



Joy Meier photo by Femke van Iperen

## Vintage Clothes Evening

By Femke van Iperen

Ever wondered what happened to those beautiful frocks from old films, or your grandmother's dresses in the dusty attic? In another entertaining North London Hospice Charity event at the Friends' House in NW11, vintage-clothing expert Joy Meier explained all to a captivated audience.

Ms Meier, who has been a costume designer on many National Opera and BBC Film and TV projects, told *THE ARCHER*, "Ever since I was little, I always ended up sewing all the family things, like my father's golf gloves, on the hand-held sewing machine." Now the proud owner and dealer of a large collection of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century women's clothing, interesting for its cultural references and normally only seen behind glass in the V&A, Ms Meier is also an international lecturer.

### Trade Secret

During the evening she sparked people's interest in antique fashion, often considered a trivial matter. She flowed through the sale of the Kennedy possessions in New York to Sotheby's sale of Diana's dresses in 1997.

In addition, she offered trade secrets in the preservation of garments and talked passionately about her searches for pink hunting coats, late 19<sup>th</sup> century chemises, and the domination of tree-bark fabrics over silk in the 1920s. "Antiques hold a huge fascination for us. We wonder who owned them, what kind of life did they lead, particularly before 1830 when most things were still hand-made before mass-production."

About her collection she remarked, "I've heard it being called period-, dead people's-, second hand- and old- clothes, by a variety of customers. I began to realise that most people outside the TV, film and antique world just don't know about [vintage clothing] and most period clothes sold are in the theatre."

### Uncertain future

Considering the future of her profession, Ms Meier expressed concern over the monopoly of the fashion world and concluded, "Unfortunately, vintage-clothes customers are dying out. Real period clothes are disappearing because designers buy them to copy and cut them, and collect them for their archives; they end up rotting in warehouses."

From the audience, costume designer Angela Whitworth said, "The nice thing is to see the original garments, it gives you a good feeling of the original period. It is wonderful to see how Joy obviously painstakingly looks after them and cares for them." The evening seemed another success for the Hospice, heavily under-funded, with only 16% of costs subsidised by the NHS.

## Amazon adventure

by Diana Cormack

While other teenagers are planning holidays in tourist hot spots like Ayia Napa and Ibiza after their exams next summer, James Loveday of Leopold Road has a very different destination in mind. He intends to spend six weeks in the Amazon jungle looking at wildlife.

His ambition is to be involved in zoology and when he read about a charitable society that organises expeditions for British schools, James decided to investigate further. He successfully applied for a place so, after his A levels, he will be setting off in July 2002 with a mixed group of 16-20 year olds to study botany and medicinal plants in the jungle. They will be living in tents as they travel through the area and it will no doubt be the experience of a lifetime.

James is particularly keen

to see the birds and mammals there, especially the colourful parrots and toucans and, hopefully, some big cats. A sixth form pupil at Fortismere School, James attended Martin School in his primary years.

### Amazing Place

James is trying to raise money for the project and has already had some response from local businesses. If you



James Loveday

wish to, you can help by sending James a cheque c/o The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA.

## I can with Cannabis

By Paula Allinson

Having existed for many years with three major debilitating conditions, I am heartened to hear that cannabis will soon be available on prescription for people like myself.

One of the most common arguments against the use of this drug is that if you don't smoke you can't use it. This is untrue: You can bake with it, make tea infusions and the latest cannabis trials use a spray which is administered under the tongue for easy absorption into the bloodstream.

The conditions I suffer from cause me acute pain, muscle stiffness, deprivation of sleep and depression.

I have found that cannabis relieves my pain, helps me sleep and above all relaxes my muscles so that I don't have to get up to go to the toilet 5-6 times a night.

### High price of sleep

I limit my use of cannabis to once a week as it is so expensive to buy. This means that once a week I get a full night's sleep. This is not ideal but at least I feel great the day after 'my treat'.

Cannabis doesn't suit everyone, but it's just like any other prescription drug: Some work and some don't.

Personally I'm really looking forward to being able to say 'I feel great' every day.

## KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

### A time and a place

George Harrison's death shocked me: childhood heroes aren't allowed to do that. Hell, never mind dying, they aren't even meant to grow old. I'm just about able to remember the dull days before The Beatles, but John, Paul, George and Ringo were the soundtrack to my youth.

Back then being a rock star wasn't about career opportunities, it was about being young and reckless. It meant dying too young and leaving a fairly wasted-looking corpse. It meant unanswered questions and playing party games like 'would Buddy Holly have been "bigger than the Beatles" if he hadn't caught that plane?' or wondering what Eddie Cochran would have done if that lamppost hadn't got in the way.

### Wasted Talent

In the 1970s Keith Moon and the elfin Marc Bolan left us wondering what might have been and Lennon's death left all those Beatles' reunion dreams unfulfilled. Of course some didn't get the dying bit right. If Elvis had got run over by a tank while on National Service he'd still be the King. Instead we watched the crown slip until he was old and fat and pointless and playing Vegas and dead of a heart attack on the toilet in 1977.

### The end of an era

Lennon was the last of this breed of stars to die a young man's death, not a clean, between-the-sheets, old man's death. In the 1980s rock'n'roll became a career opportunity, and career opportunities and the thrill of reckless youth don't combine to make icons. Icons get to die at the right time, looks intact, having had just enough time to make a mark. The best go like Marilyn or Diana, image untarnished, no wrinkles, no outward signs of madness or ageing. Or they do a Jimmy Dean, leaving little more than unlimited potential. If you want iconic immortality you should arrange to die in a plane crash before your 40th birthday. Any later and you lose that precious chance of being forever young in people's minds. There is, in rock'n'roll at least, a right time to die. Miss it and you end up just someone with an interesting past. Then again, I guess that suited George down to the ground.

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