



The New Sheridan Club Summer Party

Are you a Mexican or a Mexican't?

The Club takes a dignified stroll *South of the Border*

Advanced trouser theory

Sean Longden on why Oxford Bags defined an epoch

Gin Tonica

In Spain they're serving G&T—but not as we know it

Brogues Gallery

Dorian Loveday bares his soul

Errol Flynn

Derek Duberry follows last month's Film Night with a profile of *The Dawn Patrol's* star

RESIGN!

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW SHERIDAN CLUB • ISSUE 81 JULY 2013



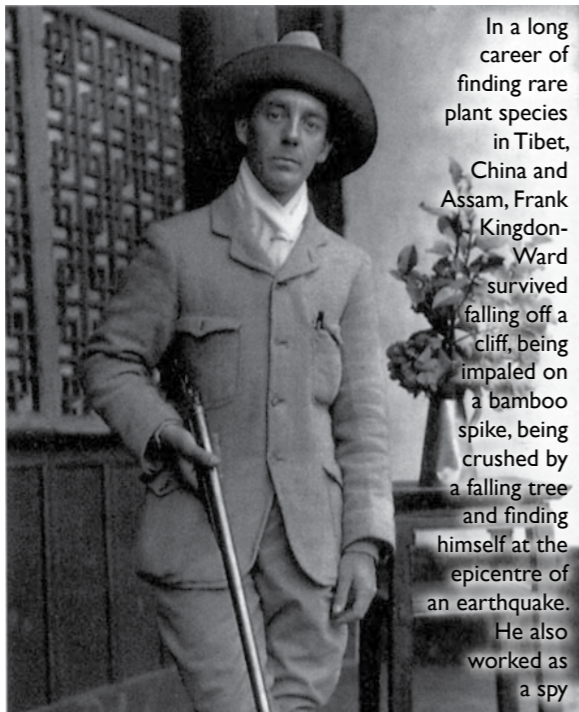
The New Sheridan Club traditionally meets in the upstairs room of The Wheatsheaf, just off Oxford Street. The Wheatsheaf is one of Fitzrovia's historic pubs, a one-time haunt of Dylan Thomas, George Orwell, Augustus John and Julian Maclaren-Ross. In fact Thomas met his wife Caitlin in The Wheatsheaf 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 3rd July in the upstairs room at The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB, from 7pm until 11pm. Member Lorna Mower Johnson will have us rooted to the spot with an address on *Tales of the Plant Hunters*, which she says "could almost be described as horticultural Boys' Own Adventures".

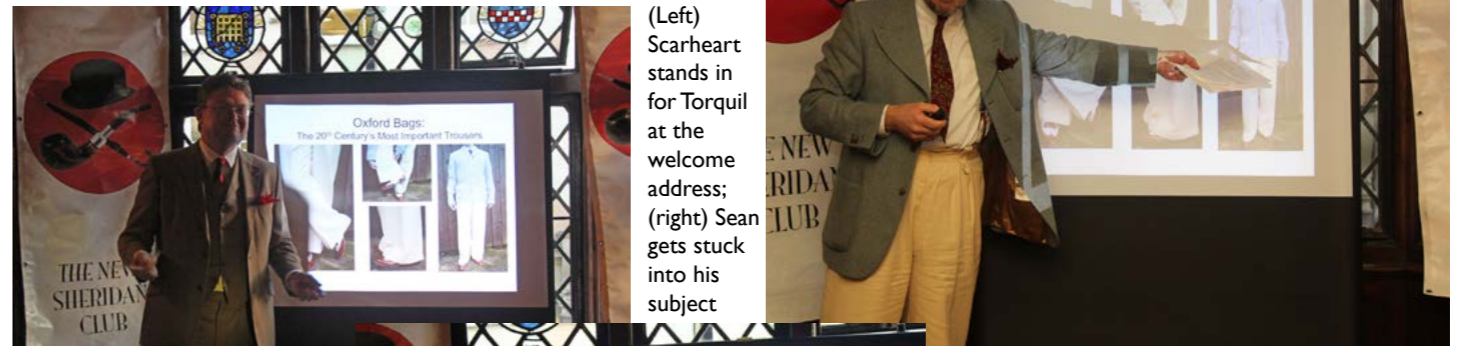
The Last Meeting

At our June gathering we once again had a packed house to welcome our speaker, Mr Sean Longden, whose topic was *Oxford Bags: The Most Important Trousers of the 20th Century*. These wide, loose trousers seemed to spring from nowhere in 1925, outraging the older generation and creating an ensemble look (baggy trousers, double-breasted blazer and flat-crowned "pancake" hat) that nearly caused riots in some cities of the world. The popular origin myth is that they followed the fashion for plus-fours—after some Oxford colleges banned the



In a long career of finding rare plant species in Tibet, China and Assam, Frank Kingdon-Ward survived falling off a cliff, being impaled on a bamboo spike, being crushed by a falling tree and finding himself at the epicentre of an earthquake. He also worked as a spy

knee-length trousers, the bags were developed to wear over the plus-fours as a disguise (presumably until the wearer was away from prying eyes and could remove the bags). But Sean used contemporary photos to show that it would not have been possible to fit a pair of plus-fours under any real-world Oxford bags. (He pointed out that everyday examples were much more restrained than the super-wide ones that turn up in some popular photographs—these were usually just fabricated for a wager and got media coverage precisely because they were atypical.) Moreover, he revealed an example of Oxford bags being referred to by name in the late 19th century. His theory is that they were developed for rowers to wear over their sports shorts when travelling to and from the river, the equivalent of a track suit. From this start, he contends, they went on to influence the basic shape of men's trousers—loose, blossoming from the hip via pleats—right up into the 1950s. An essay version begins on page 4.



(Left) Scarheart stands in for Torquil at the welcome address; (right) Sean gets stuck into his subject



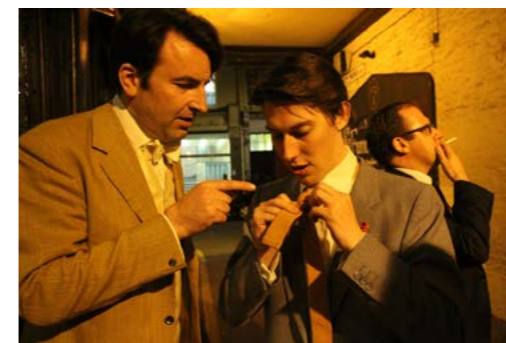
(Below) Anton Krause (r) accosts Sean on a point of trouser lore; (below right) Mr Simon Pile looking pensive



(Left) Sean lays out his case and (below) has the crowd in the palm of his hand



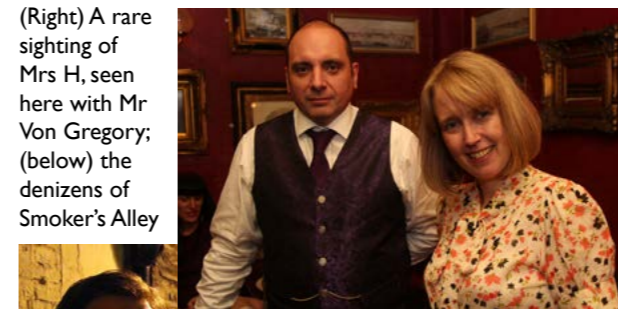
(Right) Giles Culpepper and the Curé in a picture crying out for a caption competition



(Left) Mark Gidman takes a touching interest in the tie knots of the next generation



(Right) The man known as Incy Wincy Spider; (left) Craigho looks sheepish; (below) a zeppelin's eye view of Mai and her circle



(Right) A rare sighting of Mrs H, seen here with Mr Von Gregory; (below) the denizens of Smoker's Alley



(Notice how Oliver's trousers are so bright he has to wear sunglasses)

OXFORD BAGS

THE MOST IMPORTANT TROUSERS OF THE 20TH CENTURY

MY TITLE IS a bold statement, but you will see why the Oxford Bags were the 20th century's most important trouser—beating jeans, chinos, plus-fours and all other contenders.

My first question is simple: what were Oxford Bags? Whilst the name is famous, most people know nothing more than that Oxford bags were wide trousers that emerged in the 1920s and then rapidly disappeared again.

However, the problem is that photographic evidence is limited and most images one sees are not genuine “bags”. The images you’ll find online of super-wide 42-inch trousers are misleading: in reality, the trousers actually worn by the students at Oxford in early 1925 were not so voluminous. Contemporary sources show us that “bags” were originally 22–23 inches in circumference at the ankles and had a circumference of 25 inches at the knee.

The next question is this: why were they invented? The most common explanation connects them to golfing enthusiasts at Oxford who were banned from wearing their plus-fours to lectures. So they developed the bags to wear *over* their plus-fours to hide them. A good argument, but is it true? It was certainly reported as such in October 1925, but the

Sean Longden busts some myths about these epoch-making garments

college at which the ban was made was not named. (Another explanation is that the look was invented pre-WWI for hunting enthusiasts to cover their riding breeches.) The problem

with this theory is that genuine Oxford Bags were not actually wide enough to conceal plus fours without looking ridiculous.

There are other arguments: Harold Acton, a poetry-quoting aesthete from Christ Church College, is often put forward as the originator of bags. But he wasn't a keen golfer. Another candidate was Bob Boothby. In later years Hall Brothers Tailors, widely acknowledged as the original bags tailors, had a sign in its window supporting Boothby's claim. He argued that the sporting connection was untrue, as he wasn't a sportsman. As he put it: “Credit for inventing Oxford

bags is generally given to Harold Acton. This is not so. I, with Hall Bros in the High Street, invented them myself. Since this was the only creative achievement I did at Oxford I felt I



should be remembered and I must claim it.” That said, another claim is that the school tailor at Downside public school first developed bags, which went to Oxford with the school alumni in 1924 and then spread throughout the university.

In reality, Oxford Bags were not the creation of a generation of effete fops. First mention of wide trousers in the USA came in 1924 when reporters mentioned wide white trousers being worn at the Henley Regatta and “Eights Week”, the annual intercollegiate rowing event at Oxford. This is important because it links us to the true story of why Oxford bags were developed. Further evidence is found in the records of *Hansard* for July 1926: “Only last year there were people in this City who took to wearing ‘Oxford bags’, thinking that they would be taken for Oxford ‘Blues’.” Which shows that people wore bags because they wanted to be seen as Oxford Blues, i.e. rowers. Speaking in August 1925, Mr Kendrick, the Keeper of Textiles at the Victoria and Albert Museum, gave his explanation for the genesis of the Oxford Bags. He noted that the undergraduate had been accused of being effeminate and wanting to look like his sisters. He disagreed and noted: “What was more likely was that he found the wide trousers convenient to pull over his shorts to go down to the river.”

More importantly, the mythology surrounding bags—such as the claims of Acton, Boothby and the plus-fours-wearing students—can be swept aside with one simple fact: you cannot invent something in 1925 if it already existed. For in truth the term had been in use for many years. Writing in the 1920s, a former travelling salesman referred to selling “Oxford Bags” in the 1880s. And in the 1904 novel *A Chicago Princess* by Robert Barr, the main character is a former Oxford student who comes across “a pair of Oxford bags I had not worn in years” and sports these white trousers with his boating blazer while out on a yacht. Furthermore, the Rowing Museum at Henley holds a pair of 1896 trousers made from an off-white blanket material, which are described as “Oxford Bags”. These were trousers used by rowers to keep warm between races. Effectively the track suit trousers of their day.

The real question is what happened in 1925, and why it was so shocking to the watching world. In 1924 the average men's trousers



(This page and opposite) Oxford bags as they should be—wide but not silly

were around 16 or 17 inches circumference at the ankle and 19 to 20 inches at the knee. Suddenly in early 1925 the UK press reported the appearance of shockingly wide trousers; with a circumference of 22 or 23 inches at the ankle. That isn't 22 inches across, but in circumference. By April 1925, the press reported the widest known example was 26 inches—in a colour referred to as “crushed strawberry”. At



Compare and contrast: genuine Oxford bags (left) and a pair of oversized bags created just for a bet (right)

and West End London tailors do not believe them likely to come into fashion... It will be very surprising if the idea is carried any further."

Such was the notoriety of 'bags' that by June they were even the subject of a radio debate—"This house would welcome the adoption of Oxford trousers." The motion was proposed by Mr C.S.M. Brereton of the Oxford Union, who asked the audience, "Were we for ever condemned to dangle our legs in straight tubes?" He also highlighted how the opposition to bags was not just the cut but the

the opening of Eights Week students were seen wearing white trousers with a circumference of 32 inches at the ankle.

Then everything went wild: 32 inch bags reached as far north as Aberdeen by June 1925. Oxford bags made their first appearance in parliament in May 1925 when Captain Arthur Evans, an MP for Cardiff, appeared wearing grey trousers "which fell about his calves in ample folds and which rippled as he walked". May 1925 was also the month when bags received the hallmark of high-society approval when Lord Birkenhead was seen wearing them. Despite this, the *Daily Mail* columnist "The Baron" continued to attack the new style: "The extravagant 'Oxford' trousers, measuring up to 22 or 23 inches at the ankle, are all very well at the Universities or in the comic papers; but they are not worn by grown up men in general,

colour. The debate was a comical affair with opposition coming from the former president of the Cambridge Union who pointed out that wearers of bags were unable to move at the pace needed in an age of quick-moving business and that, if adopted by the entire population, the pace of life would slow to that of the Oxford crew in the Boat Race.

As the look spread, it became a suitable source of outrage and ridicule for provincial newspapers. In Hull the local paper reported its first sighting in April, noting that the wearer was the source of much comment. A month later the paper laughed at the two young men seen walking through town in blazers and bags "hoping to be mistaken for undergraduates".

It was not just wide trousers that characterised the "Oxford Look". Another element was to combine bags with a double-

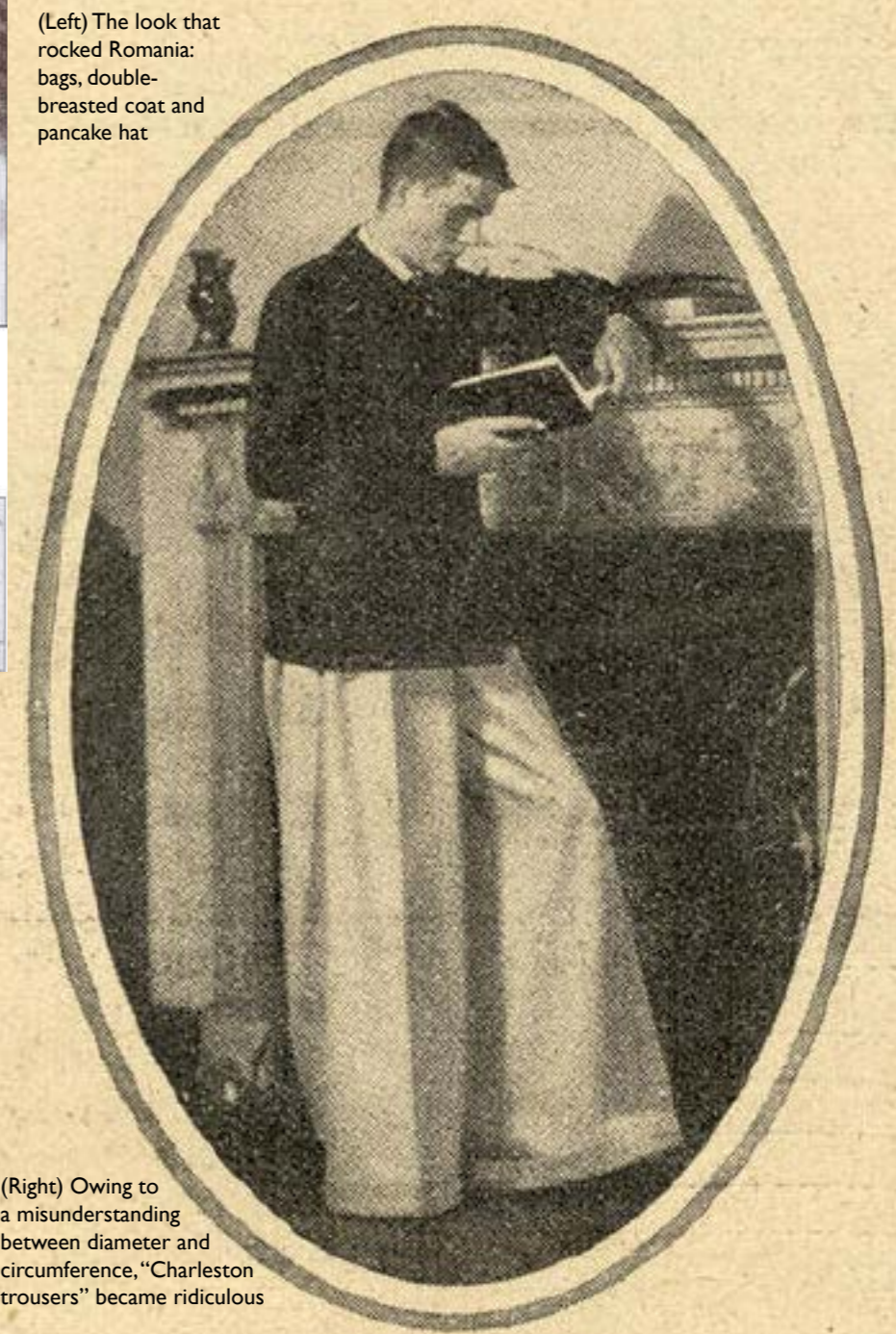


breasted coat, an unrolled umbrella and to wear horn-rimmed spectacles with plain glass just to give "an appearance of owlish sapience".

the cast was costumed in Oxford Bags. In an era when men dressed predominantly in grey and black suits, and even blue seemed daring, trousers began to appear in a wild and "eye-smiting" hues: silver-grey; yellow-pink; pale green; powder-blue; Bois de Rose (described as a "pinky-beigey-brown"); honey; brownish-orange; puce; magenta; jade; violet; lavender; biscuit; heliotrope; and a green that would "make an emerald look like a drop of milk".

While the original bags were restrained, suddenly everything started to get silly, as they mutated into something monstrous. This was the period in which super-wide trousers were made

(Left) The look that rocked Romania: bags, double-breasted coat and pancake hat



(Right) Owing to a misunderstanding between diameter and circumference, "Charleston trousers" became ridiculous

By the time the look had reached London other elements had entered. There was a broad-brimmed flat-topped black hat, often described as a "Spanish" or "pancake" hat. Some young men were seen carrying oversized cigarette holders, up to 24 inches long.

The fashion had taken such a hold on public consciousness that in August, when a new production of *Hamlet* opened at London's Kingsway Theatre, in which the actors wore modern dress, one of



A modern-dress production of *Hamlet* from August 1925—featuring Oxford bags

to win bets, leaving us with some of the most common images used to represent the trousers. At one public school, the headmaster found two pupils wearing extreme bags that he estimated to measure 42 inches around the cuffs. In front of the rest of the pupils, the boys were forced to remove their trousers and deliver them to the headmaster's study. The school magazine included a poem written by a pupil in reaction to the ban: "These bags are comfortable and cool, with none I can compare them; but when I bring them to Mill Hill, I'm not allowed to wear them."

In August 1925, London's "style-makers" of Oxford Street, Bond Street and Savile Row were reported to be striking back against the fashion, pushing for conservatism in clothing. For some the spread of bags to the working classes was a sign that it was time to find a new look. Newspaper cartoons identified them as becoming increasingly popular and worn by barrow boys. In July 1925 one journalist noted: "They were never popular in the smarter circles at Oxford and, despite subtle propaganda in London, never caught on in the West End. Curiously, the only specimens now seen about Piccadilly are worn by obviously undesirable

gentlemen closely identified with the shady night life in that region. They have become almost the uniform of West End bullies."

Despite the horrors of the vulgarly wide bags, the look began to spread. In some parts of the world they were rechristened "Charleston trousers" and the fashion was associated with the latest dance craze rather than with British students. But the style for mutant bags seemed to be based on a misunderstanding of the measurements—reading the circumference and believing it to be the width. So a genuine 22 inch circumference become 44 inches to the man who has never seen photographs of the genuine article

Romanian youths, wearing "Charleston Pants", peacoats and pancake hats were attacked in the streets. One reported being surrounded by a 200-strong mob and having to be rescued by policemen, who fixed bayonets in order to hold the mob at bay. In 1927 Turkey banned Oxford bags due to their connection with a "notorious gang of thieves". One fashionable young man, who had arrived in Istanbul with a pair he had purchased in London, was imprisoned for a week. Even Soviet Russia was not exempt from the new taste for wide

trousers. A group of young males took to wearing bags with "checkered jackets and ties". These youths—christened the *Douglasovshchina* after their Hollywood hero Douglas Fairbanks—were reported to be obsessed with displays of consumption and accused of laziness, pessimism, self-interest and hooliganism. The Communist party criticised bags on the grounds that the flapping of the wide trousers slowed down production.

In the USA, Oxford bags arrived relatively early and soon became popular. This isn't the place to go into the history of American trousering, but the American version which became known as "collegiate pants" were a different and distinctive cut. High-waisted, but fitted snug around the seat, they expanded from lower than the original English trousers in which the width came from double pleats beneath the waistband. Collegiate pants expanded to cover the shoe, rather than fell over the shoes. Effectively they were bell-bottomed, harking back to the early 1920s, to a style that pre-dated Oxford bags.

What is central to my argument is the bags' legacy. Despite the efforts of some tailors and those in the fashion trade, Oxford bags did not disappear: As late as October 1926 one Oxford college banned the wearing of bags in its dining halls, announcing that college servants had been instructed not to attend to undergraduates thus attired. Despite the ban, students were still spotted wearing trousers "as wide as ever". As late as September 1927, Oxford bags were described by newspapers as being an "epidemic" among proletarian youth

As early as December 1925, Parisian tailors, who derided the excesses of Oxford, admitted that they were cutting new trousers wider than they had a year earlier. In September 1926 a journalist reported on a conversation with his tailor who noted that even the most conservative of men would have to accept the new shades to replace their old blue, brown and grey suits. The tailor noted that, although bags had overdone it, all men's trousers were now going to be wider. There were even press articles calling for the return of the suit, as light coloured bags and sports jackets became increasingly popular—effectively becoming the standard British casual outfit from 1925 until the late 1950s.

The notion that the look faded as quickly as it emerged is a fallacy. What did soon disappear were super-wide gimmick trousers; what remained were wide trousers. The 22-inch bottoms that remained a standard on British trousers throughout the 1930s and into the 1940s were no longer referred to as Oxford Bags; they were simply trousers, but were as wide as most of the original bags of early 1925.

The influence was clear to those in the trade. Speaking in 1934, the newly elected president of the National Federation of Merchant Tailors told their annual conference: "The wheel has come full circle at last, and that strange conception of men's dress, which began as Oxford Bags, and now has developed into the ubiquitous sports coat and flannel trousers, which in these days is the supreme fashion for every occasion, and which can be bought at any price and in all the checks of all the clans of Scotland, will disappear into the oblivion from which it ought never to have appeared."

But he was wrong. The look, first brought to us by Oxford bags, did not go away. It may not be as prevalent today, but the style of sports jacket and grey trousers lives on. So there my argument rests: Oxford bags brought about a look that was central to male fashions into the 1950s. They influenced how men looked worldwide. No other British trouser fashion can claim that. They helped introduce colour to menswear in a distinctive way. Only jeans can compete with bags in the history of 20th-century menswear. But, one might argue, their widespread popularity was only possible because of how bags had introduced casualness to menswear.

On that note, I rest my case.



An 1896 pair of Oxford bags in the Henley Rowing Museum, proving that the style was not invented in the 1920s

THE BROGUES GALLERY

WITH ARTEMIS SCARHEART



In which a Member of the New Sheridan Club is asked to introduce themselves to other Members so that those at Home and Across the Seas may all get to know fellow Club Members. No part of this interview may be used in court or bankruptcy proceedings.



Dorian Loveday

'Better than something worse'

Name or preferred name?

Dorian Loveday.

Why that nickname or nom de plume?

I feel it conveys the right degree of louche decadence. The surname is original, the first name isn't. Am considering changing said nom de plume to Wing Commander Sandy Bedfordshire, DFC.

Where do you hail from?

Darkest Hertfordshire.

Favourite cocktail?

A Slow Snog With A Distant Relative. Failing that, a good old Mojito.

Most Chappist skill?

The ability to undo a bra from the front with only one hand.

Most Chappist possession?

My 78rpm gramophone. Either that or my collection of tweed jackets and cravats.

Personal motto?

"It's got to be better than something worse." Or, "I see, I hear, I understand," which renders in Latin as *Video, audio, disco*.

Favourite quotes?

"They couldn't hit an elephant at this dist—": last words of American Civil War general John Sedgwick.

Not a lot of people know this about me...

...but under all these layers of clothes, I'm completely naked. I can also drive a tractor.

How long have you been involved with the NSC?

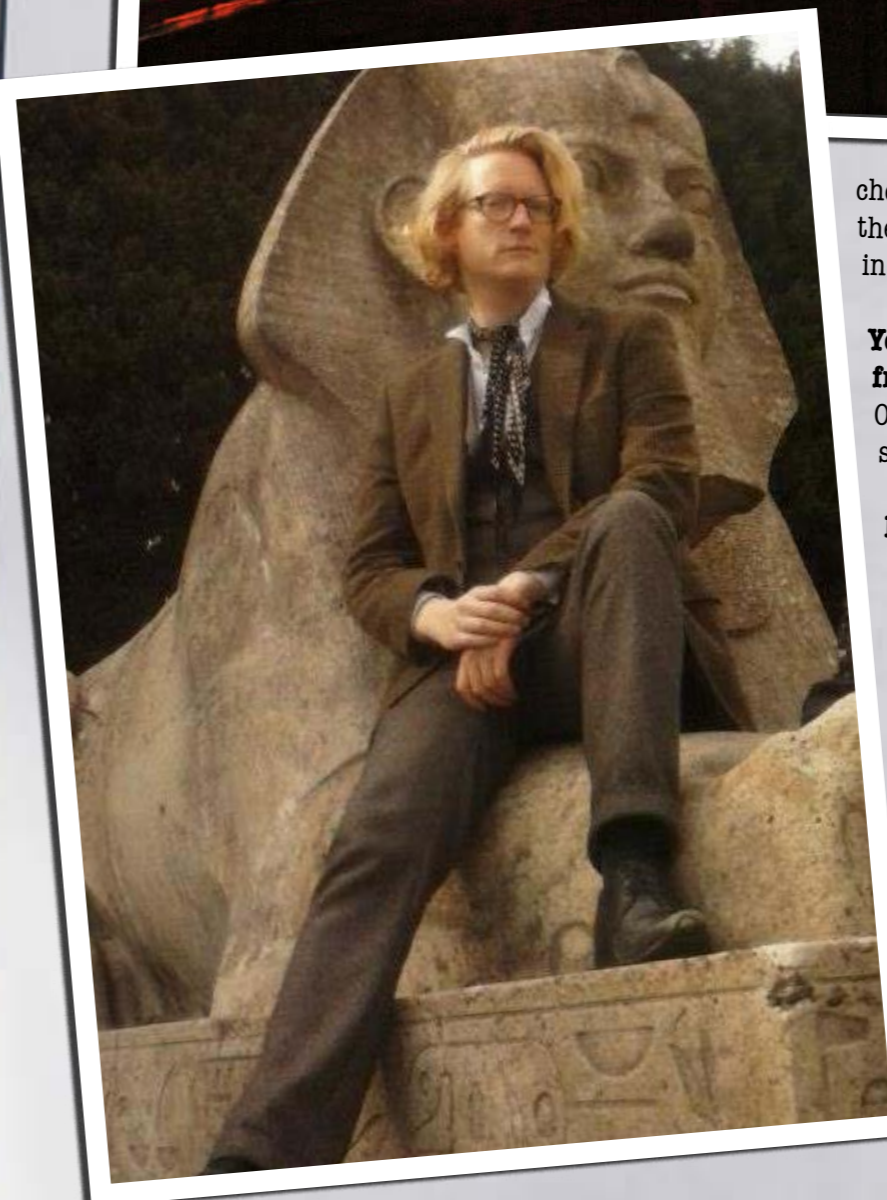
Just over three of your Earth years.

How did you hear about the Club to begin with?

From a close chum, who then initiated me. Darn sight less painful than the Freemasons.

What one thing would you recommend to fellow Members and why? (cocktail, night out, tailors, watchmaker, public house, etc)

Snoopers Paradise, a retro shop in Brighton—jolly



cheap, and lots of lovely things on sale there. Same goes for Haynes Lane Market in Crystal Palace.

Your three chosen dinner party guests from history or fiction and why?

Ooh, tough one. David Attenborough, for sure. Possibly Buddha. Possibly Hitler.

Favourite Member of the Glorious Committee? Artemis Scarheart.

Have you done a Turn yet? If so what was it on, if not what are you planning to do?

I've done two—one on the history of Rolls-Royce aero engines, and one on Tom Crean, an unsung hero of Antarctic exploration. I may well threaten to do another.

Thank you for allowing yourself to be interviewed in the palatial surroundings of New Sheridan Club House. On behalf of the Members of the Club may I respectfully ask you to resign.

In Like Flynn

Our June Film Night featured the 1938 First World War air ace movie

'The Dawn Patrol'. **Derek Duberry**, who curated the event, pauses to consider the film's star, **Errol Flynn**

RATHER THAN GO over a general introduction of *The Dawn Patrol*, which was covered in last month's *Resign!*, I'd like to make a few observations of my own regarding its star, Errol Flynn and his credentials as one of the more charming bounders who has ever graced the silver screen.



The Dawn Patrol is particularly notable for the chemistry between the three main players; Errol Flynn, David Niven and Basil Rathbone. This was the second and last time that Flynn and Niven worked together (the first being the 1936 version of *The Charge of the Light Brigade*) and the third and final time that Flynn was teamed with Rathbone, who had played the villains in both *Captain Blood* (1935) and *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (1938). Flynn and Niven had also shared a house for a brief time during one of Errol's frequent separations from his first wife Lili Damita. Niven's account of that period

in *The Moon's A Balloon* suggests that this was a lively place to live, and although Niven is keen to cast Errol as the main protagonist in these revelries, it's fair to say that Niven's reputation as a womaniser was not too far behind Flynn's at this time! It's clear from their highly effective performances in *The Dawn Patrol* that this bonding between the two men had a healthy impact on their on-screen relationship.

The other notable aspect of the film, is that no matter how unlikely some of the events depicted seem to the modern eye, anyone who has read much about the reality of the Royal Flying Corps knows that far more unlikely things actually happened. The drinking, the singing, the public school atmosphere, even the carousing with the captured German pilot are all based firmly upon the accounts of those who were participants in the air war on the Western Front.

By 1938 Errol Flynn was probably the foremost male star in Warner Bros stable. But he was what we'd call a "chancer" in today's parlance. Born in Tasmania in 1909, he used his good looks, wit and charm, combined with as little effort as possible, to get away with just about anything he tried, while leaving a trail of debt and destruction in his wake.

His time in Australia saw him expelled from a large number of good schools and then a patchy employment history which frequently seems to have been curtailed when the latest set of fabricated references was uncovered. He also tried his hand at being a sailor, a journalist, a plantation manager, a gold prospector and a recruiter of native labour (a slave trader to all intents and purposes) against the hazardous backdrop of 1920s New Guinea. He fell into acting when he was engaged as a guide for a

film producer who was shooting documentary footage of the tribes in New Guinea. This footage was later combined with dramatic interludes involving Flynn (with the worst blond wig in the history of cinema) playing Fletcher Christian, in an Australian film called *In The Wake of the Bounty*. By strange coincidence Errol's mother was related to one of the HMS *Bounty* mutineers, one midshipman Young.

On the strength of this foray into the world of acting Errol decided to travel to England to try his hand at this new way of living it up whilst doing as little work as possible. He left Australia under something of a cloud with some persistent rumours of a missing diamond necklace and many unpaid bills. He never returned to his native land although in a 1940s radio broadcast to Australia he famously quipped, "To all those people to whom I owe money—I'm prepared to forget about it if you are."

On the strength of this one celluloid appearance—together with two more films that he'd simply invented for his CV—he got himself a job with the Northampton Repertory Company. His lack of training and inexperience were quickly exposed and for the most part he was consigned to minor roles. Even then though, his good looks and charm enabled him to stack up a long list of female companions and even longer bar bills, at least one of which (unpaid) is framed in one of the town centre pubs to this day.

A few more minor forays into theatreland managed to get him a screen test at Warner Bros. UK facility. By this time he was marketing himself as variously a former Olympic swimmer and/or boxer. Although this was a complete fiction he was by all accounts a very proficient swimmer, boxer and tennis player (considered the best amateur player in Hollywood in the later 1930s). He then starred in a now lost British film called *Murder at Monte Carlo* (1935). He was impressive enough for Warners' British

head to recommend this dashing young man to the bigwigs in California. Despite being a nobody he wasted no time in meeting and marrying the relatively famous, and very beautiful, Lili Damita. Damita undoubtedly provided Errol with the social entrée to A-list Hollywood and it wasn't too long before he found himself starring in *Captain Blood* when the far more famous Robert Donat turned the role down.

From this point until the early 1940s Flynn was a major star with a succession of hits such as *The Charge of the Light Brigade* (1936), *The Prince*



and the Pauper (1937), *The Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex* (1939), *The Adventures of Robin Hood*, *Dodge City* (1939), *The Sea Hawk* (1940), *The Dawn Patrol* and many more. Warners, continuing Flynn's own tendency for publicity of doubtful veracity, now marketed him as an Irishman (presumably because no one in America had heard of Tasmania) and stuck with the champion swimmer angle. Although Flynn's father was of Irish ancestry, Flynn was about as Australian as you could be expected to be, although since 1931 his

parents had moved to live in Northern Ireland where his father was Professor of Zoology at Queen's University and later was put in charge of Belfast's air raid defences.

After 1942 Flynn's life and career began a gradual downward spiral culminating in his early death, at the age of 50 in 1959. I shall save the tale of this decline for another time but it's fair to say that he rarely let anything get in the way of his having a good time. I'll close with a couple of quotes which sum up his attitude and wit to some extent: "The public has always expected me to be a playboy, and a decent chap never lets his public down."

And probably my favourite: "My problem lies in reconciling my gross habits with my net income."

Film Night: *Erotikon* [*Seduction*] (1929)

Monday 15th July

7pm–11pm (screening from 8pm)
The Tea House Theatre, 139 Vauxhall Walk,
London SE11 5HL (020 7207 4585)
Admission: Free

For this month's Film Night Dr Tim Eyre will tease us with this long lost silent masterpiece from Czech director Gustav Machatý, starring mesmerising screen siren Ita Rina.

Clearly Tim had a Chappist agenda in mind when he explains, "While in Taipei I watched a silent film from 1929 called *Erotikon*. It stars a cad of the first order, has some splendid vintage styles and includes a scene at a tailor." But the film has more to it than just this. At a time when US directors were labouring under increasingly prudish strictures, Machatý was startlingly frank (if not explicit) about sexuality and moral turpitude; combined with dramatic cinematic techniques, using moving cameras, optical effects and strange, expressionist points of view, this makes for a very "modern"-seeming silent movie. The film was actually considered lost until a crumbling print was discovered in 1993 and restored.

The plot concerns Andrea, a trusting



country girl who experiences an awakening when seduced by worldly visitor Olaf Fjord. After he abandons her, she endures single motherhood and marriage to another man, all the while nursing an overwhelming passion for her first lover. Andrea finds herself in the upper-class social scene, which is portrayed as fundamentally sleazy, an environment that encourages disloyalty by its own shallowness.

Machatý began as a cinema pianist, and debuted as an actor at 16. Moving to the US in the 1920s he learned film-making as apprentice to the great D.W. Griffith and Erich von Stroheim. Andrea is played by Slovenian beauty Ita Rina, who was honoured with her own postage stamp in 1996 (below).



THE PALAIS DE DANSE

Member George Tudor-Hart welcomes you to his new project, a ballroom dance club in London

FOUNDED IN APRIL, the Palais de Danse is the brainchild of myself, an ageing amateur ballroom dancer, Brandyn Shaw, a young professional entertainer who sings in the style of Al Bowlly, and Hans Peter Fischer, an eccentric Swiss multimillionaire whose main occupations are boogie-woogie piano playing, stunt flying and astrophysics—he organised a series of lectures in Switzerland last year by Roger Penrose.

Inspired by Mr Penrose's ability to drink copious amounts of alcohol and deliver a flawless lecture the next day, Hans Peter decided to indulge my fantasy of a decent place to go ballroom dancing to live pre-war music in glamorous clothes. Brandyn was in the room at the time, and was similarly interested—he wanted to be singer and host, which was just as well as I tend to upset most people in social situations.

I persuaded my reluctant wife (who ran a bar in San Francisco) to do the drinks—decent drinks and drinkable cocktails at cheap prices—which she finally agreed to, on condition she could do it with her pub-owning friend Julie, who wanted to sell homemade finger food too.

Brandyn's talented toy-designer father Gareth does all the artwork, advertising and stage sets. Brandyn hosts, sings, chooses the records and the bands, I dance with the customers and keep out of the way, and Hans plays the piano now and then when he's over from Switzerland.

The venue is the London Welsh Centre in Grays Inn Road, which has a large sprung dance floor and stage. It is licensed for 200, though our policy is to limit the number of guests to 120, as the place got too crowded for comfort with 150 on the opening night.

The long-term aim is to get 100 members, each of whom will pay an annual subscription of £150 for twelve dance events, so the current



owners can stop worrying about ticket sales and everyone can just enjoy the dances.

The events are held monthly, usually on the first Friday of the month. There's a free beginners ballroom dance lesson from 6.30 pm to 7.30pm. The main dance event starts at 8 pm with period records from Brandyn, who then sings a little, usually accompanied by a pianist or period backing tracks. The main band start at 9pm and play two 45-minute sets with one half hour break. There's usually a fun dance competition, and interaction between guests is encouraged by having "Paul Jones" or "Excuse Me" dances (where changing partners is an integral part of the dance), or doing period novelty dances together. The average age of guests is around 35 and most men wear black tie. Men/women ratio is roughly in balance. Hen parties and those who think vintage dress is fancy dress are frowned upon. Watchers are encouraged as long as they drink and dress well.

Past bands have included the Pasadena Roof Orchestra, the Boomtown Swingalings, the Old Hat Jazz Band and the Jean Bentley Dance Orchestra. The main dances are quickstep, slow foxtrot, swing, slow waltz, tango, Viennese waltz and rumba in that order. There's a bar upstairs and a library if you want to escape the bustle.

See www.facebook.com/londonpalais

The New Sheridan Club Summer Party

SOUTH OF THE BORDER

We've all had to flee the country to avoid bad debts, an arrest warrant for duelling or a paternity suit. So as a celebration of such tactical exile, the New Sheridan Club advises you to flee south over the border to the magic land of Mexico.

Here we will be safe from the G-Men and bounty hunters and can start a new life among the cacti and tequila, lazing on our verandas drinking mezcal and serving peyote in the drawing room after dinner. It was good enough for dapper beat writer William Burroughs—just look how character-building it proved for him.

As usual there will be **silly games**—Shoot the Champagne Glass from Joan Vollmer's Head, Cut the Heart from the Aztec Sacrificial Victim, and, of course, Whack the Piñata with a Stick—plus our legendary **Grand Raffle** (entry is free, to Members only, including anyone who joins on the night). There will be our traditional free **Snuff Bar**, and also a **complimentary buffet** of Mexican food. We will be treated to live traditional music from **Mariachi Jalisco**.

The evening will be brought to you in proud association with **Olmecca Altos** premium tequila, made from 100% blue agave grown at 2,104 metres above sea level in Los Altos in Jalisco. There will be a free **tequila masterclass** at the beginning of the evening, plus discounted tequila cocktails from the 1930s and 1940s all night.

Grand Raffle prizes so far include a host of DVDs (*Touch of Evil*, *The Three Amigos*, *The Wild Bunch*, *The Magnificent Seven*, *The*



Mark of Zorro, *Viva Zapata!*, *Speedy Gonzales*, etc), books (Mexican textiles, festivals, Aztecs, *The Yage Letters*, etc), a *lucha libre* wrestling mask, a Day of the Dead cruet set, Mexican playing cards, a pair of maraccas, a tin of *chipotle* smoked chillis, a “Mexican elbow” and more...

All guests welcome!

Dress:

Day of the Dead, El Presidente, dishevelled Federales, vaqueros, toreadors, washed-up US writers, fugitives from the Feds, drug barons, Hunter S. Thompson, Frida

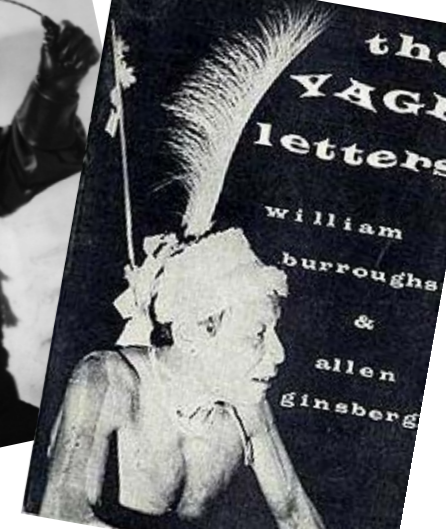
Kahlo, sultry señoritas, Aztecs, bandidos, Leon Trotsky, the cream of Mexico City society...

For updates see the Facebook event.

SATURDAY 20TH JULY
7PM TILL 1AM
ADAM STREET CLUB,
9 ADAM STREET (OFF STRAND),
LONDON WC2N 6AA
FREE ENTRY FOR NSC MEMBERS
£5 FOR GUESTS



OLMECCA
ALTOS
100% AGAVE



The Cocktail Cabinet

Wherein Members muse on booze

Viva L'España

By David Bridgman-Smith

Once again, your drinks correspondent has been trekking the globe looking for interesting topics and spirits to share with the members of the Club. My latest trip took me to Catalonia in Spain, where a favoured drink is that old British colonial favourite, the gin and tonic. But in Spain they do things a little differently and your choices when ordering go far beyond Gordon's or Bombay Sapphire and whether to garnish with lemon or lime.

See the picture below. Some writers (me, basically) refer to this drink as a "Gin Tonica"

rather than a "Gin and Tonic"; not only does the drink look different, but the ceremony that surrounds it is rather remarkable.

I walked into a bar called Cappuccino in a quiet seaside town and asked the bartender and owner, an Italian chap called Don, for his best Gin Tonica. Upon inspecting his ice, he declared it unsuitable (it was too wet) and, with a flourish, disposed of it in the sink and ordered his assistant to go and get him some replacement ice. The cubes themselves were pretty interesting, with each one the size of a medium-sized plum.

With his ice now up to standard, the bartender filled a large glass (which looked like a small, stemmed goldfish ball) with the ice and swirled the cubes around to chill the glass. He then drained out any water droplets that had melted off of the ice.

Then it came to the gin. He used Martin Miller's (imported gin is still in vogue in Spain over locally, craft-produced spirits) and poured it slowly over the ice, making sure to cover every surface. He explained to me that it changed the look of the ice and, indeed, the ice had taken on a rainbow iridescence once it had been gin-soaked. (I wish this were true of some of the more colourful gin luses I know!)

For tonic, he used his favourite—1724, which contains Peruvian quinine. (I'm also quite keen on this brand and I think it is one of the better products out there.) Rather than just pour the tonic water into the glass, he produced a bar spoon and gently wedged it amongst the ice, before delicately starting to pour the tonic down the spiralled handle of the spoon. This has the effect of introducing the tonic very gently, as you might want to do when layering liqueurs, and stops the bubbles from bursting on impact. When you pour a carbonated drink and get a lot of froth, that is your fizz being lost.

This method may sound like a gimmick and I was initially sceptical, but in fact it really does work to ensure that your drink stays fizzier for longer.

Finally, we come to the garnish. As I mentioned previously, this is where the Gin Tonica really shines. That said, sometimes the garnishes can almost resemble fruit salad, so for my drink I had a simple lime

twist—well, as simple as it can be when the barman uses tongs to get the right flair from the fragrant oils in the rind! Bartender Don also has his own "tag" (a concept similar to that of a graffiti artist, I believe), which consists of two slivers of orange peel crossed over one another.

The result was superb. The care and attention taken in its creation really came through in the drink: the bubbles were fresh and stayed around for a long time, making the drink exceptionally refreshing.

Spain is also home to a wide array of tonic waters. Schweppes make some tasty premium flavoured varieties: pink peppercorn, orange blossom and lavender, and cardamom and ginger. In addition to providing some interesting botanical flavours, these tonics are packaged in the lemon-shaped tonic bottles of old. Originally, these would not have had flat bottoms as their contemporaries do, meaning that they would have had to lie on their sides so that none of the fizz would escape. Modern closure techniques make these sorts of inconveniences unnecessary. There is also a penchant for coloured tonics in Spain: four—a blue, a red (cherry-flavoured) a pink (raspberry) and green (mint) varieties all being available.

Such is the excitement about the Gin Tonica in Spain that a variety of gadgets and accessories have been released, some branded



Schweppes's premium mixer range, including botanical tonics, sadly unavailable in the UK

and some operated by individual companies. Infugintonic make botanical infusion bags to add a little spice (literally) to your drink, which you infuse in the gin before adding tonic, and Dropmoon make some botanical sprays that add extra aroma (available in citrus, liquorice and cinnamon). But the French brand G'vine are kings of gizmos at the moment. They produce branded ice-ball moulds for tumblers and ice fingers (about the size of a modest cigar) for high balls; they make atomisers to spray scents across your drink; and finally, my personal favourite invention, they make the tonic spike, which is used to pierce the top of a tonic bottle's cap, allowing the tonic water to be squirted across the room into a waiting glass. It's certainly better than the alternative method for doing this—a kitchen knife!

At present, there are not a lot of places in the UK where you can experience the delights of the continental gin and tonic, but one place is the London Gin Club at The Star at Night in Soho. In addition, both Fevertree and Bottlegreen have just brought out flavoured tonic waters and Bottlegreen are even releasing a pink one with extra pomegranate.

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





CLUB NOTES

The Man With Two Faces

AS YOU WILL KNOW, one of the benefits of NSC Membership is the Club Portrait Service (you can see some examples at www.newsheridanclub.co.uk/portraits.htm). The idea is to insert you, using the power of Science, into an old painting or photograph that you think best represents your true self. You need to supply the source image and either you or we can photograph you in the right pose to match the one in the picture.

The latest beneficiary is Mr Ryan Pike—who also happens to be the only person who has had their likeness produced twice. He felt that his original portrait, as a BBC announcer, was now out of date as he had since grown a moustache with which he was very pleased, and he wished this to be immortalised in his portrait. You can see the results below. The original figure in the second picture also had a similar moustache (though of course you wouldn't know that...).



Ryan Pike as he was...



...and as he is now

Club Tie Spottings Skyrocket

IN WHAT CAN ONLY BE a sign of the gathering cosmic significance of the New Sheridan Club, we have had a bumper crop of spottings of what appears to be the Club tie—or something related to it—in film, television or oil on canvas. See the opposite page...

New Members

AS THE CHAPPIST DEMI-MONDE approaches the starting line of July—a month containing both the NSC's annual summer party on 20th (see page 16) and also the Chap Olympiad on 13th, that annual sporting extravaganza where flanneled athletes vie on the "Field of Drams" in such tests of worldly gentlemanliness as the Martini Relay, Umbrella Jousting and Cucumber Sandwich Discus—we offer the languidly genteel equivalent of a locker-room pep talk, some last-minute rolfing of the liver and a shot of Club IsoTonic (replaces the gin and tonic lost through exercise) to the following young hopefuls, all of whom have signed on to Team Sheridan in the last month: Diana Jevons, Katherine Barla and Edward P. Atkins.



Tommy Noonan, seen here with Marilyn Monroe, sports the Club silk in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1953)



Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines (1965) sees James Fox in the NSC tie



(Left) Simon (Andrew Lincoln) from TV series *Teachers* has at least one quality item in his wardrobe



(Below) James Stewart pledges his allegiance to the Club in *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1956); (below right) David Dickinson flaunts what is arguably a deconstructed Club tie on *Dickinson's Real Deal* (11th June, 2013); (right) and finally, courtesy of our Chairman, the newly identified portrait of the French transvestite Chevalier D'Éon in an NSC ribbon





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 3rd July
7pm–11pm
Upstairs, The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB
Members: Free
Non-Members: £2 (first visit free)
See page 2.

Cakewalk Café

Every Wednesday
8pm–1am (swing dance classes 7–9.15pm, uke classes 5–6pm, live music from 8.30)
Passing Clouds, 1 Richmond Road, Dalston, London E8 4AA
Admission: Free before 9pm, £4 after (plus £2 for the uke class and £1 for the dance class)
Live swing jazz every Wednesday featuring Nicholas Ball, Ewan Bleach and chums, with optional dance classes from Swing Patrol and ukulele classes too, plus a uke open mic session and a late jam session with the band.

The Fitzrovia Radio Hour

Thursday 4th July–Saturday 6th July
7.30pm
The Horse Hospital, Colonnade, London WC1N 1JD
Admission: £12

The purveyors of live 1930s-style radio broadcasts are back, with more spoofing of the genre, cut-glass accents, spurious sponsors and much mirth created by the on-the-spot creation of sound effects. The show is called *Undead! Unloved! Unsolved!* and features three

separate stories—‘The Four Minute Mystery’, ‘The Romance of Helen Simms’ and a version of Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*. More at www.fitzroviaradio.co.uk.

The Phoenix Dance Club

Friday 5th July
10pm–2am
The Phoenix, 37 Cavendish Square, London W1G 0PP
Admission: £7
Dress: Smart or vintage
A monthly night of hot jazz and swing for dancers at the Phoenix Bar, Oxford Street, on the last Friday of the month. With resident DJs Turn on the Heat and Swingin’ Dickie, plus special guests playing the best sounds from the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s—this time featuring Tim Hellzapoppin’. They also now have their own Phoenix Dance Club cocktails: the Broadway Limited, the I Can’t Dance, the Al Capone’s Spats and the Cotton Club.

The Hep Cats Holiday

Friday 5th–Monday 8th July
Sand Bay Leisure Resort, Kewstoke, Weston-

HEP CATS HOLIDAY: 5 - 8 JULY 2013
Sand Bay, North Somerset, England
NUMBER 11
SWING, JUMPIN' JIVE, RHYTHM & BLUES

A VINTAGE WEEKEND OF MUSIC DANCING & SHOPPING FOR DISCERNING HEP CATS

MUSIC FROM THE '30s THROUGH TO THE MID '50s
SWING, JAZZ, JUMPIN' JIVE, RHYTHM & BLUES & VOCAL HARMONY

EIGHT OF THE HOTTEST DANCE BANDS FROM ACROSS THE WORLD

THREE NIGHTS DANCING 'TIL DAWN WITH SEVEN KILLER DILLER DISC JOCKEYS

DANCE CLASSES WITH INTERNATIONAL TEACHERS
LINDY HOP, CHARLESTON, SHAG & BALBOA

FANTASTIC VINTAGE MARKET

PLUS:
CLASSIC BARBER SHOP, HAIR SALON, BEAUTY PARLOUR, SWIMMING POOL.
PRICES INCLUDE ALL ENTERTAINMENT, CLASSES & HALF-BOARD ACCOMMODATION IN COSY CHALETS



The record-breaking steam locomotive Mallard

Super-Mare, North Somerset BS22 9UR
Admission: From £26 for evening-only or from £199 for chalet-based all-weekend tickets. See www.hepcatsholiday.com

A weekend of vintage music, dancing and shopping. Music ranges from the 1930s to the early 1950s and includes swing, jumpin’ jive, rhythm and blues and vocal harmony, with eight dance bands from across the world, three nights dancing until dawn with seven DJs. There will also be top international dance teachers offering classes in Lindy Hop, Charleston, Collegiate Shag, Boogie Woogie and Balboa, plus a vintage market, barber shop, Hair Salon, beauty parlour, classic movies, two ballrooms, swimming pool and leisure facilities. Prices include all entertainment, chalet accommodation, breakfast and evening meals.

Rogue Punting and Picnic

Saturday 6th July
Oxford
For further details see the Facebook event

Having had to miss the NSC Oxford punting trip in April, Mai Møller is organising another one herself! It will presumably follow the usual pattern of punting to a nice spot, eating a picnic then punting back.

75th Anniversary of Mallard’s Steam Speed Record

Saturday 6th July
10am–6pm
The National Railway Museum, Leeman Road, York YO26 4XJ (0844 815 3139)
Admission: Free

One for vintage railway enthusiasts. On 3 July 1938, A4 class locomotive Mallard raced down Stoke Bank at 126mph to set a new steam locomotive world speed record. That record still stands. In 2013, the National Railway Museum is marking the 75th anniversary of Mallard’s achievement with a series of commemorative events, including this chance to see the record breaker united with its five surviving sister locomotives, two of which have been shipped back here from Canada for the occasion. The collection is on display from 3rd to 17th July, but Club public transport nerd the Earl of Waveney has proposed a mass gathering on Saturday 6th. For those living in London or the Home Counties, he has suggested a steam special service running on that day from London Victoria to York via St Albans, Luton, Bedford, Kettering and Melton Mowbray. More details of this from www.railwaytouring.net/uk-day-trips/yorkshireman-to-railfest-york.



Swing at the Light

Every Monday
From 7pm

Upstairs at The Light Restaurant and Bar,
233 Shoreditch High Street, London E1
Admission: £8 for class and club, £4 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.

Palais de Danse

Friday 12th July
6.30–11pm

London Welsh Centre, 157–163 Gray’s Inn
Road, London WC1X 8UE

Admission: £15 in advance, £20 on the door

Dress: Strictly vintage glamour

See page 15.

The Chap Olympics

Saturday 13th July

From middayish

Bedford Square Gardens, Bedford Square,
London WC1B 3ES

Admission: £20 in advance

The Chap magazine’s annual sporting gala
of events designed for the well-dressed but
distinctly unathletic lady and gentleman.
This year new disciplines will include Parallel
Bars (in which contestants must mix drinks
simultaneously at two parallel bars), Breadbasket
Ball (where servants play basketball with the

bread and breadbasket, while contestants,
playing the role of diners, must interrupt
play to get served any food) and a Boulder
Hunt for the ladies. Look out for updates at
thechapmagazine.co.uk/category/events.

The Golden Age of Hollywood

Saturday 13th July

7pm–1am

The Artist Marie Lloyd, 24 Chart Street,
London N1 6DD

Admission: £10 on the door

Dress: Strictly 1910–1950s

An evening of vintage glamour featuring
DJs (including David De Vynél and Auntie
Maureen), burlesque and jazz singing. The
venue is a pub with Victorian–1920s styling.

NSC Film Night: *Seduction* (1929)

Monday 15th July

7pm–11pm

The Tea House Theatre, 139 Vauxhall Walk,
London SE11 5HL (020 7207 4585)

Admission: Free

See page 14.

The New Sheridan Club summer party:

South of the Border

Saturday 20th July

7pm till 1am

Adam Street Club, 9 Adam Street (off Strand),
London WC2N 6AA

Admission: Free for NSC Members, £5 for
guests

See page 16.

The Lucky Dog Picturehouse

Saturday 20th July
8pm (first film 9pm) till 12am
Jamboree, courtyard of
Cable Street Studios, 566
Cable St, London E1W 3HB
Admission: £6 (£5 concs)
from [Wegotickets](http://Wegotickets.com) or £7/£6
on the door

Regular night screening
silent movies, sometimes
with live period musical
accompaniment, followed by
dancing till midnight. Films
this time come courtesy of
Harold Lloyd, Laurel and
Hardy (featuring *The Lucky
Dog* from which the club gets its name) and
Charlie Chaplin, plus Felix the Cat and
early footage of conjuring tricks.

Alex Mendham and His Orchestra

Saturday 27th July

7.30–midnight

The Savoy Hotel, Strand, London
WC2R 0EU

Admission: £85 including three-course
dinner, cocktail reception and live music
Dress: Black tie

Alex Mendham presents dance music
of the 1920s and 1930s under the glass
cupola of the Savoy’s Thames Foyer.
Call 020 7420 2111 for reservations.

Die Freche Muse Farewell Party

Saturday 27th July

10pm–4am

The Boys Club, 68 Boleyn Rd,
Dalston, London N16 8JG

Admission: £17.50 in advance

Dress: 1920s–1940s

The final night of Baron
von Sanderson’s tribute
to 1920s Berlin cabaret:
“irreverent, decadent, sexually
ambivalent and dissolute”.
Held in a private Victorian
residence, Die Freche Muse
offers exotic burlesque, jazz,
performance art, singing and
dancing till dawn.



(This page)
Highlights
from last
year’s Chap
Olympiad
(with a
strong
NSC
turn-out,
as usual)



This picture of Errol Flynn handily illustrates both our article on him (page 12) and our feature on how Oxford bags created the male casual look for decades—wide, pleated trousers and sports jacket (page 4)

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.

CONTACTING US

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