

RATIGAN

Time,
gentlemen,
please!

The annual
NSC pub crawl
tries to stick to
schedule

Eastern promise

The truth about Marshal Tito

Last orders

The Club feasts at the Gay Hussar restaurant in perhaps its final days

All Over By Christmas

Club prepares to go over the top at our party



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 December in the upstairs room at The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB, from 7pm until 11pm. Member Mr Charles R. Tsua will entrance us with *Dancing Cranes and Soaring Dragons: The Guqin or 'Ancient Zither'*, an introduction to the history and ethnomusicology of the ancient Chinese seven-stringed zither, illustrated with a recital and demonstration of various melodies.

The Last Meeting

At our November meeting, our speaker was Mr Mark Gidman, whose subject was *Marshal Tito and Yugoslavia: The Communist Bourgeoisie Republic?* Mr Gidman examined Tito's origins and early inclinations towards Socialism, but mostly focused on the ways in which he differed from other Communist leaders—in fact he split dramatically from Stalin, to such an extent



Our December speaker Charles Tsua melting the fretboard with some blistering guqin action

that he seems lucky to have avoided invasion. But was it luck? Tito was skilled at sculpting his public comments and responses, and his soft approach to Communism made him popular with the West. (Indeed he loved visiting other heads of state.) He seems to have realised early on that a purely state-run economy was doomed, and instituted worker-run businesses that were allowed to make and share a profit. When other Communist states had closed borders, he allowed Yugoslavians to leave freely—with the effect that they went abroad to work and sent the money home to Yugoslavia, boosting the economy. Mr Gidman was at pains to point out that, while Tito did have a secret police, there were not the show trials found in other regimes; overall he can be seen as a fairly benign dictator. He was a lover of fine living and fine tailoring, and although he owned little he was always delighted to accept lavish gifts. When he died his was the largest state funeral in history.



(Left) Matthew "The Chairman" Howard appreciates his birthday gift; (right) Scarheart brandishes the bribe he demanded to return the Chairman's scarf; (below) Oliver has brought an "e-cigar"; (below left) Priya has a puff; (below right) Josh Weedon and Luke Wenban



(Here and right) Mr Gidman begins



(Left) Peng Hui Lee; (right) Trevor Marchant signs up; (below) much garrulous hilarity



(Below) A rare sighting of Paul Effeny, with Rachel Downer



Eugenie models her new hat



All human life is in Smoker's Alley

BENIGN DICTATOR

**MARK
GIDMAN** on
Marshal Tito: can
you be a bourgeois
socialist?

ALMOST 33 YEARS after Marshal Tito's death, history can perhaps now put him into a different historical context. European socialism has been criticised and derided since its total collapse over 20 years ago, but one figure stands out among the sombre and often ruthless figures of Honecker, Jaruzelski, Mao and Stalin: Josip Broz Tito. Unlike other communists, Tito, throughout his 40-year leadership enjoyed and displayed the regal splendour he had inherited from the previous royal family, the Karađorđevićs. Often photographed happily relaxing in the company of royalty at the "Beli Dvor" and at other royal retreats with film stars and musicians, he shunned much of the dogma of socialist realism, embracing a curious brand of market socialism. While the symbolic socialist norms of "The Party" and "The Flag" were apparent during his Presidency a rather interesting contradiction was occurring—a blending of socialism with strong capitalist and often seemingly royalist tendencies.



'I am the leader of one country which has two alphabets, three languages, four religions, five nationalities, six republics, surrounded by seven neighbours, a country in which live eight ethnic minorities' —Tito

Early life

Born in Kumrovec, Zagorje, on 7th May 1892, to a Slovene mother and Croat father in the rural Croatian countryside of what was the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Josip Broz seemed, by parentage, destined to spearhead the multiculturalism of a country he was to lead for 40 years.

Growing up in poverty the young Broz regularly had to suffer the drunken violence of his father, who often used the boy as an emotional deflector or pawn, sending him to act as a decoy to prevent the money lenders from coming to the family home. This would have a lasting impression on Josip throughout his life. He saw the frustration of poverty and yearned for a better life, and was upset when his father could not afford the ticket to join other émigrés making passage to the United States.

As a young teenager he remarked that he wanted to become a waiter, only so that it could give him an opportunity to wear tailored clothes. He was regularly teased about his passion for dressing

elegantly as young man but he was never dissuaded from sartorial elegance and pursued it throughout his life. Later, as President, he would order cloth from Savile Row and Fifth Avenue and have it fitted by an Italian tailor—a curious choice for the president of a socialist republic.

The road to socialism

On leaving school Tito got a job as a trainee locksmith and metallurgist. In 1910 he joined the Union of Metallurgy Workers and helped to organise the 1st May celebrations. Employed by the Daimler and Benz factories he became a test driver for their cars—a position he seems to have enjoyed. After the outbreak of war in 1914, Tito was drafted into the Austro-Hungarian army and was awarded the Silver Bravery Medal, but was taken prisoner by Imperial Russian troops before he could be presented with it and was sent as a prisoner to the Ural Mountains.

During the 1917 revolution he was freed by revolutionaries and subsequently joined a Bolshevik group. Participating in the October Revolution, he joined a cadre in Omsk before heading home to the newly established Kingdom of Yugoslavia. There he adopted the handle "Comrade Walter" or "Tito" and was sent to organise the Yugoslav Communist Party (CPY) by Stalin.

In the interwar years he worked as a machinist and then on the railways but was fired as soon as his communist ideology was identified, and he subsequently spent five years in prison for communist activities. After release, using his *nom de guerre* he met with future political advisors and future wartime comrades Edvard Kardelj, Milovan Đilas and Aleksandar Ranković. Together they began to assert themselves and spread socialism throughout Yugoslavia by publishing pamphlets and organising unions.

Organisation and resistance in the Second World War

After the invasion by German troops in 1941 and the collapse of the Royalist government, Tito quickly organised partisan troops against the invasion. Allied leaders Churchill, Stalin and Roosevelt became increasingly supportive and provided much aid for Tito as well as supporting the exiled royalist government of King Peter.



Tito with (above) the Queen and (below) Margaret Thatcher



Tito led a brilliant guerrilla campaign (known as AVNOJ) from the mountains of Bosnia to drive German troops from Yugoslavia. The Germans countered with Operation Rosselsprung, an airborne assault to capture Tito in the mountainous Drvar region. This failed but only due to the ingenuity of Tito's comrades who were able to help him escape using an ingenious rope chair! Tito's partisan forces were successful with Allied help in driving back German units, and it was from this point that he began to formulate and cultivate his rightly deserved image as liberator of Yugoslavia. In later years Tito's wartime activity was retold in the film *Battle of Neretva* starring Yul Brynner, a Hollywood-style action film approved and shot in Yugoslavia.



Tito with the co-author of *Samoupravljanje*, Edvard Kardelj

Throughout the war Tito built a friendly relationship with Churchill—indeed Churchill's son worked as an assistant to Tito during this time, providing his father with intelligence reports and liaising with partisan forces. Although aware of their political differences, Tito acknowledged, "Churchill, he is a great man. He is, of course, our enemy and has always been the enemy of Communism, but he is an enemy one must respect, an enemy one likes to have."

Leader of Yugoslavia and the "1948 Split"

Initially Tito was a stoic supporter of Stalin, but after 1945 relations between the two soured. Tito was criticised for being too "independent". Tito considered Stalin too domineering. The latter was not impressed when Tito turned up to a meeting in Moscow provocatively wearing a Marshal's uniform, which Stalin perceived as a challenge to his leadership in the communist world. Stalin was keen to bring Tito and Yugoslavia under control by announcing a customs union with Bulgaria which Tito rejected.

Stalin announced in 1948 that Yugoslavia would be expelled from the Cominform and Comecon for revisionist tendencies and for straying from the communist path (in effect, shorthand for defying Stalin). Tito did not panic at the threat of Hungarian troops massing on the border. He announced that Yugoslavia would not be bullied by the Russians and marshalled his comrades from the war years to prepare to defend the country.

Tensions rose between the Soviets and Yugoslavia with Tito famously declaring in 1948 to Stalin: "Stop sending people to kill me! We've already captured five of them, one of them with a bomb and another with a rifle... If you don't

stop sending killers, I'll send a very fast-working one to Moscow and I certainly won't have to send another."

The 1948 split was probably the most significant test of Tito's leadership. Well aware of Yugoslavia's position both economically and politically, he immediately approached Britain and America for help and received loans worth \$80 billion dollars. This economic and political relationship was to last throughout Tito's entire presidency and he was warmly welcomed in London and Washington. The effect of this rapprochement between Tito and the allies cemented his leadership and warned off an almost certain invasion of Yugoslavia.

Yugoslavia maintained cool yet polite relations with other socialist states behind the iron curtain. As a joint founder of the Non-Aligned Movement, Tito cultivated the idea that Yugoslavia would neither be in the capitalist west nor the communist east.

Titoism and worker self-management

The split in 1948 from Soviet hegemony was just the excuse Tito needed to pursue his own brand of market socialism and neutrality.

Tito was acutely aware of the oppressive dogma and command economy of socialism (possibly as a result of spending some years in the USSR) and chose not to pursue it in the same manner of other socialist states, believing that it would never bring perceived benefits and lift Yugoslavia from its dominant agricultural economy. Instead he developed with Edvard Kardelj the concept of *Samoupravljanje* or worker self-management. This theory focused on profit sharing in corporations, with workers and management taking a greater degree of individual responsibility for the operations and productivity of factories. Although general planning and targets were still controlled by Belgrade, autonomy was granted to each of the republics and to industry to focus more on consumer and regional demands—a heretical idea in communism but one that seems to have been farsighted if we consider China today.

Cultural, political and social change within the Federation

From 1959 Tito made significant changes to the country, a period often known by historians as "Yugoslavia ascending". He abolished visa

restrictions in 1968 which caused a significant boost to tourism in Croatia and Slovenia, bringing added revenue. Yugoslavs also had the opportunity to leave the country and many went to work in the car factories in West Germany—but many of those brought their valuable German Marks back where they could be converted to Yugoslav Dinars. The sight of cranes and concrete mixers became common as Yugoslavs used their new wealth to build homes.

In cinemas, cultural centres and shops, Western films and music were easy to watch and buy and notable musicians such as the Rolling Stones, Deep Purple and The Hollies played gigs in Zagreb and Belgrade. Radio Luxembourg, un-jammed, was received by a great many of Yugoslavia's youth keen to tune into the latest music trends from the UK and the USA. Artists were free to perform and as long as Tito and the party were not too heavily criticised they could enjoy modest careers.

Tito himself was no stranger to Western-



Tito with Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor, and (above) Sophia Loren



style living, often seen smoking Cuban cigars or enjoying Scotch whisky. He attended Hollywood film premieres and played host to stars such as Kirk Douglas, Richard Burton, Sophia Loren and Elizabeth Taylor. These actors were regular visitors to his island retreat at Brijuni and photographers often captured Tito playing the imperial-looking host as he collected celebrities from the yacht *Galeb* in his Cadillac (a gift from US President JFK).

Later Years and Death

Tito's presidency was not entirely trouble-free. Croats protested in 1968 for greater autonomy and reforms within Yugoslavia. Tito's response was not to send in the army to crush the agitators as in Hungary or Czechoslovakia but to use state TV and radio to defend the position of the Croats thereby, curiously, muting the protests! (Of course Yugoslav state security officials were later keen to take note of the leaders and many of them were questioned.)

By 1974 Tito had taken on the role of elder statesman and was named President for Life by the national assembly. Commentators noted that his popularity was such that if he had gone to the polls he may have won a popular vote—but this was never tested.

Tito was approaching his 88th birthday when Yugoslav TV announced his death at Ljubljana Central Medical Hospital in 1980. Author Richard West noted a conversation he overheard in a coffee shop in Sarajevo: "Do you think that now that the old man has gone, we will all start killing each other again?" Sadly this comment proved prescient and the Yugoslavia that Tito brought to the world stage started to collapse nine years later.

Many Yugoslavs genuinely mourned his passing and his funeral was attended by four kings, 31 presidents, six princes, 22 prime ministers and 47 ministers of foreign affairs of all political identities.

He is remembered as a unifying figure, sometimes controversial but never without glamour or courage. He audaciously stood up to the Soviets while openly courting the West. He undoubtedly made an unusual figure in the chapter of socialism.

EVERY YEAR NSC Member Mr Ian White, a stalwart of the Campaigns for Real Ale and Real Cider, organises a pub crawl for us in some district of London, showcasing fine ales and fine pub architecture. This time it was in the City. Because many of these pubs are typically closed at weekends, we moved the

crawl from its usual Saturday night slot to a Wednesday evening. And a most agreeable night it was, as these photos attest. Many thanks to Mr White for organising it once again. (Owing to an earlier engagement I missed the first two pubs, but for the record they were the Ship in Talbot Court and the Swan in Ship Tavern Passage.)

Supping in the Square Mile



The Crosse Keys, built as the headquarters of HSBC in 1919 and now, mercifully, a pub



Time to drink up! Sheridanites realise it's time to leave the Lamb in Leadenhall market and move on



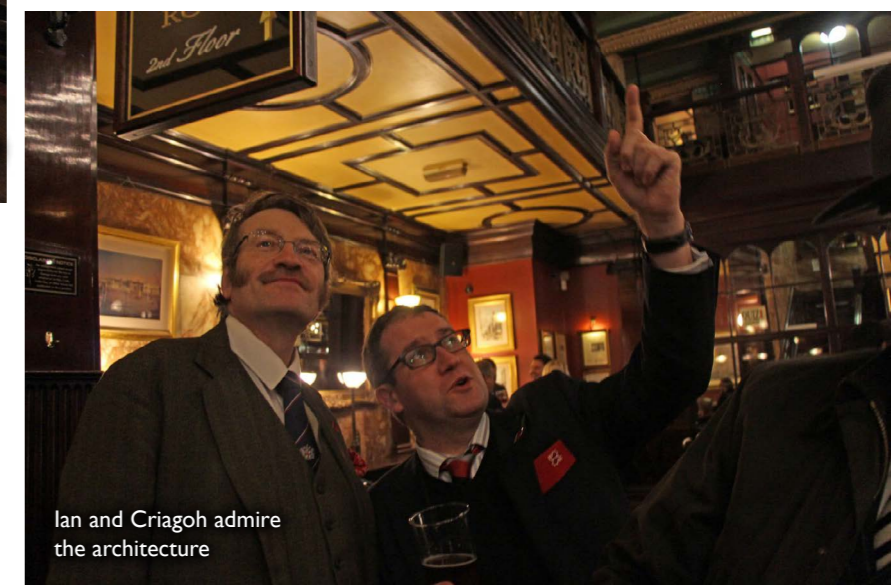
Much jollity at the Jamaica Wine House



Just time for a group photo, outside a church (hence the Curé's gesticulations to the heavens)



Willkommen, bienvenue, welcome! Miss Minna dons a Coke (for some reason it was all about hats at the end)



Ian and Criagoh admire the architecture



Ian is happy to be in the Counting House, built in 1893 as a banking hall



Artemis "Two Hats" Scarheart



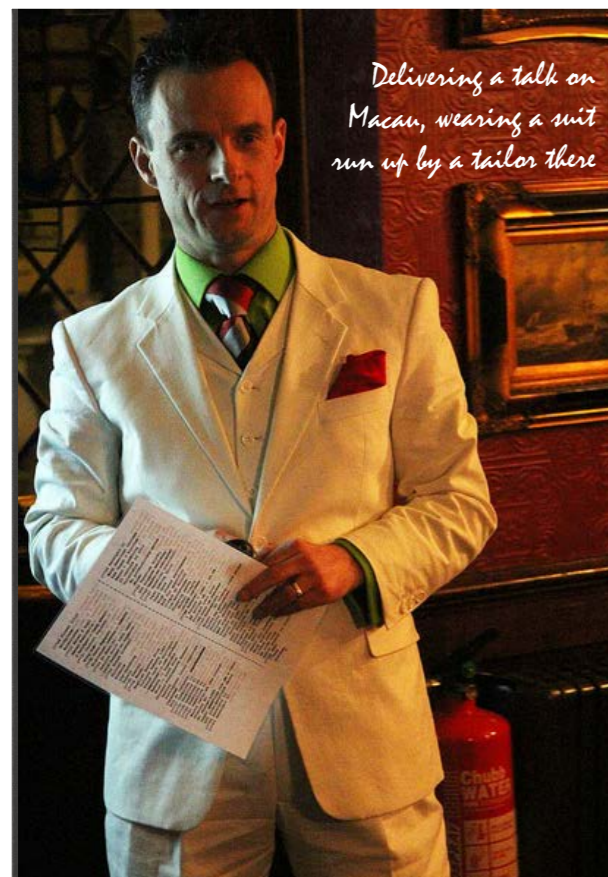
Birgit tries on the bowler (presumably Ian's)

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.



Timothy Eyre

'Seek to be and to do, not to own'

Name or preferred name?

My name is Dr Timothy Eyre. I have managed to resist the temptation to take on a special club name. I am a doctor of mathematics rather than a physician, so please don't come to me with your ailments unless they are mathematical ones. I sometimes write under the pseudonym of Mark

Wentworth: those are my two middle names.

Where do you hail from?

I live in Enfield, about as far north as one can go in London and still plausibly claim to be in town. However, I spend about a third of my time travelling the world for business and pleasure. I was born in Walsall, as was Jerome K. Jerome, author of *Three Men in a Boat*. My earliest memories are of living in Ramsey in Cambridgeshire, which now hosts a splendid annual 1940s weekend.

Favourite Cocktail?

Location and company matter to me more than the cocktail itself so I'd say a Mojito consumed in a wood-panelled bar in Havana while a local band gently immerses the conversation or a Rum Cooler sipped from a coconut shell on a Samoan beach.

Most Chappist Skill?

I'd like to think that it's maintaining an air of louche sophistication. However, in truth it's probably having the chutzpah to wear flamboyant clothes in unlikely locations.

Most Chappist Possession?

My dark red tweed suit. The trousers have a fishtail back and the waistcoat has a special buttonhole for a watch fob.

Personal Motto?

Seek to be and to do, not to own.

Favourite Quotes?

From Macbeth:
Nought's had, all's spent,

*Where our desire is got without content.
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy."*

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

My favourite work of classical music is Bartók's cycle of string quartets. That's the sort of austere, cerebral fellow I am.

How long have you been involved with the NSC?

I've only been involved since the spring of 2011, although I would have joined much earlier had I heard of it.

How did you hear about the Club to begin with?

I learned of the club via Fleur's website while I was looking for photographs of the previous year's Grand Anarcho-Dandyist Ball. It appeared to be exactly the sort of club that would appeal to me. This has indeed proved to be the case. My only regret is that my heavy travel schedule prevents me from going to more meetings and events.

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

Wear your chappish clothes every day so that they feel completely natural. Your bearing will be much the better for it.

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

I would choose Epicurus for his philosophy, Einstein for his science and Lee Harvey Oswald so that we could settle the conspiracy theories about the assassination of John F. Kennedy for good.

Favourite Member of the Glorious

Demonstrating his most Chappist skill



Committee?

Artemis Scarheart

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

I have done three, all this year. The first was in January when I gave an impromptu talk about a trip I had made to American Samoa the previous summer. The billed speaker was forced to cancel at the last minute so I volunteered to step in. The second was in February, when I gave a more prepared talk on the City-State of Macau. Then on a baking hot evening in July I introduced the film *Erotikon* at a New Sheridan Club film night. Only one of those really counts as a proper turn but I did write articles for the club magazine for each.

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





Craigoh samples the Bull's Blood

Hungry for Hungary

Club members get goulashed at The Gay Hussar

Words by **Craig Young**, pictures by **Ernie Samat**

THERE ARE MANY stories that get told about the Soho restaurant, The Gay Hussar. It's that kind of place. Arguably the saddest story currently being told is that, after 60 years of being famed for serving up "goulash and gossip" among its genteelly faded, louche surroundings, it is closing. Your correspondent heard that this was so, while tuning in to the excellent Sunday morning show "Broadcasting House" on the BBC Home Service (Radio Four). A quick "goggle" session revealed *Grauniad* and *FT* articles reporting news to the same effect. It was decided that, perhaps it was time for an ad-hoc club outing; our Club's name could be added to the list of political and publishing luminaries who have wined, dined, sipped and supped within its four walls.

But enough about us, how did it all begin?

Word on the street is that the restaurant was founded in 1953 by Swiss/Welsh restaurateur Victor Sassie, who had visited Vienna and

Budapest before the Second World War, where he had been tutored in the ways of goulash and dumplings at either the Gundel or Three Hussars restaurant. He then apparently served in British Army intelligence in the war, where one version of the story has him serving in Budapest for a spell immediately post war. Having been demobbed, Sassie went back to the restaurant trade, either serving in, or opening the Budapest Restaurant in Dean Street. This, before he most certainly started his own establishment, The Gay Hussar, in Greek Street, where he served the likes of T.S. Eliot, Barbara Castle, Michael Foot, 14th Lord Home, Princess Alexandra, one T. Blair Esq. and a certain Mr Gordon Brown.

Astute readers will have noticed that many of the aforementioned luminaries were of a Labour Party persuasion, and it is true that the restaurant has long been a hotbed of Labour Party and Fleet Street intrigue, although the



Tory “Wets” were said to have met there to plot against Maggie too.

Other notable patrons have included the left-wing Labour MP and newspaper columnist Tom Driberg who once used the private dining room on the second floor as the scene for his attempt to tempt Mick Jagger into being upstanding for the Labour Party. (Ahem.) Jagger fled, and the room is now informally named after Driberg. A former British Foreign Secretary, George Brown, was ordered out of the establishment by Victor Sassie for groping a female customer at the next table, and in the early 1980s, sightings of Roy Hattersley at the restaurant would earn *Private Eye* readers a £5 prize. (This being back in the days when £5 would actually buy more than one pint in a Soho pub...)

Now. Just how did the establishment get its

name for goulash and gossip? Of course goulash is on the menu, but gossip is in the very walls—as it is rumoured to have once been bugged! More likely, Sassie was said to be infamous for passing on titbits of information from table to table so that by the end of the evening all diners—and soon all of Fleet Street—knew. In the early 1970s, this leaking of gossip was nearly the restaurant’s undoing; a delegate of Soviets was invited to dine there by a British union, and a photograph of the extremely high bill found its way to the *Daily Mail*’s front page. The old clientele boycotted for a spell, as they deemed it unsafe to be seen there, but the pull of Bull’s Blood proved too strong, and soon things were back to normal.

Then, there’s the literal name; in 1953, being “gay” in today’s sense might get one arrested for “indecent”, but back then it just meant one was frightfully cheerful, and Hussars were horse soldiers, the elite of the Hungarian army, liable to ride into taverns calling for buckets of wine for their horses. So, what better venue for a group of Sheridanites to dine? Indeed, many of today’s New Sheridan Club have dined there previously, with one club member making it a habit to visit the restaurant on her birthday to enjoy the famous cold cherry soup.

So, on a Thursday night in mid-November, following a bracing pre-dinner snifter in the nearby Pillars of Hercules pub, a baker’s dozen of club members assembled at the restaurant



Unicum (a highly bitter Hungarian digestif). The latter item was downed in one, the only way to do it.

So, what was it like? Well, if you like dining in a place with velvet curtains, dark, wood-panelled walls adorned with cartoons of politicians and portraits of chaps who look like they were bosom pals of Vlad Dracul, then it is for you. The cuisine is, as far as your scribe can recall from past trips to Budapest, authentically Hungarian. That is to say, “hearty” and solid; those not fond of “stodge” or those of a vegetarian bent may well struggle there, and indeed the critic Grace Dent wrote an amusing but utterly scathing review in Friday’s *Evening Standard*.

All your scribe can say here is that our party really enjoyed the food, the wine, the décor and the evening. And the staff made us all most welcome.

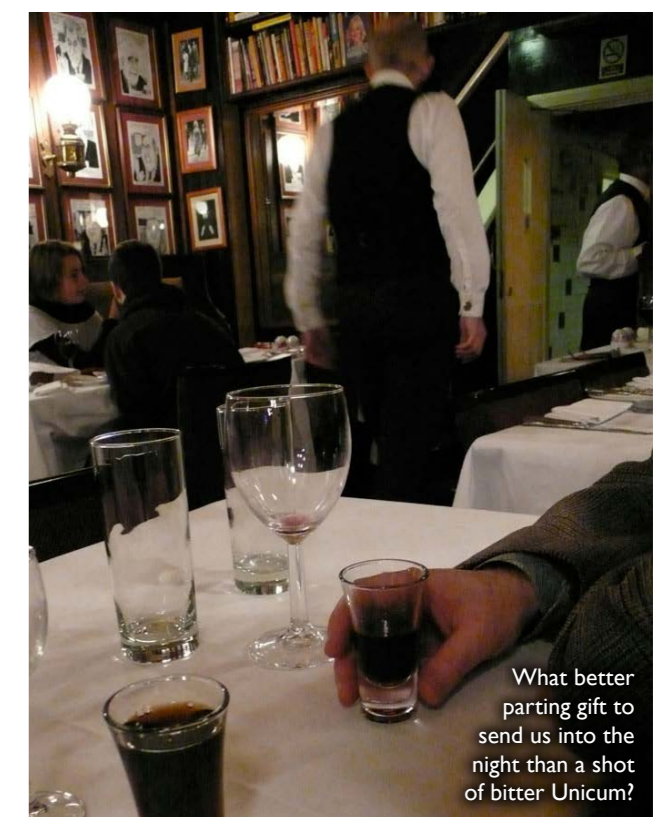
Although, perhaps another indication of the quality of the cuisine may be inferred from the following anecdote about Victor Sassie. *Guardian* Journalist Ian Aitken writing his obituary noted: “He was ... tyrannical to his regulars, not least about what you ate. If you ordered before he

to be greeted by today’s manager, John Wrobel. We sat downstairs, dominating one half of the venue, and happily worked our way through the menu of dishes such as beef goulash, pork dumplings and stuffed cabbage. This was accompanied by sparkling Hungarian wine, Bull’s Blood (strong red wine), Tokai (sweet white wine) and, in the case of your humble correspondent, a shot of Zwack

could get at you, he would dash over to your table and demand to be told what you were having. ‘Don’t have that muck, that’s tourist stuff,’ he would snort. Then he would summon a waiter and order you something entirely different.”

What of the Future? Are the closure rumours true? Well, the *Guardian* and *Observer* cartoonist Martin Rowson and Tory political blogger Iain Dale are said to be organising a syndicate (inevitably, dubbed The Goulash Co-operative,) to invest in a bid to keep the restaurant open. Apparently, minimum contributions start at £500 and the restaurant’s fate will be decided by December 5th. Those without the funds to slosh about can sign the online petition to the new owners here.

Certainly, with a brother in Budapest and a love of atmospheric, boozy bonhomie, your correspondent hopes that this corner of old “Mitteleuropa”, old Labour and old Soho combined, can be saved. To quote from the sole positive passage of Grace Dent’s review: “The Gay Hussar could be a gorgeous, battily mad, imperfect yet raffish feeding and watering hole, steeped in history and juicy anecdotes, evoking the sense whenever one pops in—for a bowl of fish dumplings in dill sauce and a large apricot brandy—that London survives and we’re just ridiculous cameo characters passing through.”



The Cocktail Cabinet

Wherein Members muse on booze

Fire Tongs Punch

It may sound like a version of “Stone Paper Scissors”, but it’s a literal translation of *Feuerzangenbowle*. As this is the name of our Film Night presentation this month (see page 18), it seemed appropriate to discuss it here. It’s a German punch-style drink, traditionally quaffed at Christmas or New Year. It is particularly associated with fraternities, and at the beginning of the film a group of men are reminiscing about their school days while drinking it.

Punch is the oldest kind of mixed drink. Shared drinks often symbolise a community bond between the drinkers (make what you will of the fact that we drink them less and less these days). That British Christmasy term “wassail” is both a toast, from the Old English *wæs hæl*, “may you be healthy”, and also a drink, a spiced mulled cider, with an accompanying song and visiting-ritual, all designed to ensure a good apple harvest the next year.

Feuerzangenbowle is essentially mulled wine: dry red wine is spiced with cinnamon sticks, cloves, oranges, etc., and heated in a vessel a bit like a fondue bowl. The defining characteristic, however, is the *zuckerhut*, a conical sugar loaf (literally “sugar hat”) that is soaked in rum, placed on a sort of grill over the wine, and ignited. The sugar melts and caramelises, dripping into the wine. (Originally the burning sugar would have been held in tongs, hence the name of the drink. Although I’ve also read that once upon a time the *zuckerhut* was placed on crossed swords, which seems to undermine the goodwill aspect of the whole thing.)

This recipe comes from german.about.com:

Feuerzangenbowle
3 bottles red wine
1 bottle high-proof rum
2 cinnamon sticks

Cardamom
Allspice
1–2 oranges
1–2 lemons
5 cloves
1 *zuckerhut*, or failing that some sugar cubes

Add the spices to the wine in a pan along with the peel and juice of the citrus. Heat until steaming but *not* boiling. Place the sugar loaf on a rack over the pan (or on crossed swords if you have them) and pour rum over it. Allow to soak in for a minute then ignite. Add more rum to the sugar as necessary to keep it burning. Serve in mugs or robust glasses.



As a footnote, the idea of sweetening a drink by having loaf sugar drip gradually into it reminds me of the traditional absinthe ritual, in which a sugar lump is placed on a flat, perforated “absinthe spoon” over the top of a glass of absinthe, and iced water is dripped from the tiny tap of an “absinthe fountain” on to the sugar, gradually dissolving it and both sweetening and diluting the absinthe. (I am told that in the old days sugar was less refined

and didn’t dissolve as easily as it does today, which is the reason for not just bugging it into the absinthe and giving it a stir.) Absinthe all but vanished after it was banned in much of the world in the first decade of the 20th century. When spurious Czech “absinthes” started to be imported in the late 1980s, marketers invented the “absinthe fire ritual”, in which a sugar cube is soaked in absinthe and ignited before eventually being stirred into the drink. I wonder if the tradition of the *Feuerzangenbowle* is where they got the idea?

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



Revisiting the Club Fez

By Artemis Scarheart

HOW MANY TIMES have you been lacking a piece of headwear which would proudly display your Club affiliation while also remaining stylish? A giant foam stetson doesn’t quite cut it. A hard hat with a bottle of gin attached to it and a handy straw has the right ethics but lacks subtlety. Well fret no longer, as we now have the solution.

The aptly named Fez-O-Rama has been chosen by the Glorious Committee—and Club member Mr E. Marlow—as the official fez-makers to the NSC. Mr Marlowe already owns one of their fezzes and reports that it is more akin to a velvet smoking cap than a cardboard or rigid Fez so commonly seen. You can see examples of their work on this page. In order



to take advantage of these handmade fezzes we need to put together an order of at least 13 (for occult reasons) and prepare the moolah. There was a presentation on these items at a Club Night a while ago, but we didn’t get quite enough orders to be able to go ahead. Since more people have joined the Club since then, we thought we would float the idea once more.

The plan is for the NSC Fez to be made in a pleasing red colour with the Club logo (which

you can see at the top of this page) in the centre. There will also be a tassle. This will make the wearer at ease anywhere from a vineyard in Constantinople



to a St James’s club, from a party in Cheam to a raft adrift in the Atlantic.

“I am keen as mustard and twice as hot to have one of these fine garments,” I hear you cry. “But how do I go about it? Well, gentle reader, the answer is here...”

Decide what size best suits your cranium and inform me. The sizing advice by the company is at www.fez-o-rama.com/fez-sizing-and-returns-page-5 where there is a handy chart. They have this to say: “This is IMPORTANT! We size our fezzes differently from traditional brimmed hats. The easiest way to measure your head is to wrap a measuring tape around your noggin just above your ears—with TWO fingers under the tape. (pointing up/down) If you don’t have a fabric measuring tape simply wrap a ribbon, a bit of string, or a cat5 cable around your head, mark where it overlaps and then measure the distance. Our fezzes are made in half-inch increments so you should be able to find one pretty close. Be careful not to pull the cord too tight. While the fezzes may stretch a bit you don’t want to cut off the flow of blood to your scalp... unless you are into that sort of thing.”

In order to ensure that there is no... unpleasantness... by Customs or delay by Royal Mail, the trifling sum of £55 is set for the fez. This should cover the total cost of a bespoke Fez which is shipped across the Atlantic, and any monies which are left over will be divided up and refunded. Customs is where the “bite” may come so we have allowed for that in the cost.

To place your order please respond to me with your details, head size, etc., at mrsscarheart@newsheridanclub.co.uk and I shall inform you in which Swiss account to place the money. Any questions, do pop me a message and have a look at the website of these coves. They are fine-looking and fine-feeling garments indeed.

NSC FILM NIGHT

Die Feuerzangenbowle (1944)

Sunday 15th December

7pm–11pm (screening from 8pm)

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

Admission: Free

Club Member Manfred Kronen mentioned this film a while back, as one that all German people know and love—but he had never seen a version with English subtitles. At the time he and Birgit Gebhardt were talking about making their own subtitles, but I am pleased to say that he has managed to find a subtitle file.

Like most Britishers, I'd never heard of the movie but this online comment should give you an idea: "To Germans this film is like *It's a Wonderful Life*, *Casablanca* and *Citizen Kane* all rolled into one. Lines from it are like proverbs."



Based on a 1933 novel by Heinrich Spoerl, set during the Weimar era, the story begins with a group of men communing around a *Feuerzangenbowle* (see page 16). One, Hans Pfeiffer, is a successful writer who was educated at home; but as he listens to his companions' reminiscences, he begins to think he missed out by not having the experience of going to school. So he hits upon the idea of masquerading as a pupil at a small town school, where he quickly develops a reputation for pranks. But when he takes a shine to the headmaster's daughter Eva he realises he must come clean about his identity. (Someone else describes the film as



"Ferris Beuller in prewar Germany".)

It sounds as if *Goodbye Mr Chips* should be in the mix of references too, and one can see that the enduring appeal of the film lies in a celebration of small-town bonds and values. Both the liberal teacher and the conservative Brett (who is not in the book) gains the boys' respect—perhaps as a sop to the Nazi board of film censors, in a film that otherwise celebrates undermining authority! Pfeiffer's modern, big-city girlfriend is portrayed unsympathetically, and true love comes in the form of blonde, girl-next-door Eva.

Although this is the best known version, there were two other films of the book, another *Die Feuerzangenbowle* in 1970, which focused on modernisation of the school system, and *So ein Flegel* in 1934, which introduced the idea of Pfeiffer swapping places with his younger brother at school, while Pfeiffer Junior takes over his brother's job. Oddly, the brothers are both played by Heinz Rühmann—who, ten years later, also plays Pfeiffer in the 1944 version.



*The New Sheridan Club
Christmas party*

Saturday 14th December

7pm–1am

The Adam Street Club, 9 Adam Street,
London WC2N 6AA (020 7520 9281)

Admission: Members free, guests £5

Dress: Tommy and Fritz, Edwardian
sweethearts, incompetent generals, noble
nurses, *Oh What a Lovely War!*, etc

AS WE HOVER ON the brink of the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of The Great War, we thought it appropriate to mark that famous incident at Christmas 1914, when British and German troops defied anti-fraternisation orders to meet in No Man's Land, exchange gifts, knock out a few verses of *While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks By Night* and have a bit of a kick-about with a football.

Only five months earlier the troops had marched off to war with the reassurance that it "would all be over by Christmas". To cheer everyone up, the 17-year-old Princess Mary sent decorative brass tins out to the troops on the front as Christmas presents—some 426,000 of them. These contained goodies such as tobacco, confectionary, spices, pencils, a Christmas card and a



picture of the Princess.

Our party will feature a **Trench Football** league, a game of **Shoot Down the Zeppelin**, live period tunes from **Patricia Hammond and her band**, and of course our famous Grand Raffle—entry is free but only to Members of the NSC, including any who sign up on the night—and a Christmas punch courtesy of **The King's Ginger**.

Raffle prizes include objects from the period—an original Princess Mary tin, a photo Xmas card from the King and Queen, a "trench art" ashtray fashioned from a shell casing, a military hospital "invalid cup", an "On War Service" enamel badge, Rupert Brooke war sonnets published in 1915, a silk-embroidered Christmas card, plus a *Dover Patrol* naval boardgame from the 1920s and some reproduction trench maps. There are books: *All Quiet on the Western Front*, *Journey's End*, *Goodbye to All That*, *Anthem for Doomed Youth*, an Edith Cavell biography, and a collection of soldier's accounts from the trenches. There are DVDs: *The Trench*, *Mata Hari*, *Oh What a Lovely War!*, *Beneath Hill 60*, *Joyeux Noel*, *La Grande Illusion*, *Nurse Edith Cavell* and *Blackadder Goes Forth!*





CLUB NOTES

New Evidence for Club's Earliest Member

I WAS SQUINTING at the noctovision the other day, taking in a documentary about British ceramicist (and author of *The Hare With the Amber Eyes*) Edmund de Waal, whose maternal grandmother was part of the Ephrussi family, when up popped the above portrait of art collector Charles Ephrussi by Leon Bonnat. He is quite clearly wearing a New Sheridan Club badge. (You can get a closer look on the back cover.) Ephrussi died in 1905, meaning he joined the Club at least 99 years before it was formed. A fellow couldn't wish for better Chappist credentials.

New Members

AS THE NATION is swamped by the spirit of goodwill to all men, and even the most curmudgeonly soul smiles indulgently as rosy-checked cherubs propel snowballs at his hat, we proffer the sloshing wassail bowl of Membership to Gillian Greenwood and Trevor Marchant, who both took the pledge this month.



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 December
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
7pm–1am (swing dance classes 7–8pm, 8–9pm)
Passing Clouds, 1 Richmond Road, Dalston, London E8 4AA
Admission: £8 for the dance class, £4 for the club (discounted if you're doing the class)
Dress: 1920s/1930s preferred
Live swing jazz every Wednesday featuring Ewan Bleach and chums, with optional dance classes from Swing Patrol.

The Tea House Theatre presents The Christmas Vintage Bazaar

Thursday 5th December
7pm–midnight
The Tea House Theatre, 139 Vauxhall Walk, London SE11 5HL (020 7207 4585)
Admission: £10 on the door, £8 in advance
An exclusive sale of handpicked vintage, repro and bespoke clothes and accessories from the 1920s to the 1950s. Enjoy classic cocktails, homemade cake and swinging tunes while trying on gorgeous clothes in an elegant, private setting. Get makeup and hairstyling tips from resident vintage mavens, and take advantage of

the on-the-spot alterations service. Ticket price includes Champagne reception and canapés.

The Grand Anarcho-Dandyist Ball

Saturday 7th December
8pm–2am
Bloomsbury Ballroom, Victoria House, Bloomsbury Square, London WC1B 4DA
Admission: £20 from Ticketscript
The Chap magazine presents its annual Christmas bash, this time heavily focused around onstage entertainment featuring members of the Bonzo Dog Doo Dah Band, plus a partial staging of Vivian Stanshall's Sir Henry at Rawlinson End. Our own Auntie Maureen will be DJing in the Cocktail Bar and running a knobbly knees contest.

The Candlelight Club: Russian Roulette

Saturday 7th December
7pm–12am
A secret London location
Admission: £20/25 in advance
Dress: Prohibition dandies, swells, gangsters and molls, degenerate aristos and decadent aesthetes, corrupt politicians and the Smart Set In the Know
The Candlelight Club is a clandestine pop-up cocktail party with a 1920s speakeasy flavour, in a secret London venue lit by candles. Each event offers a one-off cocktail menu with special themes, plus live period jazz bands and vintage vinylism (sometimes from the New Sheridan Club's own DJ MC Fruity). Ticket holders get an email two days before revealing the location.



Tamara de Lempicka, having fled Russia to paint the rich and bohemian in Paris, works it for the camera

In the aftermath of the Revolution, life is tough for White Russians, and many are forced to flee the Motherland with their wealth hidden about their persons. A shipload of exotic but maudlin aristocrats creeps into the docks by night: where do they go to drown their sorrows? The Candlelight Club, of course. But, hey, they've brought vodka...
Music from the Marama Café Band and DJ Magdalena, plus Cossack dance energy from the Bees Knees doing their Russian Dolls routine.

The Sohemians present
A Rogues' Gallery: Off-the-Record Encounters with Figures of Fame, Folly and Fun
Tuesday 10th December
7.30pm
Upstairs, The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1JB
Admission: £4
Journalist Peter Lewis gives a talk based on his new book, *A Rogues Gallery*, snapshots, gathered during his career, of the famous and infamous, foolish and funny, when they were off-camera. Here are private views of the tensions that opened cracks in the marriages of Arthur Miller and Marilyn Monroe, Harold Pinter and Vivien Merchant, Laurence Olivier and Joan Plowright. What really happened when Laurie Lee drank cider with Rosie? Which film roles made Alec Guinness most satisfied and dissatisfied? Which made a young Judi Dench cry? How the woman Hitler most admired publicly embarrassed him; how the spoons once embarrassed Uri Geller...

🍷 The New Sheridan Club Christmas Party: All Over By Christmas

Saturday 14th December
7pm–1am
The Adam Street Club, 9 Adam Street, London WC2N 6AA (020 7520 9281)



Admission: free to Members, £5 for guests
 Dress: Tommy and Fritz, Edwardian sweethearts, incompetent generals, noble nurses, Oh What a Lovely War!, etc
 See page 19.

NSC Film Night:
Die Feuerzangenbowle (1944)

Sunday 15th December
 7pm–11pm
 The Tea House Theatre, 139 Vauxhall Walk,
 London SE11 5HL (020 7207 4585)
 Admission: Free
 See page 18.

The Tenth Liverpolitan Tweed Run:
Hooton Tootin’

Sunday 15th December
 From 11am
 Meet at Hooton Station with a bicycle
 Dress: Tweedy

The latest in a series of minimum-exertion, maximum-elegance bicycle outing for ladies and gentlemen who find plastic helmets, ‘mountain bikes’ and gaudy Lycra distasteful. This time the plan is to meet at Hooton railway station and follow the Wirral Way to West Kirby, a distance of about twelve miles through pleasant countryside with picturesque views that is relatively sheltered from wind by trees and shrubs. The path is a former railway track so without punishing hills. You can find a map of the route here. At the end you can take the train back from West Kirby, or take the cycle path to Hoylake. There will be detours for refreshment, and a picnic lunch (bring your own) is planned,

though it all depends on the weather. More details at the Facebook event.

Drinks at the Dover Castle

Friday 20th December
 6–11pm
 The Dover Castle, 43 Weymouth Mews,
 London W1G 7EQ
 Admission: Free
 Tradition has it that we always meet up on the last Friday before Christmas at the Dover Castle public house. I can’t remember why. But it’s usually the one time in the year when Lord Mendrick is back from teaching the children of the rich in Araby (though I think he’s now moved to the Far East), so he’ll usually be in the corner saying “Bah!” There is not much more to it than that—just a pub (a Sam Smith’s pub, so it is pretty reasonably priced) and some Christmas Cheer. The pub does food, though I couldn’t in good conscience recommend it.

Tails and Twirls

Friday 20th December
 8.30pm–12am
 The Tea House Theatre, 139 Vauxhall Walk,
 London SE11 5HL
 Admission: £10 from WeGotTickets
 Dress: Glamorous romantic, black tie for men preferred but not essential

Tails and Twirls is a new monthly dance event for ballroom and swing dancers (the next event will be on 17th January). Dancing will be mainly to period records, but there will also be a pianist/singer. There’s a licensed bar and most drinks are £5. There will always be a free beginner’s ballroom dance lesson from 7.15 pm to 8.15 pm. The dances will be mainly quickstep, foxtrot, swing, slow and Viennese waltz, tango, rumba, jive and some cha cha. There will be some activities, like “Excuse Me” dances and “Snowballs” to encourage intermingling of the guests.

The Candlelight Club: Christmas by Candlelight

Saturday 21st December
 7pm–12am
 A secret London location
 Admission: £20/25 in advance
 Dress: Prohibition dandies, swells, gangsters and molls, degenerate aristos and decadent aesthetes,

corrupt politicians and the Smart Set In the Know

The Candlelight Club is a clandestine pop-up cocktail party with a 1920s speakeasy flavour, in a secret London venue lit by candles. Each event offers a one-off cocktail menu with special themes, plus live period jazz bands and vintage vinylism (sometimes from the New Sheridan Club’s own DJ MC Fruity). Ticket holders get an email two days before revealing the location.

Our annual Yuletide extravaganza with tinsel and Christmas trees, dancing girls the Bees Knees and live jazz from those sentimental World War I veterans Albert Ball’s Flying Aces.

Herr Kettner’s New Year’s Eve Kabaret

Tuesday 31st December
 7.30pm–3am
 Kettner’s, 29 Romilly Street, Soho, London
 W1D 5HP (020 7734 6112)
 Admission: £50 non-dining, £165 dining, either online or by ringing 020 7292 0513

See in the New Year by reliving the decadent, desperate days of 1920s Weimar Berlin, when people really knew how to respond to an economic recession—when the future was so uncertain it made more sense to live for the present in a maelstrom of Champagne, dancing, laughter and song. Across three floors of Herr Kettner’s decadently beautiful house, you can sway to the new “jazz” music coming from America, learn to dance the Charleston, flirt with our cabaret singers, guffaw at our comedians, and quaff cocktails like there’s no tomorrow—there probably isn’t.

In the Ballroom there will be live ragtime and swing music courtesy of the Basin Street Brawlers, vintage DJing from Vince Moses, plus complimentary dance lessons from Paul and Louise of the Swingtime Dance Co.

In the Kabaret Lounge the revels will be

led by that cheeky mistress of the ukulele Tricity Vogue, with daring burlesque from glamourpuss Ruby Deshabillé, seductive siren song from the silver-tongued Dolores Delight, riotous comedy magic from Christian Lee, acerbic wit mixed with European cool from professional Frenchman Marcel Lucont, all ably accompanied on the piano by cross-dressing ivory-tickler Von Klaus. When not on stage, Christian will be wandering from room to room, befuddling all with displays of close-up magic.

In the Champagne Bar on the ground floor Pete Saunders will be playing the piano, with an early evening set by Dolores Delight.

Treat yourself to professional vintage styling from Lipstick & Curls, whose pop-up salon will offer appointments in the afternoon and touch-ups during the party. Then have a glamorous vintage photo portrait taken at our in-house studio by Hanson Leatherby, gentleman photographer.

Sample the specially designed cocktails at our two bars, and why not push the boat out with a dining ticket that includes a four-course gourmet meal in the oak-panelled dining room, with wine included and a complimentary welcome drink, plus exclusive cabaret performances between courses?

More at www.herrkettnerskabaret.com.

New Year’s Eve at the Savoy

Tuesday 31st December
 8pm
 The Savoy Hotel, Strand, London WC2R 0EU
 Alex Mendham and his Orchestra, purveyors of 1920s and 1930s dance band music, play the famous Lancaster Ballroom at this iconic hotel. Not too many more specifics at the moment, so keep an eye on Alex’s Facebook event for emerging details.

The Hep Cats “New Year” Ball

Tuesday 31st December
 7pm–2am
 London Irish Centre, 50–52 Camden Square,
 London NW1 9XB
 Admission: £75

The Hep Cats team put on a “party like its 1949” NYE special. Ticket price includes a meal, plus vocal harmony from the Intelli-Gents, cabaret, DJs and special guests. More at www.hepcats.co.uk.



A closer look at that portrait of Charles Ephrussi, quite clearly wearing an NSC lapel badge See page 18



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