

St Dunstans
REVIEW
JANUARY 1978

St. DUNSTAN'S REVIEW

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10p MONTHLY

A New Year Greeting from our President Sir Michael Ansell

As a fellow St. Dunstaner, in these difficult times, I sincerely wish every St. Dunstaner and his family a happy and rewarding coming year. At the same time, I would like to thank all our staff who work untiringly, caring for our "wants". To me, St. Dunstan's is a happy and efficient Regiment to which we are all proud to belong.



Colonel Sir Michael Ansell, C.B.E., D.S.O., D.L.

Message from the Chairman

Mr. Peter Matthews

By the time this *Review* is in print, Headquarters will have lost one of its best-known personalities through the retirement of St. Dunstaner Peter Matthews, our Estate Manager. A Chartered Surveyor and Territorial Soldier before the War, he was embodied in September, 1939, and was later commissioned in the Royal Engineers; he was blinded in September, 1944, came to St. Dunstan's for training and then joined the staff in September, 1945.

Ever since, Peter has devoted his professional knowledge, careful judgement, determination, humour and tremendous sympathy to the many problems of housing St. Dunstaners and their families, and later their widows. To him, no property was just a house or bungalow or flat, but the home of a St. Dunstaner and therefore of great importance and requiring the best attention he and his Department could give. No one has cared more deeply about St. Dunstan's and no one has given more generously of himself to the organisation and his fellow St. Dunstaners. We were indeed fortunate to find such a man and to have his services for over thirty years.

On behalf of our Council, St. Dunstaners and their families, St. Dunstan's widows, our staff, my wife and myself, I wish Peter and Marjorie Matthews great peace and happiness in their retirement.

Mr. N. McLeod Steel

Readers everywhere will be grieved to hear of Jock Steel's death on the 12th November; a formal obituary appears on another page.

He was a fine St. Dunstaner and First World War physiotherapist, who joined the staff of St. Dunstan's when we were at Church Stretton. He was the instructor for the new generation of physiotherapists and they derived great benefit from his wise tuition and outstanding example. In addition, all St. Dunstaners who trained at Church Stretton will remember the delightful contribution made by Jock and his family to the life of the centre through their music.

St. Dunstan's was represented at the cremation by Mr. Charles Campkin, physiotherapist at Pearson House and one of Jock's trainees, and Mr. R. Priestley, our Physiotherapy Superintendent. On behalf of all Jock's St. Dunstan's friends and comrades, the Council and myself, I offer his wife, "Tim", their daughters and their families our deepest sympathy.

The Robert Redfern Memorial Trophy

Readers will recall an earlier announcement that a trophy had been presented to St. Dunstan's by Mrs. Elizabeth Redfern in memory of her husband, the late Captain Robert Redfern, D.F.C., to be awarded outright each year to a St. Dunstaner for personal achievement within his or her first year as a St. Dunstaner.

I am delighted to be able to tell you now that the first pottery tankard has been awarded to Arthur Lowe, of Stubbington, Hants., whose blindness ended his responsible work as a hydraulics specialist, but he has taken up creative hobbies and learnt mobility and, above all, "has never lost compassion for others with similar disabilities and is ever ready to learn from them and to impart what he himself has learned".

Many congratulations to Arthur Lowe!—and to the runners-up: George Nolan, of Great Sutton, who continues to lead as normal and full a life as possible from his wheelchair, and William Pinder, of Peterlee, an 82-year-old in poor health, who nevertheless joins in every activity he can, both in his home area and at Brighton.

The maintenance of the high standards of St. Dunstan's is assured for the future by the spirit shown by men such as these.

Jon Kenneth Duncanson

APPOINTMENT OF MATRON, IAN FRASER HOUSE

We are pleased to announce the appointment on the 5th December, 1977, of Mrs. Ann Pass as Matron at Ian Fraser House.

Mrs. Pass is a Yorkshire woman, comes from an Army family and served in the WAAF with the rank of Pilot Officer. She has a Degree in Social Science, has

experience of voluntary welfare work with the WRVS and the Red Cross and has held responsible appointments in hospital social work and in business administration.

We welcome her to the staff and wish her every success in her work for St. Dunstan's.

C. D. WILLS

COVER PICTURE: Bert Ward knows his way about the corridors of the Education Building in Leeds. He is carrying his memo tape recorder. See "Having It Taped", this month's Ways of Life feature.



Peter Matthews, (centre), with members of his Estate staff. Miss French is on the extreme right in the front row.

Retirement of Mr. Peter Matthews

Mr. Peter Matthews retired on December 30th, 1977, from the post of Estate Manager after 32 years service with St. Dunstan's.

Born in Plymouth, Mr. Matthews was articled to a firm of Chartered Surveyors in that city in 1929, qualified as a Chartered Surveyor in 1936 and was elected a Fellow of the R.I.C.S. in 1944. Prior to the war he had his own practice until 1939 when, as a member of the Territorial Army, he was embodied into the Regular Army and posted to France with the Royal Army Service Corps.

After escaping from Dunkirk, Peter Matthews was commissioned in the Royal Engineers in 1941. He asked to work on bomb disposal, and, "They accepted my suggestion". Much of his work was the risky business of lifting our own anti-personnel mines laid on the beaches around the South West Coast until, in September, 1944, he was injured in an explosion on the beach at Penzance that cost the lives of two fellow sappers.

After a period in hospital and at Stoke Mandeville, Peter Matthews joined St. Dunstan's at Church Stretton in February 1945. Within six months he was invited to take on the enormous task of finding

homes for, literally, hundreds of St. Dunstaners as they completed their training and were settled in work in towns all over the country.

As Settlement Officer, Mr. Matthews had the help, initially, of Mr. Dennis Wright and Miss I. M. G. Duncuft, and, soon after, Mr. George Stevenson. This was at a time when everybody was buying property and the new Department, "worked like blacks", to find homes for St. Dunstaners, always Peter Matthews' first priority: "The housing of a St. Dunstaner, whatever the reason, must come first all the time".

On the retirement of Mr. Percy Lale in 1952, Mr. Matthews became Estate Manager and his Settlement Department was merged into the Estate Department as we know it today.

Peter Matthews says quite emphatically that were it not for the loyal and devoted service of so many good people he would have failed in his objectives. "We've been so fortunate in the type of people we have been able to recruit. We have had such good service because we have enjoyed what we've been doing. If I had the choice again I would choose to work for St. D's. I couldn't have had a happier career".

Mr. Trevor Frederick Lloyd, M.A., F.R.I.C.S.

Mr. Peter Matthews will be succeeded as Manager of the Estate Department of St. Dunstan's by Mr. Trevor Lloyd who for the past 4½ years has worked closely with him as his Chief Assistant.

Mr. Lloyd is already known to many St. Dunstaners and we wish him every success in his very important post.

C. D. WILLS

MISS DOREEN FRENCH

One of our most active members of the staff, Miss Doreen French of the Estate Department, retired at the end of the year.

Miss French came to St. Dunstan's in 1955 and one of her first tasks was to endeavour, through correspondence, to obtain rating relief for St. Dunstaners generally and, as a result of that process, relief in respect of workshops and garages was obtained.

Over the years Miss French has been the principal secretary and personal assistant to me and a tower of strength to many St. Dunstaners wishing to have a quick solution to their worries.

Before coming to St. Dunstan's, Miss French worked for sixteen years for the Metropolitan Society for the Blind where she was mainly engaged on dealing with admissions to that charity's holiday homes and in helping civilian blind people in London in a variety of ways.

Miss French will be greatly missed by everybody, not least by other members of the Estate Department. My task would have been hard indeed without the able and unselfish service which Miss French has given unstintingly.

PETER MATTHEWS

Mr. D. F. ROBINSON

St. Dunstaners who are garden and greenhouse enthusiasts should note that Mr. Robinson moved on the 28th December to, 14 Newton Way, West Kirby, Wirral, Merseyside, (Telephone No. 051-625 9866) where he has settled for his retirement next April. Meanwhile, he will continue to visit from his new address attending Headquarters about once a month. St. Dunstaners requiring help or advice should contact him at his new home after 1st January, 1978.

C. D. WILLS

FROM DR. JOHN O'HARA

My dear friends, you, who have given me so much in friendship and, indeed, affection over the twenty seven and a half years that I was privileged to be your Medical Adviser, have showered further magnificent generosity on me with your wonderful retirement gift and I am very, very grateful.

After long and anxious consideration, I have decided to use your present to visit my daughter and my lovely granddaughter, Sarah, aged one, in Iran, where they now live; my son-in-law having taken up a post there as an Accountant. As they will stay there for some years, it would not be likely that I would see them for some time. But with your help, my wife and I will be able to visit them in the New Year, bringing us all much happiness. I miss you all very much but am very happy that the Brighton Club have honoured me by electing me an Honorary Member, thus allowing me to hold on to my ties with St. Dunstaners. God Bless you all.

AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY Meetings for 1978

4th and 5th February, 1978

Annual General Meeting

10th and 11th June, 1978

9th and 10th September, 1978

During the Annual General Meeting on the weekend of 4th and 5th February, 1978, the G3MOW Memorial Trophy will be presented to the person who, in the opinion of the Amateur Radio Society's members, has done the most for the Society since its inauguration.

The 1977 President of the Radio Society of Great Britain, Lord Wallace of Coslany, has accepted an invitation to the Meeting. He hopes his engagements will permit him to attend.

OBITUARY

Mr. George Short

We regret to announce the sudden death on 13th November, of Mr. George Short, House Steward at Ian Fraser House for many years, who retired in September, 1975. Many of his colleagues, retired staff and St. Dunstaners from the Brighton Homes attended the cremation ceremony.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From: Don Snelling, Christchurch, Dorset

The article "To Touch a Stone" last month referred to the help Bernard Mason received from Don and Barbara Snelling, who write:

One of the nicest things about our hobby is that anyone can become involved in it to whatever extent they choose and can find their own level of achievement and satisfaction – whether it be mineral or fossil hunting in the field, handling and classifying specimens at home, assembling simple jewellery or producing precision-cut stones and making settings for them.

As far as the blind are concerned, we believe that, provided equipment is carefully chosen and competent basic advice is given, there is no need to design and build unnecessarily complicated and expensive machinery merely because the user can't see; that a family "team" can develop an absorbing shared interest to which they can both contribute and from which they can each gain pleasure and perhaps even a little profit! and that, because mineralogy and lapidary are essentially activities which seem to attract friendly enthusiasts who are interested in natural things, involvement in them can be a key to blind people widening their social horizons and making new friends.

I am sure that the various mineral and lapidary clubs throughout Britain would welcome St. Dunstaners at their meetings, would take them on field trips and, where workshop facilities are available, would help them to gain practical experience. We would be glad to run a small weekend course for St. Dunstaners at our own New Forest Club workshop, with the aid of our team of experienced instructors. Those who wished, could get the feel of basic equipment, whilst perhaps some of the wives would like to be shown the techniques of assembling jewellery.

One other thought that I have been playing with lately is that those who wish to create original silver or gold settings

for their jewellery, rather than relying on stock "findings", could probably be introduced to wire work. This would mean that creative work could be done without the need for soldering.

From: John Proctor of Rottingdean

I was very interested in the article on semi-precious stones in the December *Review*. I thought you might be interested in a publication I obtained 2 years ago. It was a pocket volume called "Gems and Jewellery" by Joel Arem, and published by Bantam Publications. The price then was 75p. It contains 150 pages and 180 colour photos.

May I make a comment on the *Talking Review*. I think Stephen Jack is a beautiful reader. Many thanks for all the hard work you obviously put into this *Review*, collecting the information and putting it on tape.

**From: W. T. Scott, Ian Fraser House
10th November, 1918**

It was 59 years ago that "three happy men of St. Dunstan's" came from France and were sent to St. Mark's, Chelsea, the second London General Hospital. In the gymnasium there were 27 beds. We realised we were not the only blinded soldiers. On the first day the others came to ask us about ourselves. As we commiserated, the subject of the conversation drifted to the best ways of committing suicide. We recalled the practice of beggars standing in the market-place with a card on their chests and a cup fixed to their buttonholes.

The first blinded casualties became a problem. It was Sir Arthur Pearson, himself blind, who was approached to help. As the weeks passed, the trickle of wounded from the Front became a stream.

The local well-to-do ladies found ways to take us for outings in Kensington Gardens. We were invited to tea and their servants were anxious to do all they could for "the dear boys". At the same

time, friends from St. Dunstan's had come to help us. One in particular was Miss Hamar Greenwood, herself blind, who began to teach us to read Braille while we were in hospital. We were then 18, 19 and 20 years old.

There was Harry Dakin, Bob Young, with his right arm off, and George Killingbeck. The latter put a box of matches by his bandaged stump to light a fag. He yelled blue murder – he had set light to his bandages. We soon got into the hospital routine. There was also Dick Slaughter and Tommy Rogers. We listened to the only one gramophone record available. I could not understand what the song was all about – it was "The Flowers that Bloom in the Spring, Tra-la-la".

After a medical examination we were earmarked for care and training at St. Dunstan's. By that time, Braille rooms and netting rooms were established. Sir Arthur arranged for blind civilians, craftsmen in basket-making, boot repairing and mat-making, to instruct us. We were all interviewed separately and allocated our place of residence. It was not very long before we settled down to our new way of life with our handicap.

From: A. C. Pointon, Bexhill-on-Sea

About a year ago I was given a bottle of home-made grape and strawberry wine and told it would be ready for slurping when the ageless white-bearded, red-coated gent gets down the chimney, even into the high-rise flats. The bottle was put in a cupboard and more or less forgotten, as my previous experience with home-made wine was that it was not worth all the time and effort which I was informed had gone into its production.

However, when the aforesaid bottle of grape and strawberry was opened in March of this year, the friends who helped us empty the bottle were, like us, so impressed that we decided to try and get the recipe. No-one was more surprised than me to find that this lovely product which I had thought would involve a lot of preparation, in fact came out of a can in concentrate form, marketed by a Nottingham based chemist.

So in I went, feet first. Just read the instructions on the label, I was told. Unfortunately, those instructions assume some knowledge which has been acquired since, but among mistakes I made was over-heating during fermentation, which kills the yeast. One can buy dried flower petals, like rose, cowslip, coltsfoot, and, of course, elderflower, and ferment them with a white grape concentrate, but nobody told me that one only leaves them in the fermenting vessels for three to five days. I think I was told on the fourth day. Getting them into the vessels dry was time consuming but getting them out again wet and swollen was both time consuming and messy. Depending on which one one is producing, the house does become permeated with a strong perfume of a fruit shop crossed with a brewery or even a compost heap or dung heap, but the end result is a very acceptable slurp which, believe it or not, costs less than coffee to make, bulk for bulk. In these days, when no-one can afford to smoke as we used to and can only drink through a mortgage from a Building Society, that can't be bad or can it? When friends call, one offers them coffee or plonk. The trouble is that they usually end up with both and leave singing not Ave Maria but Tia Maria.

The worst part of plonk making is waiting three months for it to mature after one has finished the work; but it passes and one can help it along by making some more to ensure a steady supply.

GREETINGS FROM MRS. SPURWAY

This is just to say Happy New Year and please forgive me for not answering all your get-well cards, which I so enjoyed getting. I arrived home on 9th December, after spending ten weeks with my younger daughter in Cheshire. My hip was pinned in Stoke Mandeville but it went wrong, so I had to go to Wrightington Hospital, near Wigan, to have a second replacement done. However, I am now doing well and hope to see you all soon.

AVIS SPURWAY



Outside Buckingham Palace, Bill and Alice Griffiths proudly display his M.B.E. award.

The Investiture

by Bill Griffiths

When I received notification from the Prime Minister that I was to be awarded an M.B.E. in the Queen's Birthday Jubilee Honours List, I was delighted and, to put it mildly, very surprised.

My thoughts immediately fled to the names of people within St. Dunstan's, the Far East Ex-Prisoner of War Association, the Royal British Legion and elsewhere, who richly deserve awards, which I earnestly hope that one day they will receive.

It was a cold, but gloriously sunny morning on November 15th, when Alice and I, and our son and his wife, were driven into the grounds of Buckingham Palace and up to a side entrance, where we were met by a cheerful, young Palace Attendant, who ushered us into a red carpeted hallway, where another Attendant took charge of me. We all entered a lift, regularly used by the Queen, which took us to a long, wide corridor that ran parallel with the balcony we are all accustomed to seeing outside the Palace,

On the walls of the corridor, were paintings of monarchs and royal personages through the ages, and between the corridor and the balcony there were small, comfortable rooms. At the end of the corridor was the Main Hall, where all the recipients of medals congregated.

Later, we all entered the Investiture Hall where guests were escorted to their seats to watch the proceedings and the recipients were taken along to a small ante-room to await their Investiture. My Attendant placed a hook in the lapel of my coat where the Medal was to be placed by Her Majesty and he told me how many steps to take before bowing to the Queen.

As I sat there listening to the Coldstream Guards Band playing light music, I wondered just what the Queen would or would not say to me and when the Investiture became ten minutes overdue, I thought perhaps the whole thing had been called off, because, that morning, Princess Anne had been admitted to hospital. However, the band struck up with the National

THE INVESTITURE—continued

Anthem, the Queen entered and said, "I am sorry to be late. The reason is my daughter has just given birth to a son." Everyone spontaneously applauded.

When my Attendant escorted me to the Queen, I felt her hooking the Medal on my lapel and she quietly said, "I am very glad you are here this morning, Mr. Griffiths." I replied, "I am absolutely delighted to be here Your Majesty." She then said, "What is your work?" I answered, "I am on the staff of St. Dunstan's, and I am connected with the Far East Prisoner of War Association, The Royal British Legion and I have participated in sports over the years, sports for the disabled, of course." She then said, "That's wonderful, and thank

you Mr. Griffiths," and vigorously shook my hand.

The moderately sized Hall was richly furnished with red and gold chairs, crystal chandeliers and two large tapestries on the wall. Two Ghurkas were in attendance and four Yeomen of the Guard, and the Lord Chamberlain announced the names of the recipients.

There was great excitement on leaving the Palace, with photographers and cameras in abundance. There were scores of friends and relatives of recipients outside the gates, including our two grandchildren, who witnessed the Official Notice being placed on the Palace Gates, announcing the birth of Princess Anne's baby.

Welcome to St. Dunstan's



On behalf of St. Dunstan's we welcome St. Dunstaners recently admitted to membership. The Review hopes they will settle down happily as members of our family.

William Baxter of Belfast, who joined St. Dunstan's on the 8th November. Mr. Baxter served with the Royal Air Force as a Corporal during the Second World War. He is a married man.

John William Chatfield of Chichester, who joined St. Dunstan's on the 8th November. Mr. Chatfield served as a Gunner in the Royal Artillery from his enlistment in April, 1940 and was discharged in March, 1946 following deprivation as a Far East Prisoner of War. He is married with three children.

Alfred James Clark of Hanwell, who joined St. Dunstan's on the 28th November. Mr. Clark was a Private in the R.A.M.C. from enlistment in 1943 until his discharge in June, 1946. Prior to his retirement, Mr. Clark worked for the Local Council Highways Department. He is a married man.

George Marcus of Bewdley, who joined St. Dunstan's on the 8th November. Mr. Marcus served as a Corporal first with the 7th Worcesters and then with the Royal Engineers during the First World War. He is a widower with two daughters.

George Walter Viner of Bristol, who joined St. Dunstan's on the 16th November. Mr. Viner served in the South Wales Border Regiment during the First World War and attained the rank of Sergeant Major. He was discharged in 1919 following injury to both eyes by shrapnel whilst on active service in Ypres. Mr. Viner worked for 40 years in a Bristol lead factory prior to his retirement. He is married with three married daughters.

Transport of Delight ?

Ray Peart of Gloucester, has managed to find some odd ways of getting to Cheltenham, but all in a good cause. One way, together with 29 companions, was to pull a double-decker bus 20 odd miles from Gloucester to Cheltenham and back. Another method was to ride on a tandem the 93 miles from the White City Stadium. Cold, wet and saddle-sore, Ray and his companion, Peter Pender, were given a Mayoral reception on arrival, eight-and-a-half hours after setting out. Both ventures have raised somewhere in the region of £3,000 for a heart resuscitation unit, amongst other things. It is stressed that the unit is not intended for those participating in these activities.



IT STRIKES ME

by Magog

Presidential Award

At the Presidential Dinner on the 14th November, at Leeds Civic Hall, Ernest Russell, 1977 President of Leeds N.A.L.G.O., was presented with a gold Braille watch by Mr. E. Wainwright on behalf of Leeds N.A.L.G.O. members. The watch is inscribed with the words, "E. Russell, President 1977 from his Leeds N.A.L.G.O. friends." The guests of honour at the dinner were the Lord Mayor and

Lady Mayoress, Councillor Wm. Hudson, J.P., and Mrs. Hudson. Also present were three past Presidents of N.A.L.G.O. and three past Vice-Presidents.

As Others See Us

With his permission I reproduce a letter from the *Radio Times*, Dec. 8th, by Mr. E. M. Cowen, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne:

I watched the Service of Remembrance at the Cenotaph (14th November, B.B.C.) with deeper emotion than usual this year. It is, I suppose, an inevitable reaction for those of us who have survived one or possibly both of the most destructive conflicts in history. Whatever it was, the sincerity of Tom Fleming's commentary combined with the sunlit beauty of the morning moved me strangely.

It was when the men of St. Dunstan's were guided slowly but proudly past that I could no longer restrain the tears. Tears of pride for the spirit that once made this nation glorious and great as exemplified by this gallant group of old soldiers.

Ernest Russell receiving his presentation gold watch from Mr. E. Wainwright. Yorkshire Post Newspapers.



Doug and Joan Cashmore with their retirement gifts.

Spelthorne Talking News

Another Talking Newspaper began publication in December, The *Spelthorne Talking News*. The Chairman of the project is St. Dunstaner, Jimmy Wright. Any St. Dunstaner living in the Borough of Spelthorne, which includes Staines, Ashford, Sunbury, Shepperton, Stanwell and the Causeway, Egham, who would like to receive cassettes, are invited to contact Jimmy Wright at "Chelmick", Manygate Lane, Shepperton, Middlesex, TW17 9ER. Telephone, Walton-on-Thames 25950.

500 Good Wishes

Doug Cashmore was recently dined out in fine style on his retirement. Doug worked at I.C.I. before and after the war, and 13 years ago started as a telephonist at Kalamazoo near his Bromsgrove home.

In 1972, Doug went on to the Swedish Ericson switchboard, the first St. Dunstaner to do so. Since the information appears in lights, a special tactile unit was added, so that Doug could cope with the 20 outside lines and 250 internal extensions.

Doug's wife Joan, was invited to the office on his retirement day. Before a special luncheon, the couple spent nearly an hour opening presents bought with donations sent in by branches all over the country. A cassette radio and garden implements plus two cards each with some 250 signatures constituted a fine send off.

Doug can now concentrate full time, as if he already doesn't, as Secretary of the Midland Club, working in his garden and on the British Legion, Austin Branch, which for the third year running made a record Poppy Day collection. There sounds work enough there for three men!

HAVING IT TAPED — Bert Ward

Talking to David Castleton

In 1939, 18 years old Bert Ward signed professional forms for Leeds Rugby League team. He had begun as a youngster playing for the City boys team at the age of 13. After progressing through the junior teams he was beginning the sports career of his ambitions—to play for Leeds in the League.

The Second World War put a temporary stop to Bert Ward's sporting life—except for the occasional game for Leeds when he was home on leave from the Royal Air Force. Then in 1943, serving in Tunis, he was asked to deal with an unusual hand grenade left by some troops: "Being an armourer this was brought to me and it was plastic stuff that we didn't know anything about—subsequently I caught it, literally."

The explosion cost Bert his sight and his left hand and ended his rugby playing, yet he can still say he enjoys visiting Leeds' famous Headingley ground as a supporter, "Its like going home to me. I've been going there since I was a boy supporter. A major part of my life is going to Headingley, winter or summer, rugby or cricket."

Bert Ward is that sort of character and this article explores how he has brought this attitude to blindness into every part of his life.

Bert, in fact, joined St. Dunstan's twice. In 1943 he came to Church Stretton, "In the hospital part in Tiger Hall where I had an operation which gave me sufficient sight to leave St. Dunstan's and I didn't return until August, 1954."

He had no training, as such, at Church



Bert Ward using his Braille shorthand machine.



This special telephone set-up enables Bert to telephone and make Braille notes one-handed.

Stretton—"I had some initial typing lessons and they gave me a Braille watch, of course, because I was totally blind at the time."

Although he could see too much to remain at St. Dunstan's, Bert found his guiding vision was not enough, coupled with the loss of a hand, to enable him to return to his original work in the clothing industry in Leeds. "I heard of this course in telephony at the disabled training centre in Exeter. I applied and I was trained as a telephonist. I worked for a year for a sub-contract firm for Avro. Then a vacancy came in Leeds Education Department and I applied for and got the job."

That was 32 years ago and Bert has worked there ever since—but in recent years not as telephonist. About five years ago the Chief Education Officer paid him the compliment of asking him to start an Information Centre. "The main object was to try and deal with as many queries as possible in a centre, rather than people wandering around a big city like ours. He wanted someone with a knowledge of the Department and various sections of Education. He said he thought I was the person for the job so I applied for the post and got it."

He is now Information Officer—Receptionist and handles queries on courses, appointments, and people coming for interviews—taking them to departments. Taking them to Departments?—"Yes, I'm mobile about the building, I was fully conversant with its lay-out. Whilst I was on the switchboard I took every opportunity I had to go into departments, say taking telephone directories round. I'm one of the few people in the office who do know every section in the Department."

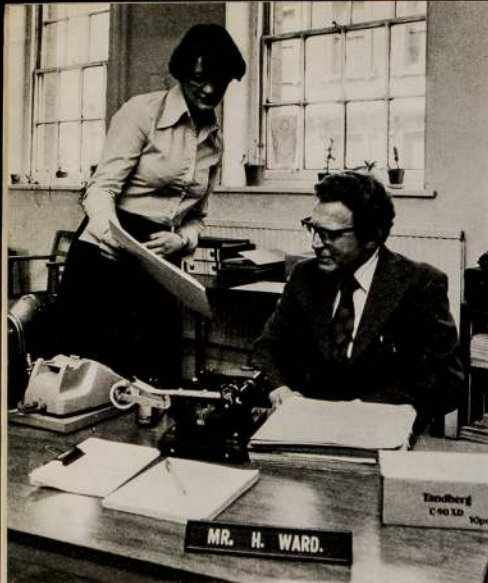
The contact he had as telephonist with schools and colleges is a big help in his other duties of maintaining stocks of literature for enquirers. "We have all the college prospectuses which are ever-changing. We have events going on in the City, concerts, athletics meetings—all these things. Where you have a big centre like ours, with hundreds of people coming through every day, we find other departments want to feed us details and make things available to us in the centre."

Bert is the first person most visitors to the Education Department meet and I wondered if there were many occasions when he had to placate an irate parent—"Not as many as you may think. Our centre has a pleasant aspect and when

they meet someone who asks them to come along and take a seat—"Sit down and I'll get someone for you"—this attitude softens the 'agro', as you might say. We give them help and we have very, very little trouble. I've been doing this for five years and I can't think of a single incident where there has been any real problem."

Over those five years Bert has, of course, worked out some rules for himself: "Initially I wanted to conceal the fact that I was blind but on the contrary I find it's much better to indicate immediately to the person that I am blind. The problem arises when they thrust a piece of paper under my nose and say, 'What do I do with this?' I say, 'I'm sorry, I can't see but tell me what it is and I'll help you.' They react well to this. They are quick to realise the situation and do help. I had a gentleman looking up an Education Year Book. I have a sighted colleague who uses this and he was away so I roped the gentleman in and he was very happy to help. There are some people you couldn't do it with but you quickly assess the type of person who is coming in."

"One doesn't tend to flaunt that one is blind but on certain occasions it can



A sighted colleague, Sandra Halmshaw, identifies a document for Bert.

even be an asset. In a department like this it is very open and the fact that you can't see makes you concentrate on the person at the desk—the voice. Often it can be quite noisy, a lot of things going on but I can isolate quite easily."

In 1954, Bert was still a telephonist when his sight deteriorated to the point when he was re-admitted to St. Dunstan's. "I had the Braille training then. A ten week course and I got the Braille. It was a bit of a crash course really. I took three months leave of absence and I had two children. Those days you didn't get grants so the pressure was on me. It may not have been a bad thing. In ten weeks I was sufficiently proficient to go back to my job and use Braille."

As a blind man Bert Ward took up his duties again on the switchboard developing the skills which now enable him to hold down his more varied job. He uses tape recorders, Braille shorthand and, of course, the telephone in his work. Each morning his first duty is to check with the Office Manager and the secretaries of the Chief and Deputy Education Officers for their respective pro-

grammes for the day. These details are tape recorded initially but back at his desk Bert Brailles the programmes on his shorthand machine.

"I carry a lot in my head and there's a lot of things I don't need to Braille but I think it is good to Braille things because it helps me to remember."

Like many other busy people Bert Ward has always found room in his life for helping others: "Some years ago I was Secretary of the Spastics Swimming Club. We used a pool at an old school in Leeds, which had originally been a school for the blind. It had had a pool which, being small, was ideal for spastic children because it was easily heated. I organised transport through the local Lions Club and I had a team of young girls from the office who were happy to go along to help the youngsters."

End of Project

That project ended as the children grew up and, sadly, because it became more and more of a problem to persuade parents to bring their children. "It got to the point where we had more helpers than children."

Bert is also a School Governor as a Parent Teacher Association representative. For many years he ran a music appreciation group for members of the Education Department. Another of his past activities was organising garden shows and he is still a member of the garden committee. "I do my stint in the garden shop up the road. We open two hours on a Sunday morning, so I have a link with gardens still."

Through another hobby interest—tape recording music—Bert has built up a considerable library of classical music and this interest in tape recording led to another venture which has had great impact on the lives of blind people in the Leeds area and beyond.

The *Leeds Cassette* is Bert's inspiration. "I had heard of talking newspapers starting and I'd always thought there was scope for a magazine for the blind—as opposed to a newspaper. The radio is readily available for hard news but there is a lot of material, background information, humorous items, some of it trivial. It's what people like."

Working in the Education Department, Bert was in an excellent position to contact the people he needed to set up his recorded magazine. "I have a friend, he's a headmaster, David Thornton, who has always been a keen reader and I felt if you could harness the energy of people like David for a cassette, it would be a good thing."

After a preliminary meeting with David Thornton and another Education Department friend, Harry Royston, who became secretary, Bert was able to form a committee of 12 which included an important member, Hubert Eichinger, Principal of the Language Centre in Leeds. "By coincidence his wife's mother is blind, so he had a fellow feeling for blind people. When I explained the situation he joined and brought along his chief technical man, Peter Badon."

The Language Centre has modern studio facilities for recording to professional standards and copying equipment to record the cassettes for distribution. More important perhaps is the

expertise and enthusiasm that Peter Badon and his staff bring to the recording of the *Leeds Cassette*.

"Within six months of the initial meeting we had a cassette in operation. We collected over £2,000 in the first year and bought 100 playback machines to loan out to our members."

Finding these members could have been a problem but once again Bert knew the right contact: "I got on to another friend of mine who is adviser to the blind in Leeds. He told me there were 1,800 blind and that less than 100 read Braille. We sent circulars out through the Social Services people asking people on the list if they had a tape recorder and, if not, saying we would try to loan them one. We have over 100 machines out on loan and we have over 300 members."

Naturally, Bert Ward is not yet satisfied. "With 1,800 blind people in Leeds, if everybody joined it would be quite a burden for the Language Centre to absorb the physical numbers of cassettes. This is why our present project is to raise

Sorting out a problem for a member of the public.





With Peter Badon in the Language Centre Studios.

sufficient capital to buy our own copying equipment. We'd still do the recording, the clever stuff, at the Language Centre but the physical work of copying would be done in our own centre. Then we could involve helpers to push the cassettes into the copying machines and put them into wallets.

"There's about ten hours work there for the Language Centre staff. They are not paid to do that for us, they do it in their own time and it's very much appreciated. But we feel that if our membership does increase much more we might be imposing. We treasure the fact that we have such splendid facilities and we don't want to impose upon them."

The *Leeds Cassette* has been running for over two years. It is still close to Bert's original idea; putting out a very professional cassette—warm with the Yorkshire accents of its presenter and readers; informative with the material, local and national, which its blind members might otherwise not have access to, its pro-

gramme a mix of serious and light items, chosen by the Editor, David Thornton.

"We leave it entirely to him. Initially we formed an editorial board but that wasn't practical. Members of the Committee can submit items to him but it is left entirely to David whether or not it goes in."

Nevertheless the *Cassette* is following Bert's original formula, its standards as high as those he sets for himself, its interest as multifarious as his own. As well as sport, music and his work in the community, Bert teaches Bridge to sighted people at the Leisure Club, not far from his home: "Mavis and I play and teach Bridge together. We go walking in the Dales—I like walking. Walking for a blind man, next to swimming—is just great. I go swimming two or three times a week at the Centre where I teach Bridge."

Through his work and through the many activities which occupy his leisure Bert's key word is 'enjoy'. His is a full life—you might say he has it taped.

THE ANNUAL CHESS CONGRESS, 2nd-4th DECEMBER, 1977

by Ray Hazan

The room was deathly quiet, had we taken a wrong turning somewhere along the line? But on reflection, chess is not a game in which you jump and shout and cheer your team on. The atmosphere in the Winter Garden was one of intense concentration and the clicking of wooden pieces on wooden board.

The draw was made on Friday evening and at 8.45 on Saturday morning, the 15 players set about in earnest. In spite of one or two absences, there was one more competitor than last year. The Congress was divided, as usual, into three sections; beginners, intermediate and senior section. The full list appears below. The winners of the lower sections are promoted the next year.

The players were pleased to welcome as adjudicators, Mr. Jack Horrocks, Director of the Congress and a county player, accompanied by his wife and her guide dog, Mr. Wally Rayner, recently retired from Headquarters, and Miss Daphne Garland, another county player. Further invaluable assistance was rendered by Mrs. Blackford, Mrs. Williams, Roland McCormack, son of Peter McCormack, and Miss Landy. Mrs. Hor-

rocks very kindly gave individual tuition to Bill Stalham who is a novice to the game.

Results were decisive so that very little judging by the adjudicators was required. Congratulations to John Cruse who won the Challenge Trophy and a special mention should be made of Wally Thomas. Having only learnt last year, he won all his matches.

After Mrs. Horrocks had presented the prizes to winners and runners-up, Mrs. Williams, on behalf of all present, gave tokens of appreciation to all helpers. Even Suzie, Mrs. Horrocks' guide dog, was awarded something for her patience. It may have been freezing outside, but during the weekend, the Winter Garden felt the warmth of friendly competition and companionship, which go hand in hand with the Annual Chess Congress.

Winners

Section 1	Section 2	Section 3
J. Cruse	5 F. Hamilton	4 W. Thomas
R. Donald	3 R. Palmer	3 V. Kemmish
R. Freer	3 M. Tybinski	2 B. Simon
D. Clarke	2 V. Delaney	1 P. McCormack
G. Hudson	2 R. Barrett	0
P. Blackmore	0	

John Cruse, (right), the winner, in play against Ron Freer, runner-up.





A portrait of "MO", one of the two pioneer D.H. Moths.

FLIGHT TO INDIA

by Bernard Leete

Fifty-one years ago this month, an historic flight was completed. St. Dunstaner, Bernard Leete, and Commander Neville Stack completed the first overland flight from London to India by private plane. Their trusty steeds were two de Havilland Gipsy Moths; biplanes. We mark the event with extracts from a manuscript by Bernard Leete.

Why undertake such an adventure? "Neville's plan was to acquire two de Havilland Moths and fly them to India. The choice of the Moth was dictated by the fact that, at the time, this was the only highly proved aircraft in this range. India was chosen as being fourtimes the mileage to Rome, the limit of the present record. The proposal to use two aeroplanes was prompted by more than one motive. It would be an obvious advantage to have a companion, but the passenger seat would have to be occupied by an extra fuel tank. Two aircraft again, because such a performance by merely one might be misconstrued as a fluke! Double proof of reliability of airframe and motor would thus be provided".

Having the idea is one thing, but possessing the cash to turn it into a reality is quite another story. "I left my home in South London to visit the Chief Sales Manager of de Havilland to obtain the gift of two Moths. My first meeting with him turned out to be one of disillusionment. It was explained that the Company's immediate aim was to boost sales in this country before attempting world conquest. Eventually we succumbed to a line of retreat wherein we asked for a quote for two second-hand Moths, with their Mark I Cirrus engine replaced by the Mark II". A package of aircraft, engines and spares could be theirs for a mere £1,200. Bernard left the office "for consultation with his legal advisor", mindful that far from having an advisor, he had no money either.

So the search for funds was initiated. One important achievement in this respect took place in Manchester. By chance, they heard that there was to be a meeting of one or two heads of administration and sales of certain big oil companies. "Hastily we staged a conference of our own to take

place in Manchester at the same time. We issued an invitation to these gentlemen and somehow managed to persuade them to attend an informal evening's party at the Midland Hotel. We let it be known that an impromptu musical entertainment was to be the background to our business discussions, so if any of our guests could play a musical instrument, they would be welcome to bring their contribution with them. As a business conference, it proved a triumph. It was decided that the Anglo-Persian Oil Company would lay on petrol where they had stocks. Shell Petroleum would provide transport for those places where A.P.O.C. did not have facilities. The provision of transport was also extended to Wakefields, who had promised to supply castor oil.

Casual Amble

The aircraft were, of course, acquired, for without them there would be no tale. November 26th, 1926 dawned wet and windy. "Purposely, we had refrained from inviting the Press to attend our own departure. We wanted to amble casually along to show that a small private plane could be used to go anywhere in the world with the same ease as any motor travelling in business or for pleasure. Not even the gleaming new paint on the airframes of 'MO' and 'KU' could dispel that misty morning. However, these two gallant little second-hand Moths got their tails up and their rudders set course for Lympne, near Folkestone". Bernard's 'KU' suffered engine splutter on the way down necessitating overnight realigning of petrol tanks and piping. "We had by now set up a record not intended in our plans; we had taken the best part of two days to fly only 75 miles".

Vociferous Greetings

The journey carried on through France, via Paris and Lyons. Typical of the reception they received was the one in Pisa in Italy. "The greeting extended to us by the Officers and men of the Regia Aeronautica Italia was vociferous. Handshaking formed its main ingredient. Those who were unable to get near enough to Neville and me for this purpose, shook hands with each other". Their evening



A 1927 picture of Bernard Leete and Neville Stack.

dress and Neville's banjolele proved to be vital parts of equipment. They were entertained that night at the Mess, with the aid of just one interpreter who had learnt all his English via the textbook; hence the quote of the evening, "Ze Commandante apologises for not being here, because once, he forgot you come to ze dinner here, and twice, 'ee is a married man and 'as gone 'ome to sleep with your wife".

The length of Italy was run and then followed by a safe landfall on Malta. Admiral Sir Roger Keyes, C-in-C, Mediterranean, insisted on a Fleet Air Arm escort for at least 100 miles of their sea crossing to Africa. "It seemed that they were not aware that their cruising speed was higher than ours. We were compelled to use full throttle to keep up with the seaplanes. A very few minutes after the escort had left, "KU's" engine, perhaps as a protest against her recent run on uncalled for full throttle, cast off suddenly some 200 revolutions. Poor 'KU' had no other choice but to gradually cast off height. However hard I blew on the short flexible pipe of my 'Mae West', my 'bosom' failed to swell an iota. Like the British of today,

FLIGHT TO INDIA—continued

I had inflation troubles. Suddenly and unexpectedly, my Cirrus engine relented. The missing revolutions were restored, and height, speed and course were resumed".

"Navigation via radio-telephone had not been developed by the mid-1920's. Navigators then demanded as a fix, something on the earth, below for his eyes to see. So, along some sections of the non-existent road from Cairo to Baghdad, a furrow was ploughed". The various landing grounds along the route had these furrows stretching out from their perimeters, though not joining one another. "A pilot's route card indicated the correct course to follow at every break in the line of the ditch as it got called".

The pair were arrested in Persia, but, with the aid of alcohol, were able to persuade the official to let them go. Without much further ado, 'MO' and 'KU' finally landed at R.A.F. Drigh Road, Karachi, early in January, 1927. "No planned welcome had been arranged to mark the event. This suited our plan that the flight should be regarded as an ordinary affair, possible to any fairly experienced private owner pilot, as well as promoting the use of the de Havilland Moth as an ideal training plane in which that same prospective owner should learn to fly. One welcoming R.A.F. N.C.O., on learning that the air in the tyres had not been changed, was heard to remark, "That means you have still got fresh London air in your tyres. Oh, wouldn't it be lovely to unscrew them valve caps and have a ruddy sniff". "When the wheels of our two Moths made their imprint on the Sind desert of Karachi, we had symbolised the creation of a new era".

BRILLE CHESS ASSOCIATION

The Association offers facilities for all chess enthusiasts, whether advanced or just beginners. Postal Chess is its main function; it is not confined to the United Kingdom alone, but extends to foreign countries also. Over twenty Postal Championships have taken place.

Details of membership may be obtained from the Secretary, Mr. H. H. Cohn, 128 Walm Lane, London, NW2 4RT.

OVINGDEAN NOTES

We expected November to provide a pause whilst we gathered our resources for the festive month. As usual, we were deluding ourselves.

We began with great aplomb. Our weekly programme announced that, on Sunday evening, Harmony Revival would be "sinning in the Lounge". Alas, it was a typing error; nor was there any singing for our guest entertainers were stricken by illness and had to cancel their visit. Once more into the breach dashed Escort Sister, poems and records at the hastily-assembled ready, to deliver the one-woman, all-happening show, entitled "Words and Music". You will not be surprised to learn that the programme did not go according to plan. The announcement, (in suitably reverent tones) of a late 1920's recording of Heddle Nash singing the Dream Song from the opera Manon, somehow turned into Frankie Vaughan belting out Hello Dolly. Jean Challis and Family Favourites was never like this.

Next came that lovely ballet music by Tchaikovsky, the Rose Adagio from the Nutcracker Suite. In her imagination, the D.J. was a 7-stone ballerina, dipping and soaring like a bird with effortless ease. It was decidedly demoralizing to wake up to reality and know that one was *not* Margot Fonteyn, but middle-aged, plump and totally unable to leap into the waiting arms of Nureyev. Ah well!—We all have our Impossible Dream!

A very entertaining evening was the outcome of a visit by the Brunswick Readers who have been coming to Ovingdean for many years. They performed three excellent comedy sketches, but the piece de resistance was undoubtedly "Fumed Oak" by Noel Coward, in which a down-trodden husband turns at long last on his demanding wife, bossy mother-in-law, whining child and tells them just where they get off. We rejoiced at the triumph of the under-dog and cheered at the come-uppance meted out

to the nasties. All very satisfying. The Brunswick Readers are a most talented group of four, but they are so versatile that one imagines that there must be at least a dozen of them. We hope they will come again soon.

At the Dome, we attended the Gang Show into which a wealth of amateur talent, time and effort is poured. Judging by the audience's reaction, that time and effort was well spent. We also attended the Festival of Remembrance at the Dome, which brought mixed emotions—sadness for all that had been lost in two world wars, and happy recollections of comradeship and enduring friendship.

We had joys and sadnesses at Ovingdean also; the happy news was that two popular members of the staff were married, Miss Nicky Seally becoming Mrs. Bob Long. We wish them a long and happy married life. We were sad to learn of the street accident suffered by Miss Nancy Feaver, who so recently retired. Happily, she is making a good recovery. We said a reluctant farewell to V.A.D., Miss Sally Falcon, who is taking up a post in Social Welfare work in London. We wish her every success. Mrs. Saul joined our V.A.D. staff and we extend to her a very warm welcome.

Next month, we shall be reporting on the Christmas festivities. We hope to see many old friends from Pearson House and local St. Dunstaners at our entertainments. We look forward to the tree, the carols, the giving of gifts, the turkey—and we leave you with this profound thought; a bird in the hand has far less fun than the two in the bush. So have a happy New Year!

MISS FEAVER'S THANKS

This is to thank all my St. Dunstaner friends for the most wonderful present of a Rolex gold watch which you gave me when I retired, after my long and happy time at St. Dunstan's. I only wish it was possible to thank each one of you individually. I shall never forget you all and the watch will always be treasured for the rest of my life. I'll never again have an excuse for being late for anything!

With warmest and heartfelt thanks again and my best wishes to you all for a very happy New Year.

NANCY FEAVER

CLUB NEWS

MIDLAND

As usual, our November meeting was held on the first Sunday in the month so that any member wishing to attend his own Armistice Service on the second Sunday would be free to do so.

The meeting was well attended and we finally managed to finish our domino competition. We have two members tying for first prize; Bruno Tomporowski and Guy Bilcliff, both with 13 points; Doug Cashmore is second with 12 points and Joe Kibbler third with 11 points.

Unfortunately the ladies have not been able to take part this year but I sincerely hope that we can put this to rights next time. Another very fine spread was arranged for us by the ladies and we thanked them in our usual manner.

Poppy Appeal Dances

During the Royal British Legion Poppy period, which runs from the 14th October until the 14th November, a number of our club members have been coming along to the Austin Branch to spend a very enjoyable evening or two at dances held in aid of Poppy Appeal. Joe Kibbler, our club chairman, said at the meeting how much everyone had enjoyed these evenings out and how welcome all our members are made at the Branch. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking everyone for their support at these dances. The proceeds certainly go to a very worthy cause.

Guy Bilcliff and his wife, Sallie, came along with my wife, Joan, and myself to the Armistice Service held in the Garden of Remembrance at the Austin Branch on Sunday morning. It was rather a cold and damp morning and a number of cadets who were taking part in the parade collapsed with the cold. Fortunately, Sallie, who is an S.R.N., was able to help with reviving these youngsters and spent some considerable time with them until

CLUB NEWS *continued*

they were all alright. She was warmly thanked by the Branch chairman afterwards.

When the service was over, everyone who so wished was invited into the branch for coffee and during this time a raffle was run in aid of the Poppy Appeal; the prize, a large teddy bear, the winner, Sallie Bilcliff. What a lovely reward for her efforts.

BRIGHTON

What a wonderful start to the Christmas festivities. One hundred and forty members, friends and guests enjoyed our Gala Dance on 10th December. We were delighted to have as our guests, Air Marshal Sir Douglas and Lady Morris, Mrs. Andrew Bowden, wife of our local M.P., and Matron Pass. It was also nice to have Dr. John and Mrs. O'Hara with us, and Miss Ramshaw. Of course, the evening would not have been complete without our President, Mrs. Elizabeth Dacre.

Sir Douglas kindly made the presentations to the winners of the Sir Arthur Pearson Tournaments. Another of our guests, Mr. Arthur Quadling, presented a cup bearing his name, to the winner of the bowling competition. Dancing then continued until midnight to the music of our popular group, The Compact Three, with a short break for a tasty buffet.

I would like to give a special thanks to our Entertainments Committee and to all the ladies who helped to make the evening such a success. Joan and I send all good wishes to club members and their wives and families throughout the country and hope you have a wonderful Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

BOB OSBORNE
Chairman

Bridge Section

Two teams were entered for the Sussex County Contract Bridge Association's Team of Four Competition. Playing against various local teams has been most interesting but not very successful.

All members and wives and friends of the Midland club send best wishes to all St. Dunstaners, their families and friends, also all members of staff, for a Very Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

If you live in the Birmingham area why not make a New Year resolution to come along and join the club.

DOUG CASHMORE,
Secretary.

With five out of eight matches played, each team can only register one victory.

In the West Sussex Inter-Club League Team of Eight Competition, our third match was played against Worthing Bridge Club "B" Team. They got their revenge for the defeat we gave their "A" team by beating us with the maximum 16 victory points to nil. Not to worry, we can only get better.

With the chess and bridge weekends being held at Ian Fraser House in December, our Christmas Bridge Drive had to be brought forward to Saturday, 26th November—a little early for Christmas and the ending of the bridge year. However, the mince pies helped, a festive feeling prevailed and everyone went home happy, especially the winners:—

M. Clements and Mr. Goodlad
W. Burnett and Miss C. Sturdy
J. Padley and Mrs. P. Padley
A. Dodgson and Mrs. E. Dodgson

May I take this opportunity to thank all our friends, all St. Dunstaners and their wives who have taken part and helped in any way throughout the year to make a success of the Bridge Section. My very best wishes to you for the New Year.

W. LETHBRIDGE

Bowling Club Notes

Owing to adverse weather conditions, the bowling green is out of service, but we hope it will soon be repaired. The Beckenham lady bowlers, who came over as our guests on 5th November, enjoyed a tour of our building with a cracking game of bingo and a lovely tea afterwards and so were not too disappointed at missing their game of bowls.



Air Marshal Sir Douglas Morris, K.C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., D.F.C., is seen with Mrs. Elizabeth Dacre and Mr. and Mrs. Wally Lethbridge during the presentations at the Brighton Club Christmas Dance.

CRIBBAGE

Winner
Runner-up

Gentlemen
Alf Dodgson
Bill Phillips

Ladies
Mrs. N. Phillips
Mrs. J. Aldridge

DARTS

Winner
Runner-up

Bob Osborne
Jimmy Morrish

Mrs. P. Padley
Mrs. T. Mugan

DOMINOES—AGGREGATE

Joint winners

Jimmy Griffiths
Stan Pike

Mrs. B. Griffiths
Mrs. N. Phillips

DOMINOES—5's & 3's

Winner
Runner-up

Theo Giles
Bill Phillips

Mrs. N. Phillips
Mrs. H. Webster

WHIST—AGGREGATE

Joint winners

Theo Giles
Bill Phillips

Mrs. H. Webster
Mrs. P. Lethbridge

FAMILY NEWS

Marriages

Mr. and Mrs. Francis Hawes of Birchington, are pleased to announce the marriage of their daughter, Bryony Ilona, to Raymond Caron on 9th November, in Belgium.

Mr. and Mrs. Alan Moore of Oxhey, are pleased to announce the marriage of their son, Kevin, to Christine Large on 6th August.

Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Baugh of Stafford, are pleased to announce the marriage of their daughter, Christine, to Michael Shinton on 19th November, at the Stafford Registry Office.

Pearl Wedding

Many congratulations to *Mr. and Mrs. Richard Jones* of Port Talbot, who celebrated their Pearl Wedding on 8th October.

FAMILY NEWS *continued*

Grandchildren

Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. "Tony" Haralambous of Winchmore Hill, on the birth of their grandson, Anthony Marc Francois, in Australia, on 26th October.

Mr. Percy Peacey of Saffron Walden, on the birth of his first great-grandchild, Louise Jayne Cheney, on 16th September.

Deaths

We offer our sincere sympathy to:

Mr. Frank Bell of Birkenhead, whose youngest brother passed away in October.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Fullard of Saltdean, on the death of Mrs. Fullard's father.

Mr. Harold Gosney of New South Wales, Australia, on the death of his daughter.

Examination and Career Successes

We warmly congratulate:

Alan Chapman, son of *Reg Chapman* of Cambridge, on attaining a Degree in Business Studies, Municipal Administration.

In Memory

It is with great regret we have to record the deaths of the following St. Dunstaners and we offer our deepest sympathy to their widows, families and friends.

George Robert Bickley *Royal Army Medical Corps*

George Robert "Bob" Bickley of Peacehaven, died on the 20th November, aged 61.

Mr. Bickley served as a Private in the R.A.M.C., having enlisted in October, 1936. Whilst on active service in Hong Kong in December, 1941, he was wounded by a grenade whilst driving an ambulance and lost the sight of both eyes. He was subsequently a prisoner of war in the Far East and was discharged in February 1946, when he was admitted to St. Dunstan's and commenced training at Church Stretton.

Mr. Bickley took over a tobacconist and confectionery business in Bexley in 1948. However, in 1950, he was retrained for telephony and became a valued employee of the Ham River Board, where he remained until 1967, at which time his health began to give cause for concern.

Nevertheless, despite his disabilities, he filled in his time making string bags, seagrass stools and basket work, retained a keen interest in his garden and was a member of the fishing and bridge clubs.

He leaves a widow, Nancy, and a young daughter, Alison Jean.

Joseph Hill *Royal Garrison Artillery*

Joseph Hill of Portishead, died on the 24th November, aged 89.

Mr. Hill enlisted in the Royal Garrison Artillery and served as a Gunner until he was wounded, losing one eye and suffering shrapnel wounds in the head. He joined St. Dunstan's in 1974, after having retired. He was devotedly cared for by his wife, Kate, helped by their only son.

He leaves a widow, Kate, and one son.

Frank James *8th East Surrey Regiment*

Frank James of Hove, died at Pearson House on 10th November.

Mr. James enlisted in the 8th Surrey Regiment in September, 1914 and served in France until he was wounded at Coriay in 1916. He joined St. Dunstan's almost immediately and trained as a boot repairer and mat maker. After the war, he opened a shop in Brighton, where he lived and worked until 1939, when he moved to Hove.

During the Second World War, he was an active Committee member of the British Legion Club, to which he devoted much of his time and energy. He always enjoyed the St. Dunstan's Reunions until increasing ill-health made it impossible to attend and much enjoyed his visits to Ovingdean. He moved to Pearson House in 1976, on the death of his wife, Winifred.

He leaves a son, Frank.

Norman McLeod Steel *Machine Gun Corps*

N. McL. ("Jock") Steel, of Chichester, died on the 12th November, 1977, at the age of 85.

He served and was commissioned in the First World War and was blinded on his birthday in 1918. He trained at St. Dunstan's, took up business interests for a short period, then studied at the Royal Academy of Music and obtained an L.R.A.M. Honours Diploma; he taught music for a time in Devon. In 1935 he started training as a physiotherapist and later practised in Tonbridge. He became an instructor in physiotherapy at Church Stretton in 1941 and stayed there until the end of the War, when he moved to Hove and built up a successful private practice. He retired gradually, moving to Saltdean in 1959 and to Chichester in 1968. He never lost his great interest in music, which he shared with his wife and family, and he also much enjoyed carpentry. He had not been in very good health for some time, but his death at home was sudden and unexpected.

He leaves a widow, Mrs. "Tim" Steel, three daughters and their families.