



involved in a psychic weekend organised by Nicole Hambro, who consults an astrologer and holds peace circles in her Knightsbridge home. 'They flew in psychics from around the world, including an incredible South African witch doctor who read bones,' Pete recalls excitedly.

But there's more to society's awakening. Numbers at the Lunar Club, a members-only ladies' dining club for holistic explorers, are growing fast. Caroline Stanley, a dowsing and reiki enthusiast and daughter of Tory peer Lord Renton, started the club 12 years ago with 10 friends, and describes it as 'a safe and healing place'. Aged from 30 to 70 and known as the Loony Ladies, the 100-plus

# Who's whooooo!

Is there anybody-who's-anybody out there? Ask the Lunar Club, says Caroline Phillips

Discussing your spiritual journey with anyone other than your therapist would once have been a social no-no. But these days your inner self can be brought up at dinner tables from St John's Wood to Somerset without fear of the other guests choking on their claret. Country-house weekends are less about brisk walks and open fires and more about psychic-healing sessions. Society hasn't been so abuzz with tales of telepathy and successful séances since Noël Coward's Madame Arcati made contact with the departed in *Blythe Spirit*.

Yasmina Mathias, doctor of philosophy and Chelsea clairvoyant (£85 a session), says: 'The number of people consulting me has grown enormously in the past few years and they seem much more upmarket.' Society's believers include, among others, healer Amaryllis Macintyre, Melissa Knatchbull, who has run women's workshops on 'finding the higher self', and Santa Sebag Montefiore, who trains with a Gloucestershire clairvoyant and healer, and says breezily: 'I've seen spirits all my life.' And she is not alone. Pete MacDonald, a barefoot mystic who looks like a prog rock survivor from the

People can learn to be psychic and to decipher messages from spirits

Seventies, spent 18 months as a hermit on an estate in Perthshire. He caters for high society, giving psychic consultations from Paris and Geneva to London and the Cotswolds. Last July he invited smart spiritual adventurers to join him on a motor yacht to investigate sacred Native American sites in Canada, and used to read tarot cards in the attic of the Belgravia home of Mai (daughter of Sheikh) Yamani. Recently Pete was



Lady Jane Dawnay



Santa Sebag Montefiore



Viscountess Astor

members include a surgeon, a dress designer, a countess, a City exec and several healers. Big banking names have passed through its portals too. Sales and networking are strictly forbidden. Some seek reassurance and answers in a club atmosphere; the inquisitive seek to broaden their horizons.

'It's a confidential forum in which to meet inspiring women and learn about different dimensions of spirituality,' explains Stanley.

They meet at the Sloane Club in Chelsea, a resolutely twinset-and-pearls establishment for ladies up from the country. Dinner is cooked by an ex-Connaught chef and the only unusual table decorations are a large rose-quartz crystal and a box of Kleenex. 'Women really let go

here,' says Stanley. After dinner the women listen to talks on a range of esoteric subjects: Lady Jane Dawnay (a Lunar member and sister of the Duke of Westminster) spoke on bereavement; Liberal peer Lord Tanlaw pondered the

meaning of life. Others have discussed raising

the spirits of the dead, angels, energy tapping and the power of crystals. Viscountess Astor is a psychoanalytical therapist, mystic and rebirther. 'It's marvellous to be at the club with like-minded souls who are open to things that science doesn't accept yet but that, intuitively, we know exist,' she says. 'One evening we walked through a labyrinth marked out with candles, symbolising one's life.'

'We live in a complicated world. The club enables me to get off the mad carousel of modern life,' says Patsy Puttnam, wife of Lord Puttnam and a member of the club's executive council. 'I'd like us also to embrace conservation and environmental concerns, which are ultimately spiritual issues.' Former TV exec Louisa Milne is another Lunar devotee, whose focus is the psychic realm. 'You can learn to be psychic,' she says. 'I've been taught to decipher messages from spirits, done astral travelling and had past-life experiences.'

And it doesn't end there. Forthcoming attractions include a demonstration in facial rejuvenation using energy alone. Beauty inside and out, and all for £150 a year. □