



**St Dunstans
Review
July 1984**

From the Chairman

It is now the middle of the year. At St. Dunstan's it's 'all go'. In current major projects talk is being translated into action and the long months of consultation, negotiation and planning are now taking shape in practical results. With the continuing reduction in numbers of St. Dunstaners, the Staff at H.Q. has also declined and will continue slowly to do so. As a result there is a great deal of unused space in 191 Old Marylebone Road and it was decided to rebuild completely our largely empty stores building next door, sell 191 for re-development and thus finance the operation.

The new H.Q. - its address will be 12-14 Harcourt Street, although, in fact, it is just next door to 191 - will have improved facilities for the reception of visiting St. Dunstaners and for the Staff. Unfortunately there will be no parking for cars until we have possession of garaging which will become available when the site of the old building has been re-developed. It will be an up-to-date, well designed building worthy of the Headquarters of St. Dunstan's.

Work has progressed well and the target date for our move is Saturday, 11th August. After that demolition of the old building will begin and the purchaser has plans for an office block with residential flats. St. Dunstan's has an option to buy some of the flats which would be adapted to become our London Hostel in place of Broadhurst Gardens - again giving improved facilities for visiting St. Dunstaners, a base nearer the centre of London, and the garaging mentioned earlier.

At Ian Fraser House the first stage in the conversion work necessary to provide holiday accommodation for St. Dunstaners and their wives has been completed. On the second floor in the 'fuselage' additional accommodation for unaccompanied St. Dunstaners has been provided. There is the additional problem of renewing the majority of the existing windows and replacing them with modern, double-glazed units which will withstand the extremes of weather and salt corrosion. Ian Fraser House will remain open during this refurbishment, albeit with reduced availability of beds, but every effort will be made to avoid disappointing St. Dunstaners who seek a specific date.

Readers will know of Gerry Jones' excellent time of 3 hrs. 26 mins. in the London Marathon recorded in the *Review* - a splendid effort. Our Archers will shortly be demonstrating their sport to the admiration of visitors to the Game Fair at Broadlands and at their summer shoot; our Bowlers in the National Competition at Weston-super-Mare.

By the time you read this the Reunion Season will be nearing completion - some 300 St. Dunstaners have met together during the Spring and early Summer, renewing old friendships and keeping up the spirit of St. Dunstan's.

The peak holiday season approaches. To those of you who have not already enjoyed a break somewhere, I wish you a very good holiday.

Henry Leach

FASTEST BLIND MARATHON RUNNER

Confirmed times from the organisers of the London Marathon show that St. Dunstaner Gerry Jones was the fastest blind man in the race. There were three known blind men competing and these were their finishing times and places: D 344 Gerry Jones - time 3 hrs 26 mins. 23 secs., place 4,816th; A 468 Mike Brace - time 4 hrs. 31 mins. 6 secs., place 13,038th; K 107 David Musgrove - time 5 hrs. 24 mins. 56 secs., place 15,192nd.

Gerry Jones and Mike Brace were running for the Royal School for the Blind, Leatherhead. With other sighted runners, who were also sponsored, they have so far raised £4,000 with more money still to come in.

TANDEM CYCLING

Our two tandems are in the process of being completely renovated and updated and it is hoped that St. Dunstaners coming to Ian Fraser House for holidays or training will be able to enjoy this resumed recreational activity. It must be explained that with the ever increasing volume of road traffic, with accidents to cyclists being quite high, that the lead rider has to be a very experienced cyclist with tandem experience. With this safety factor in view a small nucleus of volunteer experienced tandem cyclists are quite willing to come and take out any interested St. Dunstaners.

As much notice as possible would be appreciated. Would you please contact us as soon as possible if you are interested and let me know when you are coming to Ian Fraser House.

Jock Carnochan

SWEEPSTAKE WINNERS

This year 2,756 Derby Sweepstake tickets were sold and the total prize money, less the cost of printing the tickets, amounted to £481.20.

There were only 17 runners this year and the payout was as follows:

1st Prize £241.00 -
W. Waller - Secreto,
Ticket No. 1879.

2nd Prize £96.00 -
J. Read - El Gran Senor,
Ticket No. 1656.

3rd Prize £48.00 -
W. Waller - Mighty Flutter,
Ticket No. 1876.

The rest of the prize money was divided equally between all those who held tickets for the remaining 14 horses.

FREE TAPES

A generous donation has been made to St. Dunstan's of recorded material on open reel tapes. There are too many to catalogue in detail. They include opera, classical music, Shakespeare plays and lectures. Reel sizes vary from 7 inches down.

They will be given away on a first come, first served basis, to those applying to the PR Department. Please state general content and reel size preferred.

HOBBY GRANTS

St. Dunstaners are reminded that those who have taken up handicrafts or similar hobbies may be entitled to a grant of £50 towards the cost of materials.

Further information is available from Mr. D. Paterson or Mrs. H. Hobbs at Headquarters.

10p MONTHLY

JULY 1984

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Cover Picture:
Our staff speaker, Bill Griffiths, addresses boys of Eton College by invitation.



Vi Delaney presents a bouquet to Mrs. Sandys.

REUNIONS

LIVERPOOL

There is always a warmth about the Liverpool Reunion – the St. Dunstaners living around Merseyside and the North West know how to make each other welcome and how to welcome their guests: Major and Mrs. Sandys, staff members and two retired staff, Miss Margot Midgley and Mr. D.F. Robinson felt that warmth on Thursday, 24th May.

22 St. Dunstaners, their wives and escorts and their guests made up a company of 54 who lunched in the fine banquet room of the St. George's Hotel. Greeting St. Dunstaners on behalf of the Council, Major Sandys said how great a pleasure it was for him and for Mrs. Sandys to come to this reunion. 'This was the first one we ever came to – it must be 15 or 16 years ago, when it was held at the Adelphi. We also like coming back here to find old friends.'

Major Sandys mentioned particularly Mr. Croft of the Wirral who was attending his first reunion. He then turned to the number of St. Dunstaners living in the U.K. and Overseas. 'These figures tend to reduce year by year every time that I give them out', he said. 'We are all saddened at the passing of old friends but it does underline

the fact that we have had the longest period of peace in Europe and freedom from major wars in our entire history.

While our armed forces have taken part in many small engagements overseas, sometimes large ones like the Falklands, ever since the Second World War, technical improvements in medical science and care of the wounded have meant that the number of servicemen coming to St. Dunstan's has been very small indeed and this is something for which we should all be thankful.

Major Sandys referred to the presence of St. Dunstaners at the service for the Order of the British Empire at St. Paul's in London and at the forthcoming D-Day commemoration in Normandy.

'During the past year', he said, 'our much-loved Chairman, Ion Garnett-Orme retired. We were all very sad that he should leave after 25 years devoted service to St. Dunstan's, greatly helped by his charming wife, Katharine, but we have been extremely fortunate that Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Leach, who has not only had a highly distinguished career in the Navy, but is also an extremely charming and

delightful man with an extremely charming and delightful wife, has taken on the responsible position of our Chairman. I am sure he will be a very worthy successor to all our very distinguished Chairmen of the past and I am sure you will all join me in wishing him and his wife all the best in the years to come.' Major Sandys concluded by wishing everyone a very happy afternoon and a pleasant reunion.

It was Charles Hague who spoke for St. Dunstaners. He expressed their thanks to Major Sandys for his speech and to St. Dunstan's for its service to St. Dunstaners. To illustrate the point he said 'I should like to refer to our St. Dunstan's Review which my wife reads out to me every month, and unfortunately, when it comes to the last page, we read about the St. Dunstaners who have passed on. Yet I am amazed at the age of some of them. They are in their late eighties or even nineties.

'Most people believe that one of the major indirect causes of premature death is through worry and stress. There we have St. Dunstan's behind us, they have lifted a lot of worry and stress from our shoulders and so enabled us to carry on a relaxed and carefree life. When I say a relaxed life I don't mean sitting at home twiddling our thumbs. St. Dunstan's have taught us hobby interests, gardening, toy making, wrought iron work, etcetera'.

Thank you

In his concluding remarks Mr. Hague thanked the hotel staff and asked St. Dunstaners to turn to their wives, smile, and say thank you. He then extended this: 'And now would everybody stand, except St. Dunstan's staff, and give them a big smile and say, thank you'.

Mr. Hague said he would like to single out one person. 'Our very able and lovely Welfare Visitor, Carol Henderson.' He did not know exactly what was involved in organising a reunion, except that it must mean a lot of hard work. 'All I can say is: Nice one, Carol.'

Vi Delaney completed the formal part of the reunion with an informal and charming presentation of a bouquet of flowers to Mrs. Sandys, who caused laughter when she said, 'My new home grows only stones, so I shall especially appreciate these flowers'.

MANCHESTER

Twenty seven St. Dunstaners were present at the Midland Hotel on Saturday, 26th May, for their annual reunion. Representing the Council was Mr. Richard Dufton, himself a St. Dunstaner, accompanied by his wife.

Mr. Dufton especially welcomed the three First War St. Dunstaners, Mr. Mabe and Mr. Ralphson, and Mr. Bocking who joined St. Dunstan's 69 years ago in 1915. He was most impressed with the list of hobbies and activities pursued by those present. Mr. Dufton himself had started training some two years after the outbreak of war, with just 29 other St. Dunstaners. 'When seven of us left in one fell swoop to work in the same factory, it left them pretty short in the choir!'

After giving out the numbers of St. Dunstaners worldwide, Mr. Dufton concentrated on the theme of overseas St. Dunstaners. Many were contemporaries of Sir Arthur and Lord Fraser. They had left England between the wars in the same pioneering spirit as our founder. 'Sir Arthur was the first real Public Relations man in the blind world. It was he who got braille production on the road. There is no doubt that he was the most qualified man to found St. Dunstan's.'

He paid a special tribute to welfare visitors, Miss Broughton and Mrs. Henderson. 'We congratulate you for all the work you do and the way you go out in all weathers.' He also congratulated Mr. Len Wiggins of the employment department and said it was quite a task keeping up with all the technical developments that were going on in industry nowadays. 'Each member of staff is recruited for his or her speciality. Group them together as a team and the result is far greater than the capability and knowledge of any individual. This is surely one of the reasons for the success of the St. Dunstan's welfare service. This might lead one to think we were an introverted society. The truth is anything but.'

Mr. Dufton went on to describe the start of the Wireless for the Blind Fund by Lord Fraser. Similarly the start of the Talking Book Service in 1934. He pointed out that St. Dunstan's led Europe in research into reading and mobility aids in the 1960's and 1970's. The National Physical Laboratory and Universities of Birmingham, Notting-

Manchester continued

ham and Sussex all conducted projects sponsored solely by St. Dunstan's. He said our organisation had tended to miss out as these projects had generally polarised towards the educational field and employment of younger blind people.

Mr. Dufton said he could not end without referring to the events of the past year. 'Mr. Garnett-Orme retired after 25 years of invaluable service. Our new Chairman, with years of distinguished service behind him, was following on a line of men who, in 70 years, covered a wide range of experience - from newspapers, politics, local government, research, business and now the services.'

Mr. Sid Jones gave the reply - 'I was only able to come here at short notice. This meant there were two matters to be dealt with urgently. First, to contact a medium to find where my suit and shirt were, and secondly to decide what to say'. Sid had consulted a Mason friend and went on to relate several stories. One concerned a motorist weaving his way along the M1. He was eventually apprehended by a patrol car. 'You're drunk!' accused the patrolman. 'Thank goodness', replied the driver, 'I thought something had gone wrong with the steering!'

Archery

Sid Jones is a keen archer. 'I compare St. Dunstan's to an archery target. On the periphery is the Council. At the centre is the gold, Miss Mosley, Miss Broughton and Mrs. Henderson. I thank the Council, the staff and the welfare department. I could not exist without the help of these wonderful, sighted people.'

Mr. Dufton thanked Sid for his address and concluded with a quote recently culled from a newspaper:

'King David and King Solomon led very, merry lives.

With very, many lady friends and very many wives.

And when old age crept up on them, with very many qualms,

King Solomon wrote the proverbs and King David wrote the psalms.'

During the afternoon a piano recital was given by 13 year old Anne Margaret, daughter of Frank Hamilton. This was much appreciated by many people.



Sid Jones gives the reply.

NEW PRESIDENT IS A DOUBLE FIRST

Streatham Croydon Rugby Club has been in existence for 113 years. In all that time they have never had a Welsh President nor a blind one. This year they have both in the person of Llewellyn Davies, our St. Dunstaner who was blinded in 1943 serving in Italy with the London Irish Rifles.

Llew took office on May 10th and will be fully responsible for the running of the club. He has been their physiotherapist for 25 years as well as physiotherapy adviser to the famous London Welsh Club. Although retired from his work at Mayday Hospital in Croydon, he is continuing to work there as Honorary Physiotherapist associated with the Sports Clinic. As physiotherapist he has always had close liaison with the players themselves and he intends to maintain this as President of Streatham Croydon.

His ambitions for the club are to foster the spirit of co-operation, enthusiasm and comradeship. 'You can't build a new club in one year, but I hope to lay the foundation for younger people to take over, those who have just retired from playing and so secure the future of the Club.'

As I See Things — News of the Fraser Group

by Eric Ward Rowe

Well, here we are again. The June issue printed copy has not yet arrived, but to meet a press time for the July issue I am now dictating another little piece. I am working with my hands tied behind my back.

Still, we are all victims of the war, we all had our lives disrupted, we all accepted the challenge to serve. As the Chairman said in his June message the management is "proud" to serve us so we must all accept the challenge of this communication difficulty. Those St. Dunstaners who replied to my suggestion of a 'Fraser Group' giving their name and address, I have sent two letters keeping them on the spot up to date. What is new:-

(a) to meet the demand of those who have 'phoned me, the inaugural meeting will be in September. Holiday periods, other commitments, made me conclude that a September date would be more convenient. Also to meet requests, it will be held in London. Mr. Weisblatt has kindly made it clear to me that all expenses, travelling, will be paid and each couple, wife or escort, will be allowed £20.00 for additional expenses. (b) the Prime Minister is paving the way for us for an appropriate venue. But again, I have a go-slow postal strike to deal with so you will appreciate I am faced with complications. But, I have no central vision, so I am able to see round corners so I know what is coming and I await the actual impact of a document confirming more news.

I am astounded at what St. Dunstaners revealed to me about the projects they have taken up, the avenues they have gone down in pursuit of mental activity. - One tells me he's off to Leningrad to talk to the blind there, another tells me he is to tour America on a lecture tour, one of our 'live-wires' will be off soon to New Zealand, one tells me he devotes his life to helping the deaf, one of our ladies tells me of our enthusiasm to help 'those less fortunate than herself'. All these are magnificent personal efforts. They all want to serve and this magnificent attitude is something we must all be proud of.

Fraser Group, at its first Conference, which I hope will be at the end of next January, obviously will be interested, not

only of these visits, but we can learn something. How stimulating it will be when we have a prominent figure, someone who knows the real world, and a different one for each day, and then look forward to listening to people who have had the courage to climb 'over the wall' in search of mental satisfaction.

Now I come to the wives and widows. We St. Dunstaners have great respect for these fine people who have really served and to whom we owe so much. They deserve a big salute and it is my intention to welcome them all to the Fraser Group. I look upon them as St. Dunstaners and I am sure that with us all working and thinking together we can go forward, the future of our Group is limitless. It is up to us. We only get out of life what we put into it. We cannot expect the new enlightened Management to carry us, but they are now giving us the golden key to a new horizon. We must have the will, the imagination to accept our challenge. Nothing can stand still, not even St. Dunstan's, and it is only our spirit that can preserve its very soul, in this troubled world, violence, mistrust, uncertainty.

This could be our finest hour when we are shoulder together with wives and widows, we all go forward in one happy family.

My home address is: Fraser House, 55 Rockville Avenue, Anchorsholme, Cleveleys, Blackpool.

EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION

St. Dunstaner Maurice Aldridge, of South Africa, in his capacity of Professor of Linguistics at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, has become involved in educational films for South African television. This year he was on the committee of the production of the university's first series, 52 twenty-minute films on general education. The series was so successful that the university has a new contract for a 26 film series on science and computers. Maurice has now been appointed chairman of the committee to oversee this new project. He says he is particularly pleased because it could be the beginning of an Open University in South Africa along the lines of the Open University on English television.



DEDICATION SERVICE

Thirteen St. Dunstaners took part in one of London's great ceremonial occasions at St. Paul's Cathedral on May 17th. It was a Service of Dedication for the Order of the British Empire, attended by His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, who is Grand Master of the Order. Hundreds of recipients of awards in the Order gathered at the Cathedral, among them the St. Dunstan's group: Eric Boulter, Esq., C.B.E., Lt. Colonel James Cowley, O.B.E., Walter Thornton, Esq., O.B.E., Jimmy Wright, Esq., O.B.E., D.F.C., David Bell, Esq., M.B.E., Bill Griffiths, Esq., M.B.E., Ted John, Esq., M.B.E., Squadron Leader George King, M.B.E., Ken Revis, Esq., M.B.E., Trevor Tatchell, Esq., M.B.E., Mike Tetley, Esq., M.B.E., George Jakins, Esq., B.E.M., Peter Jones, Esq., B.E.M.

Members Only

Only Members and Medalists of the Order could attend the ceremony so all the escorts had to be so qualified. They were: Air Vice-Marshal W.E. Colahan, C.B., C.B.E., D.F.C., C.D. Wills Esq., O.B.E., Group Captain K. Martin, O.B.E., Mrs. Elizabeth Dacre, M.B.E., and Miss M. Skinner, M.B.E.

After the service the party, with their wives, lunched at the Regent Crest Hotel, where, in a short speech after the meal, Air

Vice-Marshal Colahan welcomed them on behalf of the Council. 'How do you follow a Service like the one we have been to today?' he said. 'It was a dedication service; it was inspiring; the atmosphere was splendid; the music was superb. So you don't make a speech to follow it.'

Thoughts

Saying that those who attended the service would have their own thoughts about it, Air Vice-Marshal Colahan gave one of his own. 'When the Duke of Edinburgh was reading the Lesson, there was one phrase in it, "God, himself dwells within us if we love one another". I'm not going to get all serious about it but, quite frankly, St. Dunstan's is the inspiration of Sir Arthur Pearson and Lord Fraser but the real rock-bottom of it is love of man for his fellow.'

Ted John expressed the thanks of St. Dunstaners in a few words. 'For the glorious opportunity of meeting fellow St. Dunstaners and their wives in a wonderful atmosphere.' He coupled his thanks to the Council with those to the hotel staff.

Finally, David Bell reminded the company that it was Alice Griffiths who drew St. Dunstan's attention to the first announcement of the Service. 'Without her we wouldn't be here', he said.

INTERNATIONAL DOLLS HOUSE EXHIBITION

St. Dunstaners or any of their friends, living or visiting anywhere near 'Longleat House' in Wiltshire this summer, would perhaps be interested to know that there is an 'International Dolls House Exhibition' sponsored by Heritage in aid of the Save the Children Fund. The exhibition will run from Thursday, July 12th, to Sunday, October 28th. Her Royal Highness Princess Anne, who is president of the Fund, will be visiting the exhibition on July 24th.

We are lending our latest dolls house, 'Warwick House', to the exhibition. It is a Georgian style house, has 11 rooms and an elegant hall and staircase leading to the Long Gallery. There is a large drawing room where the master and mistress are resting before going out, a dining room, kitchen, bathroom, library, nursery, servants' sitting room and four bedrooms. All the rooms have skirtings, picture rails and cornices and the 12 doors in the house are all hinged to open.

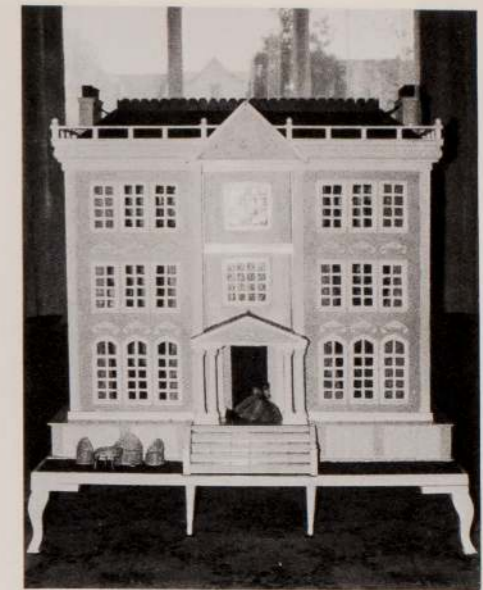
The house is fully furnished - we have made most of the furniture ourselves. Half the fun is thinking of things to put in to make it look like a real home. It stands 48 inches high, 44 inches wide and 33 inches deep. The lighting is supplied by a six volt transformer and all the rooms have individual switches, 14 in all.

I know there are a lot of people who will say 'How can a blind man make things?'. I can assure anyone who has any doubts at all that without Ted I could not do any of the things we do. He plans and designs everything in his head and then tells me exactly what to do, what wood to get, where to cut, etc. I'm the apprentice, he is the master. It gives us a lot of pleasure making things and between us we generally get things done in the end - not without a few arguments now and then!

I don't know what plans to make next, but I'm sure he is working something out, he doesn't like to sit still for too long!! (Don't tell him I said that though.)

Iris Miller

We have just heard that the organisers have asked the Millers to also lend their model thatched cottage.



Warwick House.

NEW SPORTS BOOKS

There are two new books coming out in the near future on the Talking Book Media which will be of interest to St. Dunstaners.

- (a) For those who participate in green bowls, 'Bowling with Bryant', the current world champion, contains excellent coaching material which is as important to the visually handicapped as it is to the fully sighted.
- (b) 'Sports and Recreation Provision for Disabled People' is useful to those people who serve on disabled sports committees of which many St. Dunstaners do. Its comments generally are in an advisory capacity, giving such advice as the general needs of different disabled groups, access to sports and recreational facilities, improvements and adaptations to enable disabled people to use existing facilities, outdoor sports, water sports and informal recreation and a host of useful aids. This book is a must for committee members. The book is published by Architectural Press for the Disabled Living Foundation in cooperation with the Sports Council. If you wish to purchase the printed version, applications to: Book Services, Disabled Living Foundation, 346 Kensington High Street, London W14.



Ninety-One Years Service to St. Dunstaners

Irene and George Adamson, two members of headquarters staff well-known to many St. Dunstaners, are to take early retirement in July. Between them they have completed no less than 91 years service to St. Dunstan's.

George joined in 1936, as a 14 year old and Rene, as she is better known to St. Dunstaners and staff, came here when she was 15. It was through his uncle, Joe Pugh, a First War St. Dunstaner, that George took a job on the, then, new nursery furniture project at Raglan Street, in London.

'When I left school my uncle put my name down for a job at St. Dunstan's. It was convenient as we lived nearby and I could act as Joe's escort on the way to work. He worked a router on the nursery furniture project. We sprayed them with paint and put on pictures through a silk screen.'

George can remember some of the St. Dunstaners working then in Raglan Street. 'There was Tom Toomey, Bill Lacey, Bill Samworth and Bill 'Jock' Jack, who used to

assemble the frames for seagrass stools.

'The department was really going well, expanding and developing into bookcases and coffee tables. The St. Dunstaners cutting the shapes and assembling them. The volume of work needed a second spray booth and that's where I came in. I learned to spray from the other chaps there.'

With the outbreak of war, St. Dunstan's closed the department fearing damage from air-raids. 'We were told to stay at home and we would be notified by telegram. My uncle hadn't heard and nor had I so I got on my bike and rode to Raglan Street to find the whole place in full swing. They'd forgotten to telegraph me. If I hadn't gone back I'd still be on leave!'

Because the nursery furniture department was on the top floor the St. Dunstaners were not recalled and the department was closed. George transferred to the joinery department until he was called up. He served with the Royal Marines in Ceylon and on beach and harbour control after the

D Day landings, then on to Norway.

Rene had joined St. Dunstan's as a telephonist in 1941 and worked at Raglan Street through the blitz. 'We went twice a day to the shelters and I used to dread Friday mornings when everybody had to practise wearing their gas masks for a period. Answering the switchboard with the telephone mouthpiece at the end of the snout was awful.'

Then the staff came back from the Christmas holiday to find the building burned down. 'It wasn't a bomb but an electrical fault. We were sent home and told we'd be telegrammed - unfortunately we heard the next day!'

The offices and Rene moved to Park Crescent and the works to Hansen Street, off Great Portland Street. Finally, they came together again in a carpet factory at Snow Hill. By then Rene had progressed from telephony to working for the gift clubs and the Old Bill Fraternity - a gift club for the general public.

Handsome young men

It was there that George and Rene met in 1946, on his return from the services. 'They kept talking about this handsome young man - so I had to see for myself,' said Rene, adding a wifely remark: 'Of course, in those days anyone in uniform was glamorous!'

They were married in 1948, to be told that St. Dunstan's could not employ a married couple. 'George said that in that case we'd both leave. Then no more was heard of it,' said Rene.

After some years in the Basket Department, Rene took over Men's Supplies. 'I enjoyed being in direct contact with St. Dunstaners,' she said. 'In previous years I only knew the basket-makers and George just the joiners.'

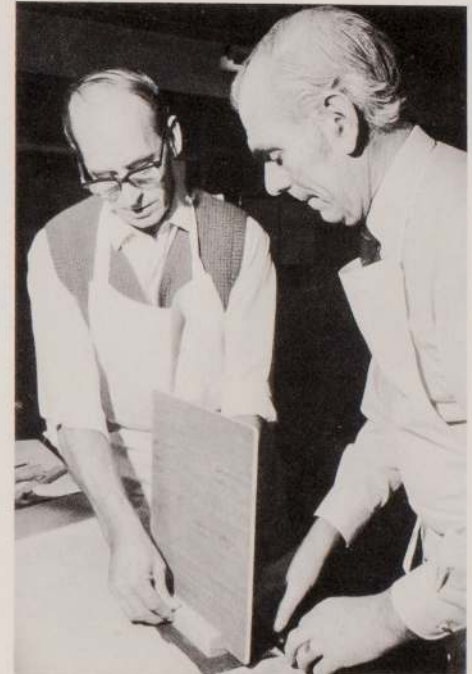
Coincidentally, the more recent years of George's service also brought him in contact with more individual St. Dunstaners, coaching them on the very successful wooden toys courses. 'In later years it has been meeting many new St. Dunstaners that has made it most enjoyable,' said George. 'I wish it had come earlier.'

'Yes, all good things have to come to an end,' summed up Rene. But they are both determined to keep in touch with St. Dunstan's. 'I definitely want to have the *Review*,' was Rene's parting shot to our interviewer.



The voice at the other end of the telephone to many St. Dunstaners, Rene is seen at work in the Men's Supplies Department.

George coaching Bob Forshaw on the Joinery course.





A Wheelchair in Mussourie

by Robert Nobbs

The invitation came in January from our friends, Tony and Rona, in India, 'Why not come and stay with us? We always said that Madras was too hot but it's cooler up here in the hills. It won't be easy but we'll manage.' 'Why not?' we thought, 'If Tony says he can cope, we'll be all right. 'Yes, we'll come,' we replied. (Later we learnt that it was Rona's idea, Tony had thought, 'Well, we could manage with difficulty, but Priscilla's bound to say "No", so we'll ask them!')

We then had to get passports and there is no popping into those booths when you're in a wheelchair. In April Priscilla's father died. 'I don't think I can cope with going to India now, but if we're meant to go it will be without any fuss and bother.' Two weeks later we met a travel agent friend who 'just happened' to have a block booking for a direct flight to Delhi about the time we wanted. She took over all the necessary arrangements needed for travelling in a

wheelchair; a doctor's certificate, insurance, special instructions, etc.

So in September we set off. At Heathrow we boarded the plane first – lifts and corridors providing easy access to the door and a special carrying chair being used to convey me to my seat. The block booking was for an army mountaineering group from the King's Regiment and they were a marvellous help on both flights, regularly lifting me from my seat to relieve any pressure. At Delhi it was another story, we waited and waited for over an hour to get off, the stewardess ran out of excuses, twice an official asked me to walk to the door, and eventually asked a passenger to help carry me out! Priscilla thought it was just to the entrance and was then horrified to see me going head first down the steps of the Jumbo.

Just as I was settled with difficulty into the back seat of a taxi, an airport wheelchair appeared and they insisted on getting me

out and into it. Priscilla, left in the taxi, saw me disappearing into the darkness, whilst the taxi driver was frantically hunting for his lost car keys! We eventually met up with a very relieved Tony. 'For 25 minutes I thought you weren't on the flight. A wheelchair sent out to the plane had been used by someone else and I was told there were no others to disembark.'

Although it was night time it was hot and sticky and straightaway we set off in a taxi for the seven hour ride into the hills. I was tied into the front seat (there are no seat belts) and my wheelchair lashed on top of the car. We drove through Meerut and the Siwalik Mountains, stopping every two hours for drinks and to give me a lift up, then through Dehra Dun where Priscilla noticed the 'St. Dunstan's' sign outside the National Institute for the Visually Handicapped. We stopped at the toll and cold water was thrown on to our boiling engine. We continued up the steep zig-zag road to Mussourie passing an elephant on the way. 'Unusual,' said Tony (two days later it arrived near Tony's and Rona and I were able to stroke its trunk) then up through the

narrow steep Landour bazaar and on up to St. Paul's Church situated way above Tony's bungalow but as near as the taxi could drive. Tony tied me into my chair, tied himself to it, then gradually lowered me down the steep side road. On the way we met neighbours toiling up to church, and Ray, a doctor living at the back, stopped to help with the luggage. So, we'd made it, just 24 hours after leaving home.

It was much higher (7,500 feet) than expected, and steeper. Tony had levelled out the ground round their narrow garden and built a wall to prevent my going over a 50' drop! It was the end of the Monsoon when we arrived, everything seemed wet (ferns were growing from tree trunks and leeches abounded). The mist often blotted out everything, but when it cleared we had glorious views of hills and valleys. I found the altitude difficult at first as the air was thin to breathe, so I appreciated a rest every afternoon. When the weather improved I was able to lay outside on a bed, under a tree, to shade me from the strong sun. I enjoyed listening to the birds, the sounds floating up from the bazaar, the occasional

Robert makes acquaintance with a passing elephant.



bell from a foraging cow and hearing the langur monkeys rushing through the trees and thumping on the roof.

'We've asked everyone to visit you as you can't get out easily,' said Rona – and they came – neighbours, language students, holiday visitors – over 100 people in five weeks. We found it quite humbling; one Indian pastor walked for 1½ hours in the rain just to see us, then had the long return trip. A retired Air-Vice Marshal of the Indian Air Force wanted to meet me having read 'A Higher Plane'. He and his wife came to tea bringing a chocolate cake decorated like the cover of the booklet.

The dud-wallah (milkman) called each day with the milk in small churns. If he didn't have a lid he made one from a leaf stuffed with grass! The milk (which was always watered down) was then sieved and boiled. Rona is registered blind but, like me, has limited vision and everyone was impressed with the way she got around and coped with cooking and entertaining.

Daily living is quite time consuming; boiling the water, washing fruit in potassium permanganate solution, using a pressure cooker for the meat before roasting. We didn't suffer any tummy bugs during our stay for which we were thankful. An

ambitious walk in our first week caused a spinal sore. Priscilla panicked, but Ray's wife Di, a nurse, came in each day and the sore soon healed. This was a marvellous provision because Ray and Di left the area soon after us. One night we were woken by furious barking and a banging at the door. 'Dr. Thomas?' said the Indian shining his torch. Ray was on call for the local hospital and the man had come to the wrong door!

Tony and Rona's work is to encourage Christian Fellowship amongst blind people and Shadrach was the first Indian blind man that we met. His wife is also blind and their world has been enlarged by attending camps started by Tony and Rona for blind and sighted people. 'I had so little contact with sighted people before then,' explained Shadrach, who had trained at Dehra Dun where he had come across St. Dunstaners. I was amused at being called 'Mr. Robert' whilst Priscilla was 'Mrs. Robert'.

Our first trip out was to see 'Fiddler on the Roof' at Woodstock School. Only two local residents had vehicles (short-wheel-based Land Rovers vintage 1951 or 1953) which could cope with the road near Tony's bungalow and Ralph kindly agreed to take us in his. Tony pushed the wheelchair as far as he could, then carried me to the Land

Robert and his Dandy men.



The wheel chair approaches one of the zig-zag corners on the descent from the bungalow.

Rover. 'Can you help?' he asked Ralph. 'No, I daren't leave the jeep in case it slips!' Tony got me into the front seat, Priscilla beside me to hold me in, Ralph's wife who had broken her ankle clambered with great difficulty into the back with Rona, Tony and the wheelchair.

We set off at a perilous angle down the zig-zag, first a five point turn, then a three point, followed by a nine point at the notorious Sunny Bank Corner, until we eventually unloaded at Woodstock. 'Where's the arm of the wheelchair?' We'd left it behind. Ralph and Tony went back for it. 'You never know what might disappear in India.'

Many houses are inaccessible by road, approached only by narrow woodland paths on the steep hillside. 'We'll hire a dandy,' said Tony, to get to Edgehill, the Bible and Medical Missionary Fellowship house were we'd been booked to speak at a meeting. I was tied into an upholstered sedan chair (left over from the days of the Raj, rather the worse for wear but still comfortable). This had a pole at each end. The four coolies lifted the poles onto their

shoulders to carry me. The dandy men chose to climb up the road, then plunge down the woodland path. Tony followed with difficulty with the empty wheelchair, often tipping it on to one wheel just to make progress. I was padded in with cushions and found it more comfortable than being in a wheelchair once we'd got the balance right. We found that the older coolies had more stamina than the younger ones who were soon puffing and blowing and had to stop to rest their sore shoulders. The coolies seemed to understand it was the only way I could travel and carried me carefully. It was expensive but worth it to get around and I thoroughly enjoyed it.

Omudh Singh, the carpenter who made ramps for the bungalow, had never seen a wheelchair before, nor it seemed had anyone else in Mussoorie – how we were stared at when we managed to push out on to the road. This was partly due to the Indian culture and attitude to a disabled person. With many it's a cause of shame to be disabled (surely someone has sinned a great deal) and the disabled person is hidden away. We spoke to the Sunday School

at Union Church (and were fascinated at Mrs. Swahmi Singh summarising in Hindi). Afterwards a teacher spoke freely to us about her disabled relative. As a couple left one of Tony and Rona's camps, the wife said, 'I have regained respect for my husband', who had lost his sight after their marriage. Many Indians are astounded at Tony choosing to marry a blind woman.

We had been invited to a meal with an Indian couple living in Happy Valley, normally a one-and-a-half hour walk. We took three hours! Again Tony had to tie himself to my chair and gingerly lower me down the zig-zag road to the bazaar. This is teeming with people and you always meet someone you know. Paul (a school teacher) appeared coasting along on his Royal Enfield motorbike (they are still made in India) – he kick-started it just so that I could enjoy again the sound of a real motorbike. We passed coolies staggering up the road with huge loads on their backs, anything from heavy sacks to massive planks of wood. We negotiated cows, bulls and potholes, saw where the house had fallen down in the bazaar and enjoyed looking at all the shops. Each time we went out we managed to get a lift back; on the last occasion we found we'd done it again – left the arm of the wheelchair way below at Union Church! Al in his 1953 jeep kindly took Tony and Rona down for it, but they had to walk back and it was over an hour before we saw them again.

Glorious sunsets

The sunsets were glorious – pinks, reds and oranges with incredible cloud formations. During our last week the 'Winter line' appeared – a straight red line across the sky at dusk. The snows appeared on the distant mountains. Priscilla got up early one morning to watch the sun rise on the snowy peaks, and in the far distance she saw Nanda Devi, the highest mountain in India (25,645 feet). Sadly we discussed our return journey.

We decided it would be less tiring if we flew from Dehra Dun to Delhi and also we'd be able to hire a rest room at Delhi as we were between flights. This time the taxi waited on the road below the bungalow and Tony lowered me down to it for the two-and-a-half hour drive to Dehra Dun Airport, which turned out to be just a huge

coloured tent! Chairs were in rows with a simple weighing machine at one side and, at the back, an old fashioned trestle table with cups and a water heater and 'Tea Stall' written above it. There were soldiers everywhere and as we went through the pre-flight checks the metal detector reacted furiously on me and Tony had to patiently repeat 'the wheelchair is made of metal.' I don't think the airline had ever carried a wheelchair passenger before and the passengers had to be held back to allow Tony to carry me in his arms up the steps into the small twin-engined Hawker Siddeley. It was only a 40 minute flight but I found it airless and tiring and was glad to stretch out in our rest room at Delhi and sleep.

In the evening we had a lovely farewell meal at the airport and yes, more visitors – Tony's ex-neighbours now living in Delhi. This time we were given first class treatment for our departure (we had complained about our arrival) and we were allowed to check in an hour late, ('we've been looking for you,' said the Army boys), and taken out to the plane first when the flight was announced.

At Heathrow was our friend Nic to greet us; or was it? He'd grown a moustache. He drove us home at the end of a superb five week holiday. I was exhausted but happy.

Welcome to St. Dunstan's



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

Robert Cecil Birchall, of Bearsted, near Maidstone, joined St. Dunstan's on 31st May.

Mr. Birchall, who is married, is 62 years old. He enlisted in the Buffs in July 1941 and was wounded in 1943 whilst giving mortar instruction and discharged the following year.

Douglas Gladwin Field, of Horsham, W. Sussex, joined St. Dunstan's on 21st May.

Mr. Field enlisted in the Royal Air Force in 1938 and was wounded by bomb blast in France in 1940. He was discharged in 1945. He is married, with two adult children and is 64 years old.

A Moment to Spare with Syd Scroggie

A TALE OF TWO CULTURES

The pianist Myra Hess had a cousin Irene Scharrer, also a pianist. In the studio of the latter one day I heard a protégée of hers sing, an Austrian girl, whose choice of songs has always struck me as peculiarly apt. Contrasted with two Schubert lieder were two songs from the Hebrides and it was impossible to say which was better, the sophisticated product of high European art or the untutored notes rising, as it were, like an emanation from foam-girt island and rolling sea. This dichotomy still persists in the West, at least so far as Celtic culture is concerned, and it is to the ceilidh, held in the glow of peat-fire and rushlight of old, that we owe the preservation of such songs as sang this Austrian girl in a London studio all those years ago.

More than the music of these Celtic times has been preserved, evocative as this is of sea and shore, the cries of oyster-catchers, bog myrtle's lovely scent; stories have passed from mouth to mouth as well, battles on ancient days, the loves of men and maids, treasons and treacheries, and, most of all, the supernatural as this affected kelpie and fairy, malignant and benevolent art, the life of glen and machar. Many were the nights, even in our own time, when the Bishop of Glen Coe, Christian as he was, shrank from returning home in the blackness under Bidean nan Bian after a night of tales such as these around the hearth of Gaelic-spoken parishioners.

He was the repository, this Bishop, of one of the great secrets of the Highlands, sworn to reveal it only to some successor in its preservation. Three people only in every generation know who slew the Red Fox and woe to his kin, calamity to himself, who should divulge it to the general world. James of the Glen was hanged for this assassin's act, but he was not the perpetrator of it, only the scapegoat unjustly brought to book. The winds that moan round the rugged heights of Sgor a' Fan-

naidh lament perpetually the law miscarriage responsible for this ancient execution. Campbell of Glen Ure was the victim of the lone assassin's ball, falling in the bloodstained bracken of Loch Linnhe's shore, and to this day, silent in Glen Ure House, two rooms remain unaltered since the hour their owner died. Ben Sgulaire towers above, piled with big granite boulders, snipe and pipits, the surreptitious, repetitive cuckoo, call in the waste of bare Glen Creran and a long and unpeaceful history hangs like a ghost around this Highland house.

There was no Schubert to echo its births and deaths, its feuds and friendships but in pibroch and song, lovely, anonymous, these things come down to us none the less. In the Barbican Centre, London, the Mozart Requiem dies away, the people disperse, tube-train and taxi empty the broad streets round till there is silence, the tolling of bell from some age-worn church. In Glen Coe and Glen Ure, as we remember their past, Rhum and Benbecula, the last dram is drunk, the clarsach put by and, lit by a flaring peat on its fork, the folk of the clachan win home in the darkness.

ELECTRONIC ORGAN WEEKEND

For any organ lover, the weekend of 11th–13th May at Pontins, Southport, was a must. From Friday evening until Sunday afternoon there was plenty to see, hear and learn.

There were concerts by Brian Sharp, Andy Smith, Trevor Daniels and several others. These names may not be familiar to you but they were first class organists. There were also talks and teach-in sessions by David Ash and Brenda Hayward who were both very interesting and informative. Sid Jones and Alan Mitchell both went to Southport and agreed it was an excellent weekend.

St. Dunstan's has a number of keen organists and in October – Friday 19th to Wednesday 24th inclusive – we are holding a get together for organ enthusiasts. Anyone interested in organ music will be very welcome, whether listeners or players, so please book in as soon as possible. If you would like any further details, please contact me, Alan Mitchell, through HQ.

Alan Mitchell

Hockham Fen, Norfolk

by Ron Smith – Part 1

You may have wondered why so much of my bird recording has been done in Norfolk. I find the Breckland a very special place. There are fifty two thousand acres of Forestry Commission conifers, mixed woodland, dry open country and wetlands, as well as cultivated fields, all making for a richly varied fauna and flora.

When I went there again in late May 1983, my first call was to a reserve known as Hockham Fen. This is owned by the Norfolk Naturalists' Trust, with some land there on loan from the Forestry Commission. My escort was Mavis Coates, who is very interested in natural history, especially botany.

Our first job was to find the Honorary Warden, Mr. E.J. Campbell. At first he seemed very doubtful about a blind person visiting the place but as I realised later, he was thinking of my safety. Hockham Fen is a twenty acre remnant of a much larger mere. It is still a place of mystery, of danger, to be visited with an experienced guide and seen adequately only from a boat.

One fine evening, with permission granted, Mavis and I in company with Mr. Campbell and his son Ben, made our way down to the mere. At one point we walked single file over a vigorously bouncing plank bridge where Mavis told me to keep directly behind her, or else! Then we went across a more primitive arrangement of crooked oak branches spread across a ditch.

Our hosts hauled a flat-bottomed boat down from its perch in a tree and handed us into it. Mavis sat at the pointed end and I was at the back, with tape recorder, while the two oarsmen sat side by side in the centre. They began to row us along a channel of black water, eight to ten feet wide, overhung with willows, so that sometimes I had to duck when Mavis called a warning as she herself doubled up. Ben remarked on a tufted duck which flew up in alarm. Mr. Campbell explained that the place was bottomless. A twenty-foot pole, he said, could be pushed down into the peat beneath the water and would disappear. School parties are not allowed to visit.

I had expected to hear reed warblers but there were none and although the evening air was filled with outside mosquitos there were no flocks of swifts or swallows to feed on them. Mr. Campbell remarked that it must be quite an experience for me and it certainly was!

Mavis became quite excited by the plant life. We passed a large area of bogbean which, she said, stood about eight inches out of the water, with a handsome trifoliate leaf and fringed, pinkish white flowers. 'Like turkish towelling,' said Mr. Campbell. 'Duck here!' he warned, adding, 'It's a job to keep the branches cut back. You can't keep the boat still.'

Mavis described for me the elegant narrow-fronded marsh fern, a first sighting for her, which filled several bright green acres. There were acres of the lilac-pink water violet, really a member of the primrose family, lighting up the dark water among the willows. The Warden described how a botanist visits regularly every year just to look at a rare grass, *calamagrostis stricta*.

I asked if the saw sedge grew here: 'We used to get a lot of saw sedge,' said Mr. Campbell, 'but it was nearly wiped out by the coypu. There is a bit left because the winter of 1963 killed off the coypu here though there are lot on the Broads still. We don't get mink, though.' We all agreed that was a good thing.

In this weird place the water is calcareous, as always in a fen, and hovers so close to the peat surface that neither walking nor swimming is possible. In the Stone Age, Hockham Fen was a considerable lake with a neolithic settlement beside it and it was still a big lake in Tudor times. At the moment the water table seems to be rising again so that mature trees which were recently on dry land now have their feet in water.

Ben spotted a single swift. I was amazed that there weren't hundreds. 'How do you account for the lack of warblers?' I asked. 'It's been a cold spring,' replied Mr. Campbell, 'and the reeds haven't grown very



Hockham Fen: place of mystery and danger.

well. There aren't the nesting places. Most years the place is infested with reed warblers.' Asked about fish, he went on, 'There are some very big pike here. One ten-pound pike turned out to have a young duck in its stomach. There are lots of eels, too.'

Ben drew our attention to a mallard flying away. We floated past more water-violet and marsh fern. Mavis, being shown the rare marsh cinquefoil and the rare milk parsley, ducked a willow branch loaded with cuckoo spit and declared she had never spent such an amazing evening. Mr. Campbell said that unfortunately there were no swallowtail butterflies although the milk parsley is their food but thickets of alder buckthorn support a colony of brimstone. A group of alders reminded him that a hen hawk visited Hockham at this time last year. Apparently they nest at Wretham.

There was a cracking of twigs as the boat was turned round in the narrow channel. Ben spotted a moorhen's nest, but Mavis wouldn't risk standing up to see if it contained eggs! I asked her what were her main impressions of the place. She said, 'It's so eerie. There's this great sheet of still, black water, with just a narrow channel for the boat surrounded by a thicket of poorish trees standing in water. It gives me the feel-

ing that the whole place is sinking. Then there are these breathtaking sheets of water violet, bogbean and marsh fern – not just the presence of rare plants but acres of them. I'm surprised, though, at the shortage of birds.'

Dusk was falling as we landed.

*The oars will rest,
The ripples cease,
The fen fade to a sombre peace,
Till dawn's dim rays shine soft and clear
To wake the blackness of the mere.*

Next evening was windy as we walked in the woodland area of the same reserve. Birds were present but spread out over a wide area and difficult to hear. Tiny goldcrests were tucked away high in the tall pines and the trees swayed continuously, sometimes roaring in the microphones like an express train. I managed to record a tuneful blackcap, its jumbled song almost identical with that of the garden warbler. There was a willow warbler about, too.

We sat under some oaks well into the late evening. Suddenly we were startled by the bark of a roebuck, quite close. He ran a few paces, then turned and barked again in defiance before making off grumbling as he went.

Hockham Fen – continued

When we first arrived on the Merton estate it was cold and raining. In the evening we walked into the parkland but found few birds about. The nightingales must have wished they were back in Africa! Two days later the air was much warmer, with very little wind, and what a difference that can make to a bird recorder's work! At four a.m. I stepped out into the stable yard to see how the bird life would react to this change of temperature.

There was a chorus of small birds from the distant woods and, in the foreground, a constant musical calling from the gamekeeper's foreign doves. House martins were busily swooping to and from their mud nests under the stable eaves while a cockerel crowed nearby. Mr. Earl, the gamekeeper, was amused to see me trying to record his doves which were shy of the microphone.

At about eleven that morning we walked out into the parkland. It wasn't exactly flaming June yet but the birds were all responding to the warmer weather and singing lustily. Scattered among the bigger trees, bird cherries were in bloom, scenting the air. A roebuck barked in the distance.

In 1981 and 1982, while Kay and I were driving round the Norfolk lanes, she had remarked on the number of road casualties among the blackbirds and thrushes. We saw these species feeding on the roads. In 1983, Mavis investigated further and found that the birds were taking tiny green caterpillars which were descending from the roadside oaks on silken threads. These tasty morsels were responsible for the death of so many birds. One day, we encountered about fifty young starlings, all in one oak tree, going mad, running hither and thither picking something off the branches, perhaps these same caterpillars. The oak is a wonderful tree, playing host to thousands of insects.

Mr. and Mrs. Earl and their grown-up son, Graham, were always up and about in the stable yard as early as I was. They were always so busy it was difficult to find a time when it was convenient to talk to them about their work, but one evening they did agree to sit down for a short time and talk.

I remarked that they had a lot of pets as well as the pheasants they reared. Derek Earl agreed. 'We've got pheasant, par-

tridge, cockateel, Senegal dove, Java dove, turtle dove, Barbary dove, donkey, goats, ten dogs . . .' 'The work seems to be a family affair,' I suggested. 'Yes,' agreed Derek, 'we are all busy at it. We start about four in the morning, looking after the birds and animals. We go on till ten at night, or later. There's poacher-hunting and we have to kill vermin, which some people don't like us for. But if we didn't do it there wouldn't be any small birds for you to record – only foxes and carrion crows and grey squirrels. We put out 25 tons of grain in the woods each year and the drinking places are medicated to prevent gapes and coccidiosis. It all helps the wildlife. Conservationists and keepers should get together sometimes to talk about their problems. They've got a lot in common.'

Asked about the imported American grey squirrel, Derek said it destroys eggs, chicks and trees, stripping bark from the sycamore trees to build its drey. 'There is no trouble with the brown squirrel,' he said, 'but you won't see brown squirrels where you've got greys. The greys multiply fast. They have two litters a year.'

There are plenty of pheasants on the Merton estate but they are usually wary and difficult to record though at last we found one which seemed indifferent and gave me an interview while strutting along a woodland path. In 1982 I heard four pairs of cuckoos here but in 1983 there were only two pairs. I wonder if this was another effect of the cold, wet spring. The cuckoos were as elusive as ever but occasionally one got close enough to record as it circled over the woods. Robins were abundant. They are wonderful birds, rising early, and the last to finish singing in the evening. Perhaps it is because they are so common that we take the beautiful song for granted. The song thrushes sang late, too. At dusk, the woodcock announced his presence with his low-pitched, eerie call, coming over us several times as he flew in a wide circle. What a wonderful help a microphone is!

Late evening arrived and the woodcock made his last few circuits while a distant cuckoo and a woodpigeon became quiet as the nightingale got into his stride. We inched closer to him. This one had an unusually long phrase – not just 'jug, jug, jug' but 'jug' seventy-nine times and don't call me a liar because I've got it on tape! We stood rigid, making no movement

which might disturb the throbbing bird a few feet away. Mosquitoes landed on hands and faces, walked up nostrils and into ears, found gaps in our insect repellent, drew blood and flew away but it was worth it!

Later still, when it was dark, with rain in the air and leaves stirring, two hedgehogs appeared, running about in a curious way on tiptoe. We stood as still as trees while one came over to look at Mavis's boot, decided it was not edible, and wandered away. Down on the leaf litter there were faint rustlings. The woodmice were about. Here came hunters, too. There was a slight displacement of air, a few quick calls. Twit! Twit! Here were the little owls. A distant dog barked down at the keeper's cottage as the nightingale began to sing again from a new perch. What better way to spend our last evening at Merton on a warm June night?

GROUP ACTIVITY HOLIDAYS

The RNIB has recently negotiated an arrangement with the SEALYHAM MANSIONS ACTIVITY CENTRE, Nr. Haverfordwest, S.W. Wales, for the use of the Centre by visually handicapped groups for a number of separate weeks during 1984. The weeks concerned are those beginning (Sunday) 15th July, 29th July, 5th August and 30th September and each week begins on Sunday p.m. and ends Friday p.m.

Activities organised at the Centre include Rock-climbing, Orienteering, Canoeing, Pony-trekking and others to meet the needs of particular groups, depending on the availability of facilities. All activities are carried out under the supervision and tuition of qualified and/or experienced Instructors and the Centre is well equipped with the necessary safety equipment and wet weather clothing.

The all-inclusive (full-board and instruction) RNIB subsidised cost for 1 week will be £72 per head and initial bookings must be made through the RNIB for parties of 12 people, 6 of whom, at least, must be visually handicapped. Alternative separate self-catering accommodation is available, if preferred and if booked early (cost per head, still to be agreed).

For further details and a booking form, contact the Sports & Recreation Officer, RNIB, as soon as possible.

READING TIME

by Phillip Wood

Cat. No. 1235

The Angry Millionaire

By Selwyn Jepson

Read by Robert Gladwell

Reading Time 12½ hours

John Addis works as a computer programmer in an old-established, very prestigious, merchant bank. Actually he is Sir John, millionaire and member of the family who own the bank. The reason for his being incognito is not important here (it would take too long to explain). Suffice to say that nobody knows his real identity.

Least of all the very delectable female in the next office. She has her eye on the main chance and is what the Americans used to call 'a gold-digger' and she has no time for a mere programmer.

John discovers that somebody has pulled off a very clever fraud and is richer by some £340,000 as a result. But who? Bank security is very tight and it would seem that only someone in the higher echelon could work such a swindle.

He sets out to solve the crime. He is assisted by a girl, not the gold-digging one. This girl is resourceful, clever, efficient and no end of a decent type. Faithful old retainer, the chauffeur, is the third member of the trio.

They succeed in the end, of course, but not before there has been a fair amount of nastiness all round, including a murder made to look like suicide, a spot of shooting, a car chase, a kidnapping and a most satisfying boardroom brawl. Our gold-digging friend is mixed up in the ruckus, too. . .

Quite a lively romp and very readable.

Cat. No. 2211

Royal Flash

By George Macdonald Fraser

Sequel to **Flashman** (Cat. No. 1854)

Read by Peter Reynolds

Reading Time 11½

Continuing the Flashman memoirs for the years 1842-1843 and 1847-1848. It is 'the true story of a dishonest poltroon', Flashman's own description of himself.

READING TIME *continued*

Fleeing from a sleazy club which is being raided by the police, he meets Rosanna, a fiery Irish beauty, and manages to insult, from a safe distance, her escort, who turns out to be none other than Count Otto Von Bismarck. The tempestuous affair with Rosanna lasts just a week. She throws Flashman out, hurling abuse and various household articles after his retreating back. Our Harry takes his own particular brand of mean and spiteful revenge.

Two years pass and Rosanna is now a princess, having married into minor German royalty. Flashman gets a message from her. Will he render her a small service, for which he will be well paid.

The impecunious Harry jumps at the chance. Arriving at the palace he discovers that he has fallen into a trap, engineered by his old enemy Otto Von Bismarck. He is forced, on pain of death, to impersonate a Danish Archduke, to whom he bears a staggering resemblance.

The plot involves his 'marrying' a young Duchess, to further Bismarck's dream of a united Germany.

After many incredible adventures and close encounters of the nastiest kind, Flashman manages to escape with a practically whole skin and Rosanna. He consoles himself with the thought that he will be a very rich man once he can dispose of the valuable loot he has acquired during his brief career as 'Danish Royalty'.

But Rosanna has different ideas. She neatly relieves him of the jewels and gold plate he had nicked from 'his princess' and Harry is left, sadder, possibly a little wiser, and penniless...

A rollicking roystering tale and a worthy sequel to the first volume of the memoirs.

Cat. No. 4425

Pawnbroking

By Kenneth Hudson

Read by George Hagan

Reading Time 6½ hours

Pawnbroking in one form or another has been in existence for many centuries. It was once common practice for kings and noblemen to raise large sums of money, using their jewels and gold (and even their relations!) as security.

Modern pawnbroking was spawned by the industrial revolution with its grossly inadequate wages and is essentially an

urban phenomenon. Raising money on securities was no longer exclusive to the upper classes and when the service became available to the poor and the transactions involved only trifling sums, 'pawn-ing' became a term of opprobrium.

The popular image of the pawnbroker as a grasping unscrupulous Shylock is very far from the truth. In the first place, only a tiny minority of them were in fact Jewish, and the overwhelming majority of pawnbrokers, Jew or Gentile, were solid honest men of business providing an essential service to the poor.

Years of research went into the book and the task was made more difficult by the extraordinary diffidence of people unwilling to admit that they had ever availed themselves of the service of 'uncle'.

It does however provide the reader with a vivid account of the lives of the very poor and the extent to which they owed their very survival to the pawnbroker. A fascinating piece of living social history.

Cat. No. 3485

Some Tame Gazelle

By Barbara Pym

Read by Elizabeth Proud

Reading Time 8¼ hours

Belinda and Harriet Bede are sisters, spinners of comfortable means, both past the first flush of youth. For more than twenty years Belinda has harboured a secret, genteel, lily-pure passion for the vicar, Archdeacon Hockley. Harriet 'collects' pale young curates and 'mothers' them relentlessly, but would not be averse to a proposal of marriage from a mature man with impeccable manners and from a good social background.

Their life and the lives of most of the inhabitants of the little village, centre round the church and its social activities. The village has its fair share of 'characters', like the outrageous Edith Liversidge, Lady Clara Bolding, widow of the local MP, the Archdeacon's wife Agatha, dogmatic and dictatorial. There is even a visiting Colonial Bishop, fresh from his labours among the noble savages of Africa, and for good measure a rich Italian nobleman, Count Ricardo Bianco.

The book is pure vintage Pym, a gently-ironic 'send-up' of the self-centred, slightly barmy, wholly delightful people who, like Feste in 'Twelfth Night' 'live by the church'.

1984 BOWLS HANDICAP

It seems that the National Club has acquired a bowler with quite a flair for the game in Jackie Pryor. His first appearance was at Queen's Park in 1983 where he came third in the totally blind section, his second at the March 1984 handicap, where he won the cup for the totally blind. The three other finalists in the totally blind competition were Alf Waters, Harry Preedy and Percy Stubbs.

The trophy for the partially sighted competition was won by Mickie Robinson. George Hudson, Colwyn Lloyd and Monty Golding were the other finalists.

My thanks to our secretary Jock Carnochan for his invaluable help in drawing up the chart and to our helpers Katie Stubbs and Len Bridge.

WESTON '84

We arrived at Weston with a slightly depleted team for various reasons, returning the ten trophies we won last year and, despite the inclement weather, we managed to win six more; three winners and three runners up. Well done lads!

I wish to thank Commander Conway for the use of the coach and driver, who inci-



Jackie Pryor.

dentally proved very helpful both behind the wheel and on the green. The coach is an invaluable asset on the away trips. I also wish to thank Jock Carnochan, Mr. and Mrs. Len Bridge and all the wives and escorts. Eyesight is always in demand from all the bowlers, thanks again from the lads - you all did a tremendous job, well done!

Monty Golding

ACCESS GUIDE FOR THE DISABLED

Do you have a guide to facilities for the disabled in your area? Recently the Spelthorne Integration Group of which St. Dunstaners, Jimmy Wright, is chairman, has succeeded in publishing a guide which offers invaluable help to disabled people living in the Spelthorne area, on the outskirts of West London.

Called the *Spelthorne Access Guide and Directory for Disabled People*, it gives detailed information on the services provided by the Social Services Department, the district council and health authority, the Department of Health and Social Security's Employment Service Agency and local and national voluntary organisations, as well as details of local transport and policy, social activities, sport, entertainment, adult education, churches, shops and restaurants.

The Spelthorne Integration Group, which was set up during the Year of the Disabled, distributes the guide free. It was paid for by fund raising activities, such as wine and

cheese evenings, as well as donations from other organisations.

If such a guide does not exist in your area perhaps you could start organising one.

OPERATIC SUCCESS

St. Dunstaners who remember John Cashmore, son of the late Doug Cashmore, of Birmingham, will be interested to learn of his musical success.

John studied at the Birmingham School of Music and his opera debut was also in Birmingham, as Giugliemo in the Midlands Art Centre's production of 'Cosi fan Tutte'. He has since appeared in opera throughout Great Britain and has sung with the Welsh National Opera.

His operatic roles include Figaro in the 'Barber of Seville', Marcello in 'La Boheme', Giugliemo in 'Cose fan Tutte', Silvio in 'I Pagliacci' and Ford in 'Falstaff'. John is also renowned for his concert and oratorio performances and is presently engaged as principal artiste with the English National Opera.

D. F. Robinson's GARDENING NOTES

We certainly have been having wonderful weather as I write these notes, but unfortunately no rain though there have been rather cold winds and even frosts at night.

Some vegetables are, I'm afraid, rather slow in growing and have needed water most nights. There may be a shortage of water if the weather is really dry, so keep all the washing water for the most important items such as all the annuals which have a light root system and others such as dahlias and sweet peas.

Vegetables

Carry on hoeing to keep the weeds down and soil open. Dose the ground with a general fertiliser such as 'Growmore' to keep all the items growing well. All kinds of pests are on the rampage now, so put down slug and snail pellets and spray plants regularly.

When the early crops of broad beans and peas have been gathered, dig up all the stalks and haulms and dig over the empty beds lightly. This will make it much easier to do the main digging later in the year. Lettuce and other salad items could be grown on these beds as a catch crop. Mulch up the main crop of carrots, especially in dry weather, and thin out the beets so as to get good size and quality when lifting.

Final earthing up of main crop potatoes should be done by the end of the month. Ensure that all the stakes and strings for the runner beans are in place and give plenty of water to ensure good, quick growth. Pick out the tops and side shoots of the outdoor tomatoes and if there is not much rain about spray the flowers to get a good set. Remember to give plenty of water to all vegetables under rainless conditions. The marrows and tomatoes will need an extra dose plus liquid feeds.

Fruit

It may be quite a prolific year with the apples, going by the blossom on all types as I set these notes out. Thin out the fruit so as to get good size and quality. Espalier and dwarf trees should be trained now for future growth, cutting away some extra long shoots. Strawberries can be layered

now for next season's new plants then cut away any extra shoots which are not wanted.

Birds may be a bit of a pest now so spray the trees with one of the special sprays in the shops or a solution of alum might be even better, as it leaves a bitter taste on the outer skins. This will wash off in future rain showers when the apples are too large for the birds to want to peck at.

Lawns

Cut the lawns regularly when you have the normal sunny and showery weather which makes the grass grow rapidly, also any weeds which were left from the first application of weedkiller. A dose of combined fertiliser and weedkiller will be a good thing when the soil is moist and will act rapidly. Even the grass on the edges grows quickly and at times seems to grow better than the lawn so see that you trim these regularly.

Flowers

Keep all the flowers going well by cutting away the dead heads on the perennials in order to get some further show of colour later on. The annuals should be getting towards their best. In dry spells give plenty of water and keep the weeds down by hoeing plus a sprinkling of a general fertiliser.

The chrysanthemums should have their tips pinched out to give really bushy plants and plenty of flowers later on. These and all other rather tall growing items will also benefit from some stakes set in place, especially if you live in coastal and exposed areas like me.

Tuberous begonias which you placed outside should have settled down by now and starting to show their colours with large blooms. Give these regular feeds of liquid manure and the same goes for the dahlias, geraniums and fuchsias. Roses will be full of bloom and to keep them at their best cut away the dead heads some distance down the main stem.

Sweet peas will be showing plenty of colour, so give plenty of water and a liquid feed every so often. Take out any heads which are starting to set pods and it would be a good thing to stop the main stem, to

stop them growing any taller – new side shoots will grow and produce more flowers. Keep the sprayer going when there is any suggestion of pests about.

Greenhouse

Water will be needed on sunny and dry days and to keep the moisture at a high level dampen down the floors. Pot plants such as achimenes, begonias (tuberous and fibrous), gloxinias and other flowering plants will need to be kept moist and have regular liquid feeds. Some of these items will make very good pot plants for the house set in a light place but not in full sun all the time.

Stake and tie in any carnations and chrysanthemums in pots. Cineraria must be kept cool in their small pots ready to be put into their final size containers in early autumn, the same can be said of calceolaria. These last two items do tend to

Game for a laugh

This story has the merit of being perfectly true. A Crewe businessman who I know slightly was driving his Datsun car when the steering went. The trouble proved to be a fractured cog in the steering box. But Datsun spares were held up in Japan and it could be weeks before the repair could be carried out.

However, the man, Dick Jardine, had to go to Tokyo on business (he imports radio equipment) and while there he called upon the Datsun spares depot. Yes, they had the cogs in stock but they were wholesale and could supply the things in lots of 1000 only. Dick agreed – he could dispose of the remainder to the Datsun people over here.

He boarded the plane in Tokyo taking his precious bag of cogs with him. All went well until they were over the Cheshire Plain bound for Manchester Airport. The co-pilot came aft and told the passengers, 'there is nothing to worry about but one of the engines has developed a minor fault and we would feel easier if we could jettison some of the payload' he turned to Dick 'and we rather wondered about your bag of cogs, sir?' Jardine readily agreed for safety's sake, and out went the bag.

Below, two Cheshire farmers were chatting. One of them looked up, 'Good lord! he exclaimed, 'just look at that! It's raining Datsun cogs!'

Phillip Wood

harbour insect pests, especially white fly, so give regular smokes. Remember that white fly is much more difficult to contain and should be given three or four sprays over a 15 day period.

Those of you with early grown tomatoes should be getting ripe fruit, so collect regularly. I have found that a spray with water gives a better set than leaving them on their own. Pinch out any side shoots as they grow and give plenty of water and liquid feeds.

Open the ventilators fully during the day and even keep them open at night if the weather is hot. Put down to the lowest level if there is a great drop in temperature and strong winds are about. Schizanthus is a good item to grow from seed now and they will germinate quite well in warm conditions. They grow rapidly and give one some wonderfully showy pot plants in early and late autumn.

MY HOBBIES

My hobbies are many
Some easy, some hard
Sewing or knitting
My talents are shared

My garden's a showpiece
Anything will grow,
I tend it most lovingly
With spade, fork and hoe.

My music's exciting
When the ivories I tickle,
Bach or Beethoven
I'm not fickle.

My lace work is delicate
With needles so fine
Doyleys or tableclothes
It passes the time

My stuffed dogs are cuddly
With heads large and sloppy,
The eyes bright and friendly,
The ears long and floppy.

But cookery's my favourite
With pies filled with fruit.
No cordon-bleu yet dear
But I'm quite a good cook!

Margaret Bingham

CLUB NEWS

BRIGHTON

Bridge

Individuals – May 19th

R. Evans	69.0
R. Fullard	59.5
W. Phillips	54.8
P. McCormack	45.2
J. Whitcombe	50.0
J. Majchrowicz	50.0
J. Padley	45.3
W. Lethbridge	26.2

Bowling

On May 4th we commenced our outdoor bowling season with a visit to the Hurst-pierpoint Bowling Club. We were lucky weatherwise and were warmly greeted by our friends. As this was our first outdoor match it took us a little time to adjust to the greens. Nevertheless, we put up a very good performance and we look forward to our future engagements.

The results of the Winter Indoor Bowling – Sir Michael Ansell Cup – are as follows:
1st Walford Davies – 70 shots/13 games
2nd Jimmy Morrish – 68 shots/14 games
3rd Elmer Richards – 65 shots/15 games
A. Miller

Entertainment Section

May has been quite a busy and happy month. On May 10th a party were entertained by the "Not Forgotten" Association at Rustington. Brigadier Woodruff, Colonel Bennett, Mr. and Mrs. Hobday and, of course, Miss Seeley welcomed us on arrival. The usual ice-cream was handed round and we all enjoyed the lovely tea. When the tables were cleared the concert began with Mr. Les Brown at the piano and Gordon Holdom with some very subtle stories and songs. Janet Armstrong pleased everyone with some well known songs beautifully sung. Following this Syd Wright showed us just how the xylophone should be played. Carole Doree then sang some very popular and older songs.

Everyone expressed their pleasure at the entertainment. Unfortunately Bob Osborne

was unable to be present, due to Joan's illness, but Bob Cunningham ably assisted by Pat thanked the Association and the Matron for the meal and concert, a token of our gratitude was presented to Miss Seeley. We were pleased to have Mrs. Dacre and Miss Stenning with us and to hear that Mr. Ion Garnett-Orme is now a Vice President of the Association.

Dance

The dance planned for May 26th was cancelled. Mr. Conway kindly offered transport for all club members in Peacehaven and Saltdean to enjoy the Bank Holiday dance in the house, several very nice prizes were won in the raffle. On May 30th a party of 31 men and wives boarded a St. Dunstan's bus with kind permission of Mr. Conway and we headed through the country to Windsor. After a good lunch at an hotel by the river, many of us were taken in the bus to Windsor Castle, others took a trip on the river. We were escorted by official guides to visit the State Apartments and St. George's Chapel. Everyone expressed their pleasure and the general feeling was that we would like to come again. The weather was very kind to us and the return journey was a happy sing-a-long. Our thanks to Bob and Pat Cunningham for arranging such a lovely day, thanks to Mr. Conway and also our thanks to the driver, Bryan, for a safe journey.

Phyllis O'Kelly

LONDON

Bridge

At the half-way position in the 1984 Gover Cup (London Section) competition, the best five result totals are as follows:

H. Meleson	339 pts
J. Carney	332 pts
F. Dickerson	332 pts
W. Miller	323 pts
R. Fullard	316 pts
J. Huk	309 pts
W. Lethbridge	283 pts

W. Allen

MIDLAND

Our May club meeting was held on Sunday, May 13th and was well attended. We all sat talking (before getting down to our domino competition), of how much we had all enjoyed the Birmingham Reunion the week before. We did finally start on the domino competition, playing off several doubles games. An excellent tea was put on again for us by the ladies and it was appreciated all the more as we were later than usual sitting down to it, owing to the late start to the dominos. The meeting broke up at about 7 p.m. with everybody promising to be early for the outing.

Our outing was on Sunday, May 20th. Everybody arrived on time for the coach so we had no waiting around for latecomers

FAMILY NEWS

GRANDCHILDREN Congratulations to:

Mr. Rex Robinson, of Acton, on the birth of his first grandson, Peter Stephen, born on May 6th to his daughter, Ann, and her husband Stephen.

Mr. and Mrs. Eric Stickland, of Rock, Cornwall, who are delighted to announce the arrival of their first grand-daughter, Holly, born on March 8th to their daughter, Gail and her husband Kenneth.

Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Tanner, of Morden, on the birth of a grandson, Christopher, born to their youngest daughter Jacqueline and her husband on April 14th.

PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT Congratulations to:

Emma, daughter of *Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Warren*, who has gained a gold swimming medal for personal survival.

RUBY WEDDINGS Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Beales, of Kingsacre, Hereford, on the occasion of their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on June 3rd.

and got away to a good start. We had a short stop for coffee on the way up and arrived in Rhyl about midday after a very pretty drive. The weather was kind to us, bright and sunny with a slight breeze coming off the sea. There was plenty to see and do; a fun fair, shops and bazaars – all open, also a very new leisure centre, where if it had been wet we could have spent the whole day and still enjoyed ourselves. On the return journey, sad to say, it started to rain and when we stopped for our 'glass that cheers' it was raining quite hard, so there was no sitting out in the garden. We arrived back in Birmingham about 9.30 after a very enjoyable day out.

Our next club meetings are on July 8th and August 12th.

E. Hordyniec

Mr. and Mrs. Reginald Gadd, of Colwick Woods, Nottingham, on the occasion of their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on June 3rd.

GREAT GRANDCHILDREN Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Armstrong, of Formby, who are pleased to announce the birth of a great grandson, Christopher Patrick, born on May 8th to their grand-daughter, Collette, and her husband John.

DEATHS We offer sympathy to:

Clement Davies, of Church Stretton, who mourns the death of his sister, Ada, who passed away on May 5th, aged 84.

Angela, wife of *Domenic Donnarumma*, of Southampton, whose sister passed away on May 12th.

Mrs. Ivy Harding, widow of *Mr. Rhesa Harding*, of Bournemouth, whose brother died earlier this year.

Mr. and Mrs. Tom Hart, of Sandwich, Kent, who mourn the death of Mrs. Hart's brother at the end of April.

Family news — continued

Walter Haslam, of Shavington, near Crewe, who mourns the death of his wife, Ethel, who passed away on May 4th.

Mrs. Minnie Martin, widow of Mr. John Martin, of Penzance, whose son-in-law passed away on March 24th.

The daughters of Mrs. Kathleen McCartan, widow of John McCartan, of Portchester, who passed away suddenly on May 3rd, aged 73.

Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Purcell, of Davyhulme, who mourn the death of their

daughter, Susan, who passed away on May 27th at the age of 34.

The family of Mrs. Edith Reed, widow of Charles Reed, of Barnes, who passed away recently, aged 86.

Herbert Scaife, of Osbaldwick, York, who mourns the death of his brother who passed away recently at the age of 76.

Mrs. Gaynor Warren, wife of Mr. Anthony Warren, of Pearson House, on the death of her mother on May 23rd.

Mr. Arthur Wells, of Reigate, whose wife, Elizabeth, passed away on May 23rd. They had been married for almost sixty years.

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.

J. Blaggrave-Ellis, King's Royal Rifle Corps

Jack Blaggrave-Ellis, of Dibden Purlieu, passed away on May 17th, aged 89.

He served with the rank of Captain in the King's Royal Rifle Corps throughout the First World War and was injured in the Battle of the Somme.

Mr. Blaggrave-Ellis lived in South Africa for some years, where he had business interests. He visited the United Kingdom frequently on business and in 1973 returned with his wife and family to live in England. He became a St. Dunstaner shortly afterwards. Several years ago he wrote his memoirs entitled 'Just One of Them'.

In 1983 Jack and his wife, Noel, celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary. They were joined by many members of the family, both here and from overseas, and were the recipients of a telegram from Her Majesty the Queen.

He leaves a widow, Noel, and two daughters.

E. Jenkins, Royal Navy

Eric Jenkins, of Ferring, passed away suddenly, in the garden of his home, on May 4th. He was 78 years old and had been a St. Dunstaner since 1957. Mr. Jenkins was a widower, his second wife, Eva, having passed away in 1976.

Mr. Jenkins served in the Royal Navy from 1940 until his discharge early in 1945. On admission to St. Dunstan's, he undertook a period of training in basket work. For many years he made teapot-stands for our stores and wheel-shoppers, baskets, etc. of consistently high standard, which were in great demand locally. However, his consuming interest until the time of his death was his garden and greenhouses, where he raised bedding plants, vegetables, and a pro-

fusion of splendid blooms, including chrysanthemums and geraniums.

Since the death of his wife, Eva, Mr. Jenkins had been cared for by his housekeeper, Mrs. Styles, by whom he will be greatly missed.

R. Parsons, Royal Field Artillery and Royal Corps of Signals

Reginald Parsons, of Northwood, formerly of Cardiff, passed away peacefully in Pearson House on May 28th, only two days short of his 86th birthday. He had been a St. Dunstaner since 1962.

Mr. Parsons served in both World Wars. During the First World War he served as a Lance Bombardier in the Royal Field Artillery and was the victim of a mustard gas attack in 1918. As a member of the Territorial Army, Mr. Parsons was called up again in 1939 and, until his discharge at the end of 1940, was a Company Quartermaster Sergeant in the Royal Corps of Signals. In civilian life he had been an employee of the Post Office for many years and retired in 1962. In earlier years, Mr. Parsons was a keen gardener.

His wife, Anne, died in 1978 after 56 years of happy marriage. However he continued to live independently in his Cardiff home until early 1983 when failing health made it necessary for him to move to Northwood in order to live with his daughter, Mrs. Cecily Pillans, who cared for him devotedly. In April of this year he was admitted to Pearson House following a serious illness and he will be greatly missed by Matron Goodwin and all members of her staff.

He leaves a son, Robert, and daughter, Cecily.