

# SPARTA Newsletter



Sept/Oct 2023

SPARTA Fitness Class  
Free Every Friday 12.30  
Live Online or in GMH

## AUTUMN IS HERE

Welcome to the Newsletter for September and October 2023.

We are coming to that time of the year when a great deal of our activities start to move indoors. But some activities are still taking place outdoors such as the Civil Service Cross Country Championships. A report from the championship can be found later in this issue.



**James Nicholls in action at the CS Cross Country.**

We have a report from our drama society, the St James's and Westminster Players from their recent production of

Sheila's Island which ran from 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> August at the Network Theatre Waterloo.



Also, in this issue we announce details of another exciting opportunity to meet the clubs when we hold events in both Great Minster House and 2 Marsham Street.

We would love to see you at these events.

If you are interested in anything in this or any of our past newsletters, then please do get in touch with us at [SPARTA@dft.gov.uk](mailto:SPARTA@dft.gov.uk)

Jason Marchant  
SPARTA General Secretary

## DFT NETWORK FAYRE



SPARTA and the SPARTA History Society attended the recent Dft Network Fayre event on the 27<sup>th</sup> of September.

The event was well attended and took place in Room LG1 in Great Minster House.

Similar events took place simultaneously in the other Dft regional offices.

SPARTA wants to ensure that we can open up the same offers in the other regional offices so if you work in the regional offices and would like to help why not get in touch with us at:

[SPARTA@dft.gov.uk](mailto:SPARTA@dft.gov.uk)

Check out the SPARTA website for upcoming events



# CIVIL SERVICE CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS 2023

## *SPARTA tames the Hill*

SPARTA sent a small team of four people to the Civil Service Cross Country Championships that took place on 11<sup>th</sup> October at Parliament Hill Fields in London.



If you have ever worked or visited 2 Marsham Street or Great Minster House you will know that you can catch an 88 bus right outside both buildings all the way to Parliament Hill Fields.

If you have ever been there and walked to the top of the hill to gaze across London, you will realise that venue has been used in numerous films and TV series. It is a wonderful venue.

Our small team put on a fantastic show with Jack Millar (below left) winning the race. Next home was Luke Watson (below) in 8<sup>th</sup> place, followed by James Nicholls (front page) in 19<sup>th</sup> and Robert Crangle (bottom) rounded off the team finishing in 43<sup>rd</sup> place.



I am pleased to report the team finished third of the 10 teams that attended. Well done all.



## UPCOMING SPARTA CLUB FIXTURES/EVENTS

### November

7<sup>th</sup> - St James and Westminster Players – Wicked Wedding - Network Theatre, Waterloo

16<sup>th</sup> – SPARTA History Society – Anne Boleyn & Elizabeth I: The Mother and Daughter Who Changed History – 1pm

### December

6<sup>th</sup> – Meet the Clubs event – 2 Marsham Street 12 -2pm

7<sup>th</sup> – Meet the Clubs event – Great Minster House 12 – 2pm

7<sup>th</sup> – History Society Event - Beyond the Wall: East Germany, 1949-1990 - Katja Hoyer - 1pm

12<sup>th</sup> – The Women Behind the Few - Dr Sarah Louise Miller – 1pm – Room LG11, GMH

13<sup>th</sup> – SPARTA AGM – Room 3.15 GMH – 4pm – 5.30pm

Keep up to date with the SPARTA website.

<https://www.spartarecreation.co.uk/>

# ST JAMES' & WESTMINSTER PLAYERS

*Mark Coram gives us an insight to the St James' & Westminster Players*

In August, the St James' and Westminster Players put on its latest production, Sheila's Island by Tim Firth, the writer behind such hits as Calendar Girls and Kinky Boots. The play is about 4 women from a company on Team Building Exercise who get trapped on an Island on Derwentwater on Bonfire Night. Every single skeleton comes flying out of every single closet. This is the all female version of the play Neville's Island – which some of you may have come across.

We were amongst the first groups in the whole country to put this play on, as it only became available for amateur societies early this year. As the person who suggested the play back in March, I had the honour of directing the play. We very soon had a great cast together and the picture below shows the cast – Sonia Valente, Karen Notaro, Samantha Kelly and Lesley Godwin backstage before opening night.



Our venue for the play is the regular home for the Players, the Network Theatre, tucked away under Waterloo Station. The Society has performed there pretty much for the last 20 years, having previously been based in the Northumberland House Theatre (now a hotel). The Network is a lovely little venue, and as the picture below shows our stage was evocative of the small island the 4 castaways found themselves on.



It was a magnificent production, with the cast giving it 125% every single night. I cannot as their director praise them highly enough.

But, as with all things the Society moves on. Our next show is for 1 Night only on 7 November. Entitled "Wicked Wedding" it would be a sin to miss it.

Tickets can be bought via [www.ticketsource.co.uk/sjwplayers](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/sjwplayers)



There has been a Drama Society in the Civil Service since the 1940's – one of our founder members was the legendary Honor Blackman. We are proud in SJWP to keep that tradition going. Should you want to join, please do so! We are always looking out for new members, & it's also a good way of networking across the Civil Service. We currently have members based in DLUHC, DSIT, MOJ, the Home Office, DFE and DFT! In addition, we have retired Civil Servants & others who have been persuaded to join.

Our range of shows in the 25 or so years that I have been involved has included everything from Ayckbourn to Shakespeare, Coward to Richard Harris, even the Goon Show & Joyce Grenfell. We even have had new writing, including last years production of Six Wives of Windsor by our own Samantha Kelly. Whether you're interested in on stage, front of house, or backstage helping with Sound, Lights, Scenery or even directing, there is something for you. The Society details can be seen at

<http://www.sjplayers.org.uk/>

and we are also on Facebook.

# MEET THE CLUBS AND THE AGM

## Upcoming SPARTA Events

SPARTA has just negotiated with the building services of both Great Minster House and 2 Marsham Street to hold another “Meet the Clubs” event.

The events will take place on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> of December in 2MS and GMH respectively.



The CS Choir have agreed to come along to both events and sing some seasonal songs for all those attending. I am really looking forward to hearing them.



## SPARTA AGM

I am pleased to announce that we have set a date for this year's Annual General Meeting.

**The date is:**

**13<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

**at 4pm**

**in Room 3.15, Great Minster House, 33 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 4DR**

If you can't attend in person, then you can join the meeting online. Full details and papers will be issued in due course to all members.

As the event is taking place so close to the Christmas holidays, we hope that many of you will join us in person for the meeting.

We will be having a social gathering after the AGM. The social venue is yet to be decided.

## WANT TO START A CLUB OR MAYBE HELP AT A CLUB?

SPARTA are always looking to build on our portfolio of clubs. If you want to start a club or are already running one and want SPARTA's help, then please get in contact.

Want to help at a current club? Then please get in contact with us:

[SPARTA@dft.gov.uk](mailto:SPARTA@dft.gov.uk)

Details of current club contacts can be found on the SPARTA website

[www.spartarecreation.co.uk/](http://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*

## SPARTA TABLE TENNIS CLUB



[www.spartarecreation.co.uk](http://www.spartarecreation.co.uk)

## SPARTA GOLF SOCIETY



[www.spartagolf.co.uk/](http://www.spartagolf.co.uk/)

## YOGA CLASSES



[www.spartarecreation.co.uk/yoga](http://www.spartarecreation.co.uk/yoga)

## SUPERSTARS CRICKET CLUB



[www.superstarscricket.org.uk](http://www.superstarscricket.org.uk)

## NETBALL CLUB

[www.spartarecreation.co.uk/netball](http://www.spartarecreation.co.uk/netball)

## BOARD GAMES CLUB

[www.spartarecreation.co.uk/board-games](http://www.spartarecreation.co.uk/board-games)



## CIVIL SERVICE CHOIR



[www.civilservicechoir.org.uk](http://www.civilservicechoir.org.uk)

## HISTORY SOCIETY



[www.spartarecreation.co.uk/history-society](http://www.spartarecreation.co.uk/history-society)

## FITNESS CLASSES



[www.spartarecreation.co.uk/fitness-class](http://www.spartarecreation.co.uk/fitness-class)

## TENNIS CLUB



[www.spartarecreation.co.uk/tennis](http://www.spartarecreation.co.uk/tennis)

## TENPIN BOWLING



[www.spartarecreation.co.uk/tenpin-bowling](http://www.spartarecreation.co.uk/tenpin-bowling)

**EXCITING NEW CLUBS  
COMING SOON**

Check out all the SPARTA clubs on our website

**SPARTA**  
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