

# THE CAVALRY AND GUARDS CLUB

## 127 Newsletter

September 2007

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Since my last Report the Club has been covered in scaffolding to facilitate the cleaning, repairing and painting of the front and rear elevations for the first time in living memory.

Those members who have been able to peek behind the coverings will have seen what a huge improvement this work will make to the look of the Club when it is finished in just over a month's time.

In my last report I promised to keep members in touch with the Committee's deliberations about the most effective use of the funds received from the sale of the Annex. Our thinking has concentrated on two areas: improvements and financial management.

With regard to improvements, our priority is to refurbish the third floor to include additional bathrooms and then move on to the fourth floor. We also need to improve the provision of hot water to the bedroom floors. However, before this work can start we are investigating installing air conditioning/heating/comfort cooling throughout the Club. We have appointed Fielden + Mawson, the Architects and Project Managers who advised us on the refurbishment of the second floor three years ago, to help us with this project. We have also agreed to erect a conservatory structure on the terrace between Geoffrey's Bar and the Writing Room where smokers will be able to puff away to their heart's content.

To move on to financial management, because of the Club's complicated financial structure (whereby the Buildings are owned by 127 Piccadilly plc), the accounting for the proceeds of the sale of the Annex is complex but will, of course, be set out in the next set of annual accounts. Specifically, in conjunction with the Directors of 127 Piccadilly plc we have paid off the long-term bank debt of approximately £450,000 thus improving the Club's operating revenue. We have also decided on the early redemption of the subscription debentures issued by 127 Piccadilly Plc which in any event were due to be redeemed in 2012. Holders of these debentures should therefore look forward to receiving a redemption cheque in early January 2008. Redeeming the subscription debentures will not only further improve the Club's revenue from subscriptions but will allow us to 'release' the fund that had been set aside to pay back the debenture holders in 2012. It is envisaged that this fund, which presently stands in excess of £300,000, will be designated as a 'rainy day' Reserve Fund.

It is very pleasing to see so many members using the Club and to find the Dining Rooms so full at lunch and dinner. For the Club, this August was the best August for many years and from the advance bookings, this autumn looks to be extremely busy. I look forward to seeing as many members as possible at the Member's Christmas Lunch on December 20th if not before.

**David Rosier**  
*Chairman*

### The Cavalry and Guards Club Book

Plans are now well underway to produce a splendid book to be published in 2009 to celebrate one hundred years of the Clubhouse - and the combined histories of both Clubs. A small Committee has been formed under the auspices of the Vice Chairman - Colonel Christopher MacKenzie-Beevor to oversee the project and the resulting book promises to be, as you would expect, a handsome volume, with full colour plates and an interesting as well as entertaining content.

A flyer will be sent out in January offering the chance to subscribe to the book (thereby having your name recorded for posterity) and it is hoped that many Members will also take the opportunity to provide their own recollections or tales of the Club so that the book encompasses many aspects of life here at '127'.



## 2008 Subscription scheme

It is very probable that a preoccupation of every Committee since the Club was founded has been the level of Members' subscriptions and how this figure relates to general Club income and expenditure.

This is certainly not a problem that is unique to the Cavalry and Guards Club. Other Clubs have made grievous errors in maintaining subscriptions at a constant level for too long and realised too late that the burden of debt and unprofitable trading spelled the loss of the Club. Others have made the opposite mistake – raising subscriptions to an unsustainable level – with the same result!

Committees over the years believe they have made sensible decisions on this thorny issue – and the Club today offers substantially better value in terms of subscription dues than most of its St James' contemporaries.

However, the system here, forged as it was in a military background, relied heavily on Members informing the Club as their rank and circumstances changed, and this has not always been successful (generally to the Club's detriment!).

Furthermore, there has for many years been a constant desire to seek a way to accommodate Members who find themselves retired and living in the country and for whom the 'full' membership is perceived as somewhat expensive. Wisely past Committees have always steered away from a 'Country Membership' firmly believing that too many of our Members live outside London to make such a scheme viable.

Taking all this into account the Committee, after many hours of deliberation and thoughtful planning, have come up with a new and simplified scheme which they trust will recognise both the military heritage of the Club – and the need to move forward to meet the demands of today's membership.

Fundamentally, the new scheme will be entirely 'Age-Related' – and will benefit both younger and older Members – whilst not substantially increasing the burden upon the 'full' membership category of the 40 – 65 year olds.

For 2008 the subscription amounts payable will be as follows -

Age	18-22	23-29	30-39	40-65	66-69	Over 70
Full Subscription	£150	£180	£210-570	£600**	£450	£350
Army & TA	£90	£108	£126-342	£360	-	-
Overseas & Ladies 50%	£75	£90	£105-285	£300	£225	£175

\*\* Subscription credit of £50 for 2008 only

Preserving our background and heritage, the rates applicable to those serving in the Regular Army and TA will be 60% of the full rate (as illustrated above) – and generally these amounts will be comparable with those payable under the old '1 day' or '2 day' pay scheme. The two-year 'transitional period' discount will continue to apply for those leaving the Army.

Between the ages of 30 and 39, when previously the Club has lost Members due to large incremental increases, the 'steps' will be in annual smaller increments of £40+, which the Committee hopes will enable more Members to stay with the Club in years when financial priorities are elsewhere (children, homes and schools, etc!)

At the other end of the scheme, the Committee will continue to run the '50 years' Membership benefit to include those qualifying up to, and including, the year 2010 and the '60 years' Membership (no subscription fee) scheme will remain for the future – recognising the invaluable support those Members will have given the Club.

The '110' scheme which has been a misnomer since all the rates were dramatically reduced in 2003 – no longer exists, since it would have meant this scheme would have had higher rates than any other category.

As before, all subscription rates will carry a 10% Penalty for late payment (after 31st January/if not by Direct Debit), and finally the 'Wives' category will remain at £125 for 2008.

The Committee trusts that not only will this 'new' scheme lay a solid foundation for the future membership of the Club, but that it may encourage new or 're-joining' Members from all age categories – particularly those at either end of the spectrum.

## Army Pay Office (APO)

For a number of years, we have requested that all Officers becoming Members of the Club complete a Direct debit mandate and this has become the preferred method of collecting subscriptions on an annual basis.

However, there are still several hundred serving Officers that have had their subscriptions collected through the Army Pay Office as a deduction from their pay.

Due to changes within the structure of the APO earlier this year, this method of paying subscriptions will no longer be available and the Club will therefore be requesting those Members to complete a Direct Debit form. These will be sent from the Club shortly - and we would ask that they be completed as soon as possible to assist the Club in facilitating the various changes the new subscription scheme will bring.

## Club Table

Central to the ethos of the Club is the provision of a Club Table in the Dining Rooms at both Luncheon and Dinner. It is here that Members can meet and converse and it provides an important focal point for Club life.

The Committee is, therefore, considering ways to encourage greater use by Members of this excellent aspect of the Club and will be presenting some proposals in the New Year. Meanwhile, Members are also reminded that a comprehensive and delicious 'Bar Menu' is available in both Geoffrey's Bar and The Ladies Bar ( from 12noon to 9pm ) and this provides a range of light dishes and sandwiches for Members and their guests to choose.

## Value for Money – Wines

At the same time as reminding Members about the splendid food available in the Dining Rooms, the Committee would also like to take the opportunity to mention to Members that our Wine List represents exceptional value for some of the finer wines on the list. The Club's Sommelier – Julio Alvarez – is always pleased to recommend something delicious to go with a particular dish – and we trust Members will welcome his comprehensive knowledge and experience in making the perfect choice.

## Update on Refurbishment Programme

As the Chairman mentions in his report, the summer has seen a hive of activity within the Club as final ties with the Annex were severed and work was done to the front and rear elevations of the main building.

Within the basement, in particular, much has been achieved to accommodate new locker rooms for the staff, a new walk-in fridge in the kitchen, a new maintenance workshop, new wine cellars (in the vaults under the Piccadilly pavement), a new electrical switch room and a new accounts and membership office (which should be finished during the coming month).

Once we have completed these works we will be able to finish the remaining bedrooms in the basement, which will then mean we are only 4 rooms short of our previous number of bedrooms and, as previously indicated, these should be found in the changes to the 3rd floor being undertaken next year.

## Barber

Tucked away in the Basement, many Members are probably blissfully unaware that the Club has the services of one of London's most respected Barbers – Philip. Not only does he provide an excellent haircut or shave, but he is a veritable source of the best of the Club's stories and the provider of numerous colourful and dubious jokes.

Appointments are available Tuesday through Friday from 10am – and Philip can be reached via the Club switchboard (020 7659 0910).

## Reciprocal Club profile

### University Club of Chicago

A relatively recent addition to the list of Clubs with which we reciprocate is The University Club of Chicago which is located in downtown Chicago (the heart of the Loop) at Michigan Avenue and Monroe Street, overlooking Lake Michigan, Millennium Park and ½ block from The Art Institute of Chicago. Several theatres are nearby, such as the Goodman and Shubert Theatre and excellent shopping along Michigan Avenue and State Street is only a few blocks away.

There are 60 beautifully appointed sleeping rooms and all of the rooms have been recently upgraded. These "Millennium" rooms have updated washrooms with heated-tiled floors, white goose down pillows and comforters, 32" JVC flat screen televisions, wireless internet connection, and Denon DVD/CD receiver player with Bose speakers.

Dining facilities include the Cathedral Hall, a Fine Dining room, College Hall, which is self-service Dining and the Front Grill.

There are also extensive Fitness and recreational facilities including a swimming pool and squash courts as well as a Barber, Billiards room and Library.

Introduction cards or letters to all our Reciprocal Clubs are available from the Secretary's Office – or on request by email [secretary@cavgds.co.uk](mailto:secretary@cavgds.co.uk). A full list of the Reciprocal Clubs is available on our website.

## Club Ties

Since the Club tie was introduced over a year ago, to a good degree of critical acclaim, over 250 Members have purchased a tie from the Secretary's office – and we trust this trend will continue until every Member has one in their possession!

As a reminder, the ties incorporate the three Club colours of blue, claret and gold – and are available for £20.

## Club Staff

As the year quickly draws to its conclusion, Members are reminded that an opportunity to recognise the service provided by the Club's staff is offered annually in the form of the General Goldsmid Fund and a circular to encourage participation in this Fund will be sent with Subscription invoices in November.

The Fund is shared amongst all the staff, but Members are occasionally interested in familiarising themselves with the names of certain staff - particularly the new ones- and attention is drawn to the portfolio of photographs maintained in the Writing room which provides such details. We trust Members will find this useful.

## CLUB EVENTS

## October

- 10th Theatre visit - 'Cabaret' Tickets £85.00pp - Supper and coach transfers included
- 25th Club Lecture – 'Balaclava' Lecture with Slides by Military Historian and author Major Mark Adkin Tickets £45.00pp - Supper included

## November

- 7th Theatre visit – 'Shadowlands' - starring Charles Dance Tickets £85.00pp - Supper and coach transfers included
- 8th Tank Museum Reception (please apply to the Secretary for an invitation to this event)
- 14th Exhibition Visit to the Royal Academy - A Passion for British Art 1700-1850, Paul Mellons' Legacy £25.00pp – Lunch included
- 20th Templer Prize Winner Lecture Keith Jeffery speaks on Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson 'A Political Soldier' Tickets £48.00pp (to include supper)
- 27th 'The Three Cavaliers' A panel discussion with three authors (The Earl Spencer, Lord Charles Fitzroy and Lucy Worsley) who have recently written books on the Civil War. Chaired by Allan Mallinson Tickets at £20 pp – to include a glass of champagne

## December

- 4th Club Charity Luncheon – in aid of The Princess Royal Trust for Carers Please see enclosed flyer for further details. Tickets £50.00pp
- 5th Theatre visit – 'Grease' Tickets £85.00pp - Supper and coach transfers included
- 12th Sons & Daughters Dinner Please see enclosed flyer for further details. Tickets £45.00pp
- 20th Club Christmas Lunch Free - Members only (drinks to be charged on consumption)
- 21st Christmas Closing (Club reopens on Wednesday 2nd January)

## 2008 Diary dates

Tickets have been purchased for Cirque de Soliel at the Royal Albert Hall on January 23rd and for The Chinese Terracotta Army Exhibition at The British Museum on February 28th.

**To book any of the above events please contact Frances Watt, 020 7659 0906**

