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Chairman, *The Light Infantry Club*



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Light Infantry Club Members

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NEWSLETTER 2020

As I write this Storm Ciara is blowing through and the Candlemas folk lore is looking true – bright weather on Candlemas Sunday (it was sunny) presages bad weather to come. I trust that when this gets to you the worst has passed by and that your roof and fence panels are still intact and where they should be!

It would have been unrealistic to expect Club members to support the 2019 lunch and dinner in the numbers seen in our 50th anniversary year, but I am delighted that sufficient signed up to make both gatherings worthwhile and enjoyable. Indeed, the dinner now seems to be the occasion when the metropolitan and overseas members congregate and the Cavalry and Guards Club look after us well. I once again thank Edward Chamberlain for his key role, acknowledging that he has an experienced Food Member looking over his shoulder to ensure that standards are maintained!

I must also thank Chris Topham for delivering another quality Salisbury lunch at The Wardrobe, blessed again with good weather and with respectable numbers. Of course the unique setting is a significant attraction but it does require a generous subsidy from Club funds to keep tickets at an affordable level which we will continue to do as long as the numbers make it worthwhile. Chris is still ‘carrying’ the Wardrobe lunch but will not do so for ever so if anyone can help him with a view to relief in the line please get in touch – or volunteer someone else! Geographical proximity is not essential.

As I said again last year, it is our intention to continue with both events for as long as there is a demand, and to subsidise both as much as it is prudent and affordable to do so. Of course both events are critically dependent on the coord and finance role played by Ian Foster – as is the dissemination of this letter – who also deserves a public thank you. The Club structure is not broken, but it will not last in its current form for ever and it is unrealistic to think that The Rifles programme will inherit and continue our modest activities, so some change is inevitable at some stage.

Whilst touching on the Headquarters support which we enjoy at present, it is with sadness that I acknowledge Ron Berry’s death after a lifetime of long service to the regiment – DLI, uniquely all 4 LI battalions - and the Club. It was the mark of the man that there was literally standing room only at his funeral with more present than at our lunch and dinner combined, and the hospitality offered by his family at the West Wellow Golf Club was generous. Our thoughts are with them.

On a happier note I am delighted to welcome Lt Col Gary McQueen CD to the Club as an Honorary Member: Gary is a former commanding officer of the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry and an active member of the Canadian Army (Reserve) who visits the UK regularly. I hope that one of his visits will allow him to cement the continuing relationship between our regiments at lunch or dinner.

The comprehensive programme of former Regimental and Rifles events in the counties will again compete for your support, but this year’s Club dates are:

Sunday 12 July - LI Club Lunch, The Wardrobe, Salisbury.

Thursday 8 October - LI Club Dinner, The Cavalry & Guards Club, London.

The success of each event is largely determined by members arranging tables of friends and those of shared experience across our Regiment so don't wait to be invited – pick up the phone or send an e-mail and arrange a table yourself.

The Light Infantry Website (www.lightinfantry.co.uk) includes a Club page and I hope that many of you will read this newsletter there. If you have received a hard copy of this letter and have an email address, please register the latter with us at liclub@lightinfantry.co.uk and help us to reduce costs further.

With my belated best wishes to you all for a peaceful and healthy 2020... Candlemas forecast notwithstanding!

Mark Elcomb