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Events

Victorian Christmas at the Historic Courthouse in Stillwater

When: Saturday Nov. 17 - \$3.00 - 10am- 5pm
Sunday Nov. 18 - \$3.00 - 11am to 4 pm
Where: Historic Courthouse
101 West Pine Street
Stillwater, MN 55082

Start your holiday season at the 15th annual "Victorian Christmas at the Historic Courthouse" for seasonal music, costumed vendors selling high-quality arts and crafts, and a beautifully decorated building. For more information, call 651-275-7075 or email historiccourthouse@co.washington.mn.us

LHS Dance Practice

When: November 16th at 7:00 p.m.
Where: Triune Masonic Lodge
1898 Iglehart Ave.
St. Paul, MN

Cost: \$5.00 at the door

VSA members are welcome at the Living History Society of MN dance practices. Dances taught may include: the standard six step waltz, mazurka, polka, and the quadrille.

Board Meeting:

When: Wednesday November 14th at 7:30 pm
Where: Ms. Lundberg's residence

English Country Dance

Want to learn more about the country dances that we do at our balls?

Come join the fun at Tapestry Folk Dance center

When: Sunday Nights: 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Where: Tapestry Folk Dance Center
3748 Minnehaha Ave.
Minneapolis, MN

Cost: \$5.00 per session \$6.00 per person on the First Sunday of the month.*

*First Sundays feature live music and start at 6:00 pm. All dances are taught, it's lively and fun! After a few sessions when our caller at the ball says "Cast Down!" you will know what he means! For information contact Mary Brown by e-mail (mebbieb10@cs.com)

Twelfth Night Ball:

When: January 5, 2007

Where: The Klub Haus

1079 Rice Street, St. Paul

Invitations for our next ball will be sent out in December.

This Month in History November 2007

For 400 years, bonfires have burned on November 5th to mark the failed Gunpowder Plot.

The tradition of Guy Fawkes-related bonfires began the very same year as the failed coup. The Plot was foiled in the night between the 4th and 5th of November 1605. On the 5th, agitated Londoners who knew little more than that their King had been saved, joyfully lit bonfires in thanksgiving.

Soon, people began placing effigies of Guy Fawkes onto bonfires, and fireworks were added to the celebrations. Preparations for Bonfire Night celebrations include making a dummy of Guy Fawkes, which is called "the Guy". Some children even keep up an old tradition of walking in the streets, carrying "the Guy" they have just made, and beg passersby for "a penny for the Guy." The kids use the money to buy fireworks for the evening festivities.

On the night itself, Guy is placed on top of the bonfire, which is then set alight; and fireworks displays fill the sky.

The extent of the celebrations and the size of the bonfires vary from one community to the next. Lewes, in the South East of England, is famous for its Bonfire Night festivities became more elaborate and consistently attracts thousands of people each year to participate.

Bonfire Night is not only celebrated in Britain. The tradition crossed the oceans and established itself in the British colonies during the centuries.

<http://www.bonfire.org/guy/bonfire.php>



Men: To Tea or Not To Tea...

By James E. Patterson

We as a species are not smart enough to make anarchy work, so we have had to devise sets of guidelines that govern every facet of our lives. Although many of these guidelines appear to be inflexible, most if not all, are in constant flux.

When we entered the 1900's the guidelines for social behavior for men and women were well established and vastly different. By the time we crossed over into the year 2000, the gap between the social expectations for men and women had narrowed to the point where it is easily traversed from either direction. The guidelines for Afternoon Tea, however, remain intact.

Anne Russell, the 7th Duchess of Bedford, is credited with "inventing" Afternoon Tea in the 1840's. Since that time this well-established event has been governed by a more genteel set of guidelines called protocol. For a variety of reasons women appear to be more adept at the protocol for Afternoon Tea than men. That does not mean, however, that men are too barbaric or such social miscreants that they can't learn and

appreciate the finer points of a well presented Afternoon Tea. In this country, most likely men's lack of participation and social acuity regarding Afternoon Tea has to do with one thing—they have never done it before.

As with most things, gentlemen, the hardest part of participation in your first Afternoon Tea is deciding to do so. After the decision is made I guarantee that the women in your life will trip over themselves trying to find a place to go for tea. Because of that, here are some basics of tearoom protocol that will help the uninitiated male get through the front door without looking like the poster child for the socially inept.

First of all, in the US many people think chivalry is dead and want it to be so. This is not the case in a well-run tearoom. If you can do something nice for someone do it. This starts with opening the door to the tearoom and allowing friends and family to enter first. To put this in a context that most men will understand, if this was a game of golf opening the door for others is worth a birdie on the first hole.

With the advent of several tea related social groups for women, wearing hats has become more and more common. At this point it should be noted that (sorry ladies) putting a hat on your head is not necessarily wearing a hat. Like a certain female specific undergarment, wearing a hat correctly requires the proper garment, the proper fit and the proper adjustment.

For men, regardless if you can wear a hat or just use your head to hold one up never have it on at tea. If you have a hat on past 3 feet into the tearoom you have just hit your drive out-of-bounds...enough of this sports talk. You get the idea.

Pulling the chair out for a lady is a nice gesture but it can be tricky. Many tearooms use every inch of available space for seating so assess this one carefully before you give it a try. Even though this courtesy is awkward for both men and women, and often thwarted by

uncooperative furniture the value is in the effort and not necessarily in the outcome.

As far as dress is concerned, no denim, no tennis shoes and wear a shirt that has some kind of collar. A sport coat would be nice. Although it may be considered fashionable in other arenas, while at tea your underwear should never, never be seen over the top of your trousers. If this occurs (okay, one more sports analogy) you are DQed and it is "game over".

After everyone has been seated, start your tea by thinking calm, quiet and relaxed thoughts. Afternoon Tea is all about the process and the people you are with, and can take one and a half to two hours. Here are a few helpful tips that will help you get through your first Afternoon Tea:

1. Eat before you go or plan to eat after tea. Afternoon Tea is not lunch or dinner. Remember, it is all about the process and the people.
2. Make sure you have a teacup that you can get your finger through the handle. It is somewhat disconcerting to discover that in mid-conversation you have unconsciously loosened your grip on a too small handle, your cup has dipped a little and you have just poured hot tea in your lap.
3. Women don't talk in a linear fashion. They will start with one subject then interject how the color of one garment is or is not compatible with the color of another garment. After returning to the original subject they will detour to the subtle qualities of their tea or the recipe for the cucumber sandwiches. This process will continue until, believe it or not, they will return to the original subject and finish their thought. Be patient and listen.
4. Stay away from any teas blended with jasmine, lavender or raspberry, and any

French teas—leave the perfume teas to the ladies.

5. When the subject turns to how hot or cold, or how hot *and* cold the temperature is in the tearoom quietly sip your tea and have another salmon pâté sandwich—you will be fine.

I realize that about now many of you are asking yourselves, “Why would any man want to put himself through all of this?” There are several reasons and they are good ones. First, heart attacks and strokes are the biggest killers of men in America today. Afternoon Tea will allow you to stop and smell the flowers... just not jasmine or lavender. Learn to be calm. Second, the health benefits of tea far out weigh most other liquids we consume on a daily basis. Also, as far as I know, no one has been arrested for “driving under the influence” for being one cup of tea over the limit. Third, if you like variety you can start today, drink a different tea everyday for a year and without having the same tea twice, still have teas left to try. Fourth, women are interesting. Afternoon Tea will allow you to hear what they have to say and how they say it. Fifth, any business arrangement negotiated over a fine Darjeeling will be longer lasting and more profitable. And sixth, we all spend too much time producing this or providing that. Let someone else produce and provide for you and be sure to give yourself the permission to enjoy it.

This is only a starter list. Go to tea, enjoy the experience and find your own benefits. If you need help, turn to a woman. They are very good at this. Remember, a woman “invented” Afternoon Tea. ~JEP~

James Patterson is the editor and contributing writer of *Tea-Totaling With Earlene*. *Tea-Totaling...* is the quarterly newsletter of author Earlene Grey.

For additional information visit
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Notable Tea Quotes

Lewis Carroll (1865) *Alice in Wonderland*, Chapter 6

"Take some more tea," the March Hare said to Alice very earnestly.



"I've had nothing yet," Alice replied in an offended tone, "so I can't take more."

Thomas DeQuincy (1875-1959) *Confession of an English Opium Eater*

Tea, though ridiculed by those who are naturally coarse in their nervous sensibilities...will always be the favored beverage of the intellectual.

Jerome K. Jerome (1859-1927): *Three Men in a Boat*

It is very strange, this domination of our intellect by our digestive organs. We cannot work, we cannot think, unless our stomach wills so. It dictates to us our emotions, our passions.

After eggs and bacon it says, "Work!" After beefsteak and porter, it says, "Sleep!" After a cup of tea (two spoonfuls for each cup, and don't let it stand for more than three minutes), it says to the brain, "Now rise, and show your strength. Be eloquent, and deep, and tender; see, with a clear eye, into Nature, and into life: spread your white wings of quivering thought, and soar, a god-like spirit, over the whirling world beneath you, up through long lanes of flaming stars to the gates of eternity!"

Gladstone (1865) *Victorian British Prime Minister*

If you are cold, tea will warm you; If you are too heated, it will cool you; If you are depressed, it will cheer you; If you are excited, it will calm you.