



THE CAVALRY AND GUARDS CLUB
127 Newsletter



March 2006

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

As we reach the end of the first quarter, traditionally the quietest quarter at the Club, I am pleased to report that our trading results are continuing the much-improved trend established in 2005.

The reason is simple; members are using the Club much more. I am very grateful to our regular supporters.

Increasing revenue is enabling us to make further improvements to the building, the most recent of which is the refurbishment, dare I say modernisation, of Geoffrey's Bar. Recently we have also extended our opening hours to late at night and I hope Members will enjoy using the bar more and more. A lively bar is much more fun for everyone, and will also add to the Club's revenue, enabling further improvements to be made to the Club. This is the 'virtuous circle' that we are seeking to achieve.

Apart from repairs to the outside of the building, our next major project is the 3rd floor bedrooms. Last year we carried out extensive re-wiring and fitted new carpets to this floor. This year we are introducing new beds, trouser presses and televisions in the rooms, as well as re-enamelling the marvellous Edwardian baths. Further changes will be kept on hold until the Annex is sold, as we would like to make major changes to this floor, not only modernising it but also creating extra bedrooms.

Events

Members will be aware that we are working hard to extend our traditional activities (i.e. dining and bedrooms) into other area of entertainment, and for ease of reference we have created a fixtures list, which is enclosed. I am extremely grateful to John Rodwell for organising the Speaker Dinners that have proved very popular, and also to the Ladies Committee who are the creative and organisational team behind many of the other events. The Committee have asked me to point out that these events are for all Members, not just Lady Members. Having participated in a number of these occasions myself, I do recommend them to you.

Together with the fixtures list we are enclosing a brief questionnaire to obtain Member's views as to which types of events would be most popular for our next fixtures list.

Annex

Following the EGM we have been working our way through the various issues that need to be addressed before the site can be marketed. I hope to be able to report good progress at the AGM on 7th June.

Thank you all for your continuing support. The Club is going from strength to strength, but there is still much to do.

Colin Methven
Chairman

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Members Benefits & New Members

Although we know that current Members are well aware of the benefits of Membership of the Club, it is sometimes useful to remind ourselves of the range of facilities available – most particularly when seeking to attract new Members.

A full list of all the benefits and services will be available on the new website, but here are one or two of the 'less-remembered' options –

- Locker facilities
– provides useful storage for 'London-wear'
- Changing rooms and bathrooms
– at 'no charge' this practical facility assists with that last-minute change of plans
- Laundry and Dry cleaning
– can be arranged for collection at the Club
- Business facilities and Library
– with high-speed access to the internet and space to review paperwork and meet business colleagues

Reciprocal Clubs

One of the benefits enjoyed by our Members is the use of Reciprocal Clubs whilst travelling overseas and we are fortunate in being able to welcome Members of those Clubs to '127' when they are visiting London.

The list of such Clubs is constantly being reviewed – and we welcome recommendations from our Members of Clubs they would like to see included. (We are particularly looking at the present time for more Clubs in the USA and Canada).

Over the last few months we have added the following Clubs to our list-

- Australian Club, Melbourne, Australia
- Cavalry Club, Oslo, Norway
- Club Nacional, Lima, Peru
- St Mortiz Toboganning Club
- The Northern Club, Auckland, New Zealand
- Tasmanian Club, Hobart, Tasmania

Cards of introduction to all these Clubs can be provided by the Secretary's office.

Piano

The Club has been very fortunate to receive, on permanent loan, from the Vice Chairman and Mrs Rosier a beautiful Bechstein grand piano which now graces the first floor landing.

This will be used for Club events and other cocktail receptions and, during the Christmas season will be played during the early evening to provide a suitably festive atmosphere!

Geoffrey's Bar

As many Members will be aware, Geoffrey Price has been running the Ground Floor bar at the Club since the merger of the two Clubs in 1976 (and prior to that saw many years of service with the Guards Club). The Committee, therefore, thought it fitting that the informal name for the Bar should be recognised in a more 'literal' way – and the placing of a plaque at the entrance to the Bar begun the important works to that area – mentioned by the Chairman in his report.

Geoffrey himself could not recall when the Bar had last been refurbished (thinking it to have been at least 20 years ago!) – and now looks forward to welcoming all Members to this newly restored 'gem'.

We trust that the slightly more 'contemporary feel' will encourage our younger Members to make use of the Bar more frequently- and that in retaining the 'feel and spirit' of the original – we have not upset the 'traditionalists' amongst us!

Some of the glorious cartoons have been 'reframed' during the process – to show them – and the other pictures – at their best – and the changes to the lighting update the Bar by at least half a century!

Book

Plans move ahead to provide the Club with a book detailing '127's' 'comprehensive history, together with anecdotal tales, which we trust will provide both a poignant reminder of the Club's glorious past and a 'marketing' tool for its even greater future.

Thank you to those Members who have already provided some kind reminiscences – and may I urge others to put 'pen to paper' to ensure that this book will be a fitting testament to the life of the Club.

Website

Although some work has been done on the Club's website in the previous twelve months, the Committee has decided a further upgrade is both necessary and useful, if the Club is to have a site that both reflects the high standards that can be found at '127' – and that will provide the necessary information for Members and visitors alike.

We trust that the new site – which will be launched in the coming months - will comprehensively detail all the facilities available at the Club and, at the same time, provide more useful detail to our Members.

It will be the intention – as we continually upgrade the site – to provide a 'Members Only' area, which will encompass a full Membership listing together with the Annual Accounts – and in this way we hope to communicate more regularly with our Members – and provide them with more news of the Club. (This Newsletter will also be available to view on-line).

Royal Ascot

Although the sceptics are still unsure that the Ascot Racecourse will be ready to host the Royal Meeting in June (!) – the Club has firmed up its plans to return to our facility at Ascot – and we trust the new location will provide an even better venue for this highlight of the season.

The Club's marquee will be on the upper level of the Club stand but will also include a small garden area at the foot of the stairs, which we hope will be useful in the event of good weather.

For the first time this year there will only be one sitting a day for luncheon – and we trust that this will ensure that Members are provided with a base they, and their guests, will be able to utilize throughout the day.

Members are reminded that they require a badge for entry to the Marquee throughout the day – and we hope that many Members - not lunching with us- will choose to support the Club in this way – whilst having the opportunity to find a 'haven of calm' amongst the hectic excitement that is Royal Ascot!

David Cowdery
Secretary

REPORTS FROM THE LADIES SUB COMMITTEE

Theatre Evenings – Mrs Sandra Nelson

The theatre evenings started with a visit to 'A Woman In White', not one of Andrew Lloyd Weber's most memorable musicals but a thoroughly enjoyable evening nonetheless.

The second visit was to 'Billy Elliot', which was hugely successful. So much so, that there was a waiting list for tickets and, because of that, another outing has been arranged for the autumn – on October 18th. Tickets are available from the Secretary.

Our third theatre evening on 24th May is to 'Hay Fever' with Judi Dench and Peter Bowles heading the cast, a block booking of 30 tickets has been obtained – so BOOK EARLY!

The format of pre-theatre drinks with canapés in the Club, to and from the theatre by coach, followed by a light supper back at the Club has proved to be very popular with the general comments: 'What a wonderful, hassle-free way of going to the theatre!'

Bridge – Mrs Cathy Methven

We are very fortunate to have Simon Stocken supervising our monthly bridge afternoons. As many of you will know Simon was one of the founders of the Andrew Robson Bridge School. His exceptional knowledge of the game means that he can offer help to everyone who is playing, whatever their standard. (Beginners will be welcome from October).

These afternoon sessions have proved to be great fun and we are gathering more players month by month. However, we would welcome more players (ladies and gentlemen) to join us. All you need to do is call Mrs Soran Marshall on 020 7499 1261 ext 452.

The next session is on
Wednesday 3rd May from 2:00pm to 5:00pm.
(Price - £15 per player including an excellent tea).

Exhibition Visits – Mrs Gunilla Carlbon

The Club organised fascinating visits to two of London's most outstanding exhibitions. Each trip included three-course lunch, plus entrance ticket for £27.50. Non-members were welcome on these occasions.

The Royal Academy, Piccadilly

The Chinese Exhibition is a portrayal of the Three Emperors of China's last dynasty - the Quing Dynasty (1644 – 1911).

The three Emperors of this dynasty were all great military men and political administrators. The exhibition comprises of court and hunting dress of the era, which are extremely elaborate and elegant.

Also on view are large-scale paintings, porcelains, jades and furnishings. These are memorable for their exceptional quality and craftsmanship.

The Queen's Gallery

The British Consul, George Smith, lived in Venice from 1700. He built a collection of Canaletto paintings and drawings, which were bought by George III in 1762. This Royal collection has become the foremost Canaletto collection in the world. It brings together Canaletto's most comprehensive set of Grand Canal paintings, as well as seventy of his most beautiful drawings of Venice.

Future visits are planned to the Constable Exhibition (7th June) and Clarence House (6th September).

Burns' Night Ball – Mrs Zoe Peto

The Burns Night Ball was a resounding success, thanks to the ladies Sub Committee and their friends. It was lovely to see 'Our Club' alive with happy partygoers.

The flowers and decorations were beautiful thanks to Cathy Methven, Sandra Nelson and fellow Committee members.

The dinner was delicious and we all enjoyed ourselves so much. The Band was fantastic, and encouraged by the young, who arrived after dinner, we were all dancing and reeling, even if some of us were unsure of the steps!

It was a truly wonderful evening. We raised £900 for the Army Benevolent Fund. If only more of our Members had joined us, then an even greater sum would have been raised.



FUTURE EVENTS – 2006

May

- 3rd Bridge Afternoon & Tea (2.30pm)
- 10th Annual Lady Members' Luncheon
- 14th Cavalry Memorial Sunday
- 23th Chairman's Dinner
(Trustees, Advisory Council & Committee)
- 24th Theatre visit to 'Hay Fever' with
Judi Dench and Peter Bowles
- 23rd-27th Chelsea Flower Show

June

- 7th AGM followed by Speaker Dinner
(Gentlemen Members only)
- 7th Visit to the Constable Exhibition
& Luncheon
- 14th Bridge Afternoon & Tea (2.30pm)
- 15th Club Luncheon to celebrate
HM The Queen's 80th Birthday
- 17th Queen's Birthday Parade
& Lunch at the Club
- 20th-24th Royal Ascot – Club Tent

July

- 5th Summer Cocktail Party
to introduce New Members
- 6th Hampton Court Flower Show & Picnic

September

- 6th Luncheon and a visit to
'Clarence House'
- 13th Bridge Afternoon & Tea (2.30pm)
- 14th Fine Wine Dinner and Tasting
- 20th Theatre Visit

October

- 4th Bridge Afternoon & Tea (2.30pm)
- 18th Theatre Visit – a return to 'Billy Elliot'
- 25th Autumn Speaker Dinner

November

- 1st Bridge Afternoon & Tea (2.30pm)
- 15th Theatre visit

December

- 6th Bridge Afternoon & Tea (2.30pm)
- 14th Club Christmas Lunch
- 22nd Christmas Closing