



Well, knock me down with a feather (boa): Burlesque comes to Tunbridge Wells!

By day, she was mild-mannered software saleswoman Laura Lawton, but by night she was... (ta da!) burlesque diva, Foxy Symons! Now Laura/Foxy is aiming to bring Burlesque's glamorous mix of dance and flirtation to the boudoirs of Sunny Tunny with her new, eight-week courses. Explains Laura, "I chose to set up Foxy Burlesque not just because I love burlesque style, but because it's one of the hottest showbiz topics at the moment, with celebrities choosing burlesque stars like Dita Von Tesse to entertain at parties. I don't believe there's a lady out there who doesn't love to dress up and feel sexy, and my burlesque classes aim to build up women's confidence and remind them just how wonderful they are. I'll take them through a series of easy dance moves incorporating chairs, feather boas – even fans – together with great music, to create a routine that's as much fun to perform as it is to watch!"

Courses (for over 18s) have just begun at The Beacon and The Grey Lady, both in Tunbridge Wells, on Tuesdays and Thursdays respectively, with more planned for the future. For more information on times and prices, contact Laura on 07711 142642, or visit www.foxyburlesque.co.uk

Brenda Blasts off!

When NASA astronaut Piers Sellers, a former pupil at Cranbrook School, heads off to space in May, he'll be taking an out-of-this-world artwork with him. It's an original watercolour depiction of his alma mater, as painted by Buxted artist, Brenda Barratt. Once it's safely back on land, the painting will be returned to Cranbrook School, complete with the official NASA verification that it has travelled into space.



Brenda Barratt, left, with headmistress of Cranbrook School

"I never thought one of my paintings would be blasted into the stratosphere," says a delighted Brenda. "Apparently, Piers saw my work on his last visit to his old school, liked it, then said he wanted to take a picture of Cranbrook School into space."

Piers Sellers is Britain's most famous spaceman, having undertaken two NASA space missions and space-walked six times. Brenda Barratt, meanwhile, comes from an artistic family and works from her studios in Buxted. "I've painted well over 500 house portraits over the years. I've also painted dozens of schools and colleges – but this is the first time one of them has headed for the heavens!"

Stylish new store for EG



Eclect, a new furniture boutique, is set to open its doors on the historic High Street of East Grinstead. The 1,200sq ft showroom, set in the pretty Tudor Building, serves as the perfect setting for a newly-sourced collection of cutting edge furniture, interiors, contemporary lighting and imaginative giftware, art and accessories, all at competitive prices. Eclect opens to the public on Thursday 8th April, and will be offering all founder customers a 10 per cent discount during that month. **Eclect, 14 High Street, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 1AW www.eclect.co.uk**

INDEX Giveaway

Based in Chatham, Dickens World takes visitors on a fascinating journey through Dickensian England, where they're immersed in the sights, sounds and smells of the 19th century. With a host of attractions, Dickens World features the Great Expectations boat ride, a spooky Haunted House, Dotheboys Hall Victorian School Room (complete with decidedly 21st touch-screen technology), a 4D cinema show in Peggotty's Boathouse, plus an animatronic stage show that introduces some of Dickens' characters. Fagin's Den, meanwhile, is a soft play area that should keep younger visitors happy. During the Easter holidays, Dickens World will also be hosting a new live circus experience at 3.30pm daily. The Index has 10 sets of family tickets (for two adults and two children, worth collectively £40), to give away, so if you'd like to receive a set, simply send an email with DICKENS WORLD in the subject line to competitions@indexmagazine.co.uk by 30th April 2010

Dickens World is Open daily from 10am; visit www.dickensworld.co.uk for more information. Alternatively, email: enquiries@dickensworld.co.uk

