

THE CAVALRY AND GUARDS CLUB

127 Newsletter

July 2007

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Having served on the Committee for the past eleven years, and as Vice Chairman for the last four years, I am very proud to have taken over from Colin Methven as Chairman of our Club. Colin deserves great thanks from us all for everything he did to energize the Club during his tenure.

Over the last few years, as a result of increasing support from the membership together with good management by David Cowdery and his staff, the Club's day-to-day financial position has greatly improved. So much so that this Summer we are able to finance the long overdue refurbishment of the front and back elevations of the Club from our operational surplus (2006) and cash flow.

As members will be aware, the Club's long-term financial position has also been strengthened as a result of the sale of the Annex. Part of the proceeds of the sale will allow us to pay off the long term bank debt, thus further improving cash flow and our ability to finance a rolling and planned refurbishment programme from operating surpluses.

Over the next few months, the Committee will be reviewing the various options and setting priorities for the most effective use of the funds. I will keep you informed of our deliberations in the next Newsletter.

During the next three years, my priorities will be to raise further the standards of food and service in the Club. A priority will be to refurbish the bedrooms so that they meet the standards required by today's members. Most importantly, we will aim to provide what you the members want of your Club. It must be a place where you can enjoy good food in good company and in elegant surroundings. But most importantly, it must be a place where you can have fun!

David Rosier

Chairman

Profile of the New Chairman

David Rosier was educated at Winchester College and Oxford University from where he graduated with a degree in Jurisprudence in 1973. After attending RMA Sandhurst he spent 5 years in 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, serving as a Troop Leader in Germany, an Intelligence Officer in Northern Ireland and as a Squadron second in command at the Junior Leaders Regiment at Bovington. After leaving the Army in 1978 he spent 8 years in the Territorial Reserve.

In 1978 he joined Warburg Investment Management becoming a Director in 1982. He became an Executive Director of S. G Warburg & Co Ltd in 1984.

He was a founding director of Mercury Asset Management Group plc on its flotation in 1987. From then until the take over by Merrill Lynch in 1997, he headed up the Private Investors Group which included the private client, charities, unit trust, personal pensions and investment trust businesses. He was also on the board of Mercury Asset Management's Channel Islands and Swiss subsidiaries.

Following the takeover, he was responsible for Merrill Lynch Investment Managers' private client investment management business. He left Merrill Lynch in 2002.

In 2003 he was one of the founding partners of Thurlough Investment Managers LLP of which he is Chairman. He is also a non-executive Director of Threadneedle Asset Management.

He is a trustee of the Nuffield Trust for the Armed Forces, the Burma Star Association, the Winchester College 1945 War Memorial Fund, the Armed Forces Common Investment Fund and 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards Museum. He is also a

Director of the Forces Pension Society. He was a councillor in the London Borough of Wandsworth from 1982 – 1986.

His sporting interests are golf, tennis, skiing and sailing.

Clubs: Cavalry and Guards (Chairman), Boodle's, Swinley Forest, Valderrama, Hurlingham, Itchenor Sailing Club

Profile of the New Vice Chairman

Commissioned from Sandhurst into 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, Christopher MacKenzie-Beevor's first posting was to Berlin (having completed the final Centurion Troop Leaders' Course at Bovington). After 3 years as an armoured troop leader he was selected to be ADC to the Commander 1 (BR) Corps in Bielefeld, General Sir Jack Harman.

On returning to Hohne, and following several Regimental appointments (including Regimental Signals Officer), he became Adjutant at the time of the Regiment's conversion to the reconnaissance role and subsequently in 1979 was posted to the MOD as the Staff Captain (AMA) to the Quartermaster General, General Sir Richard Worsley (lately Vice President of the Club).

After a short tour with the Queens Own Yeomanry in Newcastle upon Tyne and attendance at the Staff College at Camberley, he was posted as Chief of Staff (Brigade Major) 1st Infantry Brigade in Tidworth. Following 2 years as a Squadron Leader with his Regiment during which time he took the Squadron to Cyprus as the UNFICYP Scout Car Squadron, Christopher was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and assumed an appointment as the Military Assistant to the Commander in Chief UKLF in Wilton for three years, working for three separate Cs-in-

C and for which he was awarded an OBE. After a year as member of the Directing Staff at the Staff College, he assumed command of his Regiment in Wolfenbuttel and deployed over 70% of the Regiment to the 1st Gulf War and subsequently moved them to Tidworth to reconvert to the armoured role. On promotion to Colonel, Christopher was appointed Senior Military Assistant to the Chairman of NATO's Military Committee in Brussels for which he was awarded the CBE. He retired from the Army in 1996 and joined a conference equipment company for 10 years as Director.

Recently appointed Operations Director for the English Courtyard Association, he has been Colonel of the QDG since 2002 (shortly to stand down) and is a member of HM Bodyguard, The Honourable Corps of Gentlemen at Arms.

Living in Wiltshire, Christopher is married to Gail, has a married son and two daughters (all of whom work in London).

His interests include – Fishing, skiing, sailing, shooting – and importantly – wine!



Outgoing Chairman's AGM address

"Following the theme I used at last year's AGM it is probably helpful to contrast the Club's progress in 2006 with that of the two previous years, so as to put it in context.

In 2004 we achieved a surplus of £100k, before exceptional items, and this result was similar to earlier years. 2005 saw the surplus rise to £189k, whilst in 2006 we achieved a surplus of £308k. In addition we spent £70,000 more on improvements and repairs than we did in 2004, thus effectively nearly quadrupling the surplus over the three-year period.

It is easy to get too carried away with the financial results, but they do tell a story of what has been happening in the Club. The primary reasons for this success are that the Club is being used much more by its members, whilst we have kept the costs close to the 2004 level. Most importantly the better results have enabled us to pay off the overdraft, which was running as high as £300k, and is enabling us to pay for the refurbishment of the outside of 127, scheduled to start on the 9th July, out of our own cash.

Turning to the individual profit centres:

- Bedrooms were more fully utilised, which is the result of greater demand, but also better management to ensure all requests are accommodated whenever possible. This has sometimes meant that members have not been given the room they wanted, and we are conscious that we need to strike a sensible balance over this.

- Dining Rooms also had a better year, with the loss we were running of £110k in 2004 now very nearly eliminated. We have worked hard to make the Dining Room more attractive in terms of the quality of the food, the service and the ambience, but we need to continue seeking improvements.

- Banqueting, sometimes referred to as Functions, was our most successful profit centre, with as many as eight different events happening on certain days at the height of the season. I think it is remarkable how the Club copes with this level of activity as well as running the Dining Rooms at the same time. However, as I have already indicated in the December Newsletter, there have been some functions which conflict with the ethos of the Club, and in 2007 we are taking a more selective approach. This process needs to be ongoing but to proceed at a pace that allows improving results from our pure member business to gradually take the place of less suitable business, whilst at the same time maintaining our improved financial results.

- Subscriptions. Whilst our membership numbers are holding at just under 2800, our subscription income was a little less in 2006 than in 2005. This is partly the result of a small reduction of full paying members, but also the result of reduced subscriptions introduced in 2003 to encourage previous members to rejoin. We have begun to address this issue in 2007 and further changes are on their way in 2008, driven partly by the APO ceasing to collect subscriptions in 2008. It is premature to give details of these changes, not least because they are not quite finalised, but I can assure members that the top rate will still be comfortably below the rate which applied prior to the 2003 changes, whilst we are paying special attention to affordability for serving officers, as well as our younger and older members.

Moving away from our trading results, the other big topic has, of course, been the sale of the Annex. Members are already aware that we exchanged contracts with Crossier Properties for £5m, with £1.3m of this sum being paid away to give us the essential access which is needed through Down Street Mews. Completion is due on 27th July.

We have established a Working Party under the leadership of David Rosier, Chairman elect, to make recommendations to the Committee as to how we should proceed once the Club receives the money. As stated at the EGM in January last year when 90% of the votes were in favour of the sale, the way in which this money can be used was carefully spelled out when the Capital Debentures and the Preferred Shares were issued,

and we will be adhering strictly to these conditions.

I would now like to announce the following appointments, which have been approved by the Committee and will take place with immediate effect: -

- Colonel Tom Hall is to become Vice President of the Club, following the retirement of General Sir Richard Worsley. Colonel Tom will be known to you all, and it is hard to imagine a better qualified person to take on this role, given he was Vice Chairman at the time we bought this building, subsequently Chairman for six years and a long serving Trustee. General Richard has been Vice President since 2002 and was a Trustee for the previous 12 years. Prior to that he was a Committee member. On behalf of us all I would like to thank him most sincerely for the hard work and wisdom he has rendered to the Club over many years.

- Ian Frazer is to become an Honorary member in recognition of many years of hard work and financial skill as Committee member, Vice Chairman and Trustee.

- David Rosier is appointed Chairman, as already indicated, following my own retirement from that role. I am delighted that David has agreed to take over. As Vice Chairman he has been a great support to me over the last three years and we have worked together on all the important issues.

Lastly I would like to thank the Trustees, the Committee, the Advisory Council and the Ladies Committee for the work they do on behalf of the Club and the support they have given me during my Chairmanship.

I would also like to give a special thank you to David Cowdery who runs the Club so well for us all, supported by our hardworking and loyal staff.

All of this work would be wasted without the support of the members and I would like to finish by thanking so many of you who are using the Club more and more and whose enthusiasm and support make our work so worthwhile."

Colin N F Methven

Chairman 2004 to 2007

The Incoming Chairman's AGM Address

"Some thirty-three year ago, in early 1974, on joining the Queen's Dragoon Guards from Sandhurst, I was told by the Commanding Officer, Robin Middleton, that it was the custom for all QDG officers to join the Cavalry Club. I did not get the impression that he wanted to debate the matter and accordingly signed the form he put in front of me.

I am very glad that I did and am immensely proud, thirty-three years later, to have been elected Chairman of this marvellous club.

I am also very proud to be taking over from Colin Methven, who has done so much over the past three years to transform the fortunes, and even more importantly, the finances of the Club.

My main aim over the next three-year will be to continue where Colin has left off. In particular, to raise further the standards of food and service in the Club, to continue the refurbishment program to include the bedrooms, but, most importantly, to provide what the members want of their club. To that end, as Colin has mentioned, we have put together a working party to review our spending priorities and to make sure that the money we are shortly to receive from the sale of the annex is used in the most effective way.

The working party will report back to the Committee and will consult the Advisory Council before decisions are made. We will, of course, keep the membership in touch with our thinking.

A word or two about the Committee: I am delighted that

Colonel Christopher MacKenzie-Beevor, has agreed to be Vice-Chairman. As both Colin Methven and I were “three year wonders”, I think it is very important that we have a senior ex-army officer as Vice-Chairman so that we can maintain our strong links with the serving army. I am extremely pleased that James Rucker, John Rothwell, Willie Peto, David Floyd and Sandra Nelson have agreed to continue on the Committee.

As to new blood, I am delighted that Peter Scrope and Simon Brookes-Ward, who have both been on the Advisory Council, have agreed to join the Committee as have Christian Yates, who is a frequent user of the Club, and Buzz West, who importantly was in a Guard's regiment..

Finally, may I say how much I am looking forward to working with David Cowdery and his team, both to provide the services that the members want and also to make the Club a fun place for us all to use and visit”.

David Rosier
Chairman 2007

Trustees

As the Chairman mentions in his AGM address, General Sir Richard Worsley retires this summer as Vice President having served on the Committee, and as a Trustee, for many years. We thank him on behalf of all the Members for his considerable support during his term of office.

Colonel Tom Hall – Chairman from 1990 to 1996 and since then Senior Trustee – takes over the position of Vice President and is warmly welcomed to this new role.

Also, earlier in the year, the President, Chairman and Trustees entertained to luncheon Major General John Strawson who was also retiring as a Trustee after many years of involvement with the Club. Members will particularly remember that it was General Strawson who oversaw the purchase of the freehold of the Club in 1987 and for this considerable achievement the Club is hugely grateful.

May we take this opportunity to wish both Members a happy ‘retirement’!

Suggestions Book

One of the great delights for an archivist is coming across written observations from previous generations that throw light on the workings and ethos of an organization, and the Club is very fortunate that the ‘Suggestions Books’ over the years serve this purpose.

The Committee has just purchased a splendid new book to continue this series and takes this opportunity to remind Members that the purpose of this book is to offer suggestions and ideas for the future growth and well being of the Club. It is not intended, nor should it be used, for complaints or to reprove (both of which should be addressed to a Member of the Committee or the Secretary – Rule 40)

Club Lectures

The Club is very fortunate to have amongst its numbers a wide variety of speakers on an equally varied number of topics, and suggestions for talks and lectures are always well received by the Committee.

During the Autumn our lecture series continues with two outstanding lectures –

October 25th - Major Mark Adkin (Military historian and author of 12 books including, *Goose Green* and *Afghanistan* –

The Bear Trap) talks about the Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaklava with particular reference to the personalities involved, the orders given and the misunderstandings that led to the blunder – as well as the Charge itself. The talk will be in two parts – with a light supper between – and will be illustrated with slides.

November 20th – we welcome this year's Templer Prize Winner – Professor Keith Jeffrey – who will talk on the subject of his award-winning book on Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson (1864 to 1922). More details to follow in the September Newsletter.

Dining Room

During recent months small, but significant, changes have taken place in the Dining Room on the second floor in order to make it both more stylish and welcoming to the many Members who use this delightful room for breakfast and dinner (and occasionally luncheon).

The old ‘buffer’ has been removed from both sections allowing greater flexibility with regard to seating - as well as improving the overall appearance of the rooms- and significant changes have been made to the lighting, producing a much-improved atmosphere in the evenings. Taken together with a general rearrangement of the pictures in this area, the overall effect is most pleasing – and as the evenings draw in and the summer leaves us, Pietro and his team look forward to welcoming you.

Club Lockers

Following a radical review of the status of Lockers within the Club (accompanied with letters to Members both past and present) we are now in the fortunate position of being able to offer Members the facility of a locker in the Club.

These will be offered on a ‘first-come’ basis – and there is no charge for this very useful amenity (the only requirement being the provision of a Member's padlock).

Please enquire of the Secretary for availability.

Royal Ascot

As previously advised, the Ascot Authority worked hard this year to solve some of the teething troubles that had been highlighted by the Royal Meeting in 2006 and we are very happy to report that the new Royal Enclosure and Club Marquee area was an unqualified success this past month.

We were very fortunate to be able to welcome over 350 Members and guests to the Marquee over the five racing days and it is the hope that we will be able to grow this number in the coming years.

The new Marquee, with its easy access to view the racing, adjacency to the other Club Marquees and Royal Enclosure exclusivity provided a winning combination and we look forward to offering a similar facility in 2008.

Refurbishment

During the summer months the Club will be a hive of activity as we move out of the Annex and undertake our programme of planned refurbishments.

Scaffolding to the front and rear elevations goes up at the beginning of this month and will be in place until late October whilst the outside of the building receives a thorough clean, repair, and paint. May we apologize for any inconvenience caused to Members visiting the Club during these very important works.

www.tankmuseum.org

An Independent Museum and Registered Charity No 1102661



Dear Members

Many Members will know that a major rebuild of the Museum of the Royal Armoured Corps (incorporated in the Tank Museum) has just begun at Bovington.

When the redevelopment project is completed in 2009, the Museum will be able to give due and dynamic prominence to the finest international collection of tanks and armoured fighting vehicles in the world, and tell the story of the Regiments and crews that manned them. It also houses the Corps Memorial Room and our Roll of Honour.

In addition to recording our past, the Museum provides an important focus in the life of the Corps today. It is a valuable recruitment tool and helps in the training of all HCav and RAC crewmen attending courses at The Armour Centre. In addition, the first Alumni gathering for former officers of the Corps was held at the Museum in 2006 and due to popular demand, it will be repeated on 23rd June this year.

Perhaps I should emphasise that the new Museum will not diminish the importance of our many excellent regimental museums. The Corps Museum will differ from these both in scale and content and in being ranked with collections of national importance, such as those at Hendon and Portsmouth.

In round terms, the total development costs should not exceed £16m. Thanks to the Heritage Lottery Fund and numerous donations from many sources, we are just £1.9m short of target. In a smaller and more fragmented Army, I believe our new Museum will continue provide a welcome additional focus for the Corps and therefore, the project must succeed.

The Club will be hosting an evening reception on 8th November this year, when Members may have the opportunity to learn more about the project.

Major General Richard Shirreff CBE
Colonel Commandant
The Royal Armoured Corps



For more information, please contact the fundraising office on 01929 462529.



EVENTS 2007

September

- 4th Theatre visit – Sound of Music
20th & 26th Clarence House visit & Luncheon

October

- 3rd Autumn Speaker Dinner
3rd Exhibition visit – Lee Miller
– after luncheon
3rd Afternoon Bridge
10th Theatre visit – ‘Cabaret’
25th Club Lecture
– ‘Charge of the Light Brigade’

November

- 7th Afternoon Bridge
7th Theatre visit
8th Tank Museum Reception
20th Templer Prize Winner Lecture

December

- 3rd Cavalry Colonels Conference & Dinner
4th Club Charity Luncheon
(HRH Princess Royal Trust for Carers)
5th Theatre visit – ‘Grease’
5th Afternoon Bridge
12th Sons & Daughters Dinner
14th Members Christmas Lunch
21st to Jan 2nd Christmas Closing

secretary@cavgds.co.uk