



THE CAVALRY AND GUARDS CLUB 127 Newsletter

June 2008

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

June has been a busy month for the Club and it was wonderful to see so many Members and their guests at the Waterloo Ball on June 12th. Thank you, on behalf of the charity, for supporting this splendid evening.

It was also a pleasure to welcome Members to the Annual General Meeting earlier in the month – and my report to that meeting follows for those of you that were unable to attend.

Sadly, June has also seen increasing reports in the newspapers about the downturn in the economy. I therefore think it is an opportune moment to remind Members that dining and entertaining at the Club provides wonderful

'value for money' when compared to many of London's more 'commercial' hospitality venues. During the month of August, as in previous years, our Club remains open and we take the opportunity to welcome members from other London Clubs. As always, we aim to show them what they miss by not being a member at '127'!

May I wish you and your families the happiest of summer holidays, and I look forward to seeing you at the Club in the Autumn.

David Rosier - *Chairman*

CHAIRMAN'S AGM REPORT

"The completion of the sale of the Annex in July 2007 was a transformational event for the Club. It not only got rid of what was becoming a costly albatross round the Club's neck but also enabled us to pay off almost £500k of long term bank debt, repay the subscription debenture holders 5 years early, and after tax and all expenses, left us with £1.5m in the bank. Huge thanks are due to my predecessor, Colin Methven for masterminding this financial coup.

In 2007 the Club again produced an operating surplus of just over £300k and this was after spending £140k on improvements and repairs. Let us drill down into this figure and look at the different revenue streams.

Bedrooms: during the Autumn we brought an additional 4 new single bedrooms in the basement on stream (making 7 in total) partially replacing the 11 lost as a result of the sale of the Annex. The contribution from bedrooms on a like for like basis increased over 2006 as a result of the very high level of occupancy on Monday to Thursday nights.

Dining Rooms: continued their improvement of the previous year with the 2nd Floor Dining Room in the evening particularly showing greatly improved results. We believe that this is due to the enhanced quality of the food, friendly and efficient service and the value for money when compared to other London eating establishments. It is pleasing that we have received many

plaudits for the improvements made in both the Coffee Room and the Dining Room in recent months.

Function income: remains one of the mainstays of the Club's finances. As a result of increased function business introduced by Members, we have been able to deliver on our pledge to reduce "business" functions. Over the past year, one of the pleasures of my job has been to receive numerous letters of thanks from Members praising the Club's staff for their contribution to yet another successful party. Alix King, our Chef Paul Farmer and Banqueting Manager Mark Beasley should specifically be thanked for their efforts in this area.

Membership: in 2007 we introduced a new and simplified subscription system based on age, the subscription increasing gradually to the age of 40 where it peaks until 65 when it begins to decline. As befits a Club with our heritage, serving officers in the Regular and Territorial Army get a 40% discount on the appropriate subscription.

The membership of the Club at 2,800 as at 31st December 2007 was a similar figure to that at the end of 2006.

Pleasingly there have been a considerable number of rejoiners in the past year, which I hope is a result of the improved reputation of the Club. Future membership of the Club is a constant concern and the Committee is conscious that the national service

"bulgers" are not getting any younger and that with a much reduced Army, the "natural" intake of newly commissioned officers is getting smaller. It is all the more important, therefore, that we provide the services that all our members require from their Club in order to ensure that they remain members throughout their lifetimes.

Martyn Pocock has joined the Committee with a specific "membership" brief and will be considering how we can persuade more sons and daughters of members to join the Club.

Refurbishment: 2007 was a busy year. Most visibly, the Front and Back elevations of the Club were cleaned and repaired possibly for the first time since the rebuilt '127' opened for business in 1909. I think we all agree that the result has been outstanding.

Possibly of more importance to the efficient functioning of the Club, the Basement working areas of the Club have been transformed: the Finance and Membership Office has been moved, staff changing rooms have been created, the kitchens have been further improved and new wine cellars have been created in the old coal cellars under the pavement.

If that was not enough, the 2nd floor ladies' lavatories have been refurbished and, although admittedly this has taken place in 2008, the Terrace has been transformed with the canopy and new seating.

So, all in all, it was a pretty eventful year for your Club.

As to the future, the Committee have agreed that we must aim to produce an operating surplus of circa £250k per annum (adjusted for inflation) in order to finance a rolling and planned refurbishment programme from our Operating Surplus. As an example of this, I would remind members that the Coffee Room was last refurbished over 10 years ago in 1997 and is beginning to look a little tired.

I could not finish without thanking the Committee for their support and hard work during the year - Willy Peto, John Rothwell, Sandra Nelson, Christian Yates, Peter Scrope, Simon Brooks-

Ward, Martyn Pocock, and Buzz West. All of them are busy and yet they have found time to make their expertise available to the Club. In particular, the Vice-Chairman Christopher Mackenzie-Beevor has been an excellent sounding board, and on occasion, foil to what some regard as my youthful exuberance.

I would also like to thank the Vice President and the Trustees for their advice and guidance in what has been an interesting year.

Finally, I would like to give a special thanks to David Cowdery for his energy and enthusiasm and his determination to continually improve things at our Club. A big thank you

too to all his loyal and hard working staff who are catering for our every need. With the training schemes that the Secretary has instigated, I believe that the level of service we are offering has improved greatly.

However, the most important thing for the success of the Club is the support of the Members.

I would, therefore like to thank all of you who are using the Club more frequently and I hope enjoying it more and more".

David Rosier - Chairman

Russian Shells

For the many years since the two Russian mounted shells were conveyed to the Club from the old Guards Club (upon the merger in 1976), they have languished on the Terrace in a poor state of repair.

Older Members of the Guards Club may remember that they once stood proudly at the entrance to the Guards Club – and the Vice President suggested that when the refurbishment to the '127' façade was completed this would be an appropriate place to display them.

Beautifully restored, painted, and with a discreet brass plaque announcing the Club's name, they now provide a fitting enhancement of the Club's front entrance – and at the same time have become something of a tourist photo opportunity!

The wording on the original brass plaques had long since disappeared – but as our research for the Club book has found, back in 1950 they had at least a vague outline of the remaining words

**TWO RUSSIAN SHELLS
SHELLED KILLING
AND THE SANDBAG
'BATTERY' AT THE BATTLE OF INKERMAN
AFTERWARDS SIR HENRY K....
SENT UP A PARTY OF BLUEJACKETS WHO BROUGHT
THEM ON BOARD HMS RODNEY AND
SO HOME TO ENGLAND**

From the Club Archives -

March 28th, 1950, the Secretary of the Guards Club writes to General Sir George D Jeffries ... *"We are having the two cannon balls repainted, and we are anxious to have the brass plate re-inscribed. We have taken a 'rubbing', the result of which I enclose (as above). I was wondering whether you would be so kind as to let me know where we can ascertain the missing words"*.

In reply Sir George, writing from the House of Commons, - *"... I am very interested to hear that the two old Russian projectiles are being repainted and I hope it means that they are going to be set up again outside the door.*

As regards the inscription, I am afraid although I think I read it when I first joined, that I have not looked at it for many years and I do not know a bit what the missing words were except one.

There is no doubt that at the beginning of line five, the word 'Battery' should be inserted. As you know the Sandbag Battery was a very famous point around which the struggle of the Battle of Inkerman ebbed and flowed and this Battery was defended throughout the day by the Guards Brigade."



AGM

At this year's Annual General Meeting it was once again suggested that the timing of the event might be reviewed, so as to give the opportunity for more 'out-of-town' Members to attend this important meeting.

The Committee has since discussed this suggestion and would like to see if does indeed result in more Members attending. However, the 2009 AGM is to be held in conjunction with the launch party for the Club book which, it is hoped, many Members will wish to attend, so the decision has been made to make the change in 2010 - and the time of that meeting will obviously be notified well in advance.

Members Handbook

The Committee decided that the Members Handbook -providing a list of all Club Members- should be produced on a biennial basis and therefore the next issue will go to press at the end of this year for sending out to Members in early 2009.

Members might like to take this opportunity to ensure that they are listed appropriately (with the correct rank, decorations and Regiment) - and the Membership Secretary, Frances Watt, will be happy to verify these details for Members.

Summer Redecoration

During the quieter months of July and August, work will be undertaken on the refurbishment of the Balaclava Room (as previously advised) providing a new Library and business facilities in this room, and at the same time, the Gentlemen's lavatories on the Ground floor will be redecorated and a new marble floor installed.

Others works will include some redecoration of bedrooms on the fourth floor and behind-the-scenes refurbishment work to the serving pantries on the 1st and 2nd floors.

St Petersburg visit



Rather belatedly we bring you news of the visit by Club Members to St. Petersburg that took place in February this year.

Excellently organised through the offices of the tour leader Gillie Keown-Boyd (Missenden Tours) and with a good local guide Elena Koshutskaya, the party arrived in St Petersburg on Wednesday 20th February and were accommodated in the Angletterre Hotel.

The following day they walked to the 18th century Winter Palace, the State Hermitage and the city's most impressive building. This existing palace was started in 1711 and completed by Rastrelli in 1755. The sumptuously furnished State Halls and the world famous Museum contain an unrivalled collection of European masterpieces; the majority amassed by Catherine the Great.

After lunch in the Adamant Restaurant they proceeded to Prince Yussupov's Palace, the most spectacular of the 19C mansions in the city and scene of Rasputin's murder in December 1916 - now eerily re-created in wax. A tour was taken of the staterooms, some with their original furniture and of the exquisite rococo private theatre where Chaliapin and Nicholas II performed.

On the Friday the group went by coach to the Catherine Palace, also built in the early 18th century and named after Peter the Great's second wife. Rebuilt in 1752 by Rastrelli, the dazzling rococo staterooms include the legendary "Amber Room", which has been newly recreated after its loss during World War II.

A lunch in the Old Tower Restaurant featured traditional Russian dishes and then the group drove to the Palace of Pavlovsk, an architectural jewel dating from 1786. Built by the Scottish architect, Charles Cameron in neo-classical style, and commissioned by Catherine the Great for her son Paul I (hence the name, Pavlovsk) every room of this beautiful palace is filled with superlative furniture, chandeliers, tapestries, paintings and objets d'art exemplifying the best of 18C Russian and European taste and craftsmanship. Before leaving Pavlovsk the group enjoyed a sleigh ride in the beautiful park which surrounds the palace.



On the Saturday the visit was to the Russian State Museum, originally Grand Duke Mikhail's palace. These magnificent halls, with interiors by Rossi, are

home to an unsurpassed collection of Russian paintings, ranging from the austere beautiful icon panels dating from the 13th century to the works of Diaghilev and the Avant Garde. Following a quick visit to the Church on the Spilled Blood, there followed lunch at Demianova Ukha Restaurant, famed for its fish dishes and then a drive to Hare Island to see the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul, built in 1712 by Trezzini. This cathedral is the burial place of the Tsars from Peter the Great onwards and is one of the great architectural landmarks of the city. The day then finished with a visit to the beautiful and rarely visited Yelagin Palace, picturesquely located on the traffic-free Yelagin Island on the Neva River.

The last day, Sunday commenced with a visit to Nicholas I's "Gothic Cottage" (1829, Menelaws) in the informal Imperial Alexandra Park and this charming personal retreat of the Tsar, with its restored and original neo-Gothic furniture and fittings, remains a unique example of 19th century Russian style. There was then a short drive to the Grand Palace of Peterhof, Peter the Great's "Versailles" which overlooks the Gulf of Finland. The spectacular enfilade of rooms miraculously retain their interiors and furnishings despite the ravages of World War II.

After lunch in the Garden Cafe there, time was left to admire the park, cascade and gardens, which led down to the Gulf of Finland, before heading back to the airport and home.

Waterloo Ball

The highlight of the Club's summer season was the Waterloo Ball held on Thursday 12th June - just prior to Trooping the Colour and Royal Ascot week.



This splendid occasion, supporting the Sir Oswald Stoll Foundation (for homeless servicemen and women) saw over 250 members and guests enjoy a champagne reception followed by a four-course dinner with wines and then dancing to the 'Eurocrats' or getting down to disco in Geoffrey's Bar. A 'Silent Auction' in aid of the charity raised over £7,500 on the evening thanks to the generosity of Members.

Not quite blessed with the warmest of evenings, the rain however did keep at bay allowing many guests to enjoy the Terrace where drinks and breakfast canapés were served well into the early hours!

2015 is, of course, the 200th anniversary of Waterloo - but such was the acknowledged success of the evening, that the Ladies Committee are already working on plans for the next ball to be held in 2010!



Help for Heroes

This relatively new Charity has been enjoying some well-deserved publicity of late and the Club is always keen to promote and assist when possible the work of this splendid organisation which has already raised over £3 million in a very short space of time.

We therefore bring to Members the following two events.

Inaugural Exhibition Polo Match

Taking place at Cirencester Park Polo Club on Saturday August 30th, matches will include The Army Polo Team v Help for Heroes and Yeomanry TA100 v Help for Heroes and alongside the polo there will be other military vehicle attractions and a fly-past as well as numerous trade stands.

Tickets for a full day package including luncheon and tea are

available at £80 per person or a Spectator Picnic pass is available at £10 per car (picnic not included!)

For further information, Members may call 01285-653135 or email h4hpolo@hotmail.com

The Heroes Ball

On 5th September 2008, nine hundred guests, including senior military personnel and corporate and celebrity sponsors, will gather at the prestigious Hurlingham Club in London.

The Band of the Scots Guards will accompany a champagne reception and after a three-course dinner, an auction of eight lots will be hosted by a Sotheby's auctioneer. After dinner there will be a live band and casino.

For more details about the evening itself, please visit theheroesball.org.uk

Henry Dallal - Wednesday October 22nd

World-renowned for two previous shows 'Pageantry & Performance' and 'Riding the Frontier', Henry Dallal has agreed to show Club Members photographs from his forthcoming book, 'Horse Warriors', a tribute to one of the few remaining mounted cavalry regiments, the 61st Cavalry Regiment of the Indian Army.

The vitality of Henry's photographs, combined with evocative sound- recordings of the troops and music, produce a show more akin to moving pictures than stills, and features the traditional horse and camel fairs in the Thar Desert, the Victorian Babugarh stud, the nomadic Nihang warriors mounted on India's indigenous Marwaris, the international polo grounds of Jaipur, as well as the 61st's operational duties on patrol and on ceremonial functions at the annual Republic Day Parade.

Henry's photographs have been exhibited in Britain and internationally, including Kensington Palace, 1999; the Royal Geographical Society, 2002; Windsor Castle, 2003; Naples Museum of Art, Florida, 2004; the Smithsonian Institute, 2004; Blenheim Palace, 2006 and the International Museum of the Horse, Lexington, Kentucky, 2008. The Royal Mail used images from his book Pageantry & Performance for the special edition of stamps Trooping the Colour.

Henry was also commissioned recently to take formal portraits of Her Majesty The Queen, HRH The Princess Royal, HRH Princess Haya and HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashed al Maktoum, Ruler of Dubai. He is working on a book on the Sultanate of Oman's Royal Cavalry and also one on The King's Troop RHA. Other books to which he has contributed include Endurance Racing for His Majesty King Khalifa of Bahrain, Magic of Monaco for HSH Prince Albert, Horse; and Flowers in the Park commemorating the public's mourning for Diana, Princess of Wales. The BBC Today programme awarded his photograph of the 'Blue Mafia', the riding staff of the Household Cavalry, the Best View of Britain at 6am.

An intrepid mountaineer and traveller, frequently undertaking expeditions through Central Asia and other remote parts of the world, following in the footsteps of notable adventurers on horseback, Henry Dallal is a member of the Alpine Club and a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society.

Places at £15 each. to include a Cocktail reception prior to the talk, are available to be booked through the Membership Secretary, Frances Watt.

CLUB EVENTS 2008

July

- 1st Cigar & Port Dinner
- 16th Theatre visit to The Globe (matinee) & luncheon

September

- 1st Evening Tour - Buckingham Palace
- 17th Grouse Dinner

October

- 16th Autumn Speaker Dinner
- 16th Theatre visit
- 22nd Henry Dallal - Talk and Show

November

- 13th Theatre visit

December

- 10th Sons & Daughters Dinner
- 18th Members' Christmas Lunch
- 23rd Christmas Closing

