



THE RAG

ARMY & NAVY CLUB

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ISSUE 64

ARMY AND NAVY CLUB UPDATES

Update from the Chairman



External events continue to have had a significant impact on Club activities. It is encouraging to see how stoic our Members have been in the face of challenges such as the rails strikes and how nimbly the staff have dealt with last-minute changes.

The future is looking bright this year. We have a packed programme of events; the Coronation weekend and a Waterloo Dinner being a couple of highlights. The all-volunteer Board has worked tirelessly to support the CEO on both the exciting and the more prosaic tasks. We are in their debt, for without them the Club would not function. May I also take the time to thank those non-Board Members, too many to mention, who have stepped up to assist us with the various committees and projects. They have all have been generous with their time. Their support and challenge of senior leadership has been invaluable. If I have learnt anything over the past four years on the Board, it is that the Rag will always face headwinds. These must be managed correctly else the Club will be blown off course. To do this, we need competent people on the Board.

We must now plan for the future. At the AGM in July there will be 2 Board vacancies. It is also worthy of note that after the 2024 AGM the Board will have to vote in a new Chair. The future Chair has to be an elected Member of the Board. Consequently, there is a need for Members who have the business skills and time to play an integral part as we embark on a changing of the guard. I encourage those Members who are willing to serve the Club to step forward.

On a positive note, as a result of hard work and your continued engagement, we remain a profitable club. Technically, of course, we do not make a profit but show a surplus. We have a sound war chest and a strong balance sheet. We have an engaged and loyal Membership base and as reported previously, if we continue the upward trend the time may soon be upon us when we have to introduce a waiting list.

Our staff look after us well and in return we look after them. They received a Christmas Fund payment this year which was multiples higher than most other London Club staff. Looking to the future, the Board have agreed with the CEO a five-year investment programme for enhancements to your Club. Robin Bidgood touches on this below. I know that he is keen to engage with Members on the style aspect of the changes.

- Frank Froud, Chairman

Update from the CEO



I start with a huge thank you to Members, from the staff, for the generosity shown for last year's Staff Christmas Fund. It was the largest pot on record and greatly appreciated by the team, thank you.

What a difference a year can make. This time last year we were still emerging from Covid Plan B measures and footfall at the Club was only slowly returning. 2023, by contrast, has started very well, with revenues in excess of budget for both January and February. Attendance at Member events has been great, as has feedback on the range and quality of speakers and topics. There is plenty more planned in the coming months, with several due to take place on the Ribbon Bar Terrace, under the new awning. The upgrade has given us much greater flexibility and extended usage across the year, even when it rains! Please do find out more on page 5 of this Newsletter.

Having survived the turmoil of the last few years, attention now turns to how we keep the Club vibrant, relevant and delivering for Members. Whilst there will be more of the same, we must make sure the facilities and fabric are invested in appropriately to achieve success. Some of the 'bones' of the building are 60 years old and will need upgrading in the next few years. We will be sharing at the AGM in July some draft proposals for a Capex plan that should keep 36 Pall Mall in good shape for many more years to come.

- Robin Bidgood, CEO

BOARD ELECTIONS

Board 2023-2024: New Directors Election

You will have seen the Chairman has mentioned in his article on [page 2](#) that there will be 2 Board Directors vacancies at the AGM on 5 July. Full Military Members or Full Members who wish to stand should contact the Company Secretary (laurence.denton@armynavyclub.co.uk) by 1 May 2023 to receive an application form. Your nomination must be supported by a proposer and seconder in accordance with Article 10.5. By so doing, you will agree these details will be promulgated in the Members' area of the Club website.

The election will take place at the AGM with the right to vote by proxy in advance. Proxies will be sent out with the candidates' profiles which will also be posted on the Club website.



Art Collection

The Club Collection has been expanding continually over the past few months thanks to many kind donations of books, artworks and artefacts from Members. We are always very grateful to those who think of us when looking to re-home their treasures, as gifts are our primary means of acquisition.

However, to ensure that we only accept objects that are relevant to the Club's Artefact Donation Policy, we ask that Members always contact the Collections Manager before bringing items to the Club.

Amy works Tuesdays and Wednesdays, or can be reached at amy@therag.co.uk or 02078498304. Please do get in touch in advance and thank you for your generosity.

Members Select Wine List

In order to provide an additional benefit to Members, as well as to improve the wine experience at the Club, a Members Select Wine List will be introduced in April. It will be populated with small quantities of high-quality, sought-after wines selected by the Wine Advisory Committee and purchased as bin-ends or at auction. The wines will be offered at more favourable prices than would normally be the case. The list, which is in addition to the existing wine list, will contain a limited number of bottles so will not be available for off-sales.

Whilst on the subject of wines, the Wine Advisory Committee is looking for a Member to join them on the Committee. Members who wish to be considered should express their interest to the Company Secretary by 1 May 2023 laurence.denton@armynavyclub.co.uk with a short description of relevant attributes and knowledge.



WHAT'S ON

Discover our exciting series of events and offerings we have in store this season!

Joining Members in the weeks ahead; the Rt. Hon. Tobias Ellwood MP, retail master Justin King, and award-winning war correspondent Christina Lamb. There will also be a Royal Ascot preview supper and a Ribbon Terrace cigar event. Following on from Burns Night, lunches with Lord Dobbs and Baroness Hale, Fireside Chats with Lord McDonald, and former Board Member Jeremy Archer and a Cheltenham Festival preview over supper with Paul Nicholls, please see the dates for your diary below:



CHORAL COCKTAIL
EVENING
19th May



BRIEFING ROOM WITH
TOBIAS ELLWOOD
22nd May



MAJOR STEPHEN
SIMMONS TALK
25th May



FIRESIDE CHAT WITH
CHRISTINA LAMB
05th June



LUNCH WITH
JUSTIN KING
07th June



BILLY DUFF'S
SUPPER CLUB
09th June



TROOPING THE
COLOUR
10th June



SAMUEL PEPYS & THE
COVENT GARDEN PIAZZA
23th June

REFER A FRIEND

Refer a friend to join the Club, if their application is ratified
you will receive a £50 credit on your Rag card
in January 2024!



MEMBERS' TESTIMONIALS

"A quick one to say thank you for looking after us all so well today - cracking lunch. And the refurb of the Ribbon Terrace is superb! Great job all. Thank you."

- Thank You -

"I enjoyed the talk immensely. Brilliantly hosted and fascinating content. I came away thinking the event had justified my annual subscription on its own!"

Fireside Chat with Lord McDonald

"Just to say how much we enjoyed the Club Dinner on Tuesday evening and the lunch yesterday. Good food, wine, company and excellent and most knowledgeable speakers - what more could we want from the Rag?"

Annual Club Dinner & Bonny Lunch

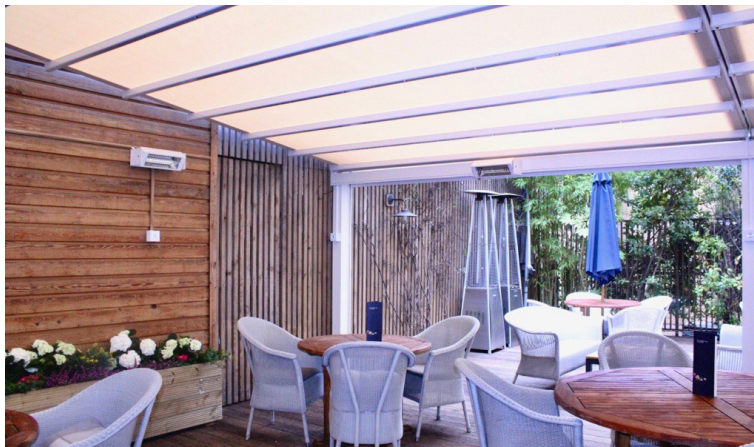
"It was an excellent evening with Lana-May and one of the best musical events The RAG has put on. Just a great character too and the audience loved her."

Cabaret Evening with Lana-May

RIBBON BAR NEWS

Introducing the new awning

Work is now complete on the new Ribbon Bar awning, providing much greater and more effective cover to the outside space. The new cover is waterproof, allowing Members to remain enjoying their food and drinks when the inevitable shower arrives. No longer will they have to scurry for cover inside. Additional heaters, new planting and built in lighting have been installed to complete the look; please come and enjoy!



SUMMER EVENTS

Join us for some exciting Events this Summer!



PICNICS

Indulge in a delightful outdoor experience during our picnic season, spanning from 15 May until 10 September 2023, from noon until 5 pm. Secure your reservation by submitting an inquiry form available on our website.



BARBECUE

The Barbecue season on the Terrace is now open for bookings every Wednesday from 16 May to 6 September. Indulge in our mouth-watering grilled dishes, carefully crafted to delight your taste buds. Reserve your table now through our website.



PRODUCERS ON THE TERRACE

The exciting rebrand of Tastings on the Terrace to Producers on the Terrace is here! Join us from 4 May to 7 September to raise a glass to the extraordinary flavours and captivating aromas selected by our loyal wine and spirit producers. Book your table now via our website.



AFTERNOON TEA

Join us for a delightful afternoon tea experience. You can now book through our website. You will be able to choose from a variety of delicious treats and exquisite teas. We look forward to providing you with a memorable afternoon.



CIGARS ON THE TERRACE

Join Members on the Ribbon Bar Terrace for a Cigar Tastings Experience. The ever-popular coffee and vodka cocktail using Monte Carmelo Brazilian beans from the Manchester Roastery, Abe & Co has been chosen specially to complement the cigars.



WALKING TOURS

Join us every Wednesday and Saturday, starting from 6 April for the Walking Tours with Member and Blue Badge Guide Jean Paul Guillaume to discover the labyrinth of St James's streets and alleyways, filled with intriguing tales from the past.

RAG CIRCLES

A fabulous way to meet fellow Rag Members

RAGAMUFFINS CIRCLE

The Ragamuffins Circle – Affectionately adopted shortly after the Club’s foundation, the nickname ‘Ragamuffin’ was coined by Captain Billy Duff after declaring the meagre offerings he was served late one evening as a Rag & Famish affair. Regular Ragamuffin supper club gatherings in the Coffee Room followed.

Inspired by the nickname and the history, the newly named Ragamuffin Circle will host lively events to encourage new friendships, connections and good conversation.



SAILING CIRCLE

The circle’s aim is to give access to sailing at a minimal cost. For 2023 the offer will include sailing the Solent, keelboat racing, a day’s cruise on a classic, gaffrigged Morecambe Bay ‘Prawner’ and a series of social events. We also host a WhatsApp ‘clearing house’; to put members with boats in touch with those members keen to crew.



CHESS CLUB

Welcome to the social chess circle, where chess and camaraderie come together. Our community offers a welcoming space for players of all levels to meet, enjoy each other’s company, and hone their skills. Join us in the spirit of friendly competition, where the pursuit of victory is just as important as building lasting friendships.



MERCHANDISE

Announcing the latest addition to our exclusive line of The RAG Club merchandise



LADIES SCARF

This exclusive scarf is a versatile accessory that seamlessly complements any outfit. Wear it around your neck, as a bag accessory, or as a headscarf. Featuring the Army and Navy Club crest and the Ragamuffin logo on the silk canvas, this must-have accessory is sure to add a touch of sophistication to your wardrobe.



TOTE BAG

Introducing our exclusive blue canvas tote bag, designed for Rag Members. The spacious bag features a gold crest, embodying the essence of our esteemed Club. Carry your essentials in style with this chic accessory, a must-have for any discerning Member.



HANDKERCHIEF

A sophisticated accessory made only for our esteemed Members. With its premium blue, red, and gold colours and the iconic Army and Navy Club crest, a true testament to our heritage and traditions. Elevate your style and become a part of the legacy with this must-have handkerchief.



THE RAG BELT

Made exclusively for Members of The Army & Navy Club - The Rag. The belt has been hand-beaded in Kenya by the Maasai, using an average of 6000 beads. It has been designed in the colours of the Club tie.

Ladies Scarfs and Handkerchief available to order from Mid-April

Scan QR code to shop or find out more!

