

# St Dunstons Review

June 1981



## Message from the Chairman

### General Sir Richard Goodbody

I am sad to record the death on the 29th April, 1981, of General Sir Richard Goodbody, G.C.B., K.B.E., D.S.O. Commissioned in 1923, he was a great soldier, serving his country with courage and distinction and holding many important commands. He became Adjutant-General to the Forces in 1960 and retired from the Army in 1963. In 1965 he became a Member of our Council, since when he has seldom missed a meeting and has presided at many Reunions.

Sir Richard's wide experience and his interest in the welfare of ex-Servicemen and women have been of great benefit to St. Dunstan's and his gift of warm and ready friendship will be much missed by us all.

On behalf of the Council, St. Dunstaners and their families, and personally for my wife and myself, I offer Lady Goodbody and her family our deepest sympathy in their great loss.

### Sir James Pitman

Sir James Pitman, K.B.E., M.A., joined our Council in 1964 and has been a valued and most helpful member ever since. Now he feels that the time has come for him to retire and the Council has expressed its sincere thanks for his work. Many St. Dunstaners met him at Reunions and they, too, will wish to add their appreciation of his interest and friendly concern for their welfare.

On behalf of us all, I thank Sir James for his service to St. Dunstan's and offer him our very best wishes for the future.

### Matron Olive Hallett

Miss Olive Hallett, S.R.N., joined the nursing staff of Pearson House in October, 1954, and became Matron in January, 1967. Now she is due to retire at the end of this month.

These are the facts but they tell only a part of the story of Matron Hallett's 27 years' devoted service to St. Dunstaners, for that is made up of many things. The work of Matron of Pearson House demands a great deal from anyone: the highest standards of professional nursing skill, administrative ability and a personality which will reach out to anyone requiring care and understanding.

We are indeed lucky to have had Matron Hallett with us at a time when there have been many demands on Pearson House, as men have grown older and many St. Dunstaners of all ages have had to face serious ill health. She has dealt with every problem, whether of everyday routine or such special difficulties as moving her St. Dunstaners to Northgate House and then returning to organise the newly modernised Pearson House, and has brought to each one her own brand of common sense, good judgement and wondrous sense of humour. She has gained the confidence and affection, not only of the St. Dunstaners in her care, but also of their relatives and friends and of her own staff and her colleagues throughout St. Dunstan's.

We shall all miss Matron Hallett very much but no one has more truly earned her retirement. On behalf of St. Dunstaners, the Council and personally for my wife and myself, I thank her for her dedicated work and friendship and wish her much happiness in the years to come.

Ion Garnett-Orme

### General Sir Richard Goodbody Distinguished Council Member

General Sir Richard Goodbody, K.B.E., G.C.B., D.S.O., died on 29th April. He was 78 years old. General Goodbody joined St. Dunstan's Council in 1965, not long after his retirement from a most distinguished military career which culminated in his appointment as Adjutant-General to the Forces from 1960-1963. He had become known personally to many St. Dunstaners through his attendance at reunions.

Sir Richard was commissioned Second Lieutenant in the Royal Artillery in 1923 and, later, in 1936, became Adjutant of the Honorable Artillery Company, serving until the outbreak of war in 1939.

During the Second World War, Sir Richard commanded the 11th Royal Horse Artillery in 1942 and became Officer Commanding the Second Armoured Brigade in 1943, the year he was awarded the D.S.O. After the war, in 1946, he became Commander, Royal Artillery, of the Seventh Armoured Division.

After a short time at the War Office as Deputy Director of Military Training, he was made Commandant of the School of Artillery at Larkhill. In 1951 he was promoted Major-General and appointed G.O.C. 56 (London) Division, T.A. He became Director Royal Artillery and in 1957, after further promotion to Lieutenant-General, he was appointed GOC in C Northern Command. In 1960 he was promoted to General and became Adjutant-General until his retirement in 1963.

Sir Richard held the posts of Colonel Commandant of the Royal Artillery from 1957 to 1968; of the Honorable Artillery Company from 1939 to 1966 and of the Royal Horse Artillery from 1960 to 1968. He was A.D.C. General to the Queen from 1961 to 1963 and Bath King at Arms from 1965 to 1976.

Mr. and Mrs. Ion Garnett-Orme represented St. Dunstan's at the funeral, on 5th May, in the Garrison Church, Larkhill, Wiltshire where a very large congregation heard a moving address from the Rt. Rev. Victor Pike, C.B., C.B.E.

## St Dunstons Review

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COVER PICTURE: Ted King working on his model steam engine. See Model Engineer on centre pages



*Joan and Bob Osborne celebrate their 33rd wedding anniversary at the Brighton reunion*

## REUNIONS

### Ipswich

It was a sunny start for the 1981 series of reunions on 9th April, but then the venue was the Copdock International Hotel, Ipswich, where the sun always seems to shine for the St. Dunstan's reunion.

23 St. Dunstaners, with wives or escorts, gathered for the reunion under the chairmanship of Air Marshal Sir Douglas Morris, a member of the Council.

Sir Douglas welcomed the St. Dunstaners on behalf of the Council. Saying that he knew it was getting more and more difficult to travel to reunions, he told his audience, "We are always pleased to see you because it is the one opportunity we get of meeting you and getting to know you and find out what your problems are and finding out what we can do to help."

Sir Douglas mentioned the names of members of staff present at the reunion, particularly that of Mr. Weisblatt, suggesting that this offered a good chance to meet our Secretary personally. He expressed the thanks of the company to Miss Newbold, who organised the reunion, "I would like to say what a sumptuous lunch it was."

"The number of St. Dunstaners living today is, in the United Kingdom, World War I, 195 and World War II and after, 825;

overseas, World War I, 71 and World War II, 427. A total of 1518."

Looking to the future, Sir Douglas said that St. Dunstan's Council was very carefully optimistic. Of course if there were any major war the situation would change he said, "But the Council is very confident that we shall be able to maintain the standard of living in your lifetime and all the estimates of the financial situation are to that end. One can't be absolutely certain, of course, but you can be quite certain that from the point of view of the Council and the financial advisers that everything will be done to make sure that life will continue as usual."

Saying that St. Dunstan's still depended on contributions and legacies, Sir Douglas said that the very best form of public relations was the impression made on the public by the achievements of St. Dunstaners in work, sport and leisure.

"I am always absolutely shattered when I read the *St. Dunstan's Review* and find out what you do, how you do it and the skill with which you do it. The greatest thing of all is the spirit. The spirit to survive and on that I congratulate you all."

Mr. Wilf Saxby replied on behalf of St. Dunstaners: "I don't know if the reason I have been asked to propose the vote of

thanks is because Sir Douglas and I have something in common. We both saw service in the R.A.F. He has been considerate enough not to ask my rank and modesty prevents me from revealing it!"

Looking back to those days of service, Wilf Saxby said that he found life today so much more complex. Machines and gadgets, although labour saving, seemed to make it more difficult to keep up with things, the complexity of life is so different.

"This is where St. Dunstan's comes into its own. It takes out of life its complexities. It keeps things on an even keel for us."

Members of the Council, he went on, gave their time and expertise and St. Dunstaners knew that affairs were in good hands. "Sir Douglas's reassuring words will be welcomed by every St. Dunstaner."

Beneath the Council was the staff of St. Dunstan's, all the departments which had helped St. Dunstaners with their individual needs. "I am sure you would like me to say how pleased we are that Mr. Weisblatt, the Secretary of St. Dunstan's, is with us today and that we can meet him and discuss anything that we wish."

There was one other person he wished to mention by name, Miss Newbold. As Welfare Visitor she was the person St. Dunstaners saw most. "If we have a problem and, perhaps injustice has been done, then Miss Newbold will certainly take up the battle on our behalf and when she takes up the battle, if you are like me, you feel sorry for the opposition because there's no doubt about it that when she gets to work she really does make sure that the things we want, the things, perhaps, that we have not realised we were entitled to, we will get."

Through Sir Douglas, Wilf Saxby said he would like to convey thanks to all departments of St. Dunstan's, which do so much for the welfare of St. Dunstaners, "I wouldn't mind saying that there isn't anyone of us who, if we have not reached it already, will not reach that moment when we don't really know which way to turn. The problem is too difficult. St. Dunstan's is there and, if we place the problem with them, they will do their utmost to help us."

After lunch the reunion continued with conversation, a little dancing, while several members found time to stroll in the pleasant grounds of the hotel and enjoy some of the first spring weather of 1981. Tea and the prize draw concluded the day.

### Birmingham

From rural Suffolk to the Midlands, but still benign weather for the reunion in Birmingham on 11th April, at the Albany Hotel.

Here there were many more St. Dunstaners; with their wives or escorts numbering some 105. They were welcomed by our Chairman, Mr. Ion Garnett-Orme, and Mrs. Garnett-Orme. After lunch, the Chairman welcomed the guests, particularly Mr. and Mrs. T. Horne, who are in charge of Pocklington Place in Birmingham. Mr. Garnett-Orme said that they have four St. Dunstaners as permanent residents, one of whom has a wife and one St. Dunstan's widow.

"1981 is the International Year of Disabled People and, as you would expect, St. Dunstan's is playing its part. This week we have held two open days, at Headquarters, and quite a number of the general public came along to see what we do and what St. Dunstan's is all about."

Mr. Garnett-Orme mentioned the open days planned for 7th and 8th July, at Ian Fraser House. "I expect, too, that many individual St. Dunstaners will be taking an active part in all kinds of local projects. However, we like to think that St. Dunstan's does not wait for a special year but that every year we show a lead in helping the handicapped."

The Chairman said he last came to Birmingham in 1974 and he referred to some of the events of that year reported in *St. Dunstan's Review*. "Towards the end of that year we suffered the sad loss of the death of Lord Fraser; but immediately we tried to make it plain to the world that St. Dunstan's would carry on the work he had done so much to forward, just as long as blinded ex-servicemen and women take up the challenge of making new lives with courage and determination. Indeed we hope that the example you set will continue to inspire people everywhere to solve and conquer the problems of disablement."

Frank Cross responded to Mr. Garnett-Orme's toast to St. Dunstan's coupled with his name, expressing thanks and welcome to members of St. Dunstan's staff and guests who had come to Birmingham for the reunion.

He said that a friend had once asked him what it was like to be blind, "I said it is like being sighted except that you can't see. It's not a bad definition if you think about it. Not long ago I dropped a piece of Braille paper on the floor - not very big - I couldn't find it anywhere. My wife came in and said, 'Is this what you are looking for?' and gave it to me. In other words I had tried my utmost; done everything I possibly could and failed. But there was still somebody there to see it through. I feel that sums up St. Dunstan's. We've got to do our best, we've got to do our utmost and, if all else fails, they're there to back us up. In this year of the disabled I think we should remember this: that we are the fortunate ones. We are the ones who know that, if all else fails, we have St. Dunstan's."

The dance floor at Birmingham reunions is always crowded as it was again this time, while for those less energetic there was the opportunity to catch up with the news of old friends among the groups chatting around the tables, where later tea was served to conclude the reunion. The Welfare Visitor responsible for organising the event was Miss Newbold, to whom Mr. Garnett-Orme expressed the grateful thanks of the company.



Mrs. Garnett-Orme chats to David Taylor at the Birmingham reunion

## Brighton

Brighton is usually one of the larger reunions in terms of numbers attending and this year's event, at the Bedford Hotel, on 24th April, was no exception. A company of

more than 200 gathered for luncheon presided over by Air Vice Marshal W.E. Colahan, who is a Member of St. Dunstan's Council, accompanied by Mrs. Colahan.

Among the guests were the Mayor and Mayoress of Brighton, Councillor and Mrs. J. Leach, the Rev. G. Meek, St. Dunstan's Chaplain, Mr. K.S.C. Phillips, of the Sussex Grocers' Association and Mrs. Elizabeth Dacre.

Opening his speech after lunch, Air Vice Marshal Colahan welcomed the guests, retired and present members of staff, mentioning particularly Miss Stewart, Welfare Visitor responsible for the reunion. He also had a special word of welcome for Mr. S. Firrell, of Hastings, who was attending his first reunion.

"Now I'm going to let you into a secret about Mr. and Mrs. Osborne," he went on, "They are celebrating their 33rd wedding anniversary today - we warmly congratulate you both and we wish you all the best for the next 33."

The Air Vice Marshal brought his audience up to date with the latest statistics of St. Dunstan's saying that they belonged to one of the most exclusive clubs in the world, "If anyone has to be blind, we all know that St. Dunstan's with its warm good fellowship and its practical, caring assistance from a devoted staff is the best thing that could possibly happen."

Air Vice Marshal Colahan then introduced Councillor Leach. Thanking St. Dunstan's for his invitation the Mayor recalled that this was the third occasion he had spent time with St. Dunstaners and expressed his thanks for St. Dunstan's hospitality. "It is always a great pleasure for the Mayoress and I to come and meet St. Dunstaners and particularly the helpers, who do a wonderful job."

Councillor Leach said this would be his last opportunity of meeting St. Dunstaners as Mayor, but he hoped that there would be times in the future when it would be possible to meet again as friends.

The vote of thanks was proposed by Dick Hall, on behalf of St. Dunstaners. He expressed thanks to the staff in London and Brighton including Miss Blebta and Miss Stewart, Welfare Visitors. He paid tribute to St. Dunstaners' wives and, as someone in the catering industry himself, concluded by saying, "Something that's dear to my own heart, a vote of thanks to the catering staff here."

## Easter at Ian Fraser House

The Easter Programme started on Thursday the 16th April, when a large party went to the Dome, Brighton to hear Vic Damone in concert with Iris Williams and the B.B.C. Radio Orchestra. This was a most enjoyable event and much appreciated by all who attended.

On Good Friday we had a special service in the chapel and then in the afternoon a drive to the Dixieland Restaurant at the end of the Pier at Eastbourne. Although the day was cold and the wind blustery, the 44 people who attended all had a most enjoyable afternoon.

On Sunday 19th April, at 7.30 p.m. the St. Dunstan's Concert Party played to an enthusiastic and very full House. Many members of staff were involved in the concert, and a great deal of talent was shown. It was a delightful experience to have three St. Dunstaners joining us, each giving us pleasure in the musical renderings. These were:-

Peter McCormack  
Ken Revis  
Harry Boorman

and the poetry of a fourth St. Dunstaner, namely Mickie Robinson, was performed by a member of the staff.

The concert came to a joyful conclusion with the whole of the Concert Party leading the audience, who were singing and clapping energetically to the song "The Whole World in His Hands."

### Easter Bonnets

On Monday 20th April the usual dance was well attended and during this we had a sight of various inventive creations worn by the St. Dunstaners, both male and female, present. We had hoped that this Easter Bonnet Parade would be judged by Dame Flora Robson but, unfortunately, she was not able to be with us, having had to cancel at the last minute. The prizes were presented by Mrs. Stilwell and were for the following:-

#### Class I Inventiveness

**Charlie Pilgrim** with a creation made out of the Racing Times and suitably adorned



George Reed as an Easter bunny

with red, white and blue ribbon, upon which various "odds" were stuck.

**Blodwyn Simon**, who wore a delightful regal creation of a crown, upon a crown with two small bells suspended from an arch above. She was parading with **Brenda Rea** who had a boater circled in red, white and blue ribbon with a crown above in which was incorporated the letters C and D.

#### Class II Prettiest

**Elsie Aldred** wore a creation covered in flowers and black ostrich feathers and **Mike Lawton** wore a pillbox with a fluffy chicken above, and hanging down the sides and the back garlands of cherry blossom.

#### Class III Funniest

**George Reed** dressed as an Easter 'Bunny' complete with ears, nose, whiskers and a white bob tail. His hat was suitably adorned with flowers.

**A. Simpson** had a very tall creation representing a castle on the top of which was a damsel in distress waving a large tissue to alert the attention of the knight passing beneath.

A most pleasurable evening was had by all.

## Amateur Radio Society

by Tom Hart

A special event station was operated by several members of the Radio Club, at Ian Fraser House, during the week of 27th April, until 1st May, to commemorate the Year of the Disabled and to act as a fringe station to the one operated from the Metropole Hotel, where the International Amateur Radio Reunion was taking place. Delegates from the whole of Europe and Africa attended this conference and we were honoured by a visit from Mr. Harry Dannals, W2HD, the President of the A.R.R.L., the Radio Society of the U.S.A. He spoke of the many aids that were being developed for the disabled, and before leaving Ian Fraser House he was presented with a plaque of the St. Dunstan's Amateur Radio Badge, by Ted John, the Secretary of the Club, on behalf of all the members.

On Wednesday evening we were entertained at the Metropole Hotel and shown around the many rooms containing thousands of pounds worth of radio equipment, being operated by 'Hams'. Once again we were delighted to meet Basil O'Brien and his wife, Eileen, who is also an amateur radio operator.

At our own station we had some very interesting contacts, and spoke to an operator on board a ship 300 miles off the coast of Ireland and within seconds to another contact on board a ship off the coast of Sardinia. A young lady in Greenland told me that the weather was not too good up there, whilst an American, in Florida, said that they were about to bulldoze in thousands of acres of strawberries.

Many contacts were made during the week and our thoughts and thanks go to our QSL manager and his wife, Tommy and Audrey Gaygan, who have the task of logging all these contacts and sending out cards to confirm them.

All work makes Jack a dull boy, so on the Thursday evening we adjourned to the Plough, taking Jackie and Alwyn with us, in appreciation of the kindness shown to us by the staff and we had a very nice dinner accompanied, of course, by several

noggins. This is what Amateur Radio is about: why not join us?

The next meeting will be held at Ian Fraser House, on 18th/19th July. Arrangements should be made through Miss Bridger, at Headquarters. Our thanks to Dr. Stilwell and Matron Pass and all the staff for their kindness.

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## Founding of new International Blind Sports Association

Taking part in serious sporting competitions these days is not so much a matter of running faster, jumping higher, or throwing further than your opponent, as threading your way through a maze of abbreviations. I.S.O.D., International Sports Organisation for the Disabled, is the overall authority as its name implies. The W.C.W.B., World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, also has a sports committee, broken down into regional committees. On occasions there has been some confusion as to whose rules were being followed. So what is the point, I hear you cry, of yet another body.

The inauguration of the I.B.S.A., International Blind Sports Association, took place in Paris from 21st to 25th April. Some 40 countries, from South America, via Cuba, and Ethiopia to Malaya were represented. The history and development of sports for the blind and the background to the new organisation were the principal topics on the first day. The remaining two days were spent discussing the constitution and finally electing the new executive.

One of the aims of I.B.S.A. is that it should become the supreme authority as far as international blind sports are concerned. It will work closely with I.S.O.D. and all national bodies. Medical and technical sub-committees will tackle the knotty problem of classification. Help and encouragement will be given to developing countries.

## See for Yourself at Ian Fraser House

The International Year of Disabled People is being marked at Ian Fraser House by two Open Days, on 7th and 8th July, when under the title 'See For Yourself' sighted visitors will be invited to find out what goes on at St. Dunstan's.

On 7th July, a number of friends of St. Dunstan's have accepted special invitations to visit both our Homes in Brighton.

8th July will be an Open Day for the public, who are asked to apply, by letter, for free tickets either for the morning between 10.30 a.m. and 12.00, or for the afternoon between 2.00 and 4.30 p.m.

### Displays

On both days there will be displays of Braille, typing, workshop activities, handicrafts and aids to daily living. Recreational activities demonstrated will include, amateur radio, archery, bowling and swimming.

Add to these continuous film showings and a busy and interesting time can be promised to all who come to see for themselves.

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New Blind Sports Association — *continued*

The executive was chosen in such a way as to represent all regions of the world. The first Chairman, and prime mover of the new organisation, is Dr. Helmut Pillasch, of East Germany. America and Denmark provide the Vice-Chairmen. The Secretary General is the head of the Norwegian Association of the Blind and France provides the Treasurer. Mr. Frank MacFarlane, recently elected Chairman of B.A.S.R.A.B., British Association of Sporting and Recreational Activities of the Blind, is the U.K. member on the executive.

What impact I.B.S.A. will have at grass root level, remains to be seen. As I.B.S.A. is to recognise only one national body per country, the mind ponders over the possibility of a U.K.B.S.A. But Utopia was only a dream creation.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

From: Laurie Slade — Pensions Officer

I am back in the saddle at Headquarters and my saddle bags are full of "Get Well" cards from St. Dunstaners and their wives, and St. Dunstaners' widows.

It would take a month of Sundays to appropriately acknowledge so many cards and other kind enquiries, and through the columns of the *Review*, I would like to express my grateful thanks to all for the kind interest in my welfare.

I have returned somewhat earlier than given out in the notice in the April *Review* and still being rather delicate, hope you will treat me gently for the next few weeks!



The late Bob Cameron was a social worker for the blind in Brent. His work in the community has been honoured by the naming of Cameron House, Pound Lane, Willesden, London. On 12th May the Mayor of Brent performed the opening ceremony which was attended by Mrs. Flora Cameron and her two daughters and son. The house has been converted into flats and a studio for a talking newspaper for the visually handicapped in Brent.

# Model Engineer

by Ray Hazan

Pictures by Diana Smalley

There are some fortunate people for whom their daily work is a hobby and a pleasure. Some work with facts and figures, others with wood, gold and silver, while others work with people or animals and so on. Although Ted King, of Southend, has spent most of his working life at a machine, his greatest pleasure seems to revolve around his precision, model engineering lathe, which is installed in a shed at home.

Ted has never received any formal engineering training. Before the war apprenticeships were expensive to come by and his parents were not able to provide him with one. So, Ted started work as a radio and electrical engineer, "Messing about with dodgy motor cycles and cars on the side."

When war came Ted became a vehicle maintenance mechanic in the Royal Army Service Corps. He served through the North Africa campaign and then went on into Italy. Some ten miles north, north east of Florence the vehicle in which he was travelling went over a mine. Not only was Ted totally blinded, but he lost his hearing as well.

After being evacuated, via North Africa, with stops at various hospitals along the way, Ted eventually found himself at Church Stretton, where he dabbled with Braille, rugs and woodwork. In the engineering department, run by Mr. Norman, Ted was given a typewriter to take to pieces and reassemble. Then a box of pieces was dumped in front of him – he was to identify and reassemble them; the pieces, once fitted together, turned out to be a knitting machine, which was then snaffled up by the handicraft department.

It was also at Church Stretton that Ted first became involved with meccano. From the various models he assembled in the meccano shop he went on, many years later at home, to construct a clock which kept excellent time. Next came a meccano

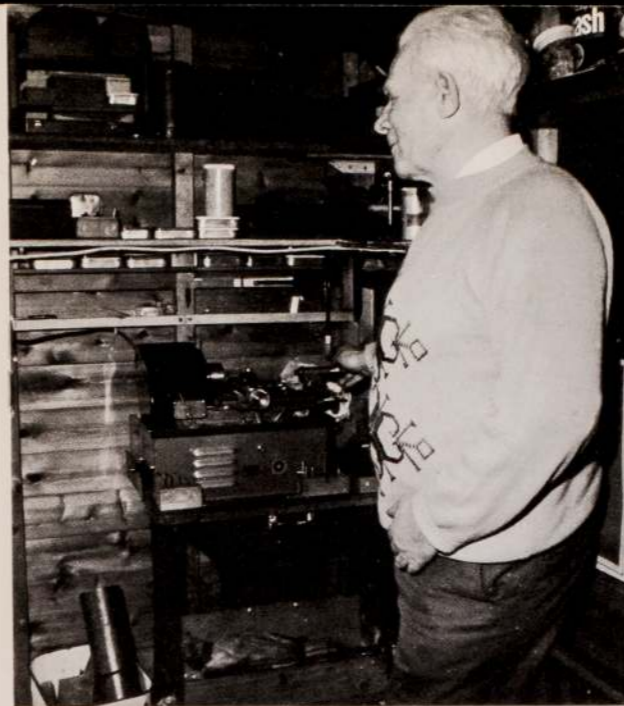
fairground roundabout, with its horses going up and down. Finally, Ted made a 3 ft. high crane. It should be pointed out that Ted makes all his own nuts and bolts.

Although on completing his training, Ted was proficient on the various machines, it was impossible for him to find work because of his double disability. He would not be able to hear the tools going blunt, or metal dropping. Ted had little choice but to accept sub-assembly work at the Echo Radio company near his home. He was the only male, and though this situation may sound enticing, in practice things did not work out.

The personnel manager did not know that Ted was blind. However, when it was discovered that both men had served in North Africa, life was made much easier. It was hard to find Ted a job, and in sheer desperation, Ted's wife, Phyllis, who he married in 1940, was invited to look round the factory to see if there was anything suitable. Phyllis pointed out that Ted could operate any of the machines in the tool shop. It was then, in 1967, that Ted first met Jim Barlow, of the Industrial Department. It was to become a professional and friendly partnership that continues today.

Ted's hobbies have been closely connected with his work. Woodwork figured prominently in the early days. The rafters of his doll's house were strong enough to bear his 14 stones. Each tread and riser of the staircase was individually made. The door lock, one inch square, was made from a knitting needle top and parts machined on the lathe. After a while, however, Ted started searching around for a new challenge, as problems with an arm were inhibiting his woodwork. One day his father-in-law turned up with a miniature lathe. This lathe not only gave Ted another interest, but also helped him at his job.

In 1969 the radio company went out of business. Jim Barlow found Ted a job at an



Ted King in his workshop

engineering company in Shoeburyness. For the first time in his industrial life, Ted found that this company sought his opinion as to the best way in which to tackle jobs. Their motto was "two heads are better than one". However, Ted made his own jigs on his lathe at home to enable him to work more efficiently at the company. Ted stayed with this company until three years ago, when he had to retire on health grounds.

A year ago Ted purchased a top quality model engineering lathe. However, after a short while, Ted was not sure that the cutting tool was running parallel. He bored a tube and then cut a piston to fit the bore. Any non alignment would then be apparent. The piston made a satisfying plopping sound when withdrawn, and the idea of a steam engine was born.

Ted worked without plans. Several attempts were required on some pieces, but then the piston, which rocks to cover an open and close entry and exit valves, and the flywheel were completed. Down at his old firm Ted was able to connect the whole to a compressed air cylinder, and it ran.

The boiler was to be made out of a two inch copper waste pipe, but the problem was finding piping of this diameter. The house was ransacked, friends and neighbours were encouraged to turn out

sheds and attics. Eventually, at a wedding reception, the valuable item was located. Ted turned a flange onto two discs, so that they fitted into either end of the boiler, like a lid. With the help of his, T.V. engineer, son-in-law the ends were soldered into place. The boiler was mounted into a cradle made from an old television chassis and connected up. The look and feel of the whole is one of neatness and precision. The total cost of the package – 64 pence – since all the materials, apart from two pieces of copper tubing, were scrap.

Then dawned the day of reckoning – lighting up time. Solid fuel was placed under the boiler, although Ted does admit to hiding behind asbestos sheeting when lighting up time came around. But, there was a wisp of steam, a small movement, followed shortly by a buzzing, as if of bees. The engine roared away at full speed.

What part did Phyllis play in all this? "My wife's role was acting as a very rigid inspector. I know where things are mechanically, but cannot necessarily tell if they are straight. She drops whatever she is doing, a Yorkshire pudding or whatever, and says, 'No, go back and do it properly'".

When asked what his future plans were, Ted's voice took on a dreamy tone. "I'm thinking about a twin cylinder steam engine", as if already tackling the problem in his mind's eye.

*Congratulations from Jim Barlow, St. Dunstan's Industrial Visitor*





Floating restaurants in Hong Kong Harbour

## HOLIDAY OF A LIFE TIME

by Jim Scholes

For a New Zealander one of the most interesting things about going to Europe is to be able to walk or stand on places that have been in existence for hundreds of years. We in New Zealand are preserving things that are about a hundred years old, in Europe people are still living in houses that are two, three hundred or more years old. To be able to walk on roads that Roman Emperors walked on, to stand on ancient battlefields, to look at documents such as the Domesday Book and letters written by long dead kings and queens, to stay in buildings that were occupied by famous people provide a fascination to people who come from a young country.

We started our tour by flying from New Zealand to Hong Kong, leaving Auckland at midday in the middle of winter, arriving in Hong Kong ten hours later in the middle of summer. The heat was overwhelming. After clearing customs we were met by a guide who directed us to a waiting coach which was to take us to our hotel in Kowloon on the China mainland.

The next day, we went on a guided tour of Hong Kong Island which included visiting Tiger Balm Gardens, once the home of an

aristocratic family, a drive through the elite area of Hong Kong, past the hillside shacks of the poor people, to Repulse Bay (so called because the battleship "Repulse" was sunk here defending Hong Kong from the Japanese during World War 2), through a suburb called Aberdeen, although anything less like its namesake in Scotland would be hard to imagine. We concluded our tour with a trip around the harbour passing all the junks tied up to a myriad of jetties. The water around this area is thick with pollution and yet the laundry hanging to dry appeared to be "whiter than white".

In the evening we went on a night tour of the Island, having dinner on a floating restaurant. After the meal we were taken down to the kitchens to see the fresh fish in their holding tanks. "The fish are caught every morning in the harbour and then held here" we were told. After having seen what was in the harbour earlier in the day we were somewhat dubious as to our future state of health! Later in a Chinese nightclub we were entertained in a typical Chinese way. The story was given in English prior to each play being performed. They were short one act plays, very colourful and very

dramatic and all depicting some part of Chinese history.

One of the more interesting tours we did was to cross the border into China. The area we were taken to was in a very barren part of China where a new city was being built called Shum Chun City. Everywhere one looked there were bicycles, very few cars or trucks but hundreds of bicycles. Our guide told us that in ten years time it would be a most beautiful city but standing on a dry dusty street in searing heat looking at half built construction surrounded by bamboo scaffolding made this statement hard to credit.

Our next stop was France, where we hired a car.

New Zealand being a relatively new country has lovely wide streets. We are not at all used to negotiating narrow lanes not much wider than the car and two way at that. Many's the time we thought "We're going to lose the wing mirrors this time" as we bumped up on to the curb, squeezed past a parked lorry, and narrowly missed a down pipe or a building to breathe a sigh of relief as we emerged unscathed. At first we were a little upset at being honked at every time we displayed a degree of caution but the Continentals seem to like the sound of their horns as they're honked at every opportunity. With my sight problem solid objects such as buildings, parked lorries and so forth appear closer or bigger or both than they really were.

### Enough Money

Then there was the money. Again with diminished eyesight this was at times a problem. One franc was much the same size as our ten cent piece. It was so easy to count one as being ten. In fact I did just that. We were installed in our room and I decided to count our French money. "we've got enough money to have a good meal" I announced. "Goody" said the others and immediately made ready to venture forth to find a restaurant. We did find one, we studied the menu, we went inside, we ordered, we ate, we were presented with the bill, we counted out the money, we didn't have enough. In fact we had very little. The waiter was called over and made aware of our plight. He was shown our US dollars, our Deutsche marks and our pounds sterling. He went away and came back with another man who accepted

the Deutsche marks or the pounds; EEC and all that! That was the last time I counted ones as tens. While on the subject of money, there was the time, a Sunday, when we ran out of French cash so we booked into a hotel thinking that we would be able to go to the bank in the morning and change some travellers cheques only to discover that in some French provinces banks don't open on Mondays, they open on Saturdays. Oh the anguish, oh the worry, oh for the plastic card. We had Visa and American Express and found that they were so much easier than coping with many different currencies and ending up with pockets full of small change, particularly if you have a sight problem.

### "Toured the Forest"

We liked France so much that we spent perhaps too much time there not leaving us with many days in other countries. We enjoyed going into village stores and buying our yard of bread and piece of cheese and motoring on until we came to a vintner, purchasing a sample of the local wine and sitting in the sun enjoying our basic diet. We did take an unscheduled drive through the Gascony Forest. It was supposed to be a shortcut but the forest roads and our map weren't quite compatible so we "toured the forest" and very nice it was too. Little narrow lanes (again), tall trees, very few houses, even less traffic and not a sign post to be seen. Eventually we emerged to a main road and mixed with the thousands of other motorists. It was delightful being all alone in the forest, so quiet and peaceful away from the hustle and bustle of the traffic.

We stopped for a night in Aix en Provence and in the morning, while wandering around the streets, we came across policemen with Alsatian dogs. Lots of them. "Wonder what's going on" said Mary. "Go on Brenda, ask him." I think it was the dog that stopped her. Big it was, with a black head and its mouth open showing all its teeth. Anyway we watched for a while as people started to set up trestles in the street which had been cordoned off. Along came trucks and vans and unloaded their wares. It was an antique market. No wonder there were so many policemen and dogs about. It was this sort of happening that made the trip so interesting. Like the hand operated petrol

pump in Spain. I can remember filling forty gallon drums from pumps like this when I was young. What a chore. I quite enjoyed standing by watching someone pumping petrol the hard way into my car. The attendant had to stand on a box, he was too short to reach the handle.

In Italy, we were amazed at the autobahns. Travelling to Florence we seemed to drive from mountain to mountain. Climbing all the time. The engineers would build a bridge from one mountain to the next, then a tunnel through the mountain and again on the other side another bridge and so on until we turned off into Florence. The bridges were on high legs that descended far below into the valleys. On completion of one section all the machinery was moved along and the next section started. It looked quite eerie seeing people working on a structure that appeared to be suspended in mid air particularly when the huge cranes were also on this structure.

In Rome we wandered around the ruins and we walked up the Capitol and came upon the small romanesque church of Aracoeli. Outside the church there was a white Rolls Royce bedecked with flowers and ribbons. Inside the church a wedding was in progress so we stayed to watch. Eventually bride and groom emerged and all other guests crowded round, photos were taken and off they went in the Rolls. We went into the church and were greeted by a strong aroma of lilies. The little church was full of them, white ones, and looked so pretty that we sat awhile.

Most of you reading this would at some time have heard of St. Francis of Assisi. Well, if you ever get to Italy you must visit Assisi. It isn't so much the smallness of the town perched high on a hill, nor the fact that time has more or less stood still but that in this tiny village one can see people of all races speaking different languages coming from different countries with one thing in common. They are Franciscan Friars. Truly a United Nation.

Our next memorable stop was in Ravenna. Byzantine mosaics. Need one say more? The streets in Ravenna are in the usual vein, narrow, but the authorities have closed the central one to traffic between the hours of 10am and 6am the next morning and everyone rides around on bicycles. Reminded us of China.

From Ravenna we drove to Austria. It looked so clean and fresh. We spent the



night at Innsbruck and the next morning joined myriads of other tourists in the old city. Tiny shops with shelves laden with goods so crowded that one felt that to turn around would spell disaster for something. In fact one lady did knock into a stand of Tyrolean hats. Fortunately the stand fell against a body and was reset in place by another body. For a person with an eyesight difficulty I was pleased to take my body outside before I did a damage to something. Anyway it was much nicer outside sitting at a table with ein stein in my hand, watching the people go past, looking at the mountains in the distance. It was midsummer and they still had a good coating of snow.

On coming into Switzerland we nearly jumped out of our skins, I was back in the desert, war was being waged. Yes, in Switzerland. The army was out on manoeuvres and we drove right through it. No warning signs just guns firing in a field to the right of us and young men going through an obstacle course to the left of us. Nothing like a few gunshots to jerk one out of reverie. After settling in at a hotel we felt a bit hungry and as our watches said 6 pm we thought that we'd head down to the

dining room. Strange, no one there, doesn't look open. We asked at the bar. The dining room definitely opens at 6 pm. Puzzled, we asked the time. Switzerland doesn't change to summer time. Our clocks were an hour fast, the time was 5 pm. We had an hour to wait. The Swiss beer is very nice!

Talking of beer I felt I couldn't go back to New Zealand without having sampled some of the German brew. So we quickly crossed the border at Koblenz and drove into Germany. We found a picturesque pub alongside the Rhine and purchased a stein of the publican's finest. (Actually I asked for "ein stein bier". I was getting quite good at this phrase!) Although the brew was full bodied and had good colour I must say that I do prefer the New Zealand variety, but then home brew is always best. In England it seems to be called "real ale" but I've yet to taste unreal ale!

We thoroughly enjoyed our experiences and were very grateful for the hospitality shown to us by St. Dunstan's. Already I am making a list of what I want to see next time. So if you have any suggestions . . . !

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*D. F. Robinson's*

## Gardening Column

Some people have been asking about the garden seeds and wondering whether it would be possible to have the cash instead. Personally, I am rather against this idea, since the amount of money you would receive would be very small, and as I can buy seeds at cost price I can get more seeds for the money than you can. Also if you do not receive the seeds you may forget to plant them at the appropriate time. I know they were rather late this season, but since the weather has been so poor, it may not have been a bad thing. Perhaps I have been lucky, but I had some oldish garden pea seeds and sowed them in a wide bed and they have come up very well, so I hope to get a good crop if the weather improves.

### Vegetables

Keep hoeing the vegetable patch and water well in dry spells. Give the cauliflowers some liquid manure if they have good flower heads and break a leaf

over the heads to shade them from the sun. Pick peas and French beans regularly, as more can be sown in the empty beds so that you have a continuous supply of crops.

You can stop lettuces from bolting if you give them large quantities of water. Again, sow small quantities of lettuce seed at different times to give you a continuous supply. Earth up the potatoes as they grow and get the supports for the runner beans in place, if you have not done so already. You can plant out some well grown tomatoes in a sunny sheltered spot, but do make sure that they are well supported.

A good sprinkling of Growmore, or a similar type of fertiliser, will benefit those items that are growing well and nearing maturity. Clear away items which have cropped and open up the beds for other crops, such as spring cabbage.

### Lawns

Keep mowing the lawn regularly with the blades at the lowest point. However, do not cut the grass too often in really dry weather but do water the grass well via the sprinkler, making sure no regulations say you should not do so.

Fertilise the lawn every so often when the grass is damp and keep the edges of the grass tidy by clipping them. Remember a long handled pair of shears takes a great deal of the pain out of this job. Remember that the mowings make very good compost and can be piled around the base of fruit trees to retain the moisture after rain.

### Fruit

You will need to water the fruit trees/bushes well to ensure that you do not get a large drop later on. Use a hoe and saturate the soil around the roots and do this several times, to get really down to the base soil.

Do pick the strawberries as soon as they ripen, since they go off very quickly and if you do not get to them, the birds soon will. Alpine types of strawberries, with the very small fruit, tend to fruit nearly the whole year round. Other soft fruits will be showing their worth soon, so again, pick the fruit as it ripens and keep the birds off with some plastic netting.

### Flowers

Finish off the bedding out of the annuals into the flower beds, even those of you in the north. Remember to plant the smaller



items in front. Cut down the dead heads on the delphiniums, lupins and pyrethrum as this will encourage more flowers over a longer period. Cut away some of these sprays of pinks for indoors and if you want large size blooms, take off the side buds well down the stems.

Those of you in the south can plant out the begonias, putting them in warm sunny borders surrounded by a handful of peat, to get them off to a good start. The early flowering chrysanthemums should be in place now, with stakes in place too. Stop some of the shoots to give more side growths and so more flowers in August and October.

Where you sowed seeds directly into the flower beds, thin them out and use these spare seedlings to fill in empty patches elsewhere in the garden. Many biennials for next spring can now be put outside. The perennials can be put in their permanent places late in the autumn.

Cut back any straggly shoots and dead flowers on flowering shrubs. This pruning may make the plants bushier and so produce more flowers next season. Cut off all dead heads from the roses and spray them against greenfly and black spots. Most plants in the herbaceous border will benefit from a dose of fertiliser.

#### Greenhouse

Keep the greenhouse well ventilated in hot weather and give some shading, such as painting the glass with a special wash that does not come off in the rain, but does wipe off with a dry cloth. Spray and use smokes regularly and some water sprayed on the floor in hot weather will be of help – but do not over do it.

If your azaleas and camelias have flowered indoors they will need plenty of moisture and warmth under cover to make new growth for next season, before you can put them outside in a protected position in early July.

Many seeds can now be sown for the coming season, such as calceolaria, cineraria, cyclamen, priuula and outdoor plants such as aubretia, geraniums, carnations and polyanthus. Another plant I find that gives plenty of colour is a perennial called abutilon and comes very easily from seed and if you get a good colour you can take cuttings next season.

Get the begonias into their flowering positions and water them well and feed the

gloxinias and other mature and flowering pot plants. The tomatoes should be giving some fruit by now and I hope you have got them in their permanent sized pots, or bags. Do not forget that if you are using bags, do pierce some holes along the side, near the bottom for drainage. Give a special tomato feed to those with fruit but only a normal type to those still coming along.

Feed the cucumbers regularly and pick the large ones so that they will continue to form fruit and do remember to take off the flowers which have no small fruit behind the base of the flower, or you may have some very bitter fruits.

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## Welcome to St. Dunstan's



*On behalf of St. Dunstan's we welcome a St. Dunstaner recently admitted to membership and the Review hopes he will settle down happily as a member of our family.*

**William Tyson** M.P.S., F.S.M.C., of Bude, who joined St. Dunstan's on 28th April. Mr. Tyson is 78 years old and served as a Petty Officer in the Royal Navy during the Second World War. In civilian life he was a pharmacist and optician. He is married with two adult sons.

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## RETIREMENT PRESENTATION FOR MISS GUILBERT

Miss Guilbert is to retire at the end of July and her many friends among St. Dunstaners who have known her over the years at Ian Fraser House may wish to contribute towards a Presentation Fund. Contributions should be sent to Dr. R. Stilwell, at Ian Fraser House, Greenways, Ovingdean, near Brighton, Sussex.

## CLUB NEWS

### MIDLAND

Sunday, 12th April proved to be very busy and hectic. Dominoes were played while the ladies prepared the tea and arranged the stalls for the "Bring and Buy". At 4.45 p.m. we sat down to enjoy a beautiful tea and the home made cakes were delicious. Joe thanked the ladies as usual and then he said how much everyone had enjoyed the reunion the previous day.

Bill Green is still unable to get along to the Club, but everyone sends their best wishes Bill and Hilda.

On Thursday, 12th March the Women's Section at the Austin British Legion had a speaker from the Red Cross. I was very pleasantly surprised to find that it was Miss Fairhead, who helped to run the Birmingham Club at Red Cross Headquarters in Highfield Rd., before the St. Dunstaners themselves took over the running of the present club in 1963. She asked me if I would pass on her kindest regards to everyone who remembered her.

Connie and Doug had met Mrs. Spurway while they were in London and she also sent best wishes to everyone, which they were very pleased to reciprocate.

After tea, the tables were quickly cleared, so that the ladies could go into the other room and spend their money. I don't think I have ever seen so many lovely things for sale. The new and nearly new articles really attracted everyone.

At 6.45 p.m. when the money was totalled up, we had raised the grand sum of £30.57 which will go a long way towards our outing to Stratford on Sunday, 7th June.

If any St. Dunstaner would like to join us on this day, would they please ring me on 021 475 5748.

After a very pleasant afternoon the meeting finished about 7.00 p.m.

The next meeting will be on Sunday, 14th June at 3.00 p.m.

*Joan Cashmore*

### BRIGHTON

#### Bowling

St. Dunstan's bowlers received an

invitation from Steve Blake to play at Elmbridge Leisure Centre on Wednesday, 8th April; 14 bowlers, wives and escorts had a most enjoyable day out. On arrival, we were met and welcomed by the Mayor and Mayoress. After light refreshments of tea and biscuits, the Mayor made a speech and I replied to his very kind words. An excellent match took place and the bowlers were amazed at the way St. Dunstaners played, as they had never played against a blind team before. One brave bowler from Elmbridge decided to find out for himself what it was like to bowl blind – he played an excellent shot – the only trouble being it was on the jack two rinks away. Everyone had a good laugh for his effort and from then on he kept his eyes wide open. After the match, an excellent tea was provided by the Ladies' Section, and we have been promised an invitation to return to Elmbridge again next year.

My thanks to Steve Blake for organising the match, to Mr. J. Carnochan (Sports Organiser), Dr. Stilwell for providing transport and Keith the driver for the safe journey and his help.

*W. Davies  
Captain*

#### Congratulations—

Congratulations to Percy Stubbs, of Norwich, who has been picked to play for England in the World Blind Bowls Tournament, in Leicester, in August. Jim Padley, of Saltdean, also deserves congratulations as he is to be the first reserve for the England team. We wish them both good luck and good bowling.

#### Entertainment Section

Our monthly dance was held on Saturday, 11th April, at Ian Fraser House and although the attendance was a little low, due to the fog, there seemed to be a very good party spirit. This spirit made the dance one of the most enjoyable we have had for some time.

On Friday, 1st May, 32 St. Dunstaners, wives and friends made the trip to Boship Farm, Hailsham. The evening started rather badly; the coach arrived late at the pick up points and then we discovered that the driver had failed to pick up Mr. and Mrs. Mugan, two of our staunchest club members. The coach turned around but despite frantic searching we were unable to locate them.

We wondered if this was a bad omen for the rest of the evening and arrived at our destination one hour later than planned. Our worries about the rest of the evening were soon dispersed, and after we had sat down to a fine meal of fish and chips and a choice of sweets, we settled down to enjoy a little beverage and listened to the organ played by the resident organist and we joined in the sing-song of old and new tunes in the traditional St. Dunstan's fashion. The evening passed too quickly and what began as a near disaster finished up a very pleasant and enjoyable evening.

A trip to Leeds Castle, near Maidstone has been arranged for Friday, 17th July and will anyone interested in this please contact Bob Osborne, Brighton 32115 as soon as possible. The price for members is £4.50 and £6.50 for non members, which includes the coach fare, lunch and tea. This trip should be very interesting.

Our May dance was held on 9th May and we were very pleased to welcome so many St. Dunstaners who were on holiday at Ian Fraser House. Our next dance will be held on 13th June and will be the last one until October 10th.

*H. Preedy*

## Brighton Social & Sports Bridge Section Results

### Pairs Results

#### Competition played 3rd May 1981

##### North/South

W. Lethbridge & R. Goodlad	62-1
E. Hannett & Mrs. Bradbury	53-8
B. Ward & Mrs. Buller-King	50-8
F. Dickerson & Mrs. Andrews	47-9
W. Phillips & Dr. Goodlad	47-1
B. Ingrey & Mrs. Gover	38-3

##### East/West

A. Dodgson & Mrs. Dodgson	57-1
W. Allen & Miss Steyning	53-8

R. Fullard & Mrs. Tibbet	52-1
B. Simmons & Miss Sturdy	51-7
T. Bradley & Mr. Bradbury	44-6
P. McCormack & Mrs. Phillips	40

### Individuals Competition 9th May Results

F. Dickerson & Partner	78
H. Preedy & R. Fullard	72
W. Lethbridge & J. Padley	60
J. Whitcombe & P. McCormack	60
T. Bradley & Partner	57
W. Phillips & C. Walters	53

*Bill Phillips*

## Open University

by Peter Matthews

If you are interested in doing an Open University course you should write to the Open University, Walton House, Milton Keynes, for a booklet called, 'Advice to Applicants', which is issued free. If you need still further information contact Binky Powell, the Displacement Officer.

The R.N.I.B. Student Tape Library have most of the text books you are likely to need and they also have quite a wide range of courses on Talking Book. I do strongly advise you to only take a course which has been recorded on to cassette.

For a course you will need, apart from your talking book machine, a good cassette recorder, for recording T.V. and radio programmes, a stock of cassettes and to be able to type your essays.

If the R.N.I.B. does not have a particular tape you need in stock, Binky Powell will record the material for you - but do check with the R.N.I.B. first to avoid duplication. However, I do stress how important it is to ensure that your chosen course has already been recorded before taking up a course.

### HOOVER HELPS THE BLIND

Hoover now supply and fit Braille bezels and control knobs to all their automatic and twin-tub washing machines and tumble dryers. They also fit special Braille dials to their irons, and to prevent accidents, provide a "muss" which is fitted around the edge of the soleplate of steam irons. Booklets in Braille giving detailed instructions are also available. Do ask your local dealer.

## BUCKINGHAM PALACE GARDEN PARTY

There was a tremendous response to the notice in the April Review asking St. Dunstaners wishing to attend the Garden Party in July to submit their names for a ballot. We were allocated a total of 22 double tickets (including a number from the "Not Forgotten Association") and well over 100 applications were received.

The draw was made by our President, Colonel Sir Michael Ansell, and the lucky 22 have been informed by letter. We have also told those who were unfortunate in the draw, and will try to ensure that these St. Dunstaners will be given preference when any similar occasion arises in the future.

*W.C. Weisblatt*

## FAMILY NEWS

### PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

#### Congratulations to:

*Frank Jeanmonod* (G3JYT), of Eltham, who has recently received a certificate from the Royal Navy Amateur Radio Society for Morse proficiency at a speed of 30 words per minute.

*Mrs. Muriel Bryant*, of Plympton, who has recently won an award for an Arran cardigan exhibited at the War Disabled Exhibition, in London. She missed winning the first prize by one point.

### MARRIAGES

#### Congratulations to:

*Mr. Paul James*, of Poole, who was married to Peggy Ann Wickham, on 18th April.

*Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Jensen*, of Uxbridge, are pleased to announce that their son, Michael Ian, was married to Linda Anne Humphries on 25th April.

### RUBY WEDDING

#### Congratulations to:

*Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Watson*, of Aldridge, Staffordshire, who celebrated their Ruby Wedding Anniversary, on 22nd March.

## BIRTHS

### Congratulations to:

*Mrs. Constance Belton*, of Teignmouth, on the birth of her sixth grandchild, Laurence, on 10th April, to her daughter, Valerie, and her husband, Nigel.

*Mr. and Mrs. Donald Groves*, of Southend-on-Sea, on the birth of their second grandson, Andrew Trevor, on 25th April, to their son, Peter, and his wife, Janet.

*Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Wilson*, of Brough, on the birth of a grandson, Matthew, on 12th April, to their daughter, Angela, and her husband, Clive.

### GREAT GRANDCHILDREN

#### Congratulations to:

*Mr. and Mrs. Harry Perrett*, of Devizes, on the birth of their second great grandchild.

## DEATHS

### We offer sympathy to:

*Henry Bowen*, of Shrewsbury, whose wife, Gladys, died on 13th April.

*Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Lowry*, of Saltdean, on the death of Mrs. Lowry's father on 2nd April.

*Mr. Bob Cunningham*, of Saltdean, whose father died on 14th April.

*Mr. Alfred Fletcher*, of Newton Abbot, whose wife, Florence, died at home on 4th May.

*Mrs. Alice McGinnis*, widow of the late *Jock McGinnis*, of Liff, by Dundee, whose only son, Jimmy died on 17th April, aged 37.

## 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.**

### Frederick William Bird, 4th Suffolk Regiment.

Frederick William Bird, of Fulbourn, Cambridge, died at home on 3rd April. He was 85 years old.

Mr. Bird served with the 4th Suffolk Regiment as a Private from 1912, until 1917. In March 1917 he was severely wounded, losing his left arm and

## **In Memory Continued**

left eye, and following the deterioration of sight in his other eye, Mr. Bird joined St. Dunstan's, in January 1980.

He was an active member of the British Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association and spent several holidays with them. Since his wife died nine years ago, Mr. Bird was devotedly cared for by his daughter Mrs. Field.

### **Sydney John Letch, Essex Regiment**

Sydney John Letch, of Hatfield Peverel, died on 25th April. He was 85 years old and was one of the oldest surviving St. Dunstaners from the First World War, having joined St. Dunstan's in 1916 after receiving injuries whilst on active service in the Dardanelles, when he was totally blinded.

He was trained in mat making and poultry rearing and ran a successful small holding for many years, with the help of his wife. Mr. Letch produced a prolific number of mats for our stores of a consistently high standard and although had to eventually cease work on his small holding, on health grounds, he continued to make mats until comparatively recently.

Sadly, their only son, John died in 1973, by which time Mr. Letch's health was deteriorating. Nevertheless, Mr. and Mrs. Letch celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary, in 1977 when their grand-daughter gave a party for them.

Through a long period of ill health, borne with great fortitude, Mr. Letch was devotedly cared for by his wife and other members of the family.

He leaves a widow, Elizabeth.

### **John French Caswell, Queen's Royal Regiment**

John French Caswell, of Reading, died at home on 21st April. He was 65 years old and had been a St. Dunstaner since 1944.

Mr. Caswell served as a Corporal in the Queen's Royal Regiment during the Second World War, from 1940 until April 1944, when he was discharged having been totally blinded by a mine explosion whilst on active service, at Cassino, in Italy.

In 1945, Mr. Caswell undertook a period of industrial training at Church Stretton and then returned to his former employers in Reading, as a capstan lathe operator. Mr. Caswell was a highly valued and efficient employee for 18 years, until he was made redundant, in 1963, when he moved on to the Reading Winding Company where he worked on assembly. He remained there until 1977 when he had to retire on health grounds.

Mr. Caswell's main hobby was his garden and

greenhouse but he was also interested in tape recording and making string bags. He was a valued member of several local clubs.

Sadly his first wife, Greta, died in 1946 leaving Mr. Caswell with a two year old daughter, but in 1948 he remarried and was happily married to Vera for 33 years.

He leaves a widow, Vera and a son and daughter.

### **Walter James West, Royal Field Artillery**

Walter James West, of Derby, died on 15th March. He was 86 years old.

Mr. West was a Corporal in the Royal Field Artillery from 1914 until 1917, and he had been a St. Dunstaner for 16 years. He worked on the railways for 40 years until he retired in 1960, on health grounds.

Mr. and Mrs. West were both extremely keen gardeners, producing prize crops of vegetables and most particularly chrysanthemums and they had an allotment as well as a garden.

He leaves a widow, Elsie, and a son.

### **Ephraim Stewart Cook Spence, 7th Bn. Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders**

Stewart Spence, of Slinford, West Sussex, died unexpectedly on the 29th April, 1981. He was 64 years old.

Captain Spence served and was commissioned in the Second World War. He was taken ill in Africa in 1943 and suffered serious after effects, including loss of sight. He came to St. Dunstan's in 1944 and had various business interests over some years, but later took up pottery and was very successful with it. In 1971, he married his wife, Joy, who is also a potter and with whom he shared a great interest in music. He was a keen swimmer and they were enjoying a visit to Cranleigh Pool, when he collapsed and died very suddenly.

He leaves a widow, Mrs. Joy Spence.

### **George Ernest Ramsay, 2/30th Bn. Australian Imperial Forces**

George Ramsay, of Epping, New South Wales, died on the 6th January, 1981. He was 81 years old.

Colonel Ramsay was commissioned and served in the Second World War. He was a Prisoner of War of the Japanese with a very fine record of courage and outstanding leadership.

He leaves a widow, Mrs. Agnes Ramsay, and many friends.