

Media Bitch

Got any gossip?
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Loose Talk...

Thursday night was party night for the handful of media execs who aren't on holiday, kicking off with *The Sunday Times* summer party at The Sanderson Hotel.

Spotted sipping cocktails with the likes of **Alexei Sayle**, **Jemima Khan** and **Rod Liddle** were editor **John Witherow**, director of commercial strategy **Neil Jones** and trading director **Dominic Carter**, as well as **Claire Myerscough**, business intelligence director.

More than 200 attended the shindig, which celebrated recent successes including increased sales in seven of the past eight months and



the announcement of a relaunch for *Style* magazine in September. Also seen mingling were some high-profile agency faces including MediaCom's **Claudine Collins**, **Paul Thomas** of Mindshare, **Jim Marshall** from Starcom MediaVest and *Media Week* columnist **Sue Unerman**, also from MediaCom.

Elsewhere, as friends were toasting the departure from Zed Media of managing director **Kevin Murphy**, others were celebrating the arrival at NatMags of new chief executive **Arnaud de Puyfontaine** (left). Joining him were managing director **Jessica Burley**, *Cosmopolitan* publisher **Justine Southall** and *Men's Health* publishing director **Alun Williams**. The do took place at The Soho Hotel, de Puyfontaine's temporary home while he house hunts in London. *Bitch* hears the Frenchman made himself at home, pouring his guests drinks from a makeshift bar.

The day when Claudine Collins played lead role

Anyone at MediaCom already knows just how important press director Claudine Collins is, but *Bitch* didn't realise just how much power she commands out in the real world.

A regular diner at Mayfair's celebrity-packed restaurant Scott's, Collins has become a familiar face to the doormen, which is usually a perk only the very famous can enjoy. Or can they?

As she left the restaurant after a recent visit, doorman Sean gave her his usual polite nod and said: "Your taxi is waiting Miss Collins."

Unbeknown to him, however, following our Claudine out of the eatery was Michael Caine and one Joan Collins who, upon hearing these words, naturally assumed her car was ready.

Respect to Sean, however, for informing Joanie that, actually no, it was Claudine's car and that she would have to wait.

It may only be July, but *Bitch* has uncovered a story that is a sure contender for her favourite of the year.



Lindon: plays it by the rules

Maxus staff show they are not a soft touch

Stoically ignoring forecasts of rain, the staff at WPP agency Maxus set off for their annual softball tournament in Regent's Park.

There was much talk as to whether the onslaught of swine flu, which affected two members of the firm, had been accelerated by fear of having to catch the ball at first base.

Milly's Masochists won by just three runs, their cause helped by American planner/buyer Patrick Lindon, who not only understood the rules but found himself the arbiter for the event.

As the afternoon drew to a close,

winners, losers and even the most sickly of players seemed to recover remarkably quickly when it was time for the pub, BBQ and trophy presentation.

Indy classified takes a trip down memory lane

With an alumni that includes Global's Stephen Miron, Trinity Mirror's Sly Bailey and *City AM*'s Simon Barnes, *The Independent's* forthcoming Classified Reunion promises to be an interesting affair.

Indy's current team is throwing the bash on 16 September in Covent Garden and all staff, past and present, and friends (ditto) are invited to join in the reminiscing.

The invitation celebrates the "hundreds of talented sales folk who have passed through *The Independent's* rigorous training and probationary periods and survived unharmed", but does give a fleeting mention to one former employee who has ended up in jail.

Entry to the party is free, but registration is essential. Anyone interested in attending should e-mail reunion@independent.co.uk.

* Out & About



MediaCom staff take a well-earned break from their hard work to mark Turner Classic Movies' ongoing celebration of great films



The *Hello* magazine team and agency friends enjoy their annual 12-hour summer boat trip around the south coast



Sunday Times editor John Witherow (left) chats to columnist Jemima Khan and Eurostar execs Claire Hutchinson and Nick Mercer at the paper's summer party

* E-mail pictures to
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* Great Viral... Betfair cricketers' challenges

www.fanvfan.com



Online gambling firm Betfair has launched a series of virals that feature cricketing legends Phil Tufnell and Jason Gillespie going head-to-head in speed-themed challenges. Pedalo racing and a lawnmower Grand Prix are just two of the extreme contests the duo compete in, and viewers are invited to back their favourite.