of maple sugar—for which maple syrup can be substituted—all shaken and, again, strained into a stemmed glass.)

The video monitors in my irregularly shaped living room, supplemented by projections on its ceiling, featured Charlie Chaplin and Laurel and Hardy films, episodes of *The Avengers* and *Bat Masterson*, and G.W. Pabst's *Three Penny Opera*, along with Charlie Chan detective films. The music that emerged from my sound system—as this medium has less obvious connections to the headgear being fêted—turned out to be

a tasteful panache of Kurt Weill tunes and a medley of lounge music favorites from the Fifties and Sixties.

Black lights made the gin and tonic drinks glow. And, contrary to my usual disinclination to serve food at such functions, I on this occasion provided a bowl of green apples—as a mimetic tribute to the famous *Son of Man* painting by the Belgian Surrealist René Magritte, whose iconic image was used extensively for decoration. All in all it turned out to be a great night for bowler hats, in a city which rarely sees them.

But this, of course, is only the beginning. I continue to embellish my home bar while facing the challenges ahead in bringing civilization to this far-off region. The Lord's work can never be finished...



## Manhattan's Stiff Upper Lip Side



ANOTHER FLYBLOWN CLASSIC

By Count Martindt Cally von Callomon

WHILE LYING LOW on a recent trip to New York to avoid a certain young popsy, I whiled away many an hour in Neary's bar (see report in Newsletter No.50).

Mention should be made of a treasure to be found just over the road, (I believe they say "right over the block" in this town). I noticed it as the huge word "DRUGS" appears to be partly covered by an awning now saying "Health And Nutrition Services" plus an even bigger sign saying "Pharmacy", a veritable cluster of roadside palimpsest and denial, no doubt.

Pollock and Bailey have been in business for more years than I dared ask, but less than they dare boast. On entering, one is hit by an odour only found in the boudoirs of ladies-of-a-certain age. The exotic blend of scented talc, cheap perfume and cosmetic appliances can prove too much but, dear reader, I stayed awhile, fortified, no doubt, by the stout snifter so well provided just minutes before when called to the bar.

And just what, I pondered, is the significance of the giant purple neon "R" so lovingly mounted on decorative curled ironwork above the counter? Oh, do tell. [It looks like "Rx", medical shorthand for "prescription"—Ed]

So it is to the gentlemen I launch this article, as Pollock and Bailey sell quite the best, perhaps the oldest, certainly the cheapest moustache wax known to man, and they produce it with nary a bat of the yankee eyelash. The shop is located in "Mid Town", a neighbourhood of ex-naval attachés, retired Commanders of the Police and respected elder statesmen of various trades, and one that probably needs a plentiful supply of the old upper-lip rectifier. Five of their "dollars" buys a tube of, well bless me, just about the



same item as Trumplers of London—theirs being trumped up for well over twice that price.

One wonders what happens to said wax as it crosses the Atlantic to justify its leap in price. One wonders this only for seconds, as Trumper's loss is Pollock's gain. I handed over the folding and they handed me back a year's supply packaged in a discreet paper bag. The last time I looked, this facial-hair clogger need not be declared to H.M. Customs and I sailed through Heathrow with a clear conscience.

Needless to say\*, I have given most of it away to moustache-wearers who aren't as flush as myself, but that just gives me another excuse to re-visit the Grand Apple to start the whole process again.

*Pollock And Bailey Drugs (no Pharmacy, please) 405 East 57th Street, New York NY 10022. No known website.*

\* An expression always followed by the saying in question, whether needed or not.





## Cocktail Party 101

By David Bridgman-Smith

One of my favourite types of event to hold is a Christmas Cocktail Party and I have no doubt that some of our readers will be equally fond of hosting the odd Winter Soirée. So this month I thought I'd share some tips I have amassed over the years to help make your evening a roaring success.

**1. Ice** The worst thing that has ever happened at one of my parties was running out of ice. Estimate how much you will need—then double it. If you hesitate at the result of this calculation, simply recall the last lukewarm cocktail that you had. If you haven't had one recently enough to do so, superb! They really are rather horrible.

**2. Keep it short** There is a temptation, and I have been guilty of this, to provide your guests with a menu of more than a dozen mixed drinks—or worse, to let them pick from the pages of an entire cocktail book. Not only does this increase indecision and the number of ingredients you need in the house, but it slows down your serving. I find it's best to choose a small number (no more than ten) drinks, catering for a range of tastes, that you have tried and tested and know don't take long to make up. Even better, choose at least a couple of drinks that you can prepare all or parts of in advance (see below).

**3. Punch** This is particularly useful to serve as guests arrive, when you are trying both to welcome your visitors and to make sure they have a drink in their hand. This could be an iced Egg Nog, warm Mulled Cider or Hot Punch. Keep a ladle and cups near by and guests can help themselves.

**4. Glasswear** Some folks may be concerned that they don't have the right glassware for each

cocktail, but, as long as you have short, long and small wine glasses, you don't need to worry. If you want to serve hot toddies or punch, you will of course need heat-proof mugs too.

**5. Cheat** Although it may seem like cheating, pre-mixing some or all of your cocktails beforehand is an established tradition that goes back to the mid-19th century. There are plenty of recipes for cocktails that can be made up in advance and bottled in Jerry Thomas' bar book and others (see Recipes). The important thing to remember is that this will give you more time for conversation with your guests and your other hosting activities.

**5. Softies** Soft drinks are very useful as they can be served to those abstaining as well as being used as mixers.

*Ginger Ale:* With a wedge of lemon or lime, this makes a refreshing soft drink. Add brandy for a Horse's Neck.

*Lemonade:* Nice on its own, or with a dash of blackcurrant or lime cordial.

*Orange Juice:* Essential for Harvey Wallbangers.

*Bitter Lemon:* A pleasant alternative to sickly soft drinks, this also mixes well with vodka, gin, and sloe gin in particular.

*Tonic Water:* Another dry soft drink and the natural partner for gin or vodka.

**6. Nibbles** I've never attended a cocktail party where I have not been glad of a bite to eat from time to time. Not only are these sorts of foods quite social, but it also stops anyone from getting too merry too quickly.

There are some excellent recipes available for a variety of *vol-au-vents* and such. These will need to be prepared in advance. In addition, I'd suggest serving some nuts and other savoury treats that are quick and easy to set out. To

my mind, it doesn't matter too much what you serve, as long as you do.

Finally the most important tip is to be relaxed and help your guests to feel relaxed and comfortable, if you can do this you are more

than halfway there to having one of the finest cocktail parties of the festive season.

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

**RECIPES**

**Harvey Wallbanger**  
*Fresh & fruity*  
2 parts Vodka  
1 part Galliano  
3 parts Orange Juice  
Add ingredients with ice to a tall glass and stir with a straw.

**Negroni**  
*Dry & complex*  
Equal parts:  
Dry Gin,  
Red Vermouth  
Campari  
Add ingredients to a short glass or tumbler with ice and stir.

**The Sidecar**  
*The ladies' choice*  
2 parts Cognac  
2 parts Lemon Juice  
1 part Cointreau  
Add all ingredients to a shaker with ice and shake. Strain into a cocktail glass and serve.

**Hot Toddy**  
*A winter warmer*  
Equal parts:  
Whisky/Brandy  
Lemon Juice  
Sugar Syrup/Honey  
Add hot water to the rest of the ingredients, stir, and serve.

**To premix\*:**  
Mix two parts Vodka to one part Galliano and bottle.  
To serve, fill a tall glass with ice, add one measure of your mix and top up with orange juice. Garnish with an orange slice.

**To premix:**  
This drink is a contender for being pre-mixed in its entirety.  
To serve, simply pour over ice in a small tumbler glass and garnish with a slice of orange peel.  
I bottled one about 5 days ago and, today, it's still a very tasty drink; so, if bottled on the day, it would be hard to tell it from a freshly mixed one.

**To premix:**  
On the day of your party, combine all ingredients in a bottle.  
To serve, pour a good measure into a shaker with ice, shake and strain into an awaiting cocktail glass.

**To premix:**  
Mix the Whisky/Brandy, Lemon Juice and Sugar Syrup or Honey together in a bottle. Be sure to do this on the day of the party, as lemon juice doesn't like to be kept for too long.  
To serve, add hot water to a serving of your premix and stir.

\* A large jug and a funnel are cheap essential pieces of kit for making premixes.





## Albion Takes The Message to the Yoot'

I WAS AMUSED to have my attention drawn the other day to "Issue 0" (i.e. some sort of pre-launch dry-run) of Topman Generation, a rather confusingly organised online fashion magazine. Clearly they are planning a regular feature on style tribes—the first of which is our own Albion and his "Geovictwardian" movement. I here reproduce the full text, unabridged\* and entirely without permission:

### DANDY GODFATHER: ALBION GEOVICTEDWARDIAN

*By John-Paul Pryor  
Photography Antony Lycett*

#### Meet the founder of the flamboyant global network of waistcoated gents in thigh-high boots called the Geovictwardians

There are few fashion tribes more niche than the fast-growing global network known as Geovictedwardians, a group of trans-generational fashionistas taking the best of British, bringing it up to date and bringing it forward. Taking their style cues from the Georgians, the Victorians and the Edwardians, this underground network of dandy highwaymen is spearheaded by the ex-barrister Alex Betts, who prefers to go under the nomenclature Albion Geovictedwardian. We caught up with him in a Soho basement to find out why the future is always a product of the past.

**Topman GENERATION:** What exactly is Geovictwardianism?

**Albion Geovictwardian:** Geovictwardiansim is about taking the best of the past, bringing it up to date and bringing it forward. It poaches

from the Georgians, the Victorians and the Edwardians, but that doesn't mean that you have to be fixed in the period of 1740 to 1914, you're just taking on all the philosophies from that era. The Georgians had a degree of hedonism, the Victorians had the attitude that anything is possible, and the Edwardians kind of fused that together; they went anywhere, did anything, and they had a really good time doing it.

**Topman GENERATION:** What does a Geovictwardian wear?

**Albion Geovictwardian:** It's essential you have your own idiosyncratic package. It's very popular to talk about vintage when it comes to Geovictwardianism, but really it's all about the now—everything that I wear is bought new, none of it's second hand. What is important is the individual. The Geovictwardian man would wear moleskin trousers, for example, rather than jeans because although jeans were once a symbol of rebellion, they have been so universally adopted that they have become a leveller down. It's like bad days of the Russian empire—you can have any colour you want as long as it's red. Now you can have any trousers you want as long as they're blue denim.

**Topman GENERATION:** To some degree, is it about class?

**Albion Geovictwardian:** People have asked me about that in the past. No. It's not some sort of upper class idea or lifestyle. It is essentially classless, which means "outside the normal stratification of society". That's what Geovictwardianism is meant to be. I have to explain to people when they see me wearing a bowler hat that it was only latterly that it was associated with people in the city—although no one in the city now wears them—and it was originally invented as a practical piece of headgear, like a modern builder's hard hat. Later, people in the city adopted it, but I try and remind people of its roots. That's partly the message of Geovictwardianism, you're always looking at where things come from to know where they're going to go.

**Topman GENERATION:** Do you ever get

HOME SHOP TOPMAN DAILY CONTENTS SIGN-IN REGISTER

FASHION UNDERGROUND

**DANDY GODFATHER: ALBION GEOVICTEDWARDIAN**

Meet The Founder Of The Flamboyant Global Network Of Waist-Coated Gents In Thigh High Boots Called The Geovictwardians

By John-Paul Pryor  
Photography Antony Lycett

There are few fashion tribes more niche than the fast-growing global network known as Geovictedwardians, a group of trans-generational fashionistas taking the best of British, bringing it up to date and bringing it forward. Taking their style cues from the Georgians, the Victorians and the Edwardians, this underground network of dandy highwaymen is spearheaded by the ex-barrister Alex Betts, who prefers to go under the nomenclature Albion Geovictedwardian. We caught up with him in a Soho basement to find out why the future is always a product of the past.

**Topman GENERATION: What exactly is Geovictwardianism?**  
**Albion Geovictwardian:** Geovictwardiansim is about taking the best of the past, bringing it up to date and bringing it forward. It poaches from the Georgians, the Victorians and the Edwardians, but that doesn't mean that you have to be fixed in the period of 1740 to 1914, you're just taking on all the philosophies from that era. The Georgians had a degree of hedonism, the Victorians had the attitude that anything is possible, and the Edwardians kind of fused that together; they went anywhere, did anything, and they had a really good time doing it.

**Topman GENERATION: What does a Geovictwardian wear?**  
**Albion Geovictwardian:** It's essential you have your own idiosyncratic package. It's very popular to talk about vintage when it comes to Geovictwardianism, but really, it's all about the now—everything that I wear is bought new, none of it's second-hand. What is important is the individual. The Geovictwardian man would wear moleskin trousers, for example, rather than jeans because although jeans were once a symbol of rebellion, they have been so universally adopted that they have become a leveller down. It's like bad days of the Russian empire – you can have any colour you want as long as it's red. Now you can have any trousers you want as long as they're blue denim.

"It's like bad days of the Russian empire – you can have any colour you want as long as it's red. Now you can have any trousers you want as long as they're blue denim"

**Topman GENERATION: To some degree, is it about class?**  
**Albion Geovictwardian:** People have asked me about that in the past. No. It's not some sort of upper class idea or lifestyle. It is essentially classless, which means 'outside the normal stratification of society'. That's what Geovictwardianism is meant to be. I have to explain it to people when they see me wearing a bowler hat that it was only latterly it was associated with people in the city, although no one in the city now wears them, and it was originally invented as a practical piece of headgear, like a modern builder's hard-hat. Later, people in the city adopted it, but I try and remind people of its roots. That's partly the message of Geovictwardianism, you're always looking at where things come from to know where they're going to go.

**Topman GENERATION: Do you ever get any hassle because of the way you look?**  
**Albion Geovictwardian:** Sometimes. Last comments but they are always with a smile. "Oi! Sherlock!"—that kind of thing. I'm not the only one that gets that on this scene, but it's never been anything nasty or malicious. Now, what does that tell you about these young people? That they'd like to do it! I was coming back from someone's wedding on the central line and a group of hooded lads got on, who were up to no good. I was wearing black gaiters with a helmet, and white trousers tucked into the gaiters, maybe a double-breasted jacket and, of course, the mutton chops. I thought it could go either way because they were making a lot of noise disturbing other passengers, and they went to me, "Cor! Where have you been, mate? Been to a wedding?" Funnily enough, I had, so I took that as an opportunity to strike up a conversation with them, and one of them, who

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was a bit more vocal than the others, looked over and pointed at the black gaiters, "I really like them!" he said. I said, "Well, they're quite expensive, but you might consider getting a pair." He said to me, "Nah mate, if I wore those on my estate I'd get beaten up!" So I looked him in the eyes and said, "You realise, don't you, that if you wear gaiters it takes courage to wear what you want and stand out from the masses." The rest of it was fine and at the end of the journey they were all waving goodbye and saying good luck...as they no doubt went off to conduct more mischief.

*John-Paul Pryor is editor of Topman GENERATION, contributing arts editor at AnOther Magazine, editor-at-large for PORT magazine and regularly writes for Dazed & Confused, TANK and Sabotage Times*

\*OK, I corrected the spelling mistakes





CLUB NOTES

## Members Despoil the Oriental Club—Again

OVERSEAS MEMBER Col. Cyrus Choke (aka mob lawyer John Delikanakis) was in Town again last month and entertained a group of us for dinner at the Oriental Club. That the club allowed us to do this showed great open-mindedness, or perhaps Blitz Spirit, given that the last time we dined there we were repeatedly asked by staff to pipe down and the evening ended in judo-throwing in the dining room in the small hours. I wasn't there till the bitter end this time, but I gather that Scarheart and Henry drunkenly pestered the staff about whether an artillery shell was naval or rail, Compton-Bassett fell asleep in the loo and by the looks of it Robert Beckwith fell asleep at the piano. Our thanks go out to the Colonel and German for hosting this appalling display.

## A last London jaunt before Crimbo

Friday 23rd December  
6pm-11pm  
The Dover Castle, 43 Weymouth Mews,  
London W1G 7EH (020 7580 4412)

There will be a final, traditional gathering of the Sheridan clan to cram a few jars down our throats before braving the horrors of the Holiday Season. Lord Mendrick will be back in Blighty from the 16th—sadly too late for the NSC party, but he'll be rattling the padlock from opening time at this event. Our association with the Dover Castle is random but ancient. If you want some vintage inspiration have a look at the picture opposite below. It hangs in the pub and claims to be D-Day, though I imagine those chaps would be otherwise engaged. There was an ambulance station in the Mews so perhaps the ladies were stationed there.



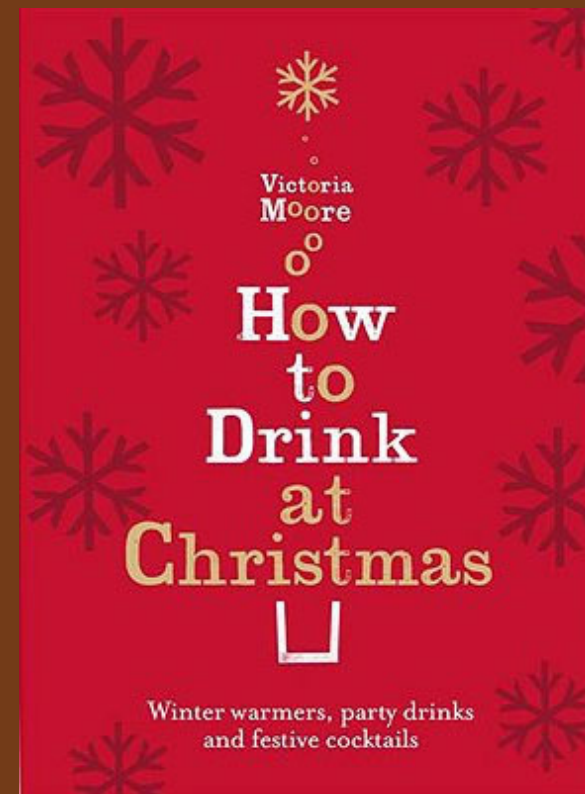
## Win a copy of *How to Drink at Christmas*

To help your Yuleide quaffing go with ease, confidence and panâche, I have five copies of *How to Drink at Christmas* by Telegraph drinks columnist Victoria Moore to give away.

A spin-off from her successful *How to Drink* volume, this little tome gives a manageable overview of seasonal boozing, from what you need to keep in stock, drinks ideas for large and small parties, including party food too, warming drinks, non-alcoholic drinks and, of course, a step-by-step guide to getting people drunk on Christmas day, including food to go with Christmas fayre and how to choose Champagne.

Ms Moore also gives her opinions on favourite spirit brands and takes an interesting detour to look specifically at vodka, as well as what she considers the perfect Martini. There are plenty of cocktail recipes, both classic and creations of her own (with a particular obsession with clementine juice for some reason—although by coincidence I discovered that my local Tesco sells the stuff in cartons now).

To be in with a chance of winning one of these books, just email [mrhartley@newsheridanclub.co.uk](mailto:mrhartley@newsheridanclub.co.uk) telling me what your favourite Christmas tippie is. It can be a cocktail of your own devising, an impassioned defence of an established beverage, a mercilessly logical argument, a letter to Santa, a filthy limerick...the world is your prairie oyster. Come next Monday, the five which have amused or impressed me the most will receive copies of the book.



## NSC Scarf Rides Again

IF YOU HAVE been kicking yourself for not snapping up one of the original batch of Ryder & Amies scarves specially made up for the New Sheridan Club,

in club colours of course, you may like to know that Member Chas. Wolfenbloode, the man behind the idea, has now taken to making the scarves himself. He has just completed



one batch and is taking orders for the next. The good news is that the price for these handmade wonders is just £15 plus postage (considerably less than the Ryder & Amies version). If you would like to own one of Charles' scarves, drop him an email at [charlesrtsua@gmail.com](mailto:charlesrtsua@gmail.com).

## New Member

AS THE SNOWSTORM of austerity and economic meltdown buffets the roof tiles, we offer the chestnut of tweedy affability, gentling roasting on the luxuriant open fire of NSC Membership, to Ellin Belton who joined up this last month (yes, just one this time—clearly the exposure on *A Very British Party* has done us a power of good).





## Forthcoming Events



**BOTH OFFICIAL NSC JAUNTS (🔴)  
AND THIRD-PARTY WHEEZES WE  
THINK YOU MIGHT ENJOY**

FOR THE LATEST developments, see the Events page at [www.newsheridanclub.co.uk](http://www.newsheridanclub.co.uk).

### 🔴 NSC Club Night

Wednesday 7th December  
8pm–11pm

Upstairs, The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB

Members: Free

Non-Members: £2 (first visit free)

See page 2.

### Cakewalk Café

Wednesday 7th December  
7pm–1am

Passing Clouds, 1 Richmond Rd (Behind the Haggerston), Dalston, London E8 4AA

Admission: Free

Night of live jazz led by Ewan Bleach and Nicholas D. Ball, featuring an open mic session from 7pm, live band from 8.30 and a late jam session from 11pm. If you would like to join in, email [ewanbleach@gmail.com](mailto:ewanbleach@gmail.com).

### Alfies Antiques Market Christmas Shopping Party

Thursday 8th December  
5–9pm

Alfies Antiques Market, 13–25 Church Street, Marylebone, London NW8 8DT

Admission: Free, but I think you must RSVP to [info@alfiesantiques.com](mailto:info@alfiesantiques.com) or 020 7723 6066

Alfies is a labyrinthine

wonderland of units selling antiques and vintage fashions, plus a vintage hair parlour and a café at the top. To celebrate 35 years of existence there will be cocktails, canapés and festive entertainment.

### The Snug Club

Friday 9th December  
8pm

Community Hall, Garden Street, Cromer

Admission: £9 in advance from [www.wegotickets.com](http://www.wegotickets.com) or from Old Town, 49 Bull St, Holt (01263 710001)

Old Time Appalachian music comes to Cromer, in the form of Aaron Jonah Lewis and Ed Hicks, plus “gypsy mash-up ensemble” Novinka! Folksaband. Beer and cider will be available.

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### Make Do Christmas

Saturday 10th December  
11am–5pm

Dugdale Centre, Thomas Hardy House, 39 London Road, Enfield EN2 6DS

Admission: Free?

The Enfieldian Vintage Fair joins healthy forces with Enfield’s finest local food growers and producers, gourmet food makers, cake bakers, craft lovers and create-your-own enthusiasts to bring a unique shop-taste-make extravaganza. For more details see the



Enfieldian Vintage Fair Facebook page.

### Lipstick and Curls Pin-Up Studio

Saturday 10th December  
10am–5pm

Central London

Admission: £250

Vintage makeover crew Lipstick and Curls offer you the chance to be photographed as a vintage-style pin-up by snapper Rocco Rolls. For your money you get styled and coiffed, get access to their vintage props, tips on posing for the camera and come out with four prints of your bad self looking impossibly glam. For more information email [info@lipstickandcurls.co.uk](mailto:info@lipstickandcurls.co.uk) or dial 07879 076449 or 07765 166 460.

### 🔴 The New Sheridan Club presents its Christmas party TINKER, TAILOR, DANDY, SPY

Saturday 10th December  
7pm–12am

The Punch Tavern, 99 Fleet Street, London, EC4Y 1DE (020 7353 6658)

Admission: NSC Members free, non-Members £5

See page 15.

### A Vintage Tea Party

Saturday 10th December  
2pm–1am

The Brown Derby, 336 Kennington Park Road, Oval, London

Admission: Free?

A day of tea, cake, music and vintage shopping, including the launch of *The Domestic Burlesque* by Elsa Quarsell, with a chance to meet the authoress. For more details see the Facebook event.

### Antique vs Vintage

Saturday 10th December  
10am–4pm (trade from 9am)

Bourne Hall, Spring Street, Ewell Village, Epsom, Surrey KT17 1UF

Admission: £2

Busy, high-quality fair with one hall for antiques and one for vintage fashions. More at [www.antiquevsvintage.co.uk](http://www.antiquevsvintage.co.uk).



Johnny Vercoutre relaxes in his vintage tearoom, Time for Tea

### Waffle Kerfuffle

Sunday 11th December  
2–8pm

Time for Tea, 110 Shoreditch High Street, London

Admission: Free, I imagine, but the waffles will cost

Johnny Vercoutre’s 1940s tea shop Time for Tea plays host to a waffle-fest, this time in partnership with Lil’ Koko’s Teaparty, meaning that the waffles are joined by lavender cake, Austrian gingerbread, winter brownies and apple strudl Christmas crackers, plus seasonal punch as well as tea. Koko will be DJing New Orleans swing and around 2.30 there will be a live performance by piano virtuoso Dom Pipkin playing New Orleans R n’ B.

### The Puppini Sisters Live in London

Sunday 11th December  
7–10pm

The Union Chapel, Compton Avenue, London N1 2XD

Admission: £18.70 in advance

Period-style close-harmony chanteuses perform numbers from their new Christmas album.

### The Cakewalk Revival

Sunday 11th December  
5.30–11pm

The Palm Court, Alexandra Palace, Alexandra Palace Way, London N22 7AY



Admission: £5 or £8 including a swing dance lesson

An evening of dancing to live jazz and vintage DJing in the beautiful Palm Court. Doors open at 5.30, the introductory dance class with Gaia Facchini is from 6.30pm and the Cakewalk Orchestra will swing into action from 7.30 to 10.30. Kitchens are open till 8pm. Nearest station is Alexandra Palace or go to Wood Green tube and take the W3 bus which stops outside the Palm Court entrance. For further details telephone Sally on 07989 513 577.

### Ukulele Christmas Cabaret

Tuesday 13th December  
8–11pm  
The Lincoln Lounge, 52 York Way, King's Cross, London N1 9AB  
Admission: Free

Tricity Vogue presents a bill of festive ukulele strumming, featuring Jo Stephenson, Wendy Solomon, The Marauders and, believe it or not, The Jive Aces. There will also be celebrations for the launch of the Ukulele Cabaret EP record. More details at the Facebook event.

### The Candlelight Club's Christmas Party

Friday 16th and Saturday 17th December  
7.30pm–12am  
A secret central London location



Admission: £15 in advance

Dress: 1920s dandies and swells, gangsters and molls, degenerate aristos and decadent aesthetes, corrupt politicians and the Smart Set In the Know

The Candlelight Club is clandestine pop-up cocktail bar with a 1920s speakeasy flavour, in a secret London venue completely lit by candles. Each event offers a one-off cocktail menu with special themes and featured ingredients. There are live period jazz bands plus dance or burlesque acts and vintage DJing from MC Fruity. More at [www.thecandlelightclub.com](http://www.thecandlelightclub.com).

This time the theme is simply Christmas. There will be live music from Albert Ball's Flying Aces and a floorshow from tap-dance sensation Josephine Shaker.

### The Black Cotton Club's Black & Red Christmas Ball

Saturday 17th December  
10pm–3am  
Volupté, 7–9 Norwich Street, London EC4A 1EJ  
Admission: £12

Long-running vintage club night with rare period dance music played on original 78s by resident DJs Lady Kamikaze and El Niño, plus guest Swinging Dickie and live gypsy jazz from Trio Manouche.

Details at [www.ladyluckclub.co.uk](http://www.ladyluckclub.co.uk).

### The Ruritanian Grand Ball

Saturday 17th December  
Victoria Gallery and Museum, Ashton St, Brownlow Hill, Liverpool L3 5TR  
Admission: Unclear how much it costs, though you must apply for an invitation to His Excellency Count Hasso von Flessing at [VonFlessing@hotmail.com](mailto:VonFlessing@hotmail.com)  
Dress: Courtly (white tie, Ruritanian military



No.1 Dress or "folkloristic Ruritanian costume") Bit shadowy but you get the picture: there will be feasting and dancing to a 30-piece band. For more details see the Ruritanian homepage. The venue looks rather stunning.

### The Eccentric Club Christmas Dinner

Monday 19th December  
7.13pm  
The Savile Club, 69 Brook Street, Mayfair, London  
Admission: Members and their guests £65, non-members £85 in advance  
Dress: Black Tie or eccentrically overdressed, glamorous (expressly no trainers, as if you needed telling), or eccentric Santa (see below)

Members, friends (which includes NSC Members) of the Eccentric Club are invited to a Christmas dinner, including a certain amount of complimentary wine and Champagne, a three-course dinner, a prize for the most eccentric Santa Claus in attendance, entertainments, surprise guests and acts and a charity raffle. More details at [www.eccentricclub.co.uk](http://www.eccentricclub.co.uk) (which currently seems to feature a picture of our own Earl of Waveney on the homepage).

### A Last London Jaunt Before Crimbo

Friday 23rd December  
6pm–11pm  
The Dover Castle, 43 Weymouth Mews, London W1G 7EH (020 7580 4412)  
Admission: Free, but bring beer money  
See page 24.

### The Last Tuesday Society presents The New Year's Eve Eve Masked Ball



Friday 30th December  
8pm–4am  
St Matthew's Church, Brixton Hill, London SW2 1JF  
Admission: £20 or £25 in advance depending on whether there are any early-bird tickets left  
Dress: Divine Decadence. Masks obligatory, clothes optional  
Viktor Wynd cunningly avoids the competition on NYE itself by throwing this bash the night before. Live music from Badger Badger, Perhaps Contraption and Mariachi Jalisco, plus a whole crowd of DJs, a chocolate fountain and a torture chamber that seems to involve being fed oysters. The event is in honour of CRISIS and 10% of ticket revenue will go to the charity. See [www.thelasttuesdaysociety.org](http://www.thelasttuesdaysociety.org).

### The Candlelight Club's New Year's Eve Party

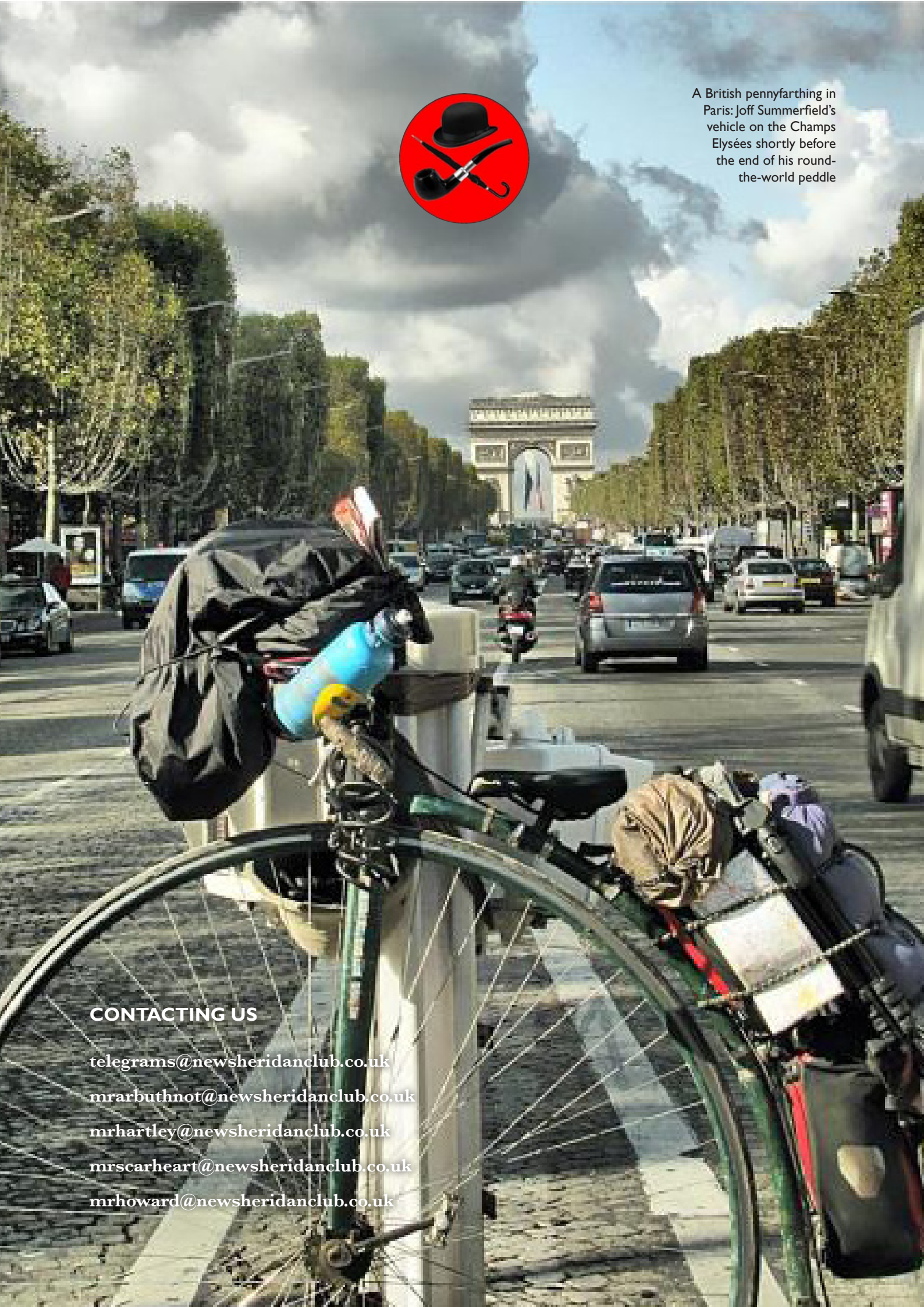
Saturday 31st December  
8pm–3am  
A secret central London location  
Admission: Tickets £30 in advance  
Dress: 1920s dandies and swells, gangsters and molls, degenerate aristos and decadent aesthetes, corrupt politicians and the Smart Set In the Know  
(See above for general details.) To see in the New Year The

Candlelight Club has found an elegant venue, a stone's throw from Leicester Square tube station, where you'll be able to gaze out over the city as you sip Champagne and tap your feet to live red-hot jazz music straight out of the 1920s courtesy of the Basin Street Brawlers. The bar will be open till 3am, and you'll be able to order sophisticated bar food, or alternatively dine in the restaurant with a free Bellini aperitif—an exclusive offer for Candlelight Club ticket holders. See [www.thecandlelightclub.com](http://www.thecandlelightclub.com).





A British pennyfarthing in Paris: Joff Summerfield's vehicle on the Champs Elysées shortly before the end of his round-the-world peddle



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