

The New Sheridan Club

Newletter

LXIX

July 2012

Who's Queen?

Monarchal mayhem at our Jubilee-themed summer party

Colonial Coolers

Heat-busting summer drinks born from the experience of Empire

The Schwarzenegger of Victorian London

The life and times of Eugen Sandow

PLUS:

The Club Jubilee mug

Our own whimsical commemorative drinking vessel—free to all Members





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 4th July in the upstairs room at The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB, from 7pm until 11pm. The Earl of Essex will entrance us on the subject of *The Life and Scandalous Times of Sir Henry "Chips" Channon MP*. Born in America, Channon fell in love with London society, spurning American values in favour of the lure of rank and privilege. He married brewing heiress Lady Honor Guinness but, although a long-serving MP, his political career was hampered by aligning himself first with Edward VIII, shortly before the King was forced to abdicate, and then with the Nazi-appeasement faction. His pursuit of a peerage was also unsuccessful. He and his wife divorced after her affair with a Czech airman and his with a (male) landscape designer. His greatest claim to fame are his extensive diaries—unexpurgated versions have not so far been made public but they are allegedly lurid: many who might feature in them have apparently turned white on hearing that they existed.

The Last Meeting

At our June meeting Mr David Waller, who previously addressed us on the subject of Gertrude Tennant, returned to talk about the subject of his latest book, Eugen Sandow, a Victorian music hall strongman and fitness guru, whose physique was considered anatomically

perfect. Just as Mr Waller's previous book was sparked by the discovery, within his family, of a chest of letters, so too his interest in Sandow derives from the fact that the great man was Mr Waller's great uncle. From humble Prussian origins Sandow trained himself as a gymnast before coming to London and dramatically announcing himself by taking up the standing challenge of two charlatan stage strongmen. He became an overnight success. But in addition to feats of strength on the stage—touring the British Empire and North America—he offered physical training using his own exercise system, he sold food supplements and exercise equipment, and was clearly a canny businessman well aware of the value of a personal brand. He was a friend to Edward VII and Professor of Physical Culture to George V. But when the First World War came, Sandow's Germanic origins deeply dented his standing with the public. Yet even this was not enough to explain his rapid fall from grace. When he died in his fifties, he ended up in an unmarked pauper's grave, with virtually no one at the funeral and disowned by his family. In the past there have been suggestions of homosexual scandal or that he died from syphilis, but Mr Waller has been unable to find any evidence to support this, so the nature of Sandow's end remains a mystery. Mr Waller's book *The Perfect Man: The Muscular Life and Times of Eugen Sandow, Victorian Strongman* is published by Victorian Secrets. An essay by Mr Waller begins on page 4.



(Above) Torquil makes his customary introduction; (right) Mr Waller with a contemporary cartoon featuring Sandow and popular anti-hero character Ally Sloper



(Above) Rachel and Robert look very serious; (right) Mr Waller with a statue of Sandow in the Natural History Museum, though deemed too racy for public display; (below left) Dave Hollander and Craig with new Member Malgorzata Kitowski; (below right) the Curé, an island in a sea of hand gestures, from Ed Marlowe on the left and Helen Cashin on the right



(Right) Much revelry in Smoker's Alley; (left, l-r) "Ravey" Dave Hollander, William Maple Watermere, Niall Spooner-Harvey



THE LIFE AND TIMES OF

EUGEN SANDOW

CELEBRITY STRONGMAN

By David Waller

ONE WINTER'S DAY in 1904, Arthur Conan Doyle steered his Wolseley Motoring Machine too quickly into the drive of his Surrey country home. The car clipped a gatepost and ran up a high bank before overturning completely. Conan Doyle's passenger was thrown clear but the author was pinioned by the heavy vehicle. The creator of Sherlock Holmes remained under the car until a crowd gathered and was able to lift the vehicle from him. "I should think there are few who can say that they have held up a ton weight and lived unparalysed to talk about it," he recalled. "It is an acrobatic feat which I have no desire to repeat."

Conan Doyle subsequently attributed his narrow escape to a course of muscular development he had undertaken with Eugen Sandow, the world-famous strongman and music-hall performer who provided personal fitness coaching from his Institute of Physical Culture at 33A, St James's Street, in the heart of London's fashionable Clubland. The training had left Conan Doyle in superb physical condition, and provided Sandow with what today we call "celebrity endorsement" for the near-miraculous efficacy of his method.

Eugen Sandow (1867–1925) is now almost totally forgotten by the broader public by whom he was once adored. The man who rose



from humble origins in Prussia to become internationally famous as the literal embodiment of masculine perfection, a century ago the possessor of the most famous male body in the world, lay for more than eighty years in an unmarked grave in Putney Vale cemetery (only recently have admirers erected a proper memorial). He is remembered today chiefly by body-building enthusiasts for whom a statuette of Sandow is the coveted first prize in the International Federation of Body Builders Mr

Olympia competition. Arnold Schwarzenegger, whose career has many parallels with that of Sandow, won one of these figurines in 1980.

In his heyday in the late Victorian and Edwardian era, Sandow was a music-hall celebrity and an international sex symbol. On the UK music-hall stage, he stirred up an erotic frenzy akin to the impact of the Beatles on their female audiences three quarters of a century later. According to one 1890 newspaper account, when Sandow started his act, "semi delirium seized the delighted dames and damsels. Those at the back of the room leapt on the chairs: paraquet-like ejaculations, irrepressible, resounded right and left; tiny palms beat till...gloves burst at their wearer's energy. And when Sandow, clad—a little—in black and white, made the mountainous muscles of his arms wobble! Oh ladies!" Later, in North

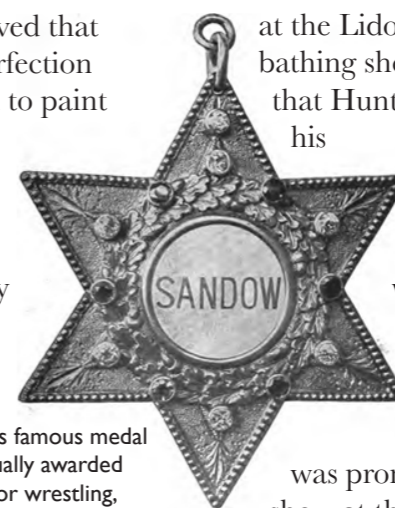
America, society ladies paid a surcharge to attend private viewings backstage after the show, where they were encouraged to fondle his muscles.

Kings and Crowned Princes beat a path to the door of his fitness salon in St James's. Tens of thousands who could not afford his personalised attention subscribed to his mail-order fitness courses. Scientists and artists studied him, deeming him not merely strong, but the perfect specimen of male beauty. Before him, nobody believed that a human body could copy the perfection of classical art. Artists clamoured to paint him, sculptors to model him. The Natural History Museum took a plaster cast of his body as representing the ideal form of Caucasian manhood. On an early visit to the US, Thomas Edison filmed him—one of the first moving pictures—and postcard images of his near-naked body were circulated by the thousand.

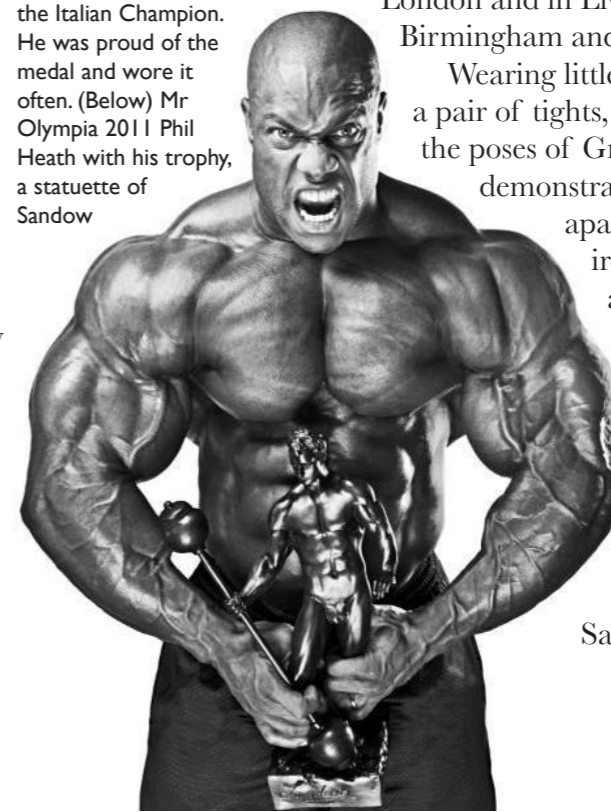
According to his own account, he was born in Königsberg in Prussia (now Kaliningrad, part of Russia) as Friedrich Wilhelm Müller, the son of a jeweller. He ran away from home and made a living as a circus strongman, wrestler and artist's model in Belgium, Holland, France and Italy before being plucked out of impoverished obscurity by an Anglo-American artist by the name of E. Aubrey Hunt. Hunt is said to have spotted Sandow walking along the beach



Sandow lifts an entire vaudeville cast. (Directly above him is entrepreneur Florenz Zeigfeld)



Sandow's famous medal was actually awarded to him for wrestling, by the Athletic Club of Florence. In one match he beat three opponents, including the Italian Champion. He was proud of the medal and wore it often. (Below) Mr Olympia 2011 Phil Heath with his trophy, a statuette of Sandow



at the Lido in Venice in nothing but his bathing shorts. The sight was so impressive that Hunt hired Sandow to be the model for his portrait of a Roman gladiator in the arena. Hunt told him about a contest at the Royal Aquarium Music Hall in Westminster, in which a strongman by the name of Sampson was issuing challenges to find the mightiest man in the world. Sandow travelled to London, won the contest and was promptly signed up for a three-month show at the Alhambra in Leicester Square. In the course of the next two years, he became a music-hall sensation, regularly topping the bill in London and in Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham and other provincial cities.

Wearing little more than a fig-leaf and a pair of tights, Sandow would imitate the poses of Greek and Roman statues, demonstrating his strength by tearing apart packs of cards, bending iron bars, snapping chains and supporting horses and a squadron of soldiers on his back. As with a modern-day rock-star or promising screen actor, his agents saw the North American market as the key to greater fortune and Sandow opened in New



York in the sweltering summer of 1893. There, he encountered Florenz Ziegfeld, later to achieve fame as the promoter of the eponymous Ziegfeld Follies, who brought Sandow to Chicago at the time of the World's Columbian Exposition. Sandow triumphed again and spent seven of the next fifteen years in North America, where he set a new benchmark for American virility.

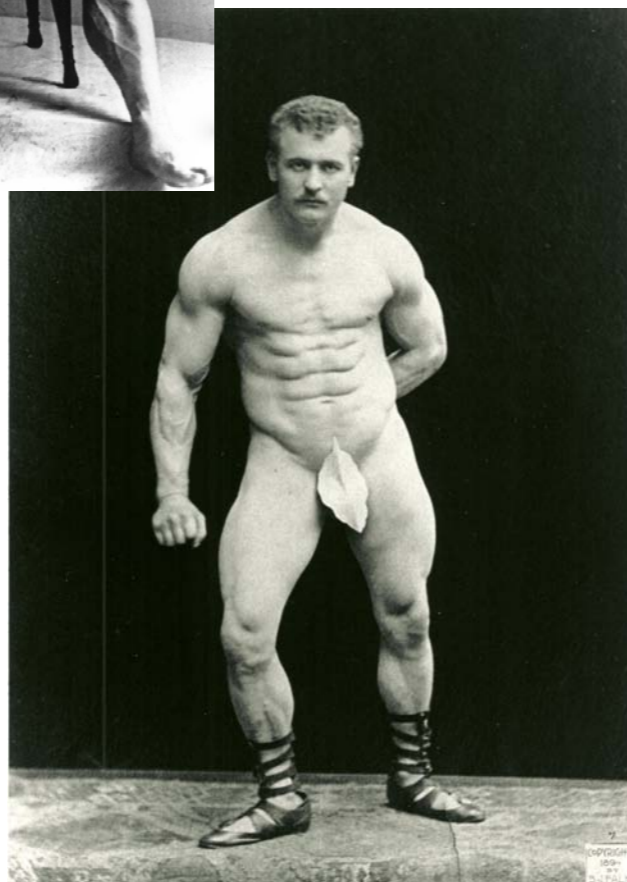
Despite his successes in North America, he chose to settle in London, taking an English wife and eventually (in 1906) British citizenship. In 1896, he established his Institute of Physical Culture in London's St James's, where ladies and gentlemen would go for the late Victorian equivalent of a workout. He wrote a number of best-selling books, starting with *Strength and How to Obtain It*. First published in 1897, this went into four further editions during his lifetime



and was translated into many languages. From 1898–1907, he edited and published *Sandow's Magazine of Physical Culture*. At a time when most men were sedentary and unhealthy, constitutionally disinclined to take any kind of exercise, and when British and indeed much of European society feared the onset of physical and moral degeneration, Sandow's self-improvement system claimed to be

able to transform weaklings into paragons of health and strength. One famous, albeit fictional, follower of his method was Leopold Bloom, the hero of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, who took up Sandow's regimen in search of "relaxation...and the most pleasant repristination of juvenile agility".

He developed a chain of licensed fitness training schools and a mail-order business selling everything from Sandow's stretching




equipment or cigars, to Sandow's cocoa, chocolate powder and embrocation, a branded body-lotion. Although the chocolate powder failed to catch on, he was initially successful in business and became every well-toned inch the prosperous Edwardian gentleman, a patron of Ernest Shackleton, a friend of Lord Esher and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. In March 1911, he was appointed Professor of Scientific and Physical Culture to King George V.

Sandow did not try to hide the secret of his success. On the contrary, in taking his clothes off and displaying his incontrovertible physical perfection, he flaunted it for all to see. In keeping with the democratic spirit of the age, he sought to disseminate his credo as broadly as possible, giving his adherents the chance to sculpt their own bodies. It was a rational form of exercise, Sandow argued, because it was based on a scientific understanding of the way the body works. Sandow had a detailed knowledge of anatomy and repeatedly impressed his contemporaries with his ability to name and display individual muscles. The diagrams and

MAN IN THE MAKING
FIRST SERIES.
Exercises for the Treatment of Lateral Curvature, for both sexes, with or without apparatus.


Exercise 1. Ex. 1a.—Repeat with right hand.



Ready Position.
Have a hook securely fastened in the floor and attach one end of the rubber thereto. Stand a full arm's length from the hook, turning the body to left side; the right leg about 12 inches from the left.

Movement.
Left arm outstretched, press slowly upwards from the shoulder above the head, and recover to ready position.

Exercise 2.



Ready Position.
Stand erect, feet wide apart, bells by sides.

Movement.
Reach down with left hand to ankle, bending right knee, but keeping left leg absolutely straight, at the same time drawing right hand under arm-pit. Reverse. The face should follow the movement of the descending hand.

SANDOW'S GRIP DUMB-BELL.



Perfect for HOME use, for increasing the STRENGTH, Flexibility, and Agility of the Muscular System.
ONE DUMB-BELL LASTS A LIFE-TIME.

For Men, price 12s. 6d. complete, 3 lbs. And Enamelled, 7/6.
For YOUTHS, about 2 lbs. 10/6 For BOYS, about 1 lb., 7/6.
" GIRLS, " 1 lb., 7/6 " CHILDREN, " 3/4 lb., 5/-
" LADIES, " 2 lbs., 10/6

Each set consists of a pair of Dumb-bells, Sets of Springs, Chart of Exercises; a Special Initiatory Prescription made out by Mr. Sandow; all packed in a neat Case with Selvyt.

SANDOW'S DEVELOPER



Used in all the Sandow Schools of Physical Culture.

A Combination of
RUBBER EXERCISER,
CHEST EXPANDER,
LIGHT DUMB-BELLS,
AND
WEIGHT-LIFTING
APPARATUS.

The DEVELOPER adapts itself to the Strength of the user, and may be used by a whole family.

**LADIES, CHILDREN,
MEN, ATHLETES.**

Packed in strong box with Chart, Foot Attachment, Screw, Hook, etc.

Price 12s. 6d.

EXTRA STRANDS for increasing Tension - - - 4/- per pair
CHEST EXPANDING STRANDS - - - 3/-
CHEST EXPANDER, complete, containing Dumb-bells 3 Strand and Chart. Price 7/6.

(Above and left) Pages from Sandow's *Body-Building*

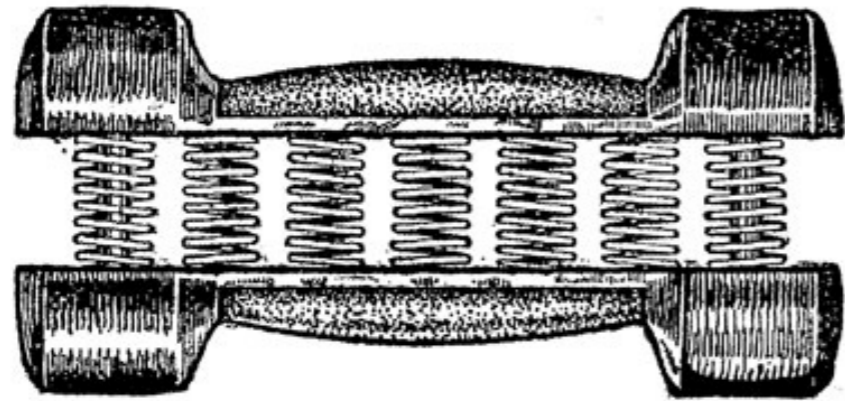
charts he used to describe his exercise routine remain admirably clear to this day. Sandow thus laid bare the secrets of muscular development.

Sandow made it clear that his exercise system could be followed without purchasing too much special equipment. The minimum requirement was a set of dumb-bells or hand-grips, ideally the patented Sandow grip dumb-bell which consisted of "two halves, longitudinally separated about 1.5 inches from one another, the intervening space being occupied by a small steel spring". There was a whole hierarchy of such dumb-bells, from the expensive to the cheap, for men and for women, reflecting the stratifications of late Victorian society. I managed to acquire a pair of gentleman's dumb-bells on eBay midway through writing this book: they are immaculately preserved, made of shiny, nickel-plated steel with six springs apiece, and have worn red leather handles. They are more than a hundred years old, giving off a faint musty smell evoking ancient exertions. They weigh three pounds

SANDOW'S

SPRING-GRIP

DUMB-BELL.



Gentlemen's Nickel Plated Dumb-Bell, Leather Covered Handies.

The Dumb-Bells are made in different sizes for Gentlemen, Ladies, Youths, Boys, Girls and Children, and are packed in elegant cases.

This appliance is very simple and cannot go out of order. It consists of a Dumb-bell made in two halves, separated about 1 inch from one another, the intervening space being occupied by small steel springs, which may be of any strength.

When exercising, the springs are compressed by gripping the Bells, and bringing the two halves close together, in which position they are kept until the exercise is over.

The pupil who possesses these Bells will find that instead of having to be continually buying heavier Dumb-bells, one pair will suffice him for all time. All that it will be necessary for him to do will be to purchase, at a small expense, new springs from time to time. All pupils are advised to use the "GRIP" DUMB-BELL, upon the merits of which I need not enlarge.

I have always taught that muscle is developed BY WILL-POWER, not by mechanical movement, and the simple principle of this latest invention is, by calling forth a continual exercise of will-power, to obtain results impossible with any previous Dumb-bell.

Yours faithfully,

EUGEN SANDOW.

The Dumb-bells can be had from ATHLETIC OUTFITTERS, SPORTING GOODS DEALERS, and OUR AGENTS throughout the World, as well as direct from ourselves.

Sandow's Grip Dumb-Bell Co.,
SANDOW HALL, SAVOY STREET,
LONDON, W.C.

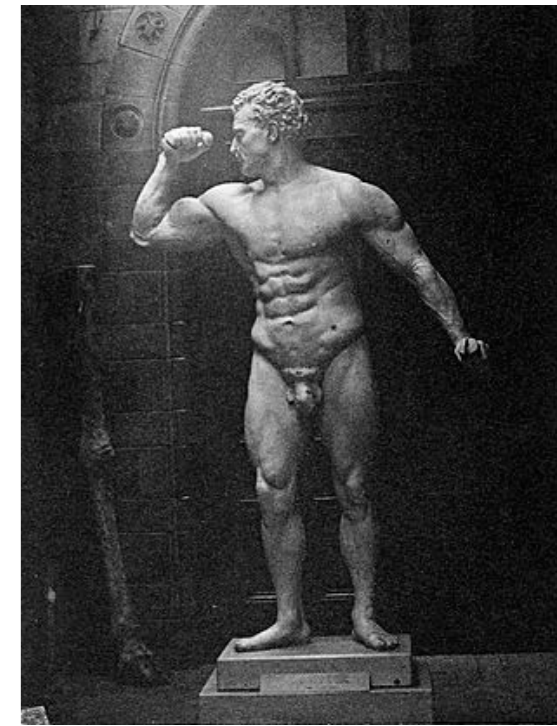
each and in handling them for the first time I was conscious of all the other people who must have lifted these beautiful objects in the century since they were first manufactured, and all the hopes and energies expended in their use. These well-crafted objects are housed in a rusted tin box, and came with a detailed and well-preserved manual of instruction.

The first time I went through the entire routine of 19 different exercises, I underestimated the amount of physical effort that I was undertaking, and blithely performed twenty or so repetitions of each exercise. After twenty minutes, I had finished and felt pleasantly energised, not conscious of having had an especially strenuous workout. The next morning I could hardly walk: there were aches and pains in strange parts of my anatomy, suggesting that Sandow had helped me exercise muscles that I was but dimly aware existed. The next time I tried them, a day or two later, I was much more

(Opposite) An advertisement c. 1905; (below left) a letter from a grateful pupil; (right) a cast statue of Sandow in the Natural History Museum, photographed in 1905, but considered too racy for public display; (bottom) Sandow's grave, only recently marked as his

circumspect, and went through eight to ten repetitions only. I still hurt all over the next day, but realised that I was getting the kind of concentrated burst of exercise that a visit to the gym has never quite delivered. I have kept going with the full workout daily for several months now, and it has definitely got easier, and I fitter. It would be going too far to say that my muscles now twist like lianas or coil sinuously like a serpent, but my wife and children have noticed there is a spring in my step and have noticed a new definition in my musculature. While exercising, you have to compress the two halves of the bell, holding them tightly together throughout the entire workout, and as Sandow intimates, this extra effort has the effect of concentrating the mind wonderfully on the precise task at hand.

The Perfect Man: The Muscular Life and Times of Eugen Sandow, Victorian Strongman, is published by Victorian Secrets. Further details on www.victorianstrongman.com



100 Netherwood Road
 West Kensington Park
 Jan. 25th 1897

Dear Sir

I write to give you my measurements as requested. I am 22 years of age, and I bought Sandow's book on Physical Training 18 months ago, since when I have been an ardent admirer & follower. If Mr. Sandow knew what a good thing he has done for the young fellows of England by inspiring them to dignify their physical powers, I think he would be more than pleased. My measurements when I started training were as follows:—

	Present Measurements.
Chest.....	36 inches
Waist.....	29 "
Biceps flexed.....	12½ "
Forearm.....	10 "
Thigh.....	19 "
Calf.....	13 "
	Height 5 feet 8 inches.
Chest.....	40 inches
Waist.....	29 "
Biceps flexed.....	13½ "
Forearm.....	10½ "
Thigh.....	20 "
Calf.....	13½ "



Never mind the Jubilee... It's the NSC Summer party



FOR OUR SUMMER PARTY on 16th June we couldn't ignore the fact that our Queen had been on the throne for 60 years this month; but we also acknowledged that not everyone in the Club is a royalist, so our theme was broadly "Jubilee", interpretable in whatever way people chose. Some came as monarchs themselves, some simply in patriotic colours, while others evoked the punk spirit of 1977, the year of the Silver Jubilee.

Our games included, for the monarchists, *Who's Queen?* in which Rachel Downer (who

an image of HMQEII, in the style of the Sex Pistols' cover imagery. Marks were awarded for plausible piercings. And for Bolsheviks we had the tasteful *Shoot the Romanovs in a Basement* game, in which a set of Russian dolls, with the faces of Tsar Alexander and his family stuck on to them, were set up as targets in a mock-up of the basement in Ekaterinberg, and contestants used the NSC ancestral foam dart gun to try and knock as many over in two shots as they

could. (The fact that the darts are now so knackered that their fins point in random directions made the task all the more unpredictable.)

Further entertainment came from Club Member Niall Spooner-Harvey reading a specially penned Jubilee poem, and the tweedpunk musical combo Lobby Lud and the Luddites, the frontman of which is also a Club Member.



Catherine and Laurence make an entrance



Pandora and Andrew Harrison

reminds many of Queenie in *Blackadder*) sat on her throne and contestants had to lob an inflatable crown, quoits-style, on to her head. What many failed to realise was that this was an exercise as much in garnering royal patronage as dexterity, and if you complimented Her Majesty then she might be inclined to try and help you out. It was Rachel's birthday that very day, so her expectations were particularly high... For anarchists we had *Pin the Safety Pin on the Queen*, in which blindfolded contestants were given three safety pins and invited to push them into



The venue begins to fill



Oliver and Ella, whose outfits were inspired by BBC Persia's recent description of Oliver as "The Sultan of Britannia"



(Top) the Vintage News team's clapper board; (above) the Glorious Committee; (left) Coppice uses his military training, (below) Mark attempts to crown Rachel from a distance

The evening concluded with the traditional Grand Raffle, in which most people went home with something, whether a book or DVD connected with royalty or a vintage souvenir from the Queen's coronation, the 1937 coronation of George VI or even the 1935 silver jubilee of George V. We also had a bottle of the King's Ginger, a liqueur concocted by Berry Bros. & Rudd specially for Edward VII, and a £100 voucher from Kettner's, the Soho restaurant where Edward VII used to meet his mistress Lillie Langtry. Many thanks to Members Grace and Harry Iggulden, owners of the venue, the Tea House Theatre, for giving us the use of it.



(Right) The Tea House as it was before we despoiled it; (below) a handsome spread of street party food, plus a handsome samovar; (below right) Niall declaims his specially-composed Jubilee poem; (below far right) Jeni Siggs and snapper Hanson Leatherby



Additional photos by Sadie Docherty



(Left) The view that an urchin or street arab would have if he pressed his nose against the window from outside as the party was in full swing



(Right) one of the Jubilee mugs that we gave to all of our Members



(see p.24), plus some of the NSC rock we made last year (it does indeed say "New Sheridan Club" all the way through);

(left) Scarheart tries his hand at Who's Queen?; (below) Grace manages to play while holding Isolde; the game was won by the Curé (on the right)



(Clockwise from above left) Staunch republican Ed Marlowe attacks the Pin the Safety Pin on the Queen game with relish; Frisax makes two creditable piercings to the eyebrow and lip, then spoils it all with a stab to the throat; Jeni's winning hat trick—eyebrow, nose and lip; Scarheart applauds a tight pattern, albeit in the forehead; Sadie horrifies all with a pin to the eye





Note the prosthetic arm kazoo holder



Lobby Lud and the Luddites



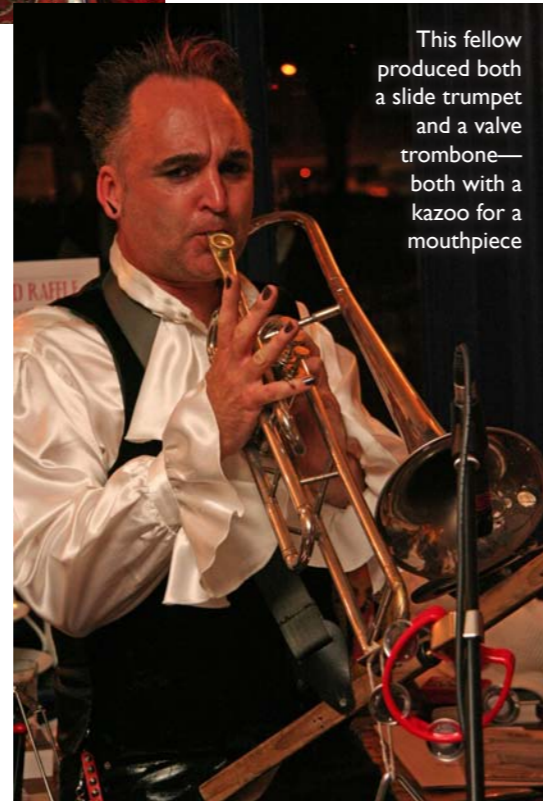
Shooting the Romanovs in a Basement (Clockwise from below) This set of Russian dolls stood in for the seven members of the royal family cruelly executed by the Bolsheviks. The faces came from a group portrait but Alexander's was a bit small so I used a picture of Club Member Will Smith, who is the spitting image; Chuckles looks like he's quite used to this sort of thing; the real Will Smith prepares to say something important; you can just see Coppice's dart veering away to the right; Waveney looks like he's engaging in a duel; the whole room awaits the outcome of Suzanne's shot



(Above) Being a groupie isn't what it used to be; (above right) the homemade percussion included a washboard and a set of saucers; (above right) the drummer had apparently never seen the drumkit before that night



(Above) The bass player didn't say much but he held it all together, as bass players do; (left) a rare sighting of Horatio Scotney-Le Cheyne. The uniform is real (though the pickelhaube isn't part of it)



This fellow produced both a slide trumpet and a valve trombone—both with a kazoo for a mouthpiece





Your Chance to Save a Vintage Cinema

IF YOU LIVE in Walthamstow you will probably know of the EMD Cinema, but even if you don't you can play your part in averting its demise. A public entertainment palace has been on that spot since 1887 when the Victoria Hall was built. In addition to hosting dances, concerts, plays and meetings, it was also the site of one of the first public film screenings in 1896. From 1907 it was converted for full-time cinema use and in 1930 it was bought by Granada moguls Sidney and Cecil Bernstein who made it their flagship new "super cinema". The interior was inspired by the Alhambra, with Moorish arches and grille work in the auditorium. It had a built-in Christie organ and, being designed for stage performances too, it played host to many famous artists including Count Basie, the Beatles and the Who. It has changed hands, and names, many times before being the EMD, owned by businessman Mohan Sharma. Now, however, it has been bought by the Brazilian Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, who want to convert it to religious use.



The cinema has its own support group, the McGuffin Society (named after the concept of a "McGuffin" coined by Alfred Hitchcock, who used to come to the cinema as a child and became a friend of Sidney Bernstein), who campaigned when Odeon, who sold the place to Sharma, included a clause prohibiting the screening of English-language films—the society felt that the venue should remain as somewhere accessible to the whole community. Now for the same reason



(it is the only venue of its kind in the borough) the McGuffin Society are campaigning against the conversion of the site. Waltham Forest Council rejected the UCKG's first proposal, but must now consider a new one, which claims that film screenings will continue alongside the religious use. However, at another UCKG site, the Finsbury Park Rainbow, the same claim was made—and there only two films have been screened in 13 years. Everyone is encouraged to write to the council and voice their objections—but the deadline is **Saturday 7th July**.

"Every written objection counts," say the McGuffin Society. "The planning officers will consider each one as part of their deliberations and those received from local residents carry particular weight. It is also vital that residents keep up the pressure and continue to voice their support—if significantly fewer objections are sent than on previous occasions, UCKG will inevitably claim the new scheme has won the support of local people and should be allowed to proceed."

Objections can be sent via post (to Development Management, Sycamore House, Town Hall Complex, Forest Road, London E17 4JS) or email (to dmconsultations@walthamforest.gov.uk)—but be sure to quote reference numbers 2012/0764 and 0765/LB.

Hail, hail, Freedonia!

The NSC Film Night presents

Duck Soup

Monday 16th July

7pm (screening starts around 8pm)

The Tea House Theatre, 139 Vauxhall Walk, London SE11 5HL

(020 7207 4585)

Admission: Free

Continuing our run of eclectic film presentations at the Tea House Theatre, at Craig Young's suggestion we are going for a comedy this time. *Duck Soup* (1933) jostles with *A Night at the Opera* for the accolade of best Marx Brothers film (both are listed in the American Film Institute's top 12 comedy movies).

From Jewish immigrant stock, the brothers grew up in New York near the German, Irish and Italian quarters. The classic line-up is

Groucho (real name Julius), who started off with a German onstage personality which he shed around the time of the First World War, creating the classic cigar-waving wisecracker with his bizarre painted-on moustache; **Chico** (Leonard) a showman piano player who wore a Tyrolean hat and affected an Italian accent (apparently developed offstage as a defence against neighbourhood bullies); **Harpo** (Adolph), a Priapic clown figure with an orange fright wig who never spoke but used a car horn to communicate, and who learned six musical instruments but focused on the harp; **Zeppo**

(Herbert), the youngest, who took the role of romantic straight man—though they say that he was the funniest offstage and could imitate the others' onstage characters too. (A fifth brother, Gummo [Milton] left to fight in the war.)

If this sounds a bizarre proposition, it is. The brothers cut their teeth in vaudeville in the early 1900s, initially as a music act, before realising, by accident (following an incident



with a runaway mule), that they had potential as a comic troupe. Their first two films, *The Cocoanuts* (1929) and *Animal Crackers* (1930) were adaptations of stage revues, but all their films are essentially strings of slapstick

set-pieces lubricated with wisecracks and wordplay. Don't go looking for any real plot.

Duck Soup is set in the bankrupt country of Freedonia. The only person with any money is wealthy widow Mrs Teasdale (Margaret Dumont, who plays the same character in every film), who declares that she will only continue to bail out the state if Rufus T. Firefly (Groucho) is made president. Firefly manages to appoint a peanut vendor (Chico) as Secretary for War—in reality a spy sent by neighbouring Sylvania—before accidentally declaring war. From a shelled-out house on the battlefield he

radios: "Three men and one woman are trapped in a building! Send help at once! If you can't send help, send two more women!"

The real town of Fredonia, New York, asked Paramount to change the country's name in the film because "it is hurting our town's image". Groucho fired off a reply asking them to change the name of their town because "It is hurting our picture".



Colonial Cocktails

By David Bridgman-Smith

Whether it be the Gin & Tonic, Pink Gin or the Gimlet, the British Empire and its colonial administrators have inspired a wide range of cooling drinks with which to endure the midday sun (heaven forbid you give in and have a siesta). Today's article is a tribute to those drinks, either in their traditional form, or with a slight variation.

Gin & Quinine

40ml gin
10ml citrus juice
1 tsp sugar/honey/molasses
3 dashes of cinchona tincture
20ml chilled water.

Combine in a glass and stir without ice

A reflection of the original "gin and tonic", when tonic water was not widely available, consisted of a mix of gin, citrus juice, sweetener, quinine and a little cold water to lengthen it.

This was a rough-and-ready drink, made with whatever was to hand. In this instance, the quinine comes from a cinchona bark tincture.

The drink is amber-brown, smooth, cool and refreshing, with some particularly strong wood notes. It's not as clean as the 20th-century G&T, but it has a similar combination of dryness, bitterness and citrus to that which you would expect today.

Colonial Cocktail

30ml gin
15ml fresh grapefruit juice

5ml Maraschino
Shake with ice and strain into a glass

The grapefruit in this cocktail adds a succulent, zesty fruitiness that you don't get from other citrus fruits. The drink is also well-balanced, with a good mix of sweet and sour. The gin is a good addition, although it does not dominate the flavours. The result? A straightforward, pleasant cocktail that is just right for the tropical colonies.

Imperial Cocktail

30ml French vermouth
30ml Maraschino
2 dashes Orange Bitters
2 dashes Absinthe

Stir with ice then strain into a glass

This is like some sort of fragrant bonbon from the subcontinent: sweet, with fruity, floral and spicy flavours, as well as a little anise towards



Left to Right: Gin & Quinine, Colonial, Japanese, Gimlet Highball, Imperial, Gin & Molasses, Original Vesper

the end. I would say that this is more of an after-dinner liqueur than an aperitif of the cocktail hour.

Gimlet Highball

30ml gin
10ml Rose's lime cordial
Soda water to top

Build in a highball glass with ice

The Gimlet was covered in an excellent article by Horatio Scotney-Le Cheyne in Volume 20 (June 2008) of this organ, but here is a twist on that drink, turning a short drink into a long

one. Fresh and crisp, with a slight sherbet aspect to it too. I used soda water, but still cold water would do the trick. Very refreshing and perfect for a long, hot afternoon.

Original Vesper

2 medium bananas
2 cups of ice
50ml Wood's dark rum
25ml orgeat (almond) syrup
Blend until smooth

This comes from the latter days of the British Empire and the island of Jamaica. According to Ian Fleming's close friend and confidante, Ivar Bryce, the most famous of James Bond's drinks was originally a frozen rum cocktail.

Thick and luscious; the creamy fruitiness of the banana and light sweetness of the orgeat is offset by the darker, richer woody notes of the rum, which has hints of treacle and molasses. Essentially, this is an alcoholic smoothie, which is very easy to drink. Despite the creaminess, the drink is not too heavy and so is suitable to drink before dinner.

Japanese

60ml brandy
10ml orgeat (almond) syrup
10ml lime juice
2 dashes Angostura Bitters

Shake with ice and strain into a glass

This has some confectionary elements, which remind me of marzipan, but with a fruity zestiness, too. There are also some darker, almost chocolatey, flavours. A very tasty tippie.

Gin & Molasses

50ml gin
1 tsp of dark brown molasses
Add to a glass with ice

I found this in an old cocktail book. Molasses was plentiful in many parts of the Empire, so, despite my initial hesitation, I thought I'd give it a try. It certainly tastes better than it looks, being essentially sweet gin; but, as such, the drink is only as good as the underlying gin with which it is made. On this occasion, I used a slightly questionable spirit and it wasn't that great.

For more cocktail recipes, product reviews and musings on booze, see the New Sheridan Club's **Institute for Alcoholic Experimentation**

Gimlet sorbet

I've been experimenting with alcoholic sorbets: a previous gin and tonic sorbet was nice but the bubbles gave it a rather odd consistency. A Negroni sorbet was far more successful as the red vermouth and Campari, being relatively low in alcohol, freeze quite readily. Although I did add a little gin to the mix, most of this ingredient was served neat from the freezer, poured over the finished sorbet, to great effect.

So I thought I'd have a bash at turning one of our colonial cocktails into an icy delight. Given how well citrus works in sorbets I decided to opt for the Gimlet. Naturally I would be using only the very best Rose's lime cordial (even though own-brand is one third of the price).

300g caster sugar
100ml Rose's lime cordial
400ml water
30ml dry gin
1 egg white

Mix the sugar, water, and cordial until the sugar has dissolved, then chill in the fridge until cold. Then add the gin and return to the freezer until almost frozen; this will take about two hours. Remove from the freezer and break up with a fork. Froth the egg white with a whisk or fork, then add both to a food processor and pulse to blitz together—do it quickly so that it doesn't start to melt. Pour the mix back into your container and freeze again until solid.

Delicious! Some sweetness and a lot of juicy zesty lime followed by the notes of the gin. Refreshing and truly tastes like a Gimlet. For extra gin flavour, pour over some gin from the freezer.





CLUB NOTES

Nation on Tenterhooks Over Chap Olympiad Weather

THIS WEEKEND SEES the annual Chap Olympics, *The Chap* magazine's annual festival of unathletic events, designed to highlight the competitors' strong points—well-pressed trousers, superb pipe-smoking technique, impeccably waxed moustaches—and draw a veil over their weaker points—being useless at sport, disliking sudden movement, making an effort or perspiration. This year the event sprawls over two days: Day One will be the usual Chap Olympic Games, including Umbrella Jousting, Swooning, Ironing Board Surfing and Not Playing Tennis, while Day Two will host the Paralyticolympics, when those barely able to stand will still have their trouser creases and their anecdote-telling skills put to the test. Gold, silver and bronze cravats will be awarded separately on both days, so competitors on either day do not have to attend on both days in order to win prizes. The events on Day Two

will differ from those on Day One, though, as usual, performance will be judged principally on maintenance of panache, perfectly knotted ties, stiff upper lips and acceptable (i.e. caddish) levels of skulduggery. On Day Two there will be a special Gin Tent, staffed by nurses trained at the Atters Attree Gout Sanatorium, to assist any contestants who have tested negative for alcohol levels, or those who are feeling a little under the weather and require a top-up.

After years of Getting Away With It weather-wise, last summer's event experienced catastrophic downpours, which kept many people away. So, what of the forecast this



Is Culpepper insane or did he really snap a man in a NSC suit?

time? At the time of writing the Met Office are hedging their bets with both two raindrops and a bit of sun behind the grey cloud symbol. Quite warm at 18–19 degrees C, though.

Tickets are available for either day, or a special weekend ticket at a reduced cost. Purchase tickets at www.ticketweb.co.uk or call 020 7724 1617.

Culpepper Has Vision of NSC Clothing

GILES CULPEPPER sent me the picture above, something he snapped at the West Indies test match at Lords last month, a man “in a NSC colours suit (twas not just a blazer)”. Even the fevered imaginations of the Committee have not yet conceived of an entire suit in the Club's red, silver and black colour scheme, so I can assure you it is not a prototype that has somehow been loosed from the labs. I would suggest, however, m'lud, that in the picture above the third colour looks more like navy blue, but if Culpepper says it was black, who am I to question him (reaches slowly under desk for silent alarm button...)?

Quirky Bow Ties for Sale

IF YOU'RE IN THE market not just for bow ties but for unusual bow ties, then you might like to know that New York tailor Carl Ulysses is about to release his new custom range, which is all about combining different fabrics. The neck pieces made separately from the bow—I had assumed this was because they were utilitarian components expected to be hidden by the collar,



Black and white houndstooth

but from the pictures it looks as if the compound nature of the tie is something to be flaunted. “The neck piece of my bow ties can be made out of grosgrain, satin, linen, or velvet,” he explains. “I make the bows in two styles:



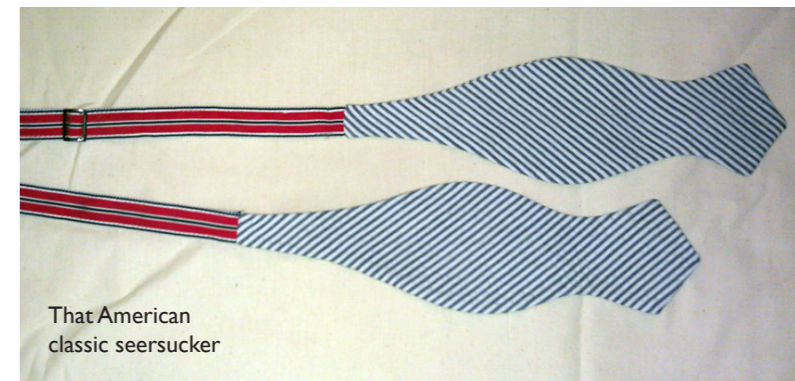
This page: scenes from last year's, somewhat damp, Chap Olympics



Carl in one of his ties, flaunting its composite nature



“Strawberries and cream”, though they look a bit more magenta than any strawberry I've ever eaten



That American classic seersucker

pointed and standard (butterfly). The bow of the tie can be made in up to four different colors, meaning ties can be made two sided or even four-sided.”

The ties are \$75 each. If you refer someone who makes a purchase, you receive \$10 for each tie that is purchased when they mention your name. For more details contact info@carlulysses.com or see www.carlulysses.com.

New Members

AS THEWS ACROSS the land flex and limber in readiness for the festival of sporting disappointment and groin strain later this month, we offer the truss of clubbable collegiate companionship and the cold compress of effortless *savoir faire* to the following hopefuls, all of whom have stepped up to the starting blocks of NSC Membership this month: Ella Armstrong Lach, Paul Gunn, Malgorzata Kitowski, M.C. Tierney, Stephanie Genichon, Ruth McBrien, Revd Basil W. Youdell, Adrienne Coles, Madame Peacock, Ken Garvey and Inessa Greta Bauer.

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 plus our Facebook page and the web forum.

🍷 NSC Club Night

Wednesday 4th July
8pm–11pm
Upstairs, The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB
Members: Free
Non-Members: £2 (first visit free)
See page 2.

Gatz

Until Sunday 15th July
2.30–10.30pm
Noel Coward Theatre, St Martin's Lane,

London, WC2N 4AU
Admission: £27.50–£77.50
from here

An extraordinary theatrical production: it starts in a 1980s office where a worker finds a copy of *The Great Gatsby*, and turns into a word-for-word dramatised reading of the novel, with the stage and the characters on it gradually shifting back in time. It takes eight hours (with breaks, including a long dinner interval) which sounds like an endurance test but it is by all accounts spellbinding. Just 23 performances are taking place as part of the London International Festival of Theatre.

Cakewalk Café

Wednesdays 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th July
8pm–1am (swing dance classes 7–8pm and 8–9pm)
Passing Clouds, 1 Richmond Road, Dalston, London E8 4AA
Admission: £5 (£3.50 if you're in 1920s/1930s clobber) or £8 including a dance class; £12 including both.

Live swing jazz every Wednesday featuring Nicholas Ball, Ewan Bleach and chums, with optional dance classes from Swing Patrol.

The Double R Club and Gosney & Kallaman present

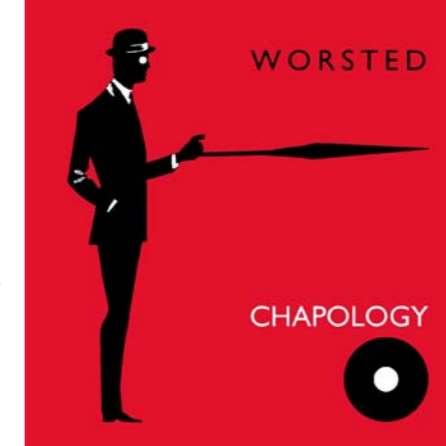
When Worlds Collide

Thursday 5th July
8pm

The Pleasure Pavilion, Vibe Bar, Brick Lane
Admission: £10 in advance

Two cabaret clubs combine for a series of oppositionally-themed nights of entertainment. Previously we were treated to Highbrow vs Lowbrow and Kings vs Queens, and this time it is The Devil vs The Deep Blue Sea. Features Marnie Scarlett and juggler/balancing artiste Mat Ricardo, plus Benjamin Louche, Rose Thorne, Amelia Kallman and Norman Gosney with The London Chinatown Dolls, featuring Miss Amelia, Miss Miranda, Kitten Von Strumpet, Emerald Fontaine, Hotcake Kitty, Brandy Butters and Miss Candy Cane.

Worsted presents
Chapology Music Cabaret



Thursday 5th July
7.30pm
Pushkin House, 5A
Bloomsbury Square, London
WC1A 2TA
Admission: £10 (£8 concs);
call the box office on 0207 269
9770

A rare London appearance

by the band that sings songs about Chappist issues such as hat doffing and trouser browsing, with lyrics by Gustav Temple, editor of *The Chap*. Described as “Noel Coward meets the Buena Vista Social Club”.

EMD Cinema: Deadline for objections

Saturday 7th July
See page 18.

If you want to lodge your objection to the proposal to gut Walthamstow's vintage cinema and convert it to religious use, this is your deadline.

The Vintage Photo Booth

Saturday 7th July
11am–5pm
South London Pacific, 340 Kennington Road, London SE11 4LD
Admission: £175 for the full-day session

A collaboration between the Lipstick & Curls styling team and pin-up photographer Tony Nylons. For your money you get a complete vintage hair and make over plus a briefing on additional top tips and tricks to complete the transformation to your chosen decade. Then you get a photo session with Tony Nylons, apparently a giant in the field of vintage “pin-up” style photography. Finally you choose four images to take away with you. The service is available to individuals, couples or groups. For more details email info@lipstickandcurls.net.

The 50s Lounge

Saturday 7th July
8–11pm
Paper Dress Vintage, 114–116 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3AH
Admission: Free (?)

Does what it says on the tin: a night of 1950s music, from the tropical Latin beats of Edmundo Ros to the private eye themes of Johnny Dankworth and Nelson Riddle to the rock 'n' roll

Claim your FREE NSC Jubilee mug!



As a special Jubilee treat we've made this limited edition commemorative mug, which is free for all Members. A high-quality two-colour silk screen, the playful design was hand-drawn by Mrs H. referencing Eric Ravilious (and channelling Ronald Searle). If you were unable to pick your mug up at the party you may either claim it in person at a forthcoming event

(I'll endeavour to bring a few to meetings) or we can mail it to you, though in this case we ask you to cover the cost of delivery (easiest to pay by PayPal to coffers@newsheridanclub.co.uk). Including a special mug carton, it is £3 to mail within the UK—Overseas Members should check with us what the cost will be. Further mugs may be purchased for just £4 Each.

of Louis Prima. Along with generous helpings of swing from Benny Goodman, Count Basie, etc, plus period radio jingles and a projection of 1950s classic *The Naked City*. Presented by Johnny Vercoutre and Dick Tracey.

Die Freche Muse

Saturday 7th July
10pm–4am

A secret private Dalston residence
Admission: £15 in advance or £20 on the door (but you must RSVP in advance.)

Dress: 1920s and 1930s, strictly enforced

Hosted by Baron Von Sanderson, Die Freche Muse is a club night created in the great tradition of European Cabaret: irreverent, decadent, sexually ambivalent and dissolute.

The venue is a private Victorian hall in Dalston, London, and entertainment will include burlesque from Fifi Fatale and Amelie Soleil, live music from Gertie and her Gaiety, a blackjack table run by professional croupier Johnny Darke—guests receive money from the Bank of Die Freche Muse and the highest roller of the night wins a prize—plus vintage DJs, films, etc.

The Chap Olympiad

Saturday 7th & Sunday 8th July
From midday-ish

Bedford Square Gardens,

Admission: £20 per day or £30 for a two-day pass

The Chap magazine's annual festival of unathletic events. See page 22.

Sohemian Rhapsody: A Journey into the Lost World of Bohemian Soho

Monday 9th July
7–9pm

Sanctum Soho Hotel, 18–22 Warwick Street, London W1B 5NF

Admission: £15 from Wegottickets.com (includes a glass of La Maison Fontaine absinthe)

Few people have led such a strange life as the cult writer and Soho dandy Julian Maclaren-Ross (1912–64), whose work has attracted admirers as varied as Harold Pinter, Evelyn Waugh, Iain Sinclair, Graham Greene and Sarah Waters. Brought up on the French Riviera during the 1920s, his subsequent life encompassed fame and literary success as well

as alcoholism, drug addiction, homelessness and a psychotic obsession with George Orwell's glamorous widow. To commemorate the centenary of his birth, a recreation of one of his short, characteristically stylish, 1950s radio plays is being staged, starring NSC Member Callum Coates, one of the founders of the Fitzrovia Radio Hour, Tristan Langlois, Emma Bown and Jon Glover, the original Mr Cholmondley-Warner himself... This will be followed by some rarely seen footage of Maclaren-Ross being interviewed, plus extracts from previously unseen interviews with his friends. There'll also be short readings from his work, and a discussion between his biographer Paul Willetts and the writer Virginia Ironside.

Swing at the Light

Mondays 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th July
From 7pm

Upstairs at The Light Restaurant and Bar, 233 Shoreditch High Street, London E1
Admission: £8 for class and club, £3 just for the club night after 9pm

Dress: Vintage/retro appreciated

Weekly vintage dance night in a venue with a wooden floor and its own terrace. Beginners classes from 7.30, intermediate classes from 8.15, and "freestyle" from 9pm.

Vintage Dance Society

Thursday 12th July
7.30pm

Elgar Room, Royal Albert Hall, Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AP

Admission: £18.50 including a gin cocktail on arrival and complimentary swing dance lesson

New swing jazz night hosted by Fred Snow of Top Shelf Jazz, this time featuring Benoit Viellefon and his Orchestra launching his new album, dance routines from the Rhythm Rascals and DJ Tim Hellzapoppin'.

🔴 The New Sheridan Club presents

The Tashes Trophy Final

Saturday 14th July
From 10am-ish

Richardson Evans Memorial Playing Field, Roehampton Vale, London SW15 3PQ

Admission: Players are asked to make a contribution towards the grounds hire.

Spectators welcome and picnicking encouraged.

The Club's annual cricket match between the Hirsuit Gentlemen and the Clean-Shaven Players—one team with facial hair (whether real or stuck on) and the other clean shaved—organised by the redoubtable Watermere. For more see the Facebook event.

Worsted presents

Chapology Music Cabaret

Saturday 14th July
7.30pm

Friends Meeting House, 52 St Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4EA (entrance to the venue is at 8 Hop Gardens)

Admission: £10 (£8 concs); call the box office on 07903 629180

See above.

Saturday Night Swing Club

Saturday 14th July
7.30pm–2am

City Firefly, 18 Old Bailey, London EC4M 7EP

Admission: £12 (includes a £3 drinks voucher)

Three dance floors playing swing, R'n'B and rock'n'roll music from the 1920s to the 1950s, with resident DJs Dr Swing and Simon "Mr Kicks" Selmon, plus guest DJs, this time Tim Hellzapoppin' and Wicked Witch. On the middle floor there are dance classes from 8.15 till midnight, with guest teachers Paul and Natasha teaching Collegiate Shag. Hmm. More at 52ndstreetjump.co.uk.

The Vintage Picnic

Sunday 15th July
11.30am–7.30pm

Near the band stand, Victoria Park, Hackney, London

Admission: Free, but you'll want some picnic food, I'll warrant

Organised by Lipstick & Curls, the idea here is for different strands of the vintage community to get together, perhaps meeting in the flesh for the first time someone you had only previously encountered on the aether. An earlier attempt was made to do this in May but I think bad weather prevented it. Of course this could happen again so perhaps keep an eye on the

Facebook page.

🔴 The New Sheridan Club Film Night

The Marx Brothers in Duck Soup

7pm (screening starts around 8pm)

The Tea House Theatre, 139 Vauxhall Walk, London SE11 5HL

(020 7207 4585)

Admission: Free

See page 19.

The Candlelight Club: The Great Games

Saturday 21st July

7.30pm–12am

A secret central London location

Admission: £15.75 in advance

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



Back at the 1924 Olympics, judges knew how to dress properly

The Candlelight Club is a clandestine pop-up cocktail bar, in a tucked-away, candlelit den with a 1920s speakeasy flavour. Each event offers a one-off cocktail menu with special themes, plus live period jazz bands and vintage vinylism from DJ MC Fruity. Guests are encouraged to dress in period outfits—and they've not let us down yet.

This time we're celebrating the Olympiads as they used to be in the Prohibition era—when judges wore boaters, lady tennis players wore long skirts and tug-of-war was an Olympic event. Remember *Chariots of Fire* (about the 1924 games) where he balances Champagne glasses on the hurdles? We'll be evoking this air of stylish amateurism... Music will come from the Brass Volcanoes.



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. You can even befriend us electrically at www.facebook.com.

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