

SPARTA Newsletter



DOUBLE OLYMPIC CHAMPION JOINS SPARTA

Welcome to the January edition of the SPARTA newsletter.

I have some exciting news to share with you. Not only is SPARTA celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2021 but the Golf Society is celebrating its centenary AND Double Olympic Sailing Champion, Iain Percy is joining SPARTA for a virtual lunch during SPARTA Virtual Activity Week 2.0.

Yes, you too can join the virtual lunch **totally free of charge** by just booking a ticket using the links in this and on the SPARTA website.

Iain Percy, (pictured below) won gold at the 2000 and 2008, Olympics and took silver at the 2012 Olympics. In our Virtual

Lunch, Iain will recap his competitive sailing career and give us an insight into the mental and physical challenges he encountered along the way. Check out the whole programme of events taking place during SPARTA Virtual Activity Week 2.0 on our website.

Remember SPARTA is **YOUR** sports and recreation association, so we want **YOU** to let us know what **YOU** want SPARTA to provide to encourage social and recreational activities and improve health and wellbeing across both DfT and MHCLG.

Why not contact us at SPARTA@dft.gov.uk
Please send us any feedback that you have.



SPARTA VIRTUAL ACTIVITY WEEK 2.0

SPARTA proudly present Virtual Activity Week 2.0

25th to 29th January 2021

Hot Jazz Dance Class

History Society Lecture

Special Guest Interview

“At Your Desk” Yoga

Fitness Class

Book your free tickets by opening the links on the SPARTA website or later on in this newsletter

www.spartarecreation.co.uk

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

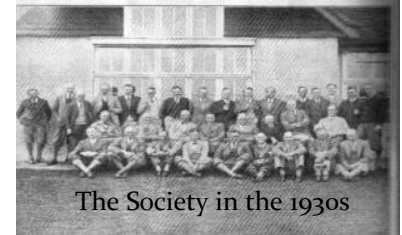
21 January 2021 – 5pm
SPARTA AGM

25 – 29 January 2021
SPARTA Virtual Activity
Week 2.0

Check out the SPARTA website for upcoming events



GOLF SOCIETY TURNS 100



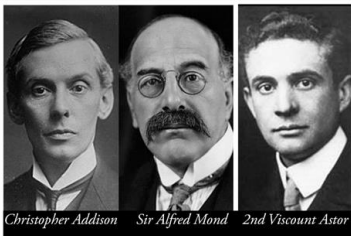
The Society in the 1930s

Vince Rossiter, Chair of the SPARTA Golf Society, recaps the history of the Golf Society as it celebrates its 100th birthday

The history of our Golf Society can be traced back 1921 when a golfing society was formed under the then Ministry of Health.

The minutes of the inaugural meeting of the Society up to 1939 were recorded in an impressive leather-bound ledger, written by hand in fine script. Unfortunately, that ledger has been lost but luckily many of the important notes were recorded in a handbook produced in 1996.

The ledger noted that, at the first annual general meeting which took place on 23 May 1921, forty members were present, and the meeting was presided over by Sir W A Robinson. Their first task was to decide the objects of the society which form the basis of our constitution today.



Christopher Addison Sir Alfred Mond 2nd Viscount Astor

Sir Alfred Mond, Minister of Health was appointed President with 8 vice Presidents including Dr Addison (the first Minister of Health), Lord Astor and Sir W A Robinson, who was elected as Captain. Together with Mr G L Pepler all put forward cups which are still played for today. One of the first meetings was held at Langley Park Golf Course on 9th September 1921.

The early Committee meeting minutes note, interestingly, that for the autumn meeting of 1922, "...the railway company was requested for the 9.49 train to be stopped at Sandy Lodge (the

golf course) on the morning of the meeting..." Presumably for the benefit of members. I cannot see that happening today!

In 1923 the future PM and new Minister of Health, Mr N Chamberlain MP, took over the Presidency. In 1928 the society revisited Langley Park where green fees were 2s 6d, a caddie for the day 2/6, luncheon 3/-, tea 1/- and a cheap day return from Charing Cross to West Wickham 1s 7d. A total of 10s 6d or 52 and a half p for the day.

By 1938, the current political situation began to affect the Society's activities. The circular for the Autumn Meeting was annotated "postponed owing to European Crisis" and the circular for the Summer Meeting of 1939 was annotated "Cancelled due to War".

The Society was put into "cold storage for the duration of the war" in correspondence between T D Harrison, Captain and S H G Hughes, Treasurer dated 27th and 29th November 1939. For safe keeping Society papers were held at "offices in Elstree" and trophies at "Hood's house in Horsham. It does not say who Hood was, but the trophies emerged safely in 1946.

After the war, with the need for rebuilding infrastructure, the Ministry of Health lost its responsibilities for public works and housing and the society and trophies emerged as part of the Ministry of Works golf society. In the fifties this became the Ministry of Public Building and Works and in 1971, that Ministry together with the Ministry of Housing and Ministry of

Housing and Ministry of Transport became one big department under the heading 'Department of the Environment'.

Under the DOE banner, three golf societies existed - the MHLG Society (which was renamed DOE(LG)), the Transport Golf Society and the PSA (Property Services Agency) Society.

In the late 1990's, the Environment part of the Department moved to a new area within the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food and the remaining department became the Department Transport, Local Government and the Regions. Around that time, the DOE (LG) Society merged with the Transport Society as the DTLG society and the PSA Society went its separate way.

In 2004, the Society adopted the name SPARTA (London) Golfing Society to reflect the name of the recreational association it is affiliated to and to avoid the need for further name changes due to government reorganisations. The Society now represents current and former members of both DfT and MHCLG and their agencies.

The Golf Society has a number of events planned for 2021 to celebrate it's centenary. If you would like to be involved, please get in touch with Vince Rossiter.

Want to find out more about the Golf Society then check out our website



SPARTA VIRTUAL ACTIVITY WEEK 2.0

The second SPARTA Virtual Activity Week will be taking place from 25th to 29th January 2021. Links to all of the events can be found on the homepage of our website or [click here](#)

One of the exciting opportunities that we have lined up for the week is a Hot Jazz dance class with dance teacher Nikki Santilli. Here Nikki tells us about herself and gives us an idea of the origins of Hot Jazz Dance along with how much fun it can be.

I've been teaching authentic jazz dance since 2005. "Authentic" means it's what people did at the time, mixing European and African folk and social dances to respond to the new, syncopated music in the 1930s and 1940s. Nowadays, the term 'jazz dance' conjures up professional female dancers in black leotards and bowler hats, a la Bob Fosse. It's great dancing, but it's not the same.

Authentic jazz dance is all about rhythm. Think tap dance then take the tap sound out and you're getting close! Many of the steps we use have history: "Rocks" are thought to come from an African folk move of picking apples; Shouts is a type of move that originated in the prayer houses of the plantations; Fall Off the Log is a skit on a ballet step that makes it look like the dancer is about to lose their balance. There's a lot of humour involved.

We dance to music from the 1930s up to the 1950s. It's said that The Twist is what killed it but really it's just a change of direction for a continuously flowing river of popular music and dance. Disco, hip hop are all descendants of authentic jazz dance.

Jazz (music and dance) is all about

adding your own signature to life. Swinging a song, syncopating a rhythm, developing an eccentric dance that nobody else has. It loves life and creativity and individuality. I stick with simple rhythms because if I have to concentrate on counting too much, I can't hear the music and where's the pleasure in that?! Early jazz dance is full of humour and enjoys company. It's exactly what we need right now.

Since the pandemic I've moved my classes online. I run 30 minute sessions at lunchtime and early evening. Eventually, I hope to return to studio classes and social dances, which I used to organise with live bands. There are so many talented early jazz specialist musicians in London. They too have taken their live bands online and are working extremely hard to continue working. They are applying the creativity they use in their music to other aspects of life, proving that jazz also provides great life skills!



Nikki Santilli

Nikki specialises in early jazz (Ragtime to Rock n Roll). She teaches Authentic Jazz Dance at Morley College London and runs her own, independent, classes. Before the pandemic, she taught in Wimbledon and Archway and ran regular social dance events with live music. She has danced on stage and tv and looks forward to being able to do all of these things again.

Nikki's class will be the first class of SPARTA Virtual Activity Week 2.0. Free tickets can be booked using the links below.

SPARTA **Virtual Activity Week** **Free Live Events**

Monday 25th Jan 12.30 – 13.30
Hot Jazz Dance Class with Nikki Santilli



[Click here to book tickets](#)

Tuesday 26th Jan 13.00 – 14.00
History Society
Lecture on the Bayeux Tapestry



[Click here to book tickets](#)

Wednesday 27th Jan 12.30 – 13.30
Virtual Lunch with Double Olympic Champion, Iain Percy



[Click here to book tickets](#)

Thursday 28th Jan 12.30 – 13.30
"At Your Desk"
Yoga session with Yoga teacher, Sue Johnson



[Click here to book tickets](#)

Friday 29th Jan 12.30 – 13.30
Circuit Training Class with GB Athletics Coach, Jason Marchant



[Click here to book tickets](#)

Check out all of SPARTA's upcoming events on our website www.spartarecreation.co.uk



THE SPARTA CLUBS

SPARTA supports a number of clubs and associations across the UK and is always looking to start new clubs. Here is just a taster of the current clubs

CD CLUB 
www.spartarecreation.co.uk/cd-club

SPARTA GOLF SOCIETY 
www.spartagolf.co.uk/

YOGA CLASSES 
www.spartarecreation.co.uk/yoga

SUPERSTARS CRICKET CLUB 
www.superstarscricket.org.uk

SOFTBALL CLUB 
www.spartarecreation.co.uk/softball

RAILWAY SOCIETY 
www.spartarecreation.co.uk/railway-society

CIVIL SERVICE CHOIR 
www.civilservicechoir.org.uk

HISTORY SOCIETY 
www.spartarecreation.co.uk/history-society

FITNESS CLASSES 
www.spartarecreation.co.uk/fitness-class

TENNIS CLUB 
www.spartarecreation.co.uk/tennis

TENPIN BOWLING 
www.spartarecreation.co.uk/tenpin-bowling



Want to start a new SPARTA club or volunteer to help SPARTA?
Get in touch with us at SPARTA@dft.gov.uk

Check out all the SPARTA clubs on our website

SPARTA
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