

**St Dunstans
Review
October 1985**



From the Chairman

Another anniversary: 50 Years of Talking Books. — Last month, in the Armitage Hall at the Headquarters of the Royal National Institute for the Blind, a Thanksgiving Service was held commemorating the beginning of the Talking Book Service for the Blind in 1935.

I think a thanksgiving is appropriate for this great resource for blind people. It is good to remember that St. Dunstan's, through the initiative of the late Lord Fraser, played a prominent part in the experimental work which led to the first long-playing records and, much later, to the first long-playing tape cassettes.

Founded by the generosity of the late Lord Nuffield, the library has developed into a nation-wide service and today, with support from St. Dunstan's, the R.N.I.B. is continuing to expand and improve it.

Henry Leach

Ian Fraser House — Holiday Arrangements

The improved facilities at Ian Fraser House have been much appreciated and it is clear that at certain times of the year bookings are going to be very heavy. With the intention of providing a booking service that is both efficient and fair, some changes are to be made, as set out below.

St. Dunstaners are welcome to apply to reserve accommodation in either double or single rooms as far in advance as they wish but bookings will not be confirmed until six months before the beginning of the proposed visit. This will mean that where the available accommodation is over-subscribed, as may well happen in July/August and at Christmas, all the names can go into the hat with a fair chance of success, subject to a degree of preference being given to those coming from far afield who have not previously visited the House during the year. The length of notice given to those who are unsuccessful in booking rooms at Ian Fraser House for the dates they would prefer should mean that they will usually have ample time to make alternative holiday arrangements.

Bookings should continue to be made in the usual way via Mrs. Tina Coyne at Headquarters. St. Dunstaners are asked to ensure, before going to Ian Fraser House, that they are in possession of a pink slip, that the dates on the pink slip are correct and that the slip indicates whether or not they are accompanied by their spouse.

St. Dunstaners' Children

Some St. Dunstaners with young children have asked whether family accommodation can be provided at Ian Fraser House. Careful consideration has been given to this request but, given the nature of the building and the accommodation and the need to make the best possible use of the available rooms, it is not thought that such a change can be made at the present time. However, Westcott, the large house standing in the grounds of Pearson House, has recently been refurbished and additional accommodation has been provided there, primarily for use by relatives visiting St. Dunstaners at Pearson House.

Subject to availability, rooms may now be booked for use by St. Dunstaners with children, and those wishing to make use of this facility should apply to Mrs. Coyne, giving details of the age and sex of the children. The accommodation will not be suitable for babes in arms and, needless to say, children will be expected to behave in such a way as not to cause annoyance to other residents.

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Cover: The Wagstaff family at their gate. See 'Out for a Duck!' on centre pages.

SIR JAMES PITMAN

We are sad to record the death, on September 1st, of Sir James Pitman, K.B.E., M.A., who served on the Council of St. Dunstan's for 17 years. Sir James was born on August 14th, 1901.

A great sportsman, he played rugby for Bath and Harlequins, Oxford University and for England. He was a boxer, runner and skier. He was Chairman and Managing Director of Isaac Pitman and Sons and a Director of the Bank of England. During the Second World War he served as a Squadron Leader in the Royal Air Force, and, in 1945, he was returned as Conservative M.P. for Bath.

He left the House of Commons in 1964, the year he became a Member of our Council. St. Dunstaners will recall him as an interesting speaker at our reunions until he retired in 1981.

The Chairman wrote to Mr. Peter Pitman, his son:

'I am writing on behalf of the Council of St. Dunstan's to extend to you and the rest of the family our deep and sincere sympathy on the death of your father. Although I personally never had the privilege of knowing him, there are still a great many St. Dunstaners who recall his time on the Council with affection and respect. He will be sadly missed by many.'

TRIBUTE

We offer sympathy to Mrs. Dorothy E. Morris, of Sydney, Australia, whose husband, Mr Frank Luke Morris passed away on August 5th, aged 87, in the nursing home where he had been staying for the past six months. Mrs. Morris sent us the following tribute to her husband:

Frank joined St. Dunstan's in 1917 having been transferred from the 3rd London General Hospital, spent two years in training, and always said they were 'the best two years of his life.' (Lord Fraser was very proud of that remark), but Frank really meant that.

We had been together 67 years. We were married in 1918 and returned to Australia

in 1919. After putting his age back he joined the A.I.F. in 1917, and was blinded just after his 20th birthday.

I thought you might like to know these details. It all seems such a long time ago but I can truthfully say he never once complained about losing his sight and always maintained that St. Dunstan's taught him how to be blind. My very best wishes to all members of St. Dunstan's and thank you very much for your help during the years.

FUNERAL EXPENSES FOR WAR PENSIONERS

No-one likes to think about dying. But in these days when funeral costs can amount to several hundred pounds, it is important for St. Dunstaners to make sure that their relatives or next-of-kin are aware of a special facility for war pensioners.

The DHSS will arrange and pay for a war pensioner's funeral if he/she dies: as a result of the pensioned disablement; or whilst in hospital having accepted treatment for it; or he/she was receiving constant attendance allowance (or would have been, if he/she had not been in hospital.)

But in order to benefit from the facility, the War Pensioners' Welfare Office must be contacted immediately after the pensioner's death and before any funeral arrangements are put in hand. *The DHSS can only pay for Funerals which it has arranged.*

The DHSS will engage a local funeral director, and any extras above the basic funeral (such as additional cars) can be arranged by the family at their own expense.

This facility is also available for pensioners from between the two World Wars who are paid by the Ministry of Defence. In these cases relatives must contact the appropriate service branch of the Ministry of Defence.

Addresses and telephone numbers of all the War Pensioners' Welfare Offices and contact points at the Ministry of Defence can be obtained from your Visitor or Headquarters.

WIDOWS AND REUNIONS

In his column in the March issue this year Sir Henry Leach announced that, by way of experiment, it was planned to invite widows of St. Dunstaners to reunions every other year commencing in 1986.

So that arrangements can be made for the numbers of people involved, would any lady wishing to attend her local reunion in 1986, please apply as soon as possible to Miss Cynthia Mosley, for those living in the Northern area, and to Miss Penny Lord, for those in the South, at Headquarters.

For information, reunions to be held in 1986 will be Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Ipswich, Liverpool, London (Central), London (Kent & Surrey), Newcastle, Sheffield and Southampton.

CONCERT DATE

Our St. Dunstaner, Jimmy Wright, is organising a concert to raise funds for the Royal School for the Blind, Leatherhead, at the Royal Festival Hall on Friday November 1st.

Dizzie Gillespie is to perform with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Robert Farnon and the compere will be Benny Green. The concert will be attended by H.R.H. Prince Michael of Kent and H.R.H. Princess Michael.

Tickets priced £3.50, £5.50, £7.00, £8.50, £10.50, £12.50 are available from the Royal Festival Hall Box Office or from Raymond Gubbay, 125 Tottenham Court Road, W1P 9HN.
Tel: 01-387 4206.

RAY SHERIFF COMPLETES 43-km WALK

On Sunday, August 14th, I took part, with my sighted escort, Pat Curry from Woodingdean, in a locally organised walk, not a race. One could enter in one of three distances: 12, 24 or 43 kilometres. We elected to go for the latter marathon distance of 26 miles. Anyway, we managed to complete the course in eight and a half hours, roughly three miles per hour; not too bad for mainly a cross-country course — lots of hills and down dales, and numerous stiles.

The course proved circular, taking in Lewes, Glynde and Kingston, which was the 20-mile checkpoint. I must admit that the six-mile, mainly uphill trek back to Rottingdean, was exhausting. I was quite relieved to reach the finishing point at the local school. In hindsight, I think I would much prefer the less fatiguing conditions of a road walk, even to a greater distance. However, it's over and done now, and to prove it I have the appropriate certificate.

ST. DUNSTAN'S BROOCH

Wives, widows or daughters of St. Dunstaners will be interested to know that a silver marcasite brooch of St. Dunstan's badge could be made available if there are sufficient orders. The 1½" brooch is made in the shape of our famous 'flaming torch' badge but without the words St. Dunstan's.

The cost of the brooch, including postage, would be £16, and those interested are asked to send their orders to the Editor, St. Dunstan's Review at HQ.

LATE CALL TO ALL ORGAN ENTHUSIASTS

We are holding our Annual Electronic Organ Week at Ovingdean from October 17th-23rd inclusive and anyone interested will be made welcome.

This year we have managed to secure the services of Brenda Hayward who is an excellent organ teacher. She will be providing teach-in sessions over a couple of days. There will also be several concerts as well as a couple of outside visits. The numbers last year were quite small but we hope for an increase in attendance this year.

Anyone interested should contact HQ to arrange accommodation at IFH.

Alan Mitchell

OBITUARY

We are sad to report the death of another old friend to St. Dunstan's, Miss Frances Feilden, of Darsham, E. Suffolk, who passed away on July 30th, aged 89.

Miss Feilden was very well known at Church Stretton where she was in charge of the Linen Room. She later became Matron of the house where physiotherapy students lived at Croxley Green.

Welcome to St. Dunstan's



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

John Patrick Cox, of Birmingham, joined St. Dunstan's on August 29th.

Mr. Cox served in the Royal Engineers (719 Bomb Disposal) during the 2nd World War. He is married with three adult daughters.

STAFF RETIREMENTS

In the May *Review* we announced briefly the retirement of **Miss Rose Marie Blebta** on June 30th. She has dedicated herself to the welfare of St. Dunstaners and their families for 28 years.

In 1957, Miss Blebta started working in the Midlands and then moved in 1962 to look after St. Dunstaners living in the Sussex area. She gave up her full-time post at the end of 1973 but continued to work tirelessly to help and advise those St. Dunstaners, wives and widows in her new area, on a part-time basis.

All St. Dunstaners and their families who knew Miss Blebta will remember her with great affection and will have appreciated over the years her great sense of duty, warmth and kindness. Nothing was too much trouble, and she was always willing to assist those in distress, even though it often meant driving long distances to visit those concerned.

We all owe her an enormous debt of gratitude for a job supremely well done and wish her a long, healthy and happy retirement. We shall look forward to seeing her again at future reunions.

Many people will have already met Mrs. Vivien Jackson who has taken over Miss Blebta's area in addition to her own, and we extend to her our best wishes in her new capacity.

Frederick Albert Vernon Day, of Salisbury, joined St. Dunstan's on July 1st.

Mr. Day served as a Private in the Royal Norfolk Regiment during the 2nd World War. He served in India and in Singapore where in January 1942 he was taken prisoner of war.

He is married with an adult son and daughter.

Edward Victor Farrer, of Hull, joined St. Dunstan's on July 11th.

Mr. Farrer served in the East Yorkshire Regiment from 1940 until 1945, taking part in the Normandy Invasion. He is married with one adult son.

As mentioned in the report on the Bristol Reunion in the August *Review*, **Miss Muriel Meyer** retired as Welfare Visitor for the South-Western area on June 30th, after 25 years' devoted service to our organisation.

Miss Meyer was introduced to St. Dunstan's by the late Dr. Hopewell in 1960 and started working in East Anglia. In 1964, she returned to Bristol, her home town, to look after St. Dunstaners based in the South-Western area. All St. Dunstaners who knew Miss Meyer will long remember her warmth, kindness, sincerity and great sense of humour. She drove many thousands of miles each year to help St. Dunstaners, wives and widows in need and nothing was ever too much trouble, whatever time of day or night.

Apart from St. Dunstaners, the staff both at Headquarters and in the field, will also remember Miss Meyer with much affection and there is no doubt that they too would like to express their appreciation for the invaluable support and encouragement which she gave to her colleagues.

Many people will have already met Mrs. Janet Stevens, Miss Meyer's successor, and we would like to extend to her a warm welcome for a long and happy association with St. Dunstan's.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Mrs. Margaret Bingham, Macclesfield.

After having spent a holiday in the new Wing at Ian Fraser House, I would like to say how comfortable we found it. To use house agent's parlance 'extremely well appointed.' We are looking forward to our next visit.

I would like to praise all the staff for the way in which they coped on the day of The Queen's visit. As far as we St. Dunstaners were concerned it ran as smooth as silk and we must feel indebted to them for the part they played in the great day.

From Mrs. M. Clarke, Sunbury on Thames, Middx.

My father, Mr. John Taylor, of Whitton, is a St. Dunstaner and recently he went to Brighton for a holiday with my mother. We went for the day and were allowed into St. Dunstan's to look around and to meet people. My children, Zoe who is 12 and Simon who is 4½, enjoyed their day. I think it is important for children to meet others, they both adore their grandma and granddad. But Zoe said to me that it was a great pleasure to meet men who had fought during a war and how much she felt that all St. Dunstaners were special.

I used to go to Northgate House for holidays at Rottingdean, and have always through my younger years and even now felt a special attachment to St. Dunstan's. I hope that I and my children will not lose contact with you all as we get on in years. Thank you for allowing us to see you all — it was a day to remember.

From Miss Muriel Meyer, Bristol

May I try to express my warm thanks to all my friends in the South West area for the more than generous cheque given to me when I retired, together with the gifts and cards which gave me such pleasure to receive.

I have tried to give much thought about how to spend this money in a way that will give me a constant reminder of you all during the past 25 years at St. Dunstan's. It has always been a dream of mine to visit Greece and the Greek Islands and so next spring I hope to do just that and whilst I am there I hope I can find a picture or memento to bring home so that I have a reminder of what your gift has given to me and why I was able to go, and the kindness of friends who made it possible.

I do send you all my warm good wishes and if I may include with this my thanks to my colleagues for their gift which will enable me to buy a tapestry of my choice, which will take all my ingenuity to work during the winter evenings, and so keep me busy! It is all so much appreciated.

I do miss you all very much indeed, but hope we can meet at a reunion in 1986.

From Mr. M.J.L. Pulling, London

Regarding the cover picture on the July 1985 *Review*, and the caption on page three, I will eat my hat, as the saying goes, if the car portrayed is a Morris Minor! It looks to me for all the world like a Morris Cowley of about 1925 Vintage. Do I have to eat my hat?

I would just add a scrap of information. At the period in question (circa 1926) the Morris Motor Company were manufacturing two types of car for the private market, known respectively as the Morris Cowley and the Morris Oxford. They were basically very similar but the latter was about 14 horsepower and more expensive than the former at about 12 H.P. In those days we had not been taught to reckon engine size, and therefore power, by cylinder capacity.

Editor:

Yes Mr. Pulling, you are quite right — a Morris Cowley it was!

SPACE PROBLEMS

Pressure on space in this issue has meant that we must hold over till next month Reading Time and Syd Scroggie.

Echoes of the Royal Visit

Even though the weather tried its hardest to dissuade St. Dunstaners and their wives from enjoying themselves, the Royal St. Dunstan's day seems to be an occasion that will be remembered for a long time to come. Letters from St. Dunstaners and their wives are full of the excitement felt by all, of the pleasure experienced at the warm interest expressed by Her Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh in the activities of St. Dunstan's, and of particular events during the day that will never be forgotten.

Christine Stalham, wife of Bill Stalham, from Camberley, sent us a report of how they experienced the great day:

Upon arrival at the entrance gates to the grounds of IFH we were stopped and inspected, then upwards to the imposing building built in 1938 for the benefit of St. Dunstaners, to be dropped at the main entrance.

Luckily the rain held off, and the gale force wind failed to rip off my pill-box hat, and we took turns to enter the building by the revolving door. On the inside our passes were noted, and we decided to get comfortable. I was pleased I could hang my dreary old mac in the cloakroom, and we were soon guided to seats at the rear of the Dining Section of the Assembly Hall; after about 20 minutes one of the kind ladies who work on the premises asked Bill and I to go with her, for my benefit, because I am deaf, and we had an excellent central view from the fourth row of the main body of members.

We chatted between commentaries relayed to us as Her Majesty and His Royal Highness arrived and proceeded upon their tour of the building. Just at noon, The Queen and The Duke were seen walking down a ramp in the garden, to enter the Hall by the garden door, and Her Majesty stepped upon the dais, to be welcomed by our President, Col. Sir Mike Ansell. Our Chairman, the Admiral, announced each speaker for blind people in the audience. Meanwhile The Queen opened her white handbag, took out her

spectacles, and two sheets of paper and as Sir Henry concluded his introduction she rose and moved to the microphone, and made her brief speech, pulled the curtain cord, then seated herself on the fine yew wood and upholstered chair. The Duke then rose to make one of his famous quips, saying what he saw was sufficient to make eyes go redundant!

As The Queen descended the dais steps, Blodwyn Simon stood up and presented H.M. with a posy. Then the great granddaughter of the late Lord Fraser of Lonsdale was presented, these formalities accomplished, The Queen proceeded down the path, stopping a while to speak with some of our fellow members that lined her path, whilst The Duke chatted up the other side of St. Dunstaners, coming gradually to the wheelchair members which fronted our main block, and she spoke to some of them. I had an excellent close-up of her magnolia/rose complexion, it is true what they say, that her photographs do not do her justice. She was wearing a deep bright cyclamen pink coat over a white dress with matching 'streaks' of pink upon it, white shoes and gloves, a hat with pink rose to one side, and a band of pink piping round the hat. I thought her choice of colour excellent, on this very drab and stormy day. She lit the place up.

As she was about to leave us, the Admiral called for three cheers, which were rousingly given, and I could hear Bill, and certainly lip read him, she gave a brilliant smile and departed. Just as she had gone I turned to the St. Dunstaner who was on the other side of Bill and he and I said simultaneously, "That's it!"

Actually, I'm sure I say for everyone who was there, we very much understood the worry the Chairman and his team at HQ had endured for so many months, and really, to reward them, the sun should have shone. As it was, we had to mill around in the corridors and Blue Lounge whilst the caterers speedily put up the tables and chairs and set out the delicious

chicken salad, followed by strawberries and cream, and I'm sure the wine consumed that day would have been sufficient to reach France! Eventually we found some empty chairs near where The Queen had carried out the opening of the South Wing, and were joined by Bill and Alice Griffiths, Beryl and a few others. We enjoyed seeing Bill again, he was the very first St. Dunstaner we knew, when my Bill had been a member of St. Dunstan's only a fortnight.

I went off to look for the new accommodation, but I am as easily lost in IFH as I was on the Great White Whale, and in the end, I didn't see them, time was running out so rather than be left behind, we returned to the lobby, and soon lined up for the return to Gatwick. Talk that evening was of course full of the day's happenings, and everyone was very happy at dinner. I hope the grey hairs at HQ reverted to their usual hue — it was a marathon job very well done. Thank you, President and Chairman, and all involved, in making this a day to remember!

Bill Griffiths writes:

The Queen came into the bedroom and shook hands with Alice and I. As she looked around the room, The Queen said 'How nice, do you like it?' Her Majesty showed great interest in the accommodation and I asked her, 'May I show you the special electronic toilet for we handless men and women Ma'am?' After explaining its operation to Her Majesty, she remarked, 'How very hygienic it is.' The Queen asked me about the braille watch I was wearing. I told her the time in my own little way, she smiled broadly and said, 'It's wonderful that you can do so much.'

Alice asked her if she would like to listen to the speaking watch. Her Majesty leaned over the bed to have a close look and listen. She laughed most heartily when I said, 'I have another one at home, and although it has a synthetic voice, it speaks with a Lancashire accent.' Then H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh came into the bedroom and shook hands with Alice and I. 'Are these hands of any use to you, will the fingers open out?' As he said this, he flipped the thumb up and down and tried to open the fingers. He felt my braille



Two 'suspicious characters' Gwen Obern and Bill Griffiths are 'interviewed' by the Police.

watch and asked me the time.

'What is the tie you're wearing?', he asked. I told him 'It is a Far East Ex-P.O.W. tie.' The Duke immediately recalled attending our National Far East Ex-P.O.W. Reunion at Blackpool some years ago. Addressing Alice, H.R.H. said, 'Do you like it here?' she replied, 'Yes Sir, very much, I didn't like it when we had to stay apart.' The Duke leaned over the bed to Alice, looked her straight in the eye, and with a little chuckle said, 'Why, don't you trust him?'

Les Copeland's Gift

St. Dunstaner Les Copeland, who lives at Shanklin, Isle of Wight, had a happy thought to commemorate the Royal Visit. He offered two original landscapes by Isle of Wight artist, Mr. Harold Sheath, for the choice of Her Majesty The Queen. Now, from the Palace has come the news of her acceptance of a river and woodland scene. The other picture, of a farm, Les has presented to St. Dunstan's and it will hang at Ian Fraser House with an inscribed plate recording Les's gift.

ROYAL VISIT COMMENTARY NOW IN TAPE LIBRARY

SD42 Radio Sussex coverage of Royal Visit to IFH (edited). C90.

TAPE RECORDING WEEK 1985

By Jim Padley

Photographs: John Barrow

In the Winter Garden at IFH on Monday morning, June 3rd, the meeting was held for the coming week. Harold Smith explained the programme that he, with the co-operation of Major Neve, had arranged and also asked for any suggestions of venues that might be considered for 1986. Once this business was completed, Barbara Bell gave a most interesting demonstration of techniques for using a recorder, and also of the unexpected sounds that may emerge, at first unnoticed, from the other side of the hedge to where you are recording bird-songs!

Monday afternoon saw us at Herstmonceux, to visit the 15th Century Castle, home of the telescopes that were transported there from Greenwich Observatory in the 1950's. The Dacre family has very strong historic connections with the castle. Our guide gave us a full history of the Observatory and demonstrated the rotating dome and opening aperture for operating the 21-inch telescope. Apart from roaming the grounds to record bird-songs we had the opportunity of riding in a cart drawn by two Shire horses which made a pleasant finish to our afternoon.

Tuesday we went to Marwell to visit the zoo which is a conservation centre for endangered species of animals. The pre-lunch session was taken up by viewing the many animals lazing in the natural parkland. One of the most popular youngsters was a five-week old giraffe. The afternoon was spent in the lecture room where two of the staff explained the purposes of the Society regarding conservation. The zoo is proud to claim that many of the animals they have bred are used to restock their own natural habitats in their countries of origin. We were able to handle a great variety of skins and stuffed animals as well as many mementos of travellers, which had been confiscated by Customs because it is

illegal to import any parts of protected animals into this country. We were also offered a live Chinchilla to handle, and a five-foot long live python which many of us handled and one or two even used it as a scarf. In all, a most interesting and informative day. The last sounds as we walked to board the coach was the roaring of the lions, and the screeching and flapping of birds' wings which signalled the approach of a thunderstorm.

Thursday morning we visited the Chalkpit Museum at Amberley, where we were able to visit a few of the many craft, commercial and industrial exhibits, including the potter at a traditional wheel and the firing done by a wood fuelled furnace, and a 12-inch gauge railway, where we had the opportunity of riding in a carriage salvaged from an RAF Station. Also the wireless exhibition, which has a collection of equipment tracing all aspects of radio from its infancy through to immediate post-war years. The whole museum is a feast of nostalgia.

The afternoon saw us at Woodmill, a nature reserve with a renovated working water-mill and a nature trail which takes you through woodland and meadow, with a large lake full of fish that are so tame they jump out of the water and take food from your fingers. A most pleasant and relaxing afternoon, listening to the song of the warblers and the occasional spotted woodpecker.

Friday saw us at the South of England Show at Ardingly, but unlike the previous day's warm afternoon it was cold, the coldest June day for 20 years. Never mind, we kept on the move visiting various stands with demonstrations from an instant egg whisk to the microwave oven, and from packets of seeds and displays of flowers to a vast selection of foods, and of course the prize animals, from the beautifully smooth-skinned warm calves to the prize bull.

The Social this year was held on Thursday evening and with the aid of Gabriel Arthur on the piano, a good time was had by all. Appropriate tokens of appreciation were made to Harold and Winnie Smith by all for their arranging and organising of another successful week. Our whole-hearted thanks go to Major Neve for his co-operation and all the help he gave for our pleasure. Also thank you to Ben, our driver for the week, who looked after us so well generally, and who conducted us so well en route with his commentary about the history of many of the villages and byways we passed through. What made the week even more enjoyable was the comfort and convenience of our lovely new married quarters of which we cannot speak too highly. Our thanks go to all the staff concerned who looked after us so well.



A camel obliges Gordon Smith with a few remarks.

Barbara Bell meets a serpent — we are not sure if she took a recording!



1985 Ex-P.O.W. Convention, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

By Bill Griffiths

The Red Carpet Hotel where we stayed for the first part of the convention was opposite General Mitchell Field on the outskirts of Milwaukee. On entering the grounds of the hotel, a big sign said 'Welcome American Ex-P.O.W.s.' Milwaukee is of German origin, and well known for brewing good beer, although I didn't get the opportunity to drink much of it. We didn't see much of Milwaukee, except for the Grand Avenue shopping centre which was quite beautiful. One large room in the hotel was reserved for selling P.O.W. books and souvenirs. Some of the badges and pins of the various states and chapters (clubs) were in red, white and blue diamante and made attractive brooches.

In America all Ex-P.O.W.s belong to one organisation and wives are members with voting rights. There are more than 86,000 American Ex-P.O.W.s of which 1600 attended the convention. There is a National Commander, three senior National Vice Commanders, State and Chapter Commanders, and a Board of Directors consisting of past National and State Commanders.

As far as we could gather there is no organisation equivalent to St. Dunstan's; the Government, States and Veterans Administration take care of war blind and disabled personnel. We only saw one P.O.W. with sight problems — he had lost the sight of one eye — and three wheelchair cases were present.

The convention is very serious, they get down to business at 8.30 a.m. to 12 o'clock, back at 1 p.m. until 4 p.m. or later. On the Tuesday, I went along to the Board of Directors' meeting, Alice to a Ladies' Seminar. Past Nat. Commander and International Co-ordinator, Mr. H.L. Page, came to take me to the meeting. Alice said that she would come for me at coffee break, we soon learned that tea and coffee breaks were non-existent.

Later I was taken for interviews with the Radio and Press. The Ex-P.O.W.s wore military caps and waistcoats, maroon and gold, depicting their state or chapter, and the National and past National Commanders wore white and gold. It was interesting to see the familiar states embroidered on the backs of waistcoats.

In the evening blazers and ties of the appropriate colour were worn, and everyone looked so smart. On one occasion Harold Page wore the Blackpool tie given to him by the Mayor when he was the guest at our F.E.P.O.W. Reunion in Blackpool. We were delighted. That evening was the National Commanders Reception night. The overseas Nat. Presidents, Robert Large (Canada) and his wife Johanne, George Beard (Australia) and wife Margaret, the French President, myself representing our F.E.P.O.W. National President, Mr. H.L. Payne O.B.E., and Alice, along with other officials, stood in a line to receive guests and members from all states. Later I was interviewed for Channel 4 Television. At five to 10, the ballroom practically cleared, most people went to their rooms to watch News at 10 on TV: I said my little piece, then some of our friends were either interviewed or shown.

Wednesday was the opening ceremony, all very moving and impressive, it was good to see the Union Jack flying with the American, Ex-P.O.W., Canadian and French flags. The Memorial service followed at 10.30 a.m. conducted by the National Chaplain, John Romine, an extremely warm and sincere gentleman, whom we got to know so well. I had the honour of taking part in the service by singing 'The Captives' Hymn', written by Margaret Dryburgh who died in a Japanese Prison Camp.

There was great praise for Martha Ray, former actress and comedienne. She had worked hard for Ex-P.O.W.s and in some



Bill is interviewed for American Channel 4 Television.

states she had secured for Ex-P.O.W.s their special car licence plates free, and always kept Ex-P.O.W.s in mind, she was said to be a great lady. It was stated that some Ex-P.O.W.s were ashamed; one lady had been married for 20 years before finding out that her husband was an Ex-P.O.W. A delegate remarked that this was the wrong attitude, 'If they hadn't been fighting for their country, they wouldn't have been P.O.W.s, and another quote was 'You stand free, because you fought.'

We had lunch with Harold Page, the Overseas Contingent and friends, then we circulated. It was fascinating talking to Ex-P.O.W.s and wives from the States. We stayed in another hotel in Milwaukee Centre for the rest of the convention. On Thursday we decided to have a look around Milwaukee, but oh dear, when we returned we were in trouble! Everyone had been searching for us, however Alice had spent a few of my dollars which made her happy.

Thursday evening George and Margaret Beard invited us to a reception, along with friends and overseas guests.

George, Australian Nat. President, is sponsoring the Australian Reunion to be held in Brisbane in October 1986. After enjoying the champagne we were taken to a very nice German restaurant for dinner, as guests of the Host Chapter, Milwaukee. Fred and Lorraine Memmel took us and our Australian friends in their car and what a lovely smooth ride it was, the car so big and roomy. It was surprising to see so many big expensive cars when the speed limit on motorways is 55 miles an hour. We arrived at the restaurant and the beautifully laid table displayed silk flags representing each country.

After our meal Alice and I were asked to sing, we appropriately sang 'Wunder Bar.' On our return to the hotel we were taken to a special room to meet officials, again we were invited to entertain. A very pleasant evening.

On Friday we attended the convention, all very interesting, many speeches and lectures. One of the speakers, a gentleman who had lost both hands (not a P.O.W.) gave an amusing address. He said that a friend once asked him, 'Which would you



Bill Griffiths with Harold Page, International Co-ordinator; A. P. Galloway, National Commander; Robert Large, National President, Canada; and George Beard, National President, Australia.

rather be, without hands or blind? His answer was, 'I'd rather be normal.' This gentleman didn't know about me and to prevent embarrassment, I would rather have kept it that way but the International Co-ordinator introduced me to him. However we enjoyed a chat about our Handless Reunion. It turned out that he was the Postmaster of Milwaukee, and he did me the honour of coming to listen to my speech in the afternoon.

Past Commander, Harold Page, introduced me to the audience, mentioning St. Dunstan's and my work. In my talk I said that St. Dunstan's were grateful to the Americans for inventions that have been of great assistance to blind people, and that St. Dunstan's always evaluated them. I also mentioned our Ex-P.O.W. Reunion at St. Dunstan's. At the end of my talk I was presented with a clock by the Nat. Commander, Mr. A.P. Galloway, he had made it with the help of his charming wife, Charlotte. It is made of Buck Wood and the brass dial is inscribed 'American Ex-P.O.W.'s presented to William Griffiths, July 26th 1985, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.' It now has pride of place in our lounge.

In the evening it was the banquet where the new National Commander, Carlo Natvig, was installed. All the guests were announced and saluted as we walked to our places on stage. After the meal the

retiring Nat. Commander gave a speech, followed by the moving ceremony of the New Commander being installed, also the newly elected Board of Directors, everybody offering their congratulations. It made an impressive picture, all the past Commanders and officials so proudly standing together. At the end of the evening we would willingly have retired, but it was the last night of the convention and we were invited to Joe's room (retiring Commander) for more singing.

During the convention we heard many reminiscences by the Americans who were stationed in this country during the war. Great Britain still means a lot to the Americans, in particular the Ex-P.O.W.'s. One Ex-P.O.W. said that they couldn't understand a small country like Great Britain sticking out the war on their own for so long, in his words, 'The British have guts.'

Making Friends

We thoroughly enjoyed our stay in America, and I was proud to represent our National President of the F.E.P.O.W. Assoc., Mr. H.L. Payne, O.B.E., who had in previous years certainly cemented good liaisons with our American Ex-P.O.W.'s. We were taken good care of and have made many friends. We are grateful to Harold Payne, Harold and Virginia Page, the Host Chapter of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and others (now friends) who made our visit informative, interesting and so enjoyable, we thank them all most heartily.

Our only regret is that we didn't take plaques, badges or small presents. Most members were exchanging little gifts — all we took were a few sticks of Blackpool rock. All went well on our journey home until we got to Preston to change for Blackpool. Alice managed to get me off the train. She went back for the luggage, but was almost taken to the next stop, Glasgow, leaving me standing alone on the platform. However she just made it to my great relief.

We have some literature, and a list of names and addresses of P.O.W.'s who were with Americans in P.O.W. Camps. We shall bring these items to our St. Dunstan's P.O.W. Reunion in April.

London Central Reunion, July 6th

The last of the 1985 reunions was held in the Russell Hotel, which, if you have to gather 150 people (58 St. Dunstaners) on a hot day, is an ideal location. The reception room was large and relatively cool. The Chairman started by welcoming some special guests. He paid a warm tribute to Mrs. Natalie Opperman, Chairman of St. Dunstan's, (South Africa), with whom 'we have long and strong ties. I cannot mention South Africa without paying warm tribute to Mrs. Opperman's late husband, Steve. He was an outstandingly wise and gentle man, who, behind the scenes, did much good work for St. Dunstan's in both our countries, and was much respected by all who knew him. Also, the Hon. Mrs. Esther Borwick, who also died recently. As Lady Ellerman, she was known to most of you. She too did generous work for St. Dunstaners in our two countries'. Sir Henry also welcomed Mr. and Mrs. John Alton from Australia. Mr. Alton was born in Southern Ireland, and emigrated to Australia on leaving the RAF. Finally, he welcomed two St. Dunstaners attending their first reunion, Mr. Heffernan and Mr. Norris. 'I am delighted to welcome Mrs. Avis Spurway, who has been doing magnificent things for you since before I existed!'

Sir Henry referred to a year of anniversaries; the 40th anniversary of the end of World War II, and the 3rd anniversary of the Falklands war. It was St. Dunstan's 70th, to be marked by a visit from Her Majesty The Queen. He went on to explain the arrangements in hand; the commemorative plaque, the toys, photographs and President's jig-saw puzzle.

He concluded, 'I can report to you, with pride, that St. Dunstan's is on a steady course and set fair for the future. I wish you well until we meet again in 1986'.

Mr. Bill Miller reiterated the Chairman's welcome to the special guests and added the name of Miss Maisie Streets, the Treasurer of the Daedalus Camp. 'The Russell Hotel has been looking after us for something like 20 years. Today has been no exception and on your behalf, I express gratitude for their good work'.

Bill went on to refer to the various changes that had occurred during the relatively short period in which the Chairman had been in office; the installation of a bar at IFH, the modernised South Wing, the removal of hospital-like beds, and the new headquarter building. 'Indeed, we seem set fair'.

The afternoon continued with a high decibel level of talk. This may have been due to tales of a 40th wedding anniversary trip via Concorde to New York and return by QE2, despite a red bomb alert on Concorde, a strike by hotel staff in New York, and the diversion of the QE2 due to iceberg alert. A fabulous trip none the less!

There was a boisterous reunion of 3 Royal Marine Commandos. Jo Humphrey had carried Bill Shea back to the First Aid post when Bill was blinded, before being struck himself an hour later. Jo Humphrey and Bill Heffernan were on the Dieppe raid together. Bill was on a landing craft which was almost entirely wiped out as the ramp went down. On landing, he saw a mill bomb with the pin out. He was badly injured whilst trying to smother it, and was later taken prisoner after also being shot in the chest.

So, thanks was largely due to our welfare visitor Miss Barbara Davis for another successful reunion.

Mr. and Mrs. John Alton, from Australia.





Out for a Duck!

Curly Wagstaff talks to Ray Hazan

Photographs by Lois Stringer and Damien Wagstaff

To awake to the dawn chorus and sense a vista of flowers, fields and hills is to feel Devon. To stand at the open window and breathe in the fresh, clean, cool morning air is to smell Devon. To turn up at a local hostelry and receive a meal despite a 'No food served on Sundays' notice is to taste the hospitality of Devon. To walk down a deserted lane amidst the rustling of the trees in the breeze and the lowing and cackle of farm animals is a universe away from the nerve rattling roar of London. It was to this background that Alan 'Curly' Wagstaff was born some 52 years ago.

School during the wartime years was a slightly haphazard affair. In order to accommodate the influx of evacuees, the school was moved to several different premises within Sidmouth. Whole and half days were devoted to nature walks, which must have been eye openers to the children from London. 'I have always been interested in nature, because I'm a country lad'. Curly left school at 15 and after a short time on a nursery, worked on a farm 'seven days' a week for 42 shillings. At this stage, he kept a few fowls in the back gar-

den, but had no intention or idea of breeding fowls or ducks as a hobby. In 1951, Curly was called up for national service.

Curly followed his brother into the Royal Signals and was trained in Catterick as a Permanent Lineman, laying telephone lines between field exchanges. After basic training and embarkation leave, he sailed on board the troop ship *HMS Lancashire* with the King's Regiment, stopping briefly in Singapore, Hong Kong, and finally Korea, arriving 10 days before Christmas, 1952.

In the following March, Curly 'met his mine'. 'I was laying 60 pairs of telephone cables to a Canadian Horse Artillery post. I was three to four hundred yards from the post when I entered either an unmarked minefield, or one that had not been cleared properly. I saw the mine as I tripped it. It was one of those double exploding anti-personnel mines. The first explosion sent it into the air, and the second was intended to take your legs off.' Curly suffered injuries to every part of his body except his head — broken arms, legs

and ribs, stomach and chest injuries. After six months hospitalisation in Korea and Japan, Curly was returned to the UK. He attended Roehampton, where they intended to amputate a leg, but this was saved. However, diabetes was diagnosed as a direct result of his injuries and it was this which was to make him a St. Dunstan.

On leaving hospital, Curly was sent to a rehabilitation centre in Egham, Surrey, where he was told he would probably not work for another five years. But Devonians are made of sterner stuff, and Curly was soon working back at Exeter on inspection work at an ammunition factory. At the end of the 50's some 15,000 employees were laid off armaments work throughout the UK and Curly found himself on the dole. He answered an advertisement for a semi-skilled mechanic at the Whiteways Cider Company in Whimble, and was soon promoted to their maintenance staff. 'We plumbed everything from horse troughs to central heating. I had to maintain their cider making machinery and generally trouble shoot.'

In 1963, Curly and Pauline married and settled in Whimble, where they have lived ever since. 'We lived in a tiny cottage 40 paces from the factory'. The factory ceased production of cider in Whimble in 1976, but, by then, Curly's eyes were beginning to suffer. At a hospital in Bristol, Curly was told he would be blind within five years. 'The most upsetting part about that was that Pauline was expecting our 4th child. It had to be a girl — we already had three boys. We had a snivelling session, but told ourselves there were others worse off, and that made us feel a little better.' Tarquin, their fourth son was born in 1974.

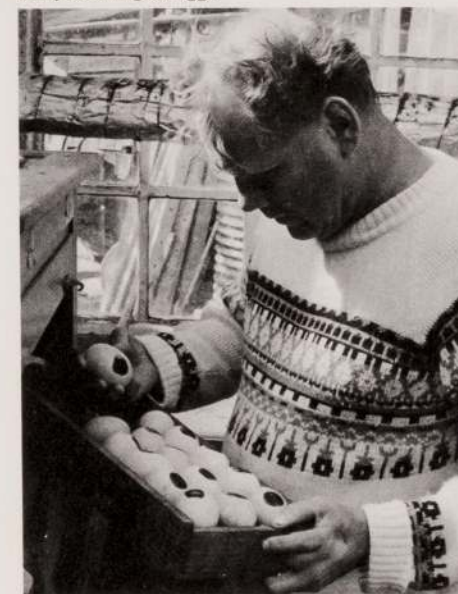
Soon, Curly's right eye went, followed by a haemorrhage in the left which has resulted in an ever deteriorating blur. It was a Ministry of Pensions Welfare Officer who put Curly in touch with St. Dunstan's.

Curly was first taken on as a border line and did 18 months hobby training at Ian Fraser House, principally in wrought iron work. Curly became a full beneficiary when his remaining vision deteriorated. 'My only knowledge of St. Dunstan's up to that time was the sight of three darts stuck into a collecting box on a bar! My first feel-

ings on arrival at IFH was one of guilt, that there were totally blind men, and I could see, in some fashion, the length of the lounge. I do not want to hide the fact that I have some sight. I still get embarrassed when people grab my arm and treat me as a totally blind person. I believe in helping the TB's, but not molly-coddling them'.

At about this time, Curly became interested in archery. 'I'm not sure how it started. I used to help Charlie McConaghy, who was in the room opposite mine, and maybe it was he who said to 'come down to the dungeon (the indoor range) one day, and have a go. I believe in trying things for six weeks before making a decision, and, well, it just caught on'. Shortly after, Curly bought his own equipment, and is now a solid member of the St. Dunstan's archery club. Archery very nearly got him into serious trouble. One day, the Post Office intercepted a bulky envelope of his addressed to 'S.A.S., Reigate'. All they could see was a suspicious looking wire sticking out. A visit by the police established that S.A.S. stood for Southern Archery Specialists, and the cable turned out to be a bow string! Hardly a shot in the gold that!

Curly checking the eggs.



While archery has kept him involved in St. Dunstan's, so Scouting has kept both he and Pauline involved in the local community. Both his two elder sons were awarded their Chief Scout's Award, a rarely obtained prize. Pauline is about to be certificated as a Cub Leader. Curly's contribution, amongst other things, was to help build the original Scout hut before he was married and to refurbish the same hut after a new extension had been added.

It was Pauline who rekindled Curly's interest in fowls. 'Whilst we were in our cottage next to Whiteways, she said she fancied six ducks to fatten up. So I said I fancied six to breed from. We dug a small pond, fed them on oats, and got some really large ones. I marked my six. From them, we took the eggs and put them into an incubator we made. It was constructed from a commode lined with polystyrene tiles and heated by a 150 watt bulb. The heat was channelled to come up under the egg trays. But the bulb was too hot and melted the tiles! The mark II version had six 60 watt bulbs and a small thermostat so that the bulbs were going on and off every half minute. That meant 80,000 times in 28 days, the incubation period. 'I never lost a bulb in three months'.

'I have Aylesbury ducks which don't fly. At first, we didn't know how many males or females we had, but just hoped. Now I know that drakes have a curly tail and 'quack' and ducks hiss. Last year's new stock of six ducks, between February and July, laid nearly 400 eggs between them. I collect about six eggs a day, and mark them with a big black spot, which I can see. The cold eggs are laid in trays and 'turned' once a day, just as the duck would do. When I have about 50, they go into the incubator. There the temperature is maintained at 102 degrees fahrenheit for approximately 28 days.

After eight or nine days we check to see if the eggs are fertile. We use two tins joined together with a light bulb in one and a hole about half the size of an egg at the other end. When it is dark outside, my boys put the egg over the hole so that they can see through it. If the egg is fertile, it looks like a small octopus — a black spot with veins extending out from it. That egg is then marked with a circle and put back



Tarquin keeping the indicator board up to date.

into the incubator. The 'clear' or unfertile eggs go up to the kitchen for consumption.

Then at 21 days, and every day thereafter, we carry out a hot water test. We believe this helps soften the shell, making it easier for the ducklings to get out. A bucket is filled with water at 102 degrees. The eggs bob about slightly denoting all is well. As the ducklings get older, so the movement in the bucket gets more violent. Sometimes you can really hear them rattling, and the ducklings squeaking inside. You know that is one and a half days from hatching.

The duckling has a 'billing' tooth on its beak. It sticks this through the shell at the air vent end. If left like this they will die. But this is where Pauline lends a hand. She carefully chips the shell away then gently takes the beak and untwists the head, then further breaks the shell until a foot is out. The yolk sack is still attached to the other end of the shell, but this is left for the duckling to break off naturally. They are left in the incubator to dry off and then go into a home made pen with its light bulb, feeding and water troughs. You have to teach just one of them to feed by sticking its beak in the trough, and then the others follow suit. We sell them at five days for 75p each. After that, it cost me 8p per duck per week, so that is added to the price.'

Keeping tabs on all the various types of eggs, and at what stage they are in their cycle could prove a complex feat of memory. But a simple device of a board with holes and golf tees enables the family to know exactly where each batch of eggs is, and what stage they are at.

Curly's garden is a thriving menagerie. Two saddleback pigs grunt and snuffle in a pen. For the first time, he has hatched a pea-chick from the peacock and peahen. Violetta, the donkey, brays in a field; Ajax, the labrador, watches over Welsh Harlequin ducks, geese, guinea fowl and hens. There were also rabbits until a ferret got amongst them.

When not involved with his animals, Curly is busy in his one and a half acres. 'I reckon we have laid over 100 tons of concrete in the garden.' Together with friends and sons, he has laid shed floors, feeding areas, paths, steps, a patio and walls. Trees have been felled and a rockery laid. 'But I do stress that I would not be able to carry out all this work without Pauline and the boys'.

Curly is a fiercely family man. The family is an integral part of his life. Despite his air of confidence and independence, he benefits from their support. Indeed, they have to be from a diabetic's point of view. The diabetic's life is governed by injections, hospital visits and regular meals. During lunch, Curly's speech started slurring slightly. A quiet code phrase from Pauline prompted him to take the necessary avoiding action — a fruit pastille in this case.

The Wagstaff family lead full and active lives. Jason, the eldest son has followed his father's footsteps into the Royal Signals. Damien is an apprentice with the RAF. The other two boys, Conrad and Tarquin are still at school. Curly has future intentions to build a large gold fish pond in the front garden and to set up more rabbit hutches, hopefully, this time, out of harm's way. He is constantly thinking of new ideas and putting them into practice. You get out of life what you put into it. If life outside came to a grinding halt, you would still find an active spot in that one and a half acres of Devon.

Curly and the boys with Violetta, the donkey.



FRENCH ADVENTURE — RYA Sailing Course

By Gordon Pennington

After making an early application for consideration, I received word from Col. D. Hurndell, Director of the R.Y.A., that I had been allocated a berth on the *Aegeia*, which would be captained by its owner, Bill Ratcliffe, and to report to the Mayflower Marina, Plymouth by 2 p.m. on Saturday, June 29th.

I actually joined the boat at 1 p.m., only to join the others for lunch in the cockpit which was most pleasant and an excellent opportunity of getting to know everyone, of which there were quite a number, nine in all: Dr. Andrew Ratcliffe, a G.P. from Falmouth; Jenny, a district nurse, also from Falmouth; Peter Ratcliffe, the youngest son of the captain and Under Manager of the Park Hotel, Cardiff, and his young lady, Louise; the mate, Michael and his wife, Ann; and Nigel and I who were the registered blind. The sun was full out and it was quite hot. During and after lunch the skipper had been working out the details, and announced that we would set sail for St. Peter Port in Guernsey at 3 o'clock that afternoon. This would give us the most favourable tide and forecast winds, so we all turned to and got the boat ship shape and ready for sea.

Off we go!

At 3 p.m. we set off out into the channel. Well, I am always ready for a sail and a blow, watches worked out and agreed, on goes the audio compass and Nigel and I take turns at the tiller, just to get the feel of the boat. Every boat is different on the helm, and answers according to the sail set and its general form or shape. The *Aegeia* (translated, means Sun Fish) is of French construction, 36 feet, generally recognised as quite fast and she is very well planned and laid out: four berths in the stern, four in the lounge (midships), and two in the forepeak for'ard — this is where Nigel and I were accommodated.

As I remember, this was quite a fair run, nothing untoward, a fair sea and wind, and we arrived in St. Peter Port in the fore



Gordon at the helm.

noon period, picked up our berth in the Marina, and after a general tidy up we all went ashore for a hot shower, shave and clean up. Marvellous what a great feeling this gives you even after such a short while: we go in tired, dirty and feeling a little listless, but we all come out feeling like lions. Back aboard again for lunch, plus making plans for the rest of our stay. The chaps go to the Yacht Club bar for a drink, the girls go off shopping for dinner and their own bits and pieces. While in the Club House we meet up with the others, and general plans are made for the following day, which are to sail to Sark, go ashore for a walk, organise a barbecue, and a general get-together for a sing-song. Finally we leave the Club House and drift back to our respective boats and a good meal which the girls have put together — excellent, everyone quite content, clean up and off to bed, undisturbed for a while.

Next morning, everyone was bright and breezy (except that Nigel snored like a fog

horn), but it's all taken in good part, breakfast, general turn to and tidy up, then off ashore for a shower and shave in HOT water, marvellous feeling going back. Off we set for Sark which is some few hours sailing away, find the agreed bay, and find that *Chungta*, one of the other boats, has already arrived and moored up fore and aft. We come alongside and do the same. There is little shore where we are, only vertical rock, we agree that only the sighted go ashore, and Nigel and I will stop aboard.

A superb 'Home' cooked meal

The sun is out and it's quite warm, with just a nice breeze to keep it comfortably cool. Eventually all the boats have arrived and we are all rafted together, ready for this meal, part of which we had agreed should be done by each respective boat, thus avoiding duplication. Our duty is to produce the main portion of the meal, curry and rice (cold) plus the bits and pieces, of course. Well I suspect you are now wondering how it all turned out. I am pleased to be able to report, marvellous, course after course came along until finally no one could eat any more, we had eaten everything: pineapple and cheese on sticks, cold sausage on sticks, onions, biscuits of every kind, cheese, wholemeal, crackers, peanuts plain and salted. It all started with soup, and ended with fruit salad and cream. Plus in between, wine of every kind. To finish, either rum, whisky or gin.

We had generally agreed during the evening to again set sail early the following morning for Ville de Treguier, some six or seven miles up the Treguier river which is extremely pretty, with trees and farms right to the water's edge. But most certainly one needs to know these parts fairly well, or to be well armed with books of tides and currents, plus way markers. After a long day's sailing, we finally arrived at our destination, moored at about six in the evening, the first boat of our fleet in. Same procedure — quick tidy up then off ashore for a shower. Someone knows where there is a great restaurant, everything typically French. Very pleased and delighted with the hot showers and

everyone feeling on top of the world, eager for this wonderful meal we are all promised. As we are about to go ashore, *Garwain* arrives, we give a hand to tie up, discuss general plans for the meal and off we go to find this wonderful restaurant, situated on top of the hill.

We walk through the village, up the long hill past the cathedral, up and up, and when we finally arrive the place is closed. 'Never mind, I saw one near the church' says someone. Now down the hill we troop, church, cathedral, but still no restaurant or cafe. 'There is one right at the bottom as we come ashore from the Marina' says another. Off we go at the double. There it is, in we go, 'Can you cater for 17 of us now, tonight?' 'Ah well yes, but it will take a little while to prepare. If you will wait, we will cook it.' All agreed and we sit down. We start the meal about nine o'clock, but in French it takes us until two in the morning to complete the meal. Everyone very satisfied and more than pleased, and back we go to our respective boats feeling fine — whether this is the meal or the wine I would not like to comment on.

During the meal the skipper had left early in order to catch the late evening news and weather report, and when we get back to the boat, he tells us that our intended journey to Malo will have to be changed as they were making repairs to the lock gates, so he proposes we go to the Ville de Perros, up another river. We decide to take advantage of the ebb tide and sail down river at about 6 a.m. Then a nice cuppa and so to bed.

Perros

Awakened at 5.30 a.m., to find nearly everyone up and getting ready to go, but also that *Garwain* had already sailed during the night, we presume, strange, but not unheard of, every skipper has it in his power to move off when he thinks fit and proper. So off down the river with the tide, and out once more into the big wide world of the ocean, or should I say channel, but it's a long way out to clear the buoys and coast, then turning west for Perros and up another very pretty river. The sun is playing hide and seek today,

but it's still nice and warm. We arrive in the river after a while, and start to travel up to the port and marina, which is different to anything I had seen or heard of — they keep six feet of water in the port by building a long wall with only a narrow entrance which has a six foot gate at the bottom, and as we draw six of water, we find we have judged it just right, just two metres over the bar, so in we go, directed by the gateman.

Perros, and here we are tied up to the marina, right in the town centre. General tidy up and off ashore to sample the delights of their baths, which again prove to be excellent, the French have definitely got the edge on us, it would appear, in this particular service. The skipper, Nigel and I go ashore to sample this delight, while the others go for a wander around the town to buy in more stores. It has been agreed that we should all have lunch on board together then go off into town to book a restaurant for the evening meal, which again proved to be at the top of the hill, overlooking the harbour.

A hug boosts team morale.



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Excellent lunch, but still not seen anything of the others, very strange. However, we shall meet up again somewhere, everyone very pleased with the limited run ashore, plenty of shops for the girls, weather very good, plenty of walks and things to see for the chaps, plus I need hardly say, bars. We found the restaurant quite easily in the evening and sat down in good time around 7 p.m. We decide to go the whole hog, right through the menu, and we order a selection of French wines. Excellent, in fact the whole meal was extremely good, and they seemed not to be in any rush or want to see us go. We had become quite friendly, even to the point where the chef brought out his youngest member of staff, a wee kitten, with the mother keeping an eye on things from close by. Yes, without doubt our stay was very good, and we all enjoyed ourselves.

Choppy Weather

Back at the boat plans are made to sail off for Plymouth early the following morning, but the weather forecast is not all that good, and we have to punch against the tide for some while to sail tight to plan, as there are tremendous rocks, tide rips, fishing pot markers plus other craft, so one has to be ready to act immediately to avoid problems. Sea quite choppy, boat plunging up and down quite a bit, but everyone in good spirits in spite of there being no sun. Everyone dressed in wet suits and wellies. The girls are busy making sandwiches, and laying in a stock for the night run, as our estimated time of arrival in Plymouth will be late the following afternoon. It will be quite a fair haul, but one can never be certain in such matters. We had picked up some fishing line, wrapped around our prop shaft on the way to Treguier, but fortunately *Garwain* had a young diver on board who without a moment's hesitation volunteered to get it off, which he did after some trouble — for which we are greatly indebted.

The wind picks up steady to force 4-5 with variable winds, building to force 6, which means that the boat is somewhat lively, making it more than difficult to lie down in the forepeak, it's just possible one at a time, but certainly not with two, as you

get tossed from one side to the other, while at the same time rearing and dropping 5 or 6 feet at a time in bursts. I, certainly, have difficulty at the helm during my period of watches, trying to keep the boat as near to her course as possible, and I can only presume the others did as well, but of course they might be better than I was. However, the night passes, and we are all still safe and well cared for in both meals and drinks — we had all got used to trying to drink and steer at the same time.

I had the middle watch so I go below to get a little rest, and eventually manage to drop off. I am awakened by local movement and Jenny appears, 'Are you feeling all right, there's a meal on the go, if you want something I'll get it for you,' but I decline. I wasn't ill, but I just did not feel it would be a good idea to have something at that point. Time passes, and I doze for a while and eventually go up on deck, to everyone's delight. They had all thought I might have not been well. We were outside Salcombe, some ten miles or so west of our intended fall, but after the rough night I was not in the least surprised. The immediate problem was that we were going to have to punch against the tide right through to Plymouth, but at least it was not raining, and the sun came out every now and then to have a look around. We all looked sunburnt and windblown, and it was my turn on the tiller once again, sailing proved to be quite steady really, if somewhat slow.

Back in Plymouth

We finally docked into the Mayflower Marina, Plymouth around mid-day, and we all turned to waiting for the Customs to arrive, no one putting a foot ashore until they had cleared the boat. The skipper had got everything ship shape and ready for them, and they seemed quite pleasant and efficient, and it was not too long before they had cleared the boat and we were able to go ashore for the proverbial shower. The skipper's wife came down to greet us and enquire what kind of trip we had had, and also to extend an invitation from their eldest son, a Lieut. Commander, and his wife for dinner that evening at the Admiral's Point where they

lived. It appears he made a career of the Royal Navy and was very proud of his service, as well he might be. We all had an excellent meal and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves, and finally departed for the boat, leaving the skipper at his son's, to have a night in bed.

The following morning we were all up early, as, apart from Nigel and I, the rest of the crew were to stop on board, and take the boat back to Falmouth, Cornwall. Peter, the skipper's youngest son, had borrowed his father's car to bring us back to the boat the previous night, so he now ran us to the station for our return home on the train.

UPDATE ON SYDNEY SCROGGIE'S DAUGHTER

Mary, daughter of Sydney Scroggie, of Kirkton of Strathmartine, Angus, was the first woman home in the Montrose Half-Marathon on August 25th, putting up her best time to date for the distance: 1 hour, 29 minutes. She is still alive!

BRITISH TELECOM CATALOGUE FOR DISABLED CUSTOMERS

For the first time, British Telecom have launched a comprehensive catalogue detailing the extensive range of products and services available, which are of special interest to disabled customers. The guide covers four main sections: for people with impaired hearing, with speech difficulties, who are blind or visually handicapped, and for those with impaired mobility.

The catalogue is available free from all local British Telecom sales offices (to find out where your local one is, dial 100 and ask the operator for Freefone Telecom Sales — they will tell you or put you in contact with your nearest BT sales office.) It has also been widely distributed to organisations who work with handicapped people, including hospitals, advice bureaux and social services departments.

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D. F. Robinson's

GARDENING NOTES

We are now coming to the end of the riot of colour in the garden, showing us that autumn and winter won't be long coming along, with even a frost or two especially in the northern parts of the country, which will cut down the tender items, so get all the beds cleared, especially the vegetable patch so you can get manure or compost down ready for the heavy digging to start you off for next season. This has not been a good summer, with perhaps quite a few failures during slow growth and germination of seeds. However don't say you won't put seeds or plants in next season, as one has these in and out years, so carry on with the ordering of flower seeds for 1986 and they will no doubt give a better account of themselves.

It is still a fairly busy time, apart from clearing the beds, as leaves will be coming down off your own trees and blown in from neighbours, so brush them up regularly and consign to the compost heap. Repair paths and put down some weed-killer to get rid of seeds settling in crevices and cracks. Be careful not to sprinkle it on plants nearby.

Vegetables

Not a lot to be done here apart from clearing away old plants such as the pea and bean halums, and if not putting any manure or compost down, dig over for the frosts to break down. Beetroot and carrots can be lifted when the green tops fade and store only the top grade roots, others which are not too bad can be used in the kitchen for a few days, but consign the bad ones to the dustbin. Ensure that you have all the potatoes dug up by going down fairly deep. I am afraid I was a bit lax over the last season or two and have potatoes coming up all over the place and interfering a little with the growth of other items.

Don't store potatoes in plastic bags or you may lose a good many later on. Good

thick paper bags with holes in can be used but sacking bags are the best and will keep potatoes in good condition for months and one can use the sacks for years to come. Keep in a place free from frost. Several items of the cabbage family will still be growing all right but keep them free from weeds. Rhubarb corms can be planted now.

Fruit

It is a good time to get the areas where you are to plant new apple and pear trees ready. Put on grease bands one foot to 18 inches above ground level to stop some of the insects climbing and setting up nests which will attack all young parts of the trees and flower buds. Gather apples and pears on fine days but do handle carefully, as bruising will not be good for storing. I always use newspaper and find it very good. Place the wrapped fruit containers well away from frost but not in warm conditions. Shallow containers which are available from greengrocers are very good for keeping the fruit in for storage.

Prune gooseberries and currants at the end of the month, cutting out old shoots which have borne fruit. Cut to ground level all growths on loganberries which have had fruit. The same can be said for raspberry canes but leave young shoots at root level or stool. All runners on strawberry plants should be cut away.

Flowers

Most of the colour has now gone so all annuals can be cleared away unless you want to save one or two for giving colour in the house by potting up. Certainly impatiens (busy lizzies) can go in pots as they are really perennial but will not stay outside in the winter. Dig up all the dahlias and gladioli corms and dry ready to store for the winter away from frost.

Get all spring flowering bulbs planted in their flowering quarters and put them in fairly deep, about twice the depth of bulbs which will be about three inches for daffodils and tulips, but only just below the surface of the soil for crocus, and these always give a good show near the edges of beds or round the base of trees. Anemones of all types generally give a good show if planted in shady places and go on for many years. They also make good cut flowers.

All perennials can be dug up and split up, throwing out centre roots and keeping only the outer pieces which are young and give a good show in the year to come. Some manure spread over the roots when planting will give them a good start. Should the weather be very dry and frost-free, give them a dose of water. Early flowering shrubs of all kinds can be purchased and put in their positions. Where you have some frames or other cover it might be a good thing to sow some sweet peas to give an early start next season. Do however, give some extra cover over the top of the frames if you have a very hard winter.

Greenhouse

Not a great deal to be done here as it is just about the end of the season for growing in a cold house, though you may have some pot plants such as cineraria, calceolaria, cyclamen and schizanthus, coming on plus a few primulas, in order to give you some colour in the early part of 1986. Where you have some heat, put it on during the night in frosty conditions. This

FOULING OF FOOTPATHS

Four Local Authorities have introduced one-year pilot schemes to persuade dog owners to clear up after their pets: the London Borough of Barking, Gosport (Hampshire), Rochester (Kent) and north-west Leicestershire.

Under new by-laws, dog owners can be fined up to £100 if they fail to remove faeces deposited by their pets on designated footpaths, grass verges and

little heat will keep the geraniums going and a few cuttings could be taken, though I think the early spring would be better. Late chrysanthemums and perpetual carnations will need to be disbudded so that you can have quality blooms.

Where you have little or nothing under glass, it might be a good idea during good sunny days to take pot plants outside and give the whole place a good clean up and add some disinfectant in the water. Take the staging out and give it a good scrubbing and then all the glass inside, plus ends and sides. Some disinfectant on the floors will give a good start to 1986. Use a duster on dry days to get rid of the Coolglas from outside windows as you will need the extra light in the spring when starting items from seed. It might also be a good thing to use a couple of smokes, one against pests and another against disease during the period of cleaning out as there might be a few corners you have missed.

GARDENERS PLEASE NOTE

Bookings for Gardeners Week must only be done through Mrs. Coyne at HQ. This includes also those who will be coming in for daily events.

Subscriptions are now due — £5 combined. Please send these to John Walbrugh, Treasurer, at: The Loft, Priory's Barn, Chichester, Sussex, PO18 0DX1. Cheques made payable to St. Dunstan's Gardening Club.

Reg Newton, Chairman

A FORTNIGHT IN BULGARIA

By Beryl Sleigh

Fred Peters, my reader, and I went to a sea-side resort called 'Golden Sands', about 20 miles from Varna, in Bulgaria, last month. The bedrooms in the hotel were very comfortable and there was a good view from the 11th floor. Fred could see the sun rise from his bedroom. However, the food was uninteresting and hardly anyone spoke English, although it was called the International Hotel. There was a good beach but the sea was very cold. We were on the Black Sea. The hotels and shops were all state owned and most of the shops would only accept English money from us — all they wanted was our currency. There was very little to buy in the shops. We had good weather though, Fred went in the sea and I swam a few times in a mineral swimming bath.

Then we went on a cruise to Istanbul, sailing up the Bosphorus to land in Asian Turkey and then going over the Bosphorus by coach into European Turkey. Istanbul is a wonderful city, full of

mosques and domes and minarets. We went inside the Blue Mosque, one of the seven wonders of the world. The roof is covered with blue tiles — hence the name. We had to take our shoes off and leave them in a pile. Luckily we found them again.

I am very slow with my arthritis, and we had to walk about a mile down the docks to get to the coach from the boat. It was quite hair-raising, as it was full of lorries and wagons and men loading and unloading ships, very narrow and congested. At one spot we had to go sideways between a pile of sisal bales and the sea (and we didn't know the way either.) No taxis were allowed in the docks and there would not have been room for them if they had been. The traffic in Istanbul has to be seen to be believed. It is much, much worse than in London.

We had a terrific storm going back which lasted for 16 hours and we were three hours late arriving in Varna. The boat pitched and rolled and shivered. She was only a small cruise ship. Practically everyone was ill but I was not, although I

felt squeamish some of the time. I am not usually a good sailor. Fred loves a rough sea and there were only two others in the dining room with him. The loo was some way from the cabins and Fred had to take me there with this rolling, pitching boat and my arthritic knees. I don't know how we did it. One also had to hold on, washing and dressing in the cabin. It was absolutely freezing on arrival at Varna and I only had thin summer clothes. I had forgotten my stockings and Fred his pullover.

When we got to Varna airport to fly back to Gatwick, we found our luggage had not been put on the coach. Thompson's representative rang up our hotel and told them to put it in a taxi and bring it to the airport, but it did not arrive in time. You can guess we were worried, we would have had to wait about four days for another flight to Gatwick. We did not even have the tickets, but Thompson's courier made some out for us. We received a message on the plane that our luggage was being put on a flight for Birmingham. It was all intact, even my zip bag which does not lock and which I would have taken on the plane with me.

All's well that ends well, it was certainly an experience but we do not want to go to Bulgaria again!

Individuals — July 20th

R. Fullard	66.7
W. Lethbridge	61.8
R. Pacitti	56.3
R. Evans	56.3
W. Phillips	54.2
Mrs. Meleson	50.7
H. Meleson	50.0
J. Huk	49.3
Mrs. King	49.3
J. Majchrowicz	48.6
J. Padley	47.1
H. King	45.8
G. Hudson	43.0
Mrs. Vi Delaney	42.3
R. Palmer	39.6
Mrs. Pacitti	39.0

Summer Bridge Drive — August 4th

The Bridge Drive was attended by eight St. Dunstaners and twelve loyal markers. Mrs. E. Dacre presented prizes to the four highest scoring pairs:

J. Huk & Mrs. Fay Andrews	2550
Miss M. Stenning & Mr. M. Douse	1310
W. Lethbridge & Mr. R. Goodlad	890
F. Dickerson & Dr. J. Goodlad	400

Pairs — September 1st

R. Pacitti & Mrs. Pacitti	61.9
R. Evans & Mrs. Barker	57.5
A. Dodgson & Mrs. Buller-King	56.9
R. Fullard & Mrs. F. Andrews	51.9
W. Phillips & Dr. J. Goodlad	46.3
W. Lethbridge & Mr. R. Goodlad	46.3
R. Goding & Miss Stenning	45.6
J. Padley & Mrs. J. Douse	45.0
M. Tybinski & Mrs. Tebbitt	44.3
J. Majchrowicz & Miss Sturdy	44.3

Bowling

We continued our summer bowling fixtures with matches against Guildford and Woolston Bowling Clubs on August 18th and 24th respectively. As always we were made very welcome and were happy to meet old friends.

Owing to illness and holidays we were very short of bowlers and were helped by, Jesse Mills, Mansell Lewis and Sid Dodd who happened to be on holiday at Ian Fraser House — many thanks gentlemen!

9th ANNUAL SPORTS COMPETITIONS FOR VISUALLY HANDICAPPED

By Jimmy Wright

I attended the Sports on July 27th at the New River Stadium in Haringey. It was a perfect day, occasional bursts of sunshine coupled with a light breeze, nothing like the intense heat that we experienced last year, and, mercifully, the rain held off until a few minutes after the day's activities had ended.

There were all the usual field events: Shot Put, Discus, Javelin, High Jump and Long Jump; track events included the sprint and 3km Walking Race, with categories both for totally blind and partially sighted.

The Walking Race for the totally blind would have been cancelled but for two St. Dunstaners having entered — Charles Stafford and Stan Tutton — as a minimum of four entries is required. The winner of the Bill Harris Challenge Cup was the UK title holder for this distance, Mike Brace,

in a time of 18 min. 26.5 sec., Stan Tutton 2nd, 22 min. 37.1 sec., Danny Flitcroft 3rd, 23 min. 32 sec., and Charles Stafford in 24 min. 35.8 sec.

The Sports were well attended and some 80 competitors took part with a number of young newcomers participating. Mike Brace commented that it was the fourth time that he had won the Bill Harris Cup and that he hoped more young visually handicapped persons would take up race-walking as it was one of the sporting activities least difficult to arrange, where no specialised athletic facilities are required other than safe roads or footpaths for training purposes. He also feels that members of local sports clubs, and in particular the police sports clubs, would be willing to provide escorts. What about some of the new young St. Dunstaners having a go?

CLUB NEWS

BRIGHTON

Bridge

Pairs — July 7th

R. Evans & Mrs. Barker	62.08
A. Dodgson & Mrs. Buller-King	57.91
W. Lethbridge & Mr. Goodlad	57.50
G. Hudson & Miss Stenning	54.16
J. Padley & Mrs. Padley	54.16
W. Phillips & Dr. J. Goodlad	53.33
W. Allen & Mrs. Gaysler	52.92
P. McMillan	
& Mrs V. McPherson	50.00
M. Clements & Mrs. Clements	42.50
R. Pacitti & Mrs. Pacitti	40.41
J. Huk & Mrs. Andrews	39.61
J. Majchrowicz & Miss Sturdy	35.83

Club News — Bowling *continued*

The bowling at both matches was of high standard and was thoroughly enjoyed by all that took part. The setting at Guildford was very attractive as the green was situated in the Castle grounds. The ladies from both Clubs provided delicious refreshments and were thanked on behalf of us all by Bob Osborne.

Our final match for the outdoor season will take place on October 5th at Old Woking.

A. Miller

Entertainment Section

The annual dinner and dance is arranged for November 7th at Butlins, Saltdean. The cost for members will be £7.50, when we hope to see many friends. Please contact Joan Osborne or Bob Cunningham for tickets, or better still come to Wednesday meetings. It is to be hoped that the competitions will be completed by this date.

We look forward to seeing all members after the summer break.

Phyllis O'Kelly

FAMILY NEWS

PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to:

Ian, son of *Mr. and Mrs. W.H. Bradshaw*, of Porthcawl, who passed his examinations in the Royal Navy and joined *H.M.S. Arrow* at the end of July.

Jean Bushnell, daughter of *Mr. and Mrs. A.W. Lockhart*, of Dagenham, on recently passing the 'Stock Exchange Practice' examination, which enables her to become a Member of the Stock Exchange.

Steven, son of *Mr. and Mrs. A. Mitchell*, of Congleton, on passing his Royal College of Music Theory, Grade I examination with flying colours at the first attempt. He plays the organ and is his teacher's youngest pupil — he turns nine in November.

The four young grand-daughters of *Mr. and Mrs. F.T. Morgan*, of Bristol, who are members of the Bristol 'Unicorn' Marching Youth Band which won the title of 'World Champions' in Holland in August. The Band returned home with the World Cup, the World Flag, and a gold medal for playing with distinction. Congratulations too, to Claire, their other grand-daughter, who has just passed her S.R.N. final exams, which means she's now a Staff Nurse.

Mr. Joseph H. Nicol, of Cottingham, on

winning two prizes for his wrought iron work at an exhibition in Leeds. He was awarded first prize for plant brackets shaped like an 'S'; and a second prize for a bedside lamp — both of his own design.

Mr. Michael Norman, in South Africa, on being awarded the Paul Harris Award for his services to Rotary.

Dr. S.J. Sosabowski, of Wimborne, on recently being awarded the Honorary Golden Badge of Merit of the Polish Parachute Regiment Association.

David, son of *Mr. and Mrs. H. Windley*, of Scarborough, on winning the Glasgow marathon this year. It was the first time he had entered for long distance running.

WEDDINGS

Congratulations to:

David, youngest son of *Mrs. P. Booth* and the late *Mr. Peter Booth*, of Wimborne, on his marriage to Joan Marchant on June 8th.

Wendy, daughter of *Mr. and Mrs. D. Groves*, of Thorpe Bay, on her marriage to Peter Swarbrick on August 3rd.

Jonathan, grandson of *Mrs. Anne Higgs*, widow of the late *Mr. E. Higgs* of Guildford, on his marriage to Marie Hannan on June 22nd.

Joanna, daughter of *Mr. and Mrs. R. Lavery*, of Minehead, on her marriage to Anthony King on August 31st.

John, son of *Mr. and Mrs. J. Lynch*, of Selsey, on his marriage to Carol Coleman on July 27th, and to their daughter, Jeannette, who married John Fillary on August 24th.

Mr. E. Ward Rowe, of Blackpool, on his marriage to Edna Whalley on July 9th.

Mr. Robert Stevens, of Orpington, on his marriage to Doris May Stack on August 15th.

RUBY WEDDINGS

Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. J. Higginbottom, of Blaydon-on-Tyne, on the occasion of their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on August 22nd.

Mr. and Mrs. T. Muga, of Hove, who celebrated their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on August 25th.

Mr. and Mrs. A. P. Waters, of Rottingdean, who celebrated their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on August 11th.

GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. G. Nolan, of Great Sutton, on the occasion of their Golden Wedding Anniversary on September 7th.

GRANDCHILDREN

Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. W. Arnold, of East Morton, Keighley, on the birth of their eleventh grandchild, Daniel, born on June 18th to their youngest daughter, Beverley, and her husband, Gary.

Mr. and Mrs. G. Durant, of Goring-by-Sea, on the arrival of their second grand-daughter, Stacey Winifred, born on July 9th to their daughter, Jill, and son-in-law, Colin.

Mrs. E. W. Edwards, widow of the late *Mr. J.E.S. Edwards*, of North Cheam, on the birth of her first grandson, Andrew Robert, born on April 4th to her daughter and son-in-law, Sally and Robert Pullin.

Mrs. L. Filby, widow of the late *Mr. W. Filby*, of Streatham, on the birth of her grand-daughter, Susan Dianne, born on April 11th to her son and daughter-in-law, Keith and Barbara Filby.

Mr. and Mrs. F.A. Hamilton, of Llandegfan, on the birth of their grandson, John Paul, born on June 23rd to their daughter, Jo Anne, and son-in-law, Lawrie.

Mr. and Mrs. F.A. Hamilton, of Menai Bridge, Anglesey, on the birth of their 12th grandchild, Martin Benedict, born on May 3rd to their son and daughter-in-law, Mark and Denise.

Mrs. J. Jensen, widow of the late *Mr. E. Jensen*, of Hillingdon, on the birth of her grand-daughter, Hannah Grace, born on August 12th to her son, Michael, and daughter-in-law, Linda.

Mr. and Mrs. C. McConaghy, of Belfast, who are pleased to announce the birth of their first grandchild, Linda Julie, born on July 11th to their daughter, Barbara, and her husband, Raymond McFarland.

Mr. and Mrs. W. Miller, of Perivale, on the birth of their grand-daughter, Emma Peta, a first child born to their daughter, Valerie, on August 10th.

Mrs. B. Robinson, widow of the late *Mr. G. Robinson*, of Willingdon, on the birth of her second grandson on June 21st.

Mr. and Mrs. A.M. Serdet, of Staines, on the birth of their sixth grandchild, Larissa,

Grandchildren *continued*

born on August 8th to their daughter, Brenda, and her husband, David Hoff.

Mr. and Mrs. C.H. Shallcross, of Farndon, near Chester, on the birth of their grandson, Peter John, born on July 9th to their son, John, and daughter-in-law, Jane.

Mr. and Mrs. D.W. Smith, of Worcester, on the birth of another grandchild, Matthew Thomas, born on June 17th to their daughter, Karen, and her husband, Colin.

Mr. and Mrs. G.A. Stanley, of Gloucester, on the birth of their grandson, Thomas Graham, born on June 19th to their daughter and son-in-law, Susan and Paul Varley who live in Canada.

GREAT GRANDCHILDREN

Congratulations to:

Mrs. A. Devlin, widow of the late *Mr. T. Devlin*, of St. Helens, on the birth of two new great grandchildren, twin girls named Jennifer Carra and Laura Jayne, born on June 17th.

Mrs. A. Muir, widow of the late *Mr. W. Muir*, of Newcastle on Tyne, on the birth of her second great grandchild, Katie.

Mr. and Mrs. G.B. Reed, of Farnham, Surrey, who are proud to announce the birth of

their first great grandchild, a boy born on July 9th to their grand-daughter, Melanie, and her husband, Robert Bamford.

Mrs. C.M. Robins, widow of the late *Mr. P.E. Robins*, of Salisbury, on the birth of her first great grandchild, Ashley Burgun, in June.

Mrs. E. Snook, widow of the late *Mr. A. Snook*, of Bath, on the birth of her second great grandson, Gregory Edward, on July 10th.

DEATHS

We offer sympathy to:

Mr. H.R. Cope, of Brighton, whose mother passed away on July 11th.

Mr. R.J. Goding, of Gosport, whose dear wife, Phyllis Gwendoline, passed away suddenly and unexpectedly in hospital on July 30th, aged 69. We extend our sympathy to their daughters, Patricia and Janet, and their families.

Mrs. D. Hoare, widow of the late *Mr. H. Hoare*, of Gillingham, whose brother, William Bates, passed away in hospital on August 5th.

Mrs. R. Millar, widow of the late *Mr. W. Millar*, of Chessington, whose daughter, Muriel, passed away in April after a long illness.

before entering the Army, and after his discharge and a period of braille and typing training, he continued with his former lifestyle and was a very successful gardener and grew pot plants, flowers and vegetables which were sold locally.

Mrs. Berisford died in 1964, and Mr. Berisford then managed alone for 17 years, with frequent visits from his children and grand-

children. In 1981, he moved permanently to Brighton, where he will be sadly missed by Matron and her staff. He leaves his sons Norman, Frederick and Owen and their families.

A.H. Caton, *Royal Navy*

Alfred Henry Caton, of Harlow, passed away on September 3rd in hospital, aged 88. He had been a St. Dunstaner for only 18 months.

He served as a Signaller in the Royal Navy during World War I having enlisted in 1915 on a 12-year engagement, but following a serious injury to his eye which was excised whilst serving in Turkey, he was discharged in 1920. Following his service in the Royal Navy, Mr. Caton was employed for 30 years by an Oil Company, until retirement.

Over the past few years, Mr. Caton suffered serious health problems. Throughout, he was devotedly cared for by his family and, in particular, by his wife, Ena, to whom he was happily married for over 60 years.

He leaves his widow, son and three daughters, and their families.

S. Firrell, *Royal Sussex Regiment*

Sidney Firrell, of Hastings, passed away in hospital on July 2nd, aged 92, following a long period of ill-health borne with great fortitude. He had joined St. Dunstan's in February 1981.

He served as a Lance Corporal in the Royal Sussex Regiment during the 1st World War and was injured in an explosion in 1916 whilst on active service on the Somme. In earlier years, Mr. Firrell had been a keen bowls player, actively involved in his local club and known to many St. Dunstaners. He also greatly enjoyed attending our Reunions.

He leaves his widow, Yanka, to whom he was married for 45 years and who cared for him devotedly, their daughter, Jeannette, his two sons from a previous marriage and their families.

L. Green, *713 A.W. Co. Royal Engineers*

Leonard Green, of Watford, passed away peacefully at Pearson House on July 16th, aged 78. He had been a St. Dunstaner for 40 years.

'Bluey', as he was affectionately known, enlisted in the Royal Engineers in 1940 and was injured by a mine explosion in Greece in 1944. He was admitted to St. Dunstan's the following year and trained at Church Stretton for industry. He settled at Watford where he worked for 31 years before finally retiring at the age of 70. 'Bluey' was always cheerful and gregarious: he enjoyed his social clubs and took a keen interest in racing. He leaves many friends at Watford and in Brighton, especially Matron and staff at Pearson House.

He was a widower, but leaves his step-grandson, and his wife's cousin who lived with them for many years.

E. Higgs, *Hampshire Regiment*

Edward Higgs, of Guildford, passed away suddenly at home on August 6th, aged 70. He had been a St. Dunstaner for 41 years.

Freddie, as he was affectionately known to many, enlisted in the 2nd Battalion, the Hampshire Regiment in June 1940 and served in Italy. He was wounded by a grenade explosion early in 1944 when he lost one eye and subsequently both his hands were amputated. Fortunately, he was left with some guiding vision and on completion of his training he was employed by Harvey Nichols, Knightsbridge, in their despatch department where he worked from 1945 to 1965. Following his retirement, he moved to Herne Bay and finally in 1979 to Guildford.

Freddie was always cheerful and had a grand sense of humour. He enjoyed attending the annual and countless reunions and in recent years regularly visited Ian Fraser House. He will be greatly missed by his many friends and the staff at St. Dunstan's.

He leaves his widow, Anne, who looked after him devotedly, a son, two daughters and their families.

S. Maruniak, *Polish Resettlement Corps*

Stanislaw Maruniak, of Allerton, Leeds, passed away at his home on August 14th, aged 72. He had been a St. Dunstaner since 1953.

From 1942 until 1945 he was in the Polish Resettlement Corps and whilst on active service in Italy in 1944 suffered serious injuries resulting in the amputation of one leg. Mr. Maruniak bore many years of deteriorating health with remarkable courage and cheerfulness and was cared for devotedly by his wife, Mary. They celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary in 1984.

He leaves his widow, daughter, Krystyna, grandchildren and members of the family.

R.E. Nobbs, *Royal Air Force*

Robert Edmund Nobbs, of Salfords, Surrey, passed away in hospital on July 4th, aged 42. He had been a St. Dunstaner since 1972.

He enlisted in the Royal Air Force at the end of 1960 and was discharged three years later with the rank of Senior Leading Aircraftman, having become the victim of a severely crippling nervous disease. Although confined to a wheelchair and severely disabled, he coped with his disabilities with tremendous courage and cheerfulness, sustained in no small measure by the devoted care and attention of his

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.

F.J. Berisford, *West Yorkshire Regiment*

Frederick James Berisford passed away at Pearson House on June 24th, aged 86, after having been unwell for some months.

Mr. Berisford joined St. Dunstan's in May 1938, after having lost his sight and suffered damage to his lungs when he was gassed while serving as a Private with the West Yorkshire Regiment in 1919. He had worked on a farm

In Memory *continued*

wife, Priscilla, and his deeply religious faith.

In earlier years, Robert Nobbs had been a prolific writer of children's stories, and up to comparatively recently attended our reunions, the Royal Tournament, a 'Not Forgotten' garden party at Buckingham Palace and several visits to the Lee-on-Solent Camp. He was also greatly interested in tape recording. Four years ago, he wrote a 'Testimony of Faith' which was published and printed in braille by the Torch Trust for the Blind under the title, 'A Higher Plane.'

In 1983, accompanied by his wife, he flew to India, visiting missionary friends living in the hills north of Delhi. This involved a 12-hour plane journey followed by a six-hour taxi drive. Whilst there, a retired Air Vice-Marshal of the Indian Air Force who had read his book especially made the long trip to meet him, bringing with him a cake made in the form of this publication.

Recently, Mr. Nobbs spent periods at Pearson House and visited Ian Fraser House where he enjoyed the company of his fellow St. Dunstaners. His bravery and zest for living will long be remembered by all who knew him, in particular Matron Goodwin and all the staff at both our Homes.

He leaves his widow, Priscilla, with whom he spent 12 happy years.

E.E.H. Ould, *Royal Army Service Corps*

Eric Ernest Henry Ould, of Southwick, passed away at Pearson House on July 8th, aged 73. He had been a St. Dunstaner for nine years.

Mr. Ould enlisted in the Army as a driver in 1940 and served in North Africa where he was hospitalised. He became a St. Dunstaner in 1976 and was a regular visitor to Ian Fraser House thereafter. On his retirement he preferred to remain active and attended local craft sessions as well as being a member of an entertainment group. He also enjoyed playing bowls at the King Alfred's with his fellow St. Dunstaners. Sadly, his last years were dogged by ill health which curtailed his activities. He will be greatly missed by his many friends and the staff at St. Dunstan's.

He leaves his wife, Doris, their three children, and members of the family.

L. Pycroft, *Middlesex and Royal West Kent Regiments*

Leslie Pycroft passed away on August 29th in Pearson House, where he had been a permanent resident for the past two years. He was a widower, aged 87, and became a St. Dunstaner in June 1983.

Mr. Pycroft enlisted as a Private on his 19th birthday. Whilst on active service during the Battle of Lys in the 1st World War, he suffered serious injuries to his face and body, including the loss of his right eye. Despite his disabilities, Mr. Pycroft was able to work subsequently as a coach trimmer on the Southern Railway until retirement age.

He will be greatly missed by Matron Goodwin and all members of the staff at Pearson House and particularly those who nursed him during the past year.

He leaves his son, Mr. L.N. Pycroft and his family.

G.W. Viner, *South Wales Borderers*

George Walter Viner, of Bristol, passed away on August 27th, aged 87. He had been a St. Dunstaner since November 1977.

He enlisted in the South Wales Borderers at the onset of the 1st War when he was 16, and rose to the rank of Sergeant Major. Whilst on active service in Ypres, he was wounded in the head but, being unaware that he had been blinded in one eye, continued in battle and, in fact, with his Army service until the end of the war without reporting it.

Sadly, his wife, Florence, to whom he had been happily married for 56 years, died in September 1983. From that time he was devotedly cared for by all members of his close-knit family.

He leaves his two daughters, Mrs. June Miles and Mrs. Audrey Brady and their families.

W.C. Wood, *Royal Army Ordnance Corps*

William Cyrillon Wood, of Petersfield, passed away in hospital on July 7th, aged 68. He had been a St. Dunstaner for 40 years.

Cyril Wood enlisted in the Army in 1942 and was admitted to St. Dunstan's in 1946. He trained as a shopkeeper and ran a successful business in Southsea until 1961 when he retired on medical grounds. He moved to Petersfield and once his health had improved retrained as a telephonist. His second career as a St. Dunstaner was equally successful and he finally retired from Barclays in Chichester in 1977. He had always been a keen gardener and added rugmaking, carpentry and toymaking to his retirement hobbies. St. Dunstaners will remember that he was a member of the party which climbed Cader Idris in 1979, and his description of the descent. In 1984 he became gravely ill but during a slight remission he was able to visit Ian Fraser House for the last time in June this year.

He leaves his widow, Marian, who looked after him devotedly during his illness, and their son and daughter.