

**St Dunstons  
Review  
May 1986**







## From the Chairman

It is with the greatest regret that I have to tell you that our President, Colonel Sir Michael Ansell, has decided to retire. His personal message is on the opposite page and puts the position far better than any words of mine. I will simply add how much we shall miss him — and how much we shall continue to enjoy keeping in touch.

For twenty-eight years Colonel Mike has served St. Dunstan's as a Member of the Council. He joined in 1958 as a St. Dunstaner who had become a national figure as the architect of the enormous success the sport of show-jumping has enjoyed in post-war years. When he retired from active organisation of the Horse of the Year Show in 1975, he became Vice-Chairman of St. Dunstan's and two years later succeeded the late Sir Neville Pearson as our President. Through all this time he has led St. Dunstaners by his own example of the way energy, initiative and sheer dogged persistence can overcome the handicap of blindness.

But it is best for us to look ahead, not astern, and it is with the greatest pleasure that I tell you that another St. Dunstaner, Colin Beaumont-Edmonds, has been unanimously elected by the Council as the new President. I am sure I speak for us all in wishing him a long, happy and successful commission.

*Henry Leach*

# St Dunstans Review

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## Au Revoir but not Goodbye



Colonel  
Sir Michael Ansell  
writes:

It has been an honour and always a pleasure to have tried to serve St. Dunstan's as President and in a small way perhaps even to give back something that the Organisation and Staff have given to me. Any praise of mine for the Staff cannot be too high — you all know as well as I do, from my earliest days of training in the late 1940's, that they are totally dedicated, invariably patient and apparently able to answer anything, given the question.

I am not saying farewell, although I am retiring as President, as we all have the unparalleled care of St. Dunstans over us all the time. It is simply that I am now 81 and attending meetings is becoming a major undertaking and I know that I should hand over to someone considerably younger.

We shall certainly meet again reunions, so this is not goodbye, but au revoir.

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A handshake that says 'good luck' from Colonel Sir Mike Ansell to Colin Beaumont-Edmonds, his successor as President of St. Dunstan's.





## St. Dunstan's new President

### Colin Beaumont-Edmonds talks to David Castleton

For Colin Beaumont-Edmonds his election by the Council to the Presidency of St. Dunstan's is the culmination of a career of service which he has pursued since he was blinded in action in 1943.

Born in Streatham, London, in 1922 and educated at Marlborough College, he was planning to follow his father into a ship-broking business. Instead, in December, 1940, when he was just 18, he volunteered into the Young Soldiers' Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment. He was selected for cadet training and commissioned into the 2nd/5th Queen's Royal Regiment, West Surreys, in July, 1942.

His service abroad lasted a year and a day and took him to Tunisia by a circuitous route via Freetown, Cape Town, Bombay, Basrah, Baghdad, Kirkuk, along the coast of North Africa to catch up, finally, with the Eighth Army, held up for the last time in the North African campaign. He was wounded at Enfidaville only three weeks before the end of that campaign in an action for which he was awarded the Military Cross.

He describes it as an incident that, 'Would have appeared on the reports, probably, as "All was fairly quiet except for patrol activity". Because it was an Italian

patrol and it just got where it ought not to be. I was the front part of a company position with a small ridge to hold and I caught sight of the little Italian heads popping over the ridge, so promptly had to launch a counter-attack. With the help of another platoon we got rid of them. It was from the covering fire of the German mortars that a bit of metal came that just blinded me.'

Colin Beaumont-Edmonds came back to England and St. Dunstan's, Church Stretton, and the possibility of a job with I.C.I. As he was not yet 21, he was advised to go to university and after a year at Church Stretton he went to Magdalen College, Oxford, for a two-year course reading Philosophy, Political Science and Economics. 'I think the main problem was getting to learn by listening. In those days there was no tape-recorder so, whereas my colleagues in college were sitting up late at night, I had to work when I could get a reader. It is a strange coincidence the reader they found for me in the mornings for an hour-and-a-half was a Mrs. Dunstan!'

In the evenings his studies were brightened by the girls of Somerville College who undertook to provide a reader daily. 'Naturally it was much more fun for us all

having them come to read their subject to a blind person.'

'When I was blinded I did not know what the future had in store and I didn't know what a blind person could do. This was illustrated in quite a different way at Oxford when someone came in and asked me if I would row in the eight. I said I could not because I could not see but the chap said, "Well, you could if you were the stroke." So I became the stroke of the third Magdalen eight. So as to get the exercise in the morning I first of all used the Radio Doctor's exercises. Then a couple of the crew said, "We'll take you out for a run round the water walks at Magdalen". I had one on my left and one on my right side and we trotted round so I was able to take my exercise in the same way as they did.' The training must have paid dividends for the Magdalen third eight bumped and went one place up.

#### College Life

Although he was older than the average student he found no difficulty in fitting in to college life: 'There was plenty going on and there were the various societies. I was secretary to a social studies group'. Leaving Oxford with a Diploma, he went straight into the Personnel Department of I.C.I. (Metals Division), Birmingham. 'The staff were very helpful but they never let me do anything on my own. Luckily, when the person in the office had a day off, I got permission to run the job for one day without him and that went sufficiently well that, when he had his fortnight's holiday, they still left me doing it and eventually gave me a job where I was interviewing men and women for employment in a factory where 8,000 people were making everything from zip-fasteners to heavy brass and sheet metal.'

In 1963 he took on reception work looking after visitors to the factory, arranging tours of departments to suit the varying requirements of schoolchildren, engineers and others — 'All the time during my stay there I helped the Education and Training Department by lecturing, first of all on selection of personnel, then on various aspects of the factory and finally on the pre-retirement course.'

On joining I.C.I. in 1947, he lived alone in digs in Sutton Coldfield and realised that if he wanted to meet other young people and have a social life he would have to go out and get involved in some organisation. 'As a blind person you can't just wander out so I had to join something. The only respectable organisation to my way of thinking then was the Young Conservatives.'

It was through his work with the Young Conservatives that he met Joyce, his wife. Joyce belonged to the Edgbaston branch on the other side of Birmingham and the two branches arranged a debate. Joyce was in charge of arrangements at her end and Colin Beaumont-Edmonds at Sutton Coldfield.

After their marriage in 1950, they settled in Sutton Coldfield which was convenient for his journey to work. 'Soon after that I left the Young Conservatives and, almost immediately, someone knocked on the door and asked would I stand for the Council as a local ward Conservative. Much to my surprise the election succeeded. It was a three-cornered fight: Conservative, Independent and Labour. I felt pleased because I was disabled and I had only been seven years in the area.'

#### A Good Win

It was a good win because the Independent candidate was an erstwhile Conservative, locally born and bred, whose business was in the centre of the ward. He was running as an Independent because he refused to be interviewed by the Committee for selection as Conservative candidate.

So began a career of 20 years as Councillor. 'I served right up to the time I left Sutton Coldfield, which coincided with the reorganisation of local government in 1974 when the borough was absorbed into Birmingham. For ten of those years I was an Alderman.'

In 1952 came a request to help the Scout Movement. 'The person working with me was District Commissioner and he suggested that I should be Secretary to the Sutton Coldfield Scouts. With a little persuasion I accepted and that opened up a





Mayor and Mayoress of Sutton Coldfield.

completely new world for me. I found myself Secretary at the same time as the Scouts were arranging their Golden Jubilee Jamboree in Sutton Coldfield Park and, as I was also on the Council, I saw it from both sides.

It was a very busy time and it ended with a wonderful blessing. The Queen opened the Jamboree and somebody had to present a bouquet. We always took our four year-old-daughter around with us and all the Members of the Council knew her. So when it came to select a young lady to present the bouquet to Her Majesty as she came into the Council Chamber it was Felicia.'

In 1964 he was made Mayor and in a busy year, with over 500 engagements, made local history by managing to visit all the industrial firms in Sutton Coldfield, then numbering 36. Joyce also made a point of visiting all the health clinics. Visits to schools were happy occasions. One centre in particular was memorable, Joyce

recalls. 'We did quite a lot with handicapped people and particularly handicapped children. A nursery for under-fives had been started to give the mothers a break and they were meeting under very difficult conditions in a church hall. Since then they have gone on to do marvellous things, with a wonderful nursery and a short-stay home. We still get invited back because we were both there to start it, and we're going back for their 25th Anniversary, this May.'

With a Council of 30 Councillors and 10 Aldermen, the most demanding part of being Mayor was chairing the monthly meeting, 'When you had to keep tabs on 39 people, observe standing orders and make sure nobody stepped out of line. We made the point early on that they must respect the position and realise that I had the problem of not being able to spot them. Nevertheless, one soon knew who were the awkward ones. If the voices started at once, well, I knew their voices

well enough to select one. But if you let your mind go for a moment, you might have missed a trick and those Council Meetings used to last — the short ones would be two hours and they might go on to four.'

Braille was his tool for agendas and speech notes, 'I was using braille continually and the same when it came to reading the lesson in Church. I shall always remember the first Mayoral Sunday. When, in May and in a heavy robe, feeling nervous, I found a perspiring hand didn't help one to read braille! So it was partly recitation but I had to keep mind linked with finger, otherwise I would forget what to read next!'

After his Mayoral year Colin Beaumont-Edmonds was made an Alderman, he also took on the Chairmanship of the Sutton Coldfield Conservative Division for three years and followed that by becoming, probably, the first blind District Commissioner in the Scout Movement, a post he held until he and Joyce left Sutton Coldfield in 1974.

That year they moved to Folkestone — a move that meant the sacrifice of the busy lives they had made for themselves in Sutton Coldfield. To quote Joyce, 'We very seldom had an evening at home and usually Sunday nights were spent reading all the minutes. There were certain functions that I used to go to because spouses were invited. We had very happy times.'

Ageing parents in Folkestone needed support, 'So we decided that if I could find a job we'd move. I re-trained at Pearson House. Ian Fraser House was shut then for rebuilding. I re-trained as a telephonist and found a job with NatWest in Canterbury. Three years later both my parents had passed away and a new branch of NatWest opened up in Folkestone so I was now able to have a job in Folkestone which I held until I retired last November.'

Once again the Scout Movement and the Conservative Party drew him and he became Chairman of the Committee appointing Scout Leaders in the Folkestone area and Ward Secretary for the Conservatives. With Joyce he joined the Decorative and Fine Arts Society in Folkestone and became Programme Secretary and then Chairman.



Joyce Beaumont-Edmonds.

Now in retirement the Beaumont-Edmonds are settled in Sidmouth. 'When I first came here I thought I would like to know about the local talking newspaper and I was told they tried to get one started last year but with no success. So I have been trying to link people up together. I've had words with the President of Lions, who are prepared to find teams to read. We have the assurance of the Editor of the Sidmouth Herald that he's going to give us all the publicity required and help by getting the copy early to the readers. The next thing is that the Secretary of the Devon County Association for the Blind is going to visit the Lions to discuss the mechanics. I have in the back of my mind following the example of Kent. There, they not only have a talking newspaper but a weekly magazine with articles read from local magazines. I feel that can be developed. But where we go after that — I somehow can't feel that we shall just remain doing nothing.'

When this interview took place and Colin Beaumont-Edmonds made that last remark, the announcement of his election as President had not been made. His new role will demand a great deal of his undoubted energy and enthusiasm as well as his experience of service in varied fields. One thing is certain — with Joyce's support he will bring to his work for St. Dunstan's 100% dedication.



## AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY'S DINNER AND DANCE

At the next meeting of St. Dunstan's Amateur Radio Society, on June 14th, a dinner/dance will be held. The proposal at the moment, is to have the dinner in the Winter Garden on Saturday evening, followed by a dance in the annexe.

Bookings for this event are to be made in the usual manner through Mrs. T. Coyne at London Headquarters.

*A. W. Lockhart*

## DERBY REMINDER

Do remember to apply for Derby Sweepstake tickets. The closing date is Friday, May 16th. The tickets are 20p each. Don't miss the deadline!

## TROOPING THE COLOUR

It is anticipated that we may be allocated tickets again this year for the Trooping the Colour on Saturday, June 14th in the morning and the Private View of the Royal Tournament on Wednesday, July 9th in the afternoon.

Any St. Dunstaners who would like to apply for tickets should contact Mrs. Tina Coyne at HQ by Tuesday, May 27th.

## HARROGATE BRIDGE WEEK

**September 6th to 13th**

The above date has now been confirmed for the Harrogate Bridge Week. Will all Bridge members wishing to participate, whether they are regular members or first timers, please contact Ian Dickson at HQ who will explain costs. In the past, this has been a most enjoyable week, both bridge-wise and social-wise. Why not take part? Bring your wives and escorts.

*Reg Goding, Secretary*

## HICCUP

Sober wine maker seeks home for heating band, filter and bottle corker. Please contact Ray Hazan at HQ. No charge, but payment in kind always welcome.

## OBITUARY

We are sorry to report the death, on March 13th, of Mr. Bezly Thorne, of Pulborough. He was our Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon in the Brighton area from 1958 until 1977, and was made a Governor of St. Dunstan's in 1968. He will be remembered as a very patient and kind man by St. Dunstaners who knew him.

## SIGHTSEEING GUIDE FOR BLIND PEOPLE

The National Trust has issued their 1986 edition of 'Facilities for Disabled and Visually Handicapped Visitors'. This useful little booklet lists places of historic interest or natural beauty throughout England, and describes the facilities available there.

The majority of places recommended as interesting for visually handicapped people offer a self-guide tape and/or braille guide so you can find your way easily, be it around gardens filled with fragrant plants, flowing streams and waterfalls, or along a nature trail. Guided walks for parties of people can also be organised at many places. Some places have special facilities on offer, such as free tandem cycling, or scale models and exhibits that can be touched. These booklets are available from the Public Relations Department, HQ, free of charge.

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S POSTBAG

In the March *Review* we published Bert Wood's letter to the Chairman gratefully acknowledging the winter fuel grant. Here is another letter that the Chairman received:

**From Mrs. F. E. Aldridge, Lancing**

My grateful thanks for the cheque received to help with the fuel bills. I often feel very alone with no close family and then I realise how lucky I am to belong to the Big Family of St. Dunstan's. Thanking you once again.



## STEWART HARRIS APPOINTED NEW LEADER

Congratulations to Stewart Harris, of Andover, who recently was appointed Chief Executive and Director of Flare (1980) Ltd.

St. Dunstaners might remember a 'Ways of Life' article in the May 1980 *Review* which relates Mr. Harris' extensive experience gained in the oil industry, now adding up to 40 years. Among the many offices he has held over the years, he has been a member of the Council of the Institute of Petroleum and Chairman of its London branch. Within his own general consultancy he became Chief Executive and Secretary of the Avia Group in the UK, and from 1981 to 1984 was Managing Director of Pace Petroleum Ltd.

The Flare Group has 300 petrol stations, 70 road tankers, 21 fuel storage depots and over 150 employees. Talking about his new job, Stewart says, 'The Group has all the qualities and talents for success. Its targets must now be concentration and effort. Based upon my experience I know that a quickening of the pulse of activity and a general uplift in enthusiasm will produce an improvement in volume of sales.'

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**From Mrs. Claire Burt, Newcastle-under-Lyme**

St. Dunstaners and friends will learn with regret of the loss of my husband, Carl Burt. Carl died on March 8th in the North Staffs Hospital, where he had been admitted that morning.

Funeral Directors Samuel Segley & Sons, Leek, relieved me of much strain by looking after the funeral responsibilities. The Reverend Burton conducted a beautiful funeral service at St. Lukes Church, and afterwards Carl was buried beside his parents and brothers in the family grave at Leek Cemetery.

Finally the mourners, Carl's sister and family and I were invited to sit down to refreshments at Segleys premises, thus relieving me of yet another responsibility after my sad loss. Although I had requested donations to the local blind society rather than flowers, I shall never forget the beautiful wreath of poppies from St. Dunstan's and the sprays that were sent that day.

**From Mr. Trevor Tatchell, Cardiff**

I have just read *The Covenant* by James Michener (Cassette No. 5704, recorded November 1985) which is on five cassettes and found it to be most fascinating. It is beautifully written and gives a complete history of South Africa from the time of the early settlers to the present day.

I feel sure that those of us who went to South Africa during the war would find this book to be of great interest and as my elder daughter and her family are in South Africa at present I found the book most absorbing. It is the type of book which you can't put down.

As many of you may know it is possible for any member of the library to recommend a book for recording as the Sound Recording Board welcome suggestions.

**Editor's note:** Trevor is referring to the Talking Book Library.





## TENTH ANNIVERSARY A.G.M. St. Dunstan's Amateur Radio Society

*By Alf Lockhart*

March 14th saw the start of the Radio Ham weekend at Ian Fraser House. This year marked the tenth anniversary of the founding of St. Dunstan's Amateur Radio Society, so there was an atmosphere of celebration and achievement. Ten years, during which time thousands of contacts have been made, and hundreds of QSL cards have been received, many of which are now adorning the walls of the new Radio Shack.

The Radio Shack is now fully operational, with a brand new array of aerials for both the HF and VHF bands. These aerials have all been given some measure of protection from the corrosive action of the salt air, by paint and the provision of stainless steel fittings. Although rather expensive, these protective measures are absolutely vital if the equipment is to last

for any reasonable length of time.

At the A.G.M. on Saturday, we were sorry to hear that Bill Shea had become unwell and was likely to need hospital treatment, also that Bob Davis has had a long spell of ill-health and was unable to attend the meeting. We send our best wishes to them both, and hope they make a speedy and complete recovery. During this meeting we were told the winner of the G3 MOW Trophy. It had been decided by ballot that the award should go to Bill Stephens G3 TFK, who is Controller of a daily net which, although not a St. Dunstan's net, has many St. Dunstaners participating in it, and Bill G3 TFK has many friends in St. Dunstan's ARS. If any members are interested in joining this net, the details are as follows: it usually opens up at 09.20 to 09.30 hours on the 80-metre

band 3.793 MHz, and closes down about three quarters of an hour later, at about 10.00 or 10.15 hours. All members will be very welcome to join. When Bill G3 TFK is not available, the control of the net is usually taken over by John Proctor G3 JFP.

During this meeting we also learned that the management of the QSL cards and the up-keep of the log book had been taken over by our very good friend and helper, Alf Lee G4 DQS. Thanks very much Alf, you have once more solved one of our major problems.

### New Club Officials

At the election of club officials, the Chairman, Peter Jones, expressed a desire to stand down as Chairman, having held the position for four years. Ted John, who has been Secretary for the whole ten years of the club's existence, also thought that a change of Secretary would be a good thing. This meant rather an upheaval as Bob Davis had also resigned from the Committee because of his continuing ill health. The results of the elections are as follows: Chairman — Ted John G3 SEJ; Hon. Sec. — Alf Lockhart SWL; and Committee Members — Jim Blake GO BUQ, George Cole G4 AWI and Tom Hart G4 KPF. The retiring members were given a vote of thanks for the extremely good work done by them during their term in office and the best wishes of the club were given to the new club officials. The meeting was then brought to a close and we went to prepare for the Tenth Anniversary lunch.

### Guests

The Guest of Honour at lunch was Major General Sir John Anderson, K.B.E., who was accompanied by the charming Lady Anderson. Sir John, who is an expert in the field of communications and electronics, was at one period in his career responsible for the entire NATO communications system. Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Leach, G.C.B., represented both St. Dunstan's and St. Dunstan's ARS. Mr. and Mrs. Ion Garnett-Orme headed an impressive list of guests and staff from both the London headquarters and Brighton. From amateur radio, we had

guests representing the various radio societies of all the Armed Forces as well as many others from local radio societies, who are so helpful in enabling St. Dunstaners to pursue their hobby.

### Presentations

We sat down to a marvellous meal. To sit down with so many friends, enjoying good food and plenty to drink is a most satisfying experience, and everybody who was present had a wonderful time. St. Dunstan's ARS received two presentations, one from RAFARS and one from the Royal Sigs. ARS. The RAFARS gave us a wall plaque, similar to the plaques that are in the bar at IFH, to display on the wall of our shack. The Signals presented us with a free-standing shield, a magnificent piece of work, which we will use as a trophy. We shall have to look very carefully indeed, at the provisions for the award of this trophy. Then came the time to make the award of the G3 MOW Trophy. The winner, Bill Stephens G3 TFK, was unable to be at the lunch, so the trophy was accepted, on his behalf, by John Proctor G3 JFP. After we had finished this most excellent lunch, we went to the annexe to hear Sir John Anderson give a talk. Sir John gave a most interesting and entertaining talk on the NATO Communications. This talk was recorded, and will probably be obtainable from the tape library in due course.

Saturday evening found many of the members in the Radio Shack, making themselves familiar with the bits and pieces which had been stored in boxes for the last two years. We also settled down to some operating. Alan Reynolds G3 VRI made several contacts on the two metre rig, whilst other members had a bash on the key on 80 metres. While some were still unpacking on Sunday morning, George Cole made several contacts on C/W. George, listening to Morse Code, is akin to a music-lover listening to Beethoven or Mozart. We locked up at lunchtime having had a most pleasant weekend, and happy in the knowledge that any members visiting Ian Fraser House on holiday or during training periods, will be able to make full use of the equipment in the Radio Shack once again.





Tony Boardman with Stuart Wilkinson.

## TONY BOARDMAN SAYS 'DIAL A RIDE'

Our St. Dunstaner, Tony Boardman, who was recently appointed to the Management Committee of the Kingston, Richmond and Merton Dial a Ride Scheme, urges fellow St. Dunstaners to take advantage of the scheme not only to solve their own transport problems but to get involved in helping their local organisation.

With the encouragement of the 'late' GLC all London Boroughs or groups of Boroughs are now served. The aim is to provide door to door transport for disabled people at fares comparable to local bus services. Fees are 30p for a distance of up to 5 miles, 50p for up to 10 miles, and £1 for over 10 miles.

Stuart Wilkinson, Co-ordinator of Kingston, Richmond and Merton's six vehicle fleet of specially adapted minibuses welcomes Tony to the Committee. 'He is a vociferous member,' he joked, 'and we need someone like that — we are always looking for more channels of communication with disabled people.'

Tony is already in touch with the local Talking Newspaper for the Blind and has contacts with the local blind organisation.

He will draw from his past experience as a Councillor in the Borough of Ealing when, among other things, he was a Member of the Welfare Committee.

The Kingston, Richmond and Merton Scheme has a list of some 2,800 registered members who are bona fide disabled people. They can telephone at any time, preferably giving at least two days notice, to ask for transport for social visits, shopping, entertainment, any journey for which the ambulance service is not available. The service covers the three boroughs and roughly two miles outside the boundaries but it also covers all the London railway termini, theatres and central shopping areas. There is a special service to London Airport and to East Croydon for the rail link to Gatwick.

Letters from satisfied clients show how much the service is appreciated: 'They (the drivers and office staff) are all so helpful. I now go to places I haven't been for years'; 'Prompt timekeeping, courtesy and helpfulness from all staff. It's a wonderful service you give to us.'

The service is a professional one, funded by grants and with the passing of the GLC, finance will be taken over by London Regional Transport. Stuart Wilkinson is awaiting charity registration and when this is through, plans to fund-raise locally. Tony Boardman looks forward to lending a further hand in this area. We wish him and his colleagues every success in very worthwhile work.

## BOOK ADDITIONS TO CASSETTE LIBRARY

A St. Dunstaner who has written and published two books has donated the tape versions to our library for any St. Dunstaners interested. He writes under the name of 'Domingo Sweetman' for the first, and 'Gypsy Goldpiece' for the other.

The first book is a rather unusual science fiction called *The Tasks of Gavin Lee* in which Gavin and Steven, two students, embark on a strange interplanetary journey, exploring other worlds and performing a special mission. Their task is to lead a primitive race from an unnamed

planet to safety, for these aborigines are to be the forerunners of a new world.  
Ref G34 (4 × C90).

The second book is *Gonaloo — Tell Mom I Love Her*. After tragedy strikes a young successful American family, a sudden mysterious desire to visit Ireland leads on to a journey of magical fantasy in which they encounter the unlikely inhabitants of the inn at Gonaloo.

Ref G35 (3 × C90).

## STANDARD ENGLISH BRAILLE

Some St. Dunstaners may not be aware that there are proposals for change to Grade Two of the Standard English Braille System. A series of conferences is currently being staged in order that all with an interest in the System may meet to discuss the proposals. Conferences have already taken place at: Leamington Spa, Glasgow, Manchester, Leeds, London, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Blackpool, Leicester and Cardiff.

A further conference will be held at Taunton on 10th May (venue on request from Customer Liaison, RNIB, 338-346 Goswell Road, London EC1V 7JE, Tel 01-278 9615 24-hour) and other conferences may be held during forthcoming months.

A thermoform leaflet, designed to be used as a basis for discussion at the conferences, is available on request from Customer Liaison.

The proposals are radical in their nature and it is important that as many people with an interest in the System should have the opportunity to input their opinions to the Braille Authority of the United Kingdom where the eventual decisions regarding the proposals will be made. This may be achieved at the conferences or, alternatively, I will be pleased to receive correspondence from St. Dunstaners and represent any opinions on the Authority. T. Bullingham, Technical Officer, Grampian Society for the Blind, 20 Bon-Accord Square, Aberdeen, AB1 2DJ (Tel 0224/582647).

**Editor's Note:** Mr. T. Bullingham has been appointed to represent St. Dunstan's on the Braille Authority of the United Kingdom.

## ST. DUNSTAN'S COMPUTER PROGRAMS

For over two years now, Peter Jones has been evaluating for St. Dunstan's the BBC Acorn computer with speech output for use by the blind. His aim has been to see how the system could be used in a 'retirement' situation keeping costs to a minimum. He has spent much time collaborating with friends, scientists, programmers and other users. Like most other computer users, he has sought to share his knowledge and experience with others. This has culminated in a specially written series of software programs which Peter is making available to any interested party. He has written several of the programs himself.

The package is on disk and is backed up with a leaflet and cassette instructions. It contains the following main headings:

### a. Text 32. b. Text 128.

These are simple text editing programs for beginners with the BBC model B or B-Plus.

### c. Choice.

Re-runs the program on the disk.

### d. Diary.

This contains all the facilities for maintaining appointments. Instructions are contained in the program.

### e. Keytalk.

This has been written to help the beginner get to know the keyboard and its characters.

### f. Data File.

This operates like a card index system. Information is stored under a key word, and retrieved by using the same word at any time. Instructions available on cassette.

### g. Teletext Reader.

This is used with the adaptor to read Cee-fax and Oracle from a TV set. Operating instructions are in the program.

### h. Further details of the programs.

### i. Information about the disk.

For further information, please contact Peter at 69, Prospect Road, Bradway, Sheffield, S17 4JB. Tel: 0742-369100. The programs are both free of charge to St. Dunstaners, and are free of copyright.



# BOOKS THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT

## The National Library for the Blind

*Allan Leach, the Director-General talks to  
Ray Hazan*

*Photographs by Lois Stringer and the Library*

In 1982 books 'talked', thanks to the Kurzweil Reading Machine (KRM). In 1882, the founding year of the National Library for the Blind, they went 'bump', or were brailled. There are many blind people who do not want to listen to either the talking book or the KRM. There are those who feel they cannot assimilate information unless the physical act of reading is involved. Locating a place on a tape may be time consuming. Talking Book machines are not portable. There are strong reasons, therefore, for the existence of the braille book for the present.

The National Library is concerned with providing books in all media which will help the visually handicapped, except tape. Nor do they just provide books in braille, moon or in large print, they transcribe and actually make the books, as we shall see.

There are three main producers of braille books in the UK: the RNIB, the Scottish Braille Press and the National Library. 'I am very concerned,' said Director General, Allan Leach, 'that we cut out as much duplication as possible'. This means that both nationally and internationally producers are exchanging lists of intended transcriptions. This is done internationally through the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), within which, Allan Leach chairs the Libraries for the Blind section. Braille books are bought and sold throughout the English speaking library world. There is no demarkation line between the UK producers as to subject areas covered, but the Scottish Braille Press mainly produces popular best sellers, and the RNIB those

books needed to be produced in volume, as they have volume capacity. Importantly, the Scottish Braille and NLB computer systems are compatible so that master tapes or discs can be exchanged.

To quote from the history of the National Library: 'The Lending Library for the Blind began its service to readers on Monday, 9th October, 1882. The Library was a private charitable venture by Miss Martha Arnold, blind herself since childhood. It was accommodated in a small room in her house in South Hampstead. Miss Arnold ran the Library with the help of a few friends. Miss Arnold intended that the Library should "bring solace and light", and that it "should help to raise the literary standards of the blind". More stress was probably laid on the first objective. The early catalogue suggests that the book titles chosen for stock were frequently more significant for their evangelical fervour and/or the moral tone than for their literary standard. There were no more than 50 volumes on the shelves when the Library opened its doors to its first registered readers, ten in number. The Library opened at first on Monday afternoons to the blind who were in a position to call. Parcels of books were sent off to "country members" on the first and third Mondays of each month. Volumes were issued for four weeks each; readers who consistently returned them late were suitably admonished!

'The annual subscription for borrowers was 4 shillings and 4 pence; 1 penny per week. Those in better circumstances were



*The library holds a third of a million volumes. Here an assistant finds books requested by readers, ready for dispatch.*

expected to pay half a guinea. The Library spent £58 in its first year of service, the readers themselves contributing £10 of this. Two grants, amounting to £30 were made by Gardner's Trust for the Blind, the remaining sum coming from subscriptions and donations from friends and sympathisers. Gardner's Trust, assuredly, has a strong claim to the role of co-founder of the National Library for the Blind.

'During the Library's first five years of existence, the number of readers increased to about 100, and the stock to about 750 volumes. Although some of the braille had been purchased, much had been hand transcribed by voluntary workers. Miss Arnold transcribed books herself, and taught friends to write braille, thus establishing a tradition of voluntary service, which has meant much to the Library over the whole period of its existence. By 1895, the Library was serving 300 readers. Some 1,500 boxes and hampers were being sent out each year. Miss Arnold died in April, 1898.

'By 1918, the annual expenditure of the Library had risen to £6,000, and the

annual circulation of volumes to nearly 100,000. Approximately 80 public libraries were receiving regular consignments of books. A northern branch was established in Manchester, thanks to a donation from the Carnegie Trust. In the early 20's, the Library's London branch moved into newly acquired premises in Westminster. In 1920 in London, and in 1922 in Manchester, the famous braille reading competitions were set up.'

Lord Normanby, a well known figure to St. Dunstan's took over the Chairmanship in 1946. He resigned in 1977, becoming the Library's President.

In the early 70's, inflation bit deeply into the Library's funding, and drastic measures were required. An amalgamation of the two branches was deemed to be the way ahead. In 1977, the present premises, a former warehouse, in Bredbury, Stockport, were purchased. By 1978, both branches were established there. The warehouse is on one floor only, which makes the administration much easier. The bulk of the space is taken up with the 20,000 metres of shelving.





The day's incoming mail is unloaded. This averages 1,000 volumes, almost entirely of braille, balanced by a similar number dispatched.

The National Library is an independent organisation. Of its £420,000 annual budget, 10% of its income is from government and local authority subscriptions, a similar amount from public donations, 25% from the unified collection schemes, and 50% from investment income. The latter is gained as a result of the sale of the London section of the Library. Policy is formulated by a Council, and the day to day running administered by its Director-General.

The Library is divided into two distinct halves; the production side, and the circulation half. There are some 61 employees in the building, of whom 26 are involved with circulation. A further 46 are paid home workers, and some 120 voluntary workers also work from their homes. The Library is a major employer of blind people. What became obvious very early on whilst touring the Library, was the relaxed atmosphere together with a great sense of industry and dedication. A single dot out of place in the braille code can alter the whole meaning; accuracy is the key word.

In view of the accuracy required, there-

fore, the production of a book in braille must be necessarily a labour intensive task. Book lists are distributed to department heads who make a selection. Copyright is seldom refused by publishers. It generally takes a month to clear copyright, and the Library then has permission to produce up to 50 copies for use world wide. The print copy is then marked up with various instructions for the transcribers. Following this it is then sent to one of the 120 volunteers who will produce the braille on the trusty old Stainsby writers in their own homes. This is a job that can last several months. Volunteers come from all walks of life and have all done the RNIB braille correspondence course run by the Library. In addition, they must learn some of the procedures specially relevant to the Library. This course will take a minimum of nine or ten months.

The braille must then be proof read, mainly by full-time blind proof-readers working in the Library, although some readers work from home. They will pro-

duce a correction list. Correcting the original is a skilled art. The mistake is first 'rubbed out' by smoothing the dots down. A solution is then applied to the manilla paper which re-tightens the fibres so leaving a smooth surface almost undetectable from the original. A special, single line braille hand frame is used to then rewrite the word. The frame is special in that it has one extra cell within the half line so that an extra braille cell can be 'squeezed' in if necessary. If extra copies of the book are required, then the original braille goes off to a home worker who simply copies it out again on a Stainsby. This can take about 10 days per volume. The same proof reading then applies. Finally, the book is bound under hard covers and becomes available in the Library.

In 1983, Dr. John Gill, of Warwick University, (now at Brunel) was asked to look into the computerisation of the production side. After a full report and many investigations, computer equipment using word-processing keyboards in the Library, feeding a computer loaded with the 'Dotsys' translation programme was installed. Output is by means of a 'Braillo' high-speed embosser. Similar routines of proof-reading are followed, but corrections are now made from the keyboard. This will double the number of new titles published.

There are two other means of input into the system, both of which can be operated from the home. In the first instance, an ergonomic keyboard, operating in either Perkins or Stainsby mode has been designed. The six braille keys are in a 'V' formation, with the point of the 'V' towards the operator. This means the arms lie in a much more relaxed, and therefore less tiring position. The keyboard is linked to a home computer with its usual monitor and cassette or disk storage system. The braille is displayed on the screen and can be edited, and the various print commands (i.e. new paragraph, etc.) incorporated in the text. The cassette or disk is then sent to the Library, and fed into the computer which produces a proof on manilla, corrections again being from the keyboard.

Computerisation will also mean that the National Library will be able to use



The output of the system is through the Braillo high-speed embosser, which produces a complete volume in about seven minutes.

volunteers with no knowledge of braille at all. In this case, they will use an ordinary home computer to type the book in plain text onto the cassette. The computer at the library will then transcribe this into grade two braille.

Finally, a potentially enormous possibility is at its infancy; the publishers' own computer tapes. Understandably, publishers guard these tapes jealously; we all know about audio cassette and video pirating. The tapes will have been proof read, thereby cutting much work out for

Computer with ergonomic braille keyboard.





the Library. Each publisher uses different command signs, but the computer could be programmed to deal with these. So far, one publisher has co-operated in the scheme, and in one instance, the braille version was ready before the large print edition. Although computerisation has meant six new employees, their costs have been offset by the prospective revenue from sales to overseas libraries, possible with the new machinery.

There are some 40,000 titles available at present. The traditional production system adds 200 titles a year, and the computer will add a similar number. International purchases will bring in a further 100, making 500 new titles annually. Of the present 4,000 readers, 800 live overseas, 250 are individual children and the number excludes schools. Once the computer system is fully operational, it will mean that a volume, (a book may consist of anything from 1 to 12 volumes), can be run off in seven minutes. Since books will be stored on disk, it will mean an enormous saving on storage space, and make it simple to replace a lost or damaged volume.

The computer will also be used to maintain the Library's catalogues. These are issued in both print and braille, and keeping them up-to-date is a major problem. Staff look forward to being able to revise catalogues quickly and print out, in print or braille, lists of books by author or subject requested by readers. They realise that this will take some time to achieve. Cataloguing staff also compile the *NLB Bulletin*, which gives, six times a year, annotated lists of new additions and some reviews from the national press of books about to appear in braille.

Also still to be computerised is the circulation. Selection lists are updated manually, and labelling carried out on an obsolete addressing machine. Nevertheless, 1,000 volumes are posted each year. Nearly the whole of the warehouse is taken up with bookshelves, some of which are on runners so that they can be packed closely together when not in use and opened out for access.

The standard braille code is currently under scrutiny, and new proposals due to be discussed at an international confer-

ence in September, 1987. The National Library is of course on the Braille Authority of the U.K., who will be hosting the conference. While any changes may only be a matter of a software program alteration to the computer there is a massive investment stored on the shelves which can never be changed. Like many 'old hands', the Library would like to see only minor alterations. As the Director-General pointed out, grade two braille saves only 25% on grade one.

The National Library is not just a lender of books in braille, moon and large print. It is a producer and, no doubt, a lifeline to many people. The personal touch is exemplified by the background of the Director himself. He qualified as a professional librarian. While at a job in Ayr, he got to know a blind social worker. This in turn led to Allan's involvement in a local talking newspaper. When he saw an advertisement for his current post, he considered it too specialised. The Council must have thought otherwise; he has been in the post for four years now.

Allan runs a happy ship, and one that is just embarking on an exciting and busy new voyage. On the horizon is the possibility of a greatly extended collection of books, and an even more efficient and personalised service. However, technology can never replace the human touch, the care and warmth which goes beyond mechanisation; the desire to put the client first. Perhaps the readers are not just feeling the 'bumps' as they read, but the warmth and care that went into creating them.



Ted and Beryl with Detective Superintendent G. Byron, Chairman of the Merseyside Police Ramblers Association, and K. G. Oxford Esq., Chief Constable.

## CHIEF CONSTABLE PRAISES ST. DUNSTANER

Ted John, of Wallasey, retired from the civilian staff of the Merseyside Police after 33 years service, on March 31st. For the majority of that time he worked for the C.I.D.

'I started with the Liverpool City Police in 1953. The Force later became the Liverpool and Bootle Constabulary and, finally, the Merseyside Police,' he explained.

Ted began as a braille shorthand-typist and retires as an Administrative Assistant, dictating material to other shorthand-typists including files on cases for submission to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

His retirement party was held on April 1st, 'Knowing me, everybody thought it might be an April Fool.' It was attended by K. G. Oxford, Esq., C.B.E., Q.P.M., Chief Constable; J. H. Burrows, Esq., Deputy Chief Constable; J. H. Crawford, Esq., Assistant Chief Constable (Operations) and about 140 of his colleagues past and

present. 'Half a dozen of the senior officers were cadets in my office when I started.'

Ted received a set of coffee tables from the staff at Police Headquarters and a crystal decanter with an inscribed silver plate from the members of the Merseyside Police Ramblers Association of which he was Vice-Chairman.

His Chief Constable said how much he admired him and the efficient way he had always carried on with his work, 'So many people turned to him with queries and he was always ready to help them. We were all delighted when he was awarded the M.B.E. five years ago.' Mr. Oxford presented Ted with a handsome plaque bearing the Merseyside Police Badge — a rare honour and one Ted will treasure.

'I've had tremendous support and encouragement,' Ted said, 'I've been blessed that my work colleagues have also been my friends.'





## It's a Picture!

by Shirley (Gloria) Gillberry

Last summer when discussing the framing of a picture with John Brown, he said; 'Why don't you come and learn how to frame your own pictures? You would enjoy it.'

That is how, early in January, I found myself entering the hitherto strictly male preserve of the Workshop at Ian Fraser House. I knew I would be the first woman to train in picture framing at Ovingdean and it is unlikely that there are many women doing picture framing. It is even less likely that there are many blind women doing picture framing. Such a thought usually acts as a challenge to me and so I determined to do as well as I could.

I suspect John and Norman were a little anxious about their new trainee. Very quickly we all settled down to work and rapidly became friends. I think the decibel level rose with the laughter that rang round the workshops. John, who tended to forget my real name called me just about every female name under the sun. I answered to all of them though 'Gloria'

was the most frequent appellation!

I quickly began to learn the craft of picture framing. Within a few days I was beginning to learn the mysteries of sawing and measuring the material and then clamping it into shape. The measuring of glass and finishing the frame off neatly at the back were soon within my grasp. Any reservations I might have had about doing the course very soon evaporated and I found that I was really enjoying the course. I got great satisfaction out of producing a perfectly framed picture. John found to his relief that, despite the laughter, I was a willing and keen learner.

Now I am home again after another successful visit to Ian Fraser House my friends are expressing great interest in my work. They are still somewhat incredulous that the framed pictures I show them could have been done by a blind person, let alone a blind woman! As soon as I get my workshop organised I intend to show them!

I have, thanks to John and Norman, found a new and absorbing occupation.

## A Moment to Spare with Syd Scroggie

### Spectre and Monster

The question is bound to arise in speculative minds why it is that, of all the hundreds of mountains in Scotland, only one has the reputation for being haunted, and of all the hundreds of lochs, one only is believed to be inhabited by what would appear to be a large and unique form of aquatic life. Ben Macdhui has its spectre, Loch Ness its monster, both thoroughly attested — and that's the lot. The answer is that these attestations are probably reliable, for if they were the product of mere fantasy, it's likely every mountain in Scotland would have its ghost, every loch its monster. The difficulty then would be to find a mountain which was unhaunted, a loch untenanted by some extraordinary species. So I'm just as satisfied that Ben Macdhui has its Big Grey Man, as I am that Rhombopterix Nessitarius, the Loch Ness monster, really exists.

My wife Margaret and I motored along the side of this loch not long ago, the sky blue, the sun bright, the birches aflame with autumn, but there were no humps to be seen cruising its water, no long neck, no turbulent wake behind them, and we were reduced to talking about St. Columba, who first recorded the existence of this great beast; but more particularly of a gamekeeper called Hamish, whose beat included part of Loch Ness. From his boyhood Hamish had known about the 'Chehuisk,' which is what they call Nessy in Gaelic, but it wasn't till he was a man that he got a good sight of it making its way down the loch. He rang up the local doctor. 'You're drunk again Hamish,' was all the response he got from this quarter. On trying the local solicitor he was curtly told that no court in the land would accept the testimony of so unreliable a witness as he. This was not the end of the matter, however, for Hamish was subsequently to get two apologies, one from the doctor, one from the solicitor, both of them having got in their turn quite unmistakable views of the Chehuisk. Not

only was the legend of the Loch Ness monster thus vindicated, but what was quite as much to the point, both the sobriety and veracity of Hamish as well.

If you travel south-west from Inverness you come to the loch; if you travel south-east you come to the mountain, for Ben Macdhui is the highest of the Cairngorms, its vast summit plateau, a wilderness of stones and shingle, rising to 4,296 feet. There are many stories concerning the Big Grey Man. Professor Norman Collie, the distinguished scientist and mountaineer, fled from his presence one night; another time his huge shadow fell on a tent when the full moon was shining; he followed my brother with terrifying audibility on a day of mist and deep snow; and I myself saw him once, an awful figure in the gloaming, as he forded the burn which runs into Loch A'an.

Whether as the Sasquatch of the Rockies, the Wendigo of Northern Canada, or the Yeti of the Himalayas, some corresponding phenomenon occurs in various high places of the world, all fundamentally inexplicable; and it was left to Sir Hugh Rankine, Bart., to provide us with the most bizarre opinion so far regarding the Big Grey Man of Ben Macdhui. Sir Hugh was a Bhuddist, and therefore better qualified than the rest of us to interpret the strange experience which befell him and Lady Rankine when the two of them were skirting Ben Macdhui by a bouldery path. The atmosphere became subtly pervaded with music, reedy pipes and twangling strings. A tall, stately figure materialised before them, robed to its ankles, and Sir Hugh and his lady fell to their knees in an excess of awe and veneration. 'We were in the presence,' says Sir Hugh, 'of a Bhodisattva, one of the seven perfected beings of the world! What with plesiosaurus in Loch Ness and Bhodisattvas on Ben Macdhui, not to mention malt whisky, it's not too much to say (don't you agree?) that Scotland has got pretty well everything.'



## D. F. Robinson's GARDENING NOTES

This month annuals should already be planted out in the borders; most of the work here will be finished apart from keeping things tidy and giving water in dry spells. Do remember to get a licence for sprinklers from the nearest water authority — vegetables will need some extra wetness in dry spells, as well as the lawn. We are getting a bit of sunshine now with temperatures more normal for this time of year, and so they should be after the awful winter and spring. I certainly hope we have the really hot, sunny conditions that should follow awful weather, but then I suppose we shall grumble that it is too hot, with no rain about, and we have to get the hose out more often. No satisfying us gardeners, is there?

Spread some general fertiliser in pellet form on all sections of the garden. The vegetable patch will need a few extra handfuls as it uses up nitrogen much more quickly.

### Vegetables

Keep the hoe going between rows of plants and spray at once if there are any pests about which like young growth, especially snails and slugs — so put some slug pellets or powder at the base of plants, between the rows. Plant out the early sown cabbage, cauliflower and sprouts in their permanent places, if not already done. Do ensure that they are firmly planted, and either dip roots in a paste of calomel powder or put powder in the planting holes when they are set in place. Also spread around a soil pest deterrent. Where you have more plants than you want, keep them separate in their boxes in shady places so that if you have any failures you can have instant replacements in the same state of growth.

If you haven't sown any runner and french beans in small containers for planting out later, sow some seed in their cropping places towards the end of the month. Peas will be growing well so set netting on stakes at a fairly good height so

that peas can climb and get well off the soil. Some broad beans will be getting a bit tall so set in some stakes and tie good string to them, so that beans are secure in windy weather. Some plants which are in the flowering stage may show signs of black fly, so spray and pick off the tips with the fly on. This will ensure growth of side shoots lower down, and will mean good crops.

Carry on sowing seeds for salad items to give a succession of plants for the house. More peas can be sown to give a late crop. Late crop potatoes can still be sown especially if you lost seed items through frosts earlier on. I lost all my seed potatoes in a place I have always found free of frost, so had to get later ones and will see how they crop. At the end of the month you can set some outdoor tomatoes in a nice warm position, free from wind. Then give them a good watering and if you are afraid of late frosts put a collar of plastic sheeting round the plants at night. Sprinkle some general fertiliser in the rows to give plants a boost.

### Fruit

Give all trees and bushes a good watering and it might be a good idea to add some liquid manure to give them a boost, especially the roots. Thin out apples in large clusters and reduce the number to about half a dozen on newly planted trees. Cut away suckers on raspberries and any runners from strawberries which are not to be used for new plants later on. Put some straw under the fruit to keep them off the ground and to keep them nice and clean.

### Lawns

Mow grass regularly. A dose of fertiliser will help to give the lawn a good colour and boost the roots to carry on giving a good amount of growth as the season progresses. Where you have more or less contained the weeds to only a few, fork these out by hand to eradicate them com-

pletely. Trim edges regularly to give a good look to the whole area. Remember to cut down mowing to a minimum if there has been little rain and it might be a good idea to set the sprinkler in position. Clean mower regularly and add a bit of oil to the moving parts, which will help to keep the grass from them. Brush round edges of the lawn which are bordering onto flower beds in case of stones which blunt the edges of cutting surfaces, or even break them.

### Flowers

By now you should be able to get all those half hardy annuals into their flowering quarters. Keep taller ones away from the front. Ensure they are sturdily planted and give plenty of water so the roots are well placed. Most perennials will be growing fast now and showing flower buds, so give taller items some stakes.

Give all beds a good hoeing to upset the weeds and to allow air to get down to the roots. Give some balanced fertiliser in pellet form such as *Growthmore* which is easily spread about and will last most of the season. It might be a good thing to lightly fork these pellets in and make sure there are none on the leaves. Some people say it is a good thing to fork up spring flowering bulbs and save them for replanting in autumn. I have never done this except where there are large clumps which can be broken up and replanted so you have more bulbs and colour in spring.

Where you have sown hardy annuals in rows and they are a bit cluttered up, thin them out and put spares in other places which may be a bit thin in colour later on. Do give these replants a good watering to settle the roots. Some of the younger growth may be a target for snails and slugs so put down some bait. Green fly may also be about so get the spray out.

Give roses a good spray with a solution of black spot and green fly deterrent. It is best to pick off the leaves which show black spot and consign to the dustbin or burn on your bonfire. There is a spray which I have told you about before, containing all items against pest and disease, plus a feed, which gets through to the growing plants by means of the leaf veins. I

have used it and it seems to be quite good but I think an extra feed at root level will give a better boost to growth and more flowers. Don't forget to cut away any old flowers down the stem to encourage more colour.

### House Plants

Most indoor plants need good light at this time of year when they are growing strongly, but not full sun or leaf edges will be burnt at the edges. Move them away from the window a bit and give plenty of water with occasional feeds. It is best to stand plants in a bowl of water for a few hours so that they can take what they want. Cut away dead flowers and failing leaves to promote further growth.

### Greenhouse

Tomatoes will be growing well now and early sowings will already have ripe fruit at the bottom trusses. Tie in the main stem as it grows and pick off any side shoots. Spray flowers with tepid water so that you get a good set. Give plenty of water in really warm weather and one of those special tomato foods at least once a week.

Many young pot plants will be growing fast, so it would be a good thing to repot into larger containers for flowering, and give plenty of water when potted off. Some *schizanthus* sown now will give a colourful show in pots in late autumn. Some seeds of greenhouse plants can be sown now in order to have good items for next year, such as *begonia*, *gloxinia*, *cyclamen*, *coleus*, *primula*, *calceolaria* and *cineraria* — amongst the best and easiest to deal with though they will need heat all the time and a propagator to start them off.

Still keep temperature at a minimum of 45F during the night and around 65F during the day. When weather is hot and sunny give plenty of ventilation during the day. Keep plenty of moisture about by watering the floors etc. Put in smokes a couple of times during the month against pests and diseases. Do it early in the evening and shut up everything. Open everything in the morning and don't work there for a few hours.





The three units of the Kurzweil Reading Machine: keyboard, scanner and (partly) electronic computer unit.

## ST. PATRICK'S DAY WITH A DIFFERENCE

St. Dunstaner, Mr. Michael Lawton, of Stanmore, enjoyed a St. Patrick's Day of some significance this year.

He attended a ceremony at Chelsea Barracks on March 17th, where Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother presented Shamrock to the 1st Battalion of his old regiment, the Irish Guards, who had just come back from Germany after being stationed there for the last four years. Then The Queen Mother came over and spoke to Michael, as he was the only man from the 3rd Battalion Irish Guards to have been awarded all the campaign stars for Europe, that is, the WWII Star, the WWII Star for Italy and the WWII Star for France and Germany.

Mr. Lawton also had the good fortune to speak to the Grand Duke of Luxembourg, who had taken his regiment over the Nijmegen Bridge when they captured it from the Germans. That was the last time they had met, as Michael was wounded and taken prisoner in 1945 by the Germans, for 3½ months until the end of the war.

## NATIONAL METRO SPORTS

The tenth National Metro Sports Competition for the Visually Handicapped will be held on Saturday, June 28th at New River Stadium, White Hart Lane, Wood Green (Wood Green tube on the Piccadilly line). Entry forms can be obtained from Mrs. Marie Salman, 15 Kenilworth Gardens, Loughton, Essex, IG10 3AG, or telephone her on 01-508 7623. The closing date for entries is May 4th, but I am told on good authority that if entries are received by May 18th, participation will be accepted.

The usual field sports will be taking place and there will be a 3-kilometre walking race for the Totally Blind and separate one for the Partially Sighted. It would be marvellous if as many St. Dunstan's walkers as possible could enter. The prize is the Bill Harris Cup.

To celebrate the tenth anniversary of the National Metro Sports, a dance will be held in the ballroom of the ABC, South Woodford, on the Saturday evening following the event. Tickets: £4 each.

*Jimmy Wright*

## KURZWEIL READING MACHINE IN MARYLEBONE LIBRARY

Shortly before Christmas, Chemical Bank sponsored a gala performance at Covent Garden to raise money for a Kurzweil Reading Machine (KRM). The appeal was linked with Westminster City Council's quatercentenary celebrations. As a result of the appeal, a machine was installed in Marylebone Library on 17th March. The machine was accepted by the Lord Mayor of Westminster, Councillor Roger Bramble. This is the first London library to have such an aid for visually handicapped people.

The KRM converts the printed word into speech. It will cope with many books and magazines, but not newspapers or hand-writing.

Anyone wishing to book in for training and subsequent reading sessions, should telephone the reference library on 01-798-1028. A cassette with travel instructions, etc., is available by ringing the same number.

## COOKERY CORNER

### Lemon Cake

From Mrs. Christine Stalham, Camberley

#### Ingredients

2oz butter  
3oz castor sugar  
2 eggs  
1 lemon  
8 trifle sponge cakes  
½pt fresh whipped cream or double cream  
Toasted almonds to decorate

#### Method

Slice cakes thinly. Cream the butter and sugar. Separate the eggs. Beat egg yolks with butter and sugar. Add grated rind and juice of lemon. Fold in stiffly beaten egg whites. Arrange layers of cake and mixture alternately in cake tin. Cover with thin layer of lemon mixture, finish with sponge on top. Firm down and refrigerate overnight (can be frozen). Serve with whipped cream spread over cake and decorate with almonds or any suitable ingredient as desired.

## CLUB NEWS

### BRIGHTON Bridge

#### Pairs — February

W. Allen & Mrs. Douse	64.2
W. Lethbridge & Mr. Goodlad	57.7
G. Hudson & Dr. J. Goodlad	57.7
R. Fullard & Mrs. V. McPherson	55.8
Mrs. V. Delaney & Mrs. Clements	55.5
R. Palmer & Mrs. Bushell	50.8
R. Evans & Mrs. Barker	48.6
A. Dodgson & Mrs. Buller-King	48.3
J. Padley & Mrs. Padley	40.8
R. Pacitti & Mrs. Pacitti	40.0
W. Burnett & Miss Stenning	30.6

#### Pairs — March 9th

Wally Lethbridge & Mr. R. Goodlad	65.3
George Hudson & Dr. J. Goodlad	61.1
Ralph Pacitti & Mrs. K. Pacitti	59.9
Bob Evans & Mrs. Barker	51.4
Alf Dodgson & Mrs. Buller-King	50.7
Michael Tybinski & Mrs. Glasby	45.8
Bill Burnett & Miss Stenning	37.5
Jim Padley & Mrs. Padley	28.5

#### Individuals — March 15th

Bob Evans	61.9
W. Lethbridge	57.1
Reg Goding	52.4
Mrs. Barker	52.4
J. Whitcombe	47.6
W. Burnett	47.6
Miss Stenning	42.9
Ralph Pacitti	38.1

On Sunday, March 16th we played our last match against Lewes in Section B of the West Sussex League team of eight.

After a very even and most enjoyable match we lost by five victory points to



## Bridge Continued

their eleven points. We are however over-all winners of our section of the league and are due to play in the Semi Finals against Crawley, who are runners up in Section A of the league. This date is still to be fixed.

*Mr. Douse*

## Easter Drive — March 23rd

W. Lethbridge & Mrs. Goodlad	2130
Mrs. V. Delaney & Mrs. Clements	1760
G. Hudson & Dr. J. Goodlad	1520
R. Pacitti & Mrs. Pacitti	1060
R. Evans & Mrs. Barker	1060

## Bowling

On February 26th we made our way to the Field Place Indoor Bowling Club where we were warmly greeted by our friends. After a chat the match commenced at about 3 p.m. with 12 St. Dunstaners taking part. Play was keen and competitive and there were some close ends and near misses. Consequently the game was a very good one.

Jackie Pryor in his vote of thanks, and with tongue in cheek, declared the match a draw. There were titters of laughter when this announcement was made! It looks as if he has got a touch of the Bob Osborne!

The tea provided by the ladies was appreciated and Jackie was delighted with the sausage rolls and is looking forward to sampling them again at our next visit.

Thank you Field Place and we look forward to our next encounter.

*A. Miller*

## Entertainment Section

The Wednesday meetings have been well attended in spite of the bad weather, and the competitions are progressing well.

On Thursday, March 20th a party of members thoroughly enjoyed the matinee performance of the 'Seven Year Itch' at the Theatre Royal.

We thank Mr. Conway for the transport to and from the theatre.

*Phyllis O'Kelly*

# FAMILY NEWS

## RUBY WEDDINGS

### Congratulations to:

*Mr. and Mrs. R. Chalmers*, of East Boldon, on the occasion of their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on March 30th.

*Mr. and Mrs. R.A. Fullard*, of Saltdean, on the occasion of their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on April 10th.

*Mr. and Mrs. W.P. Kelly*, of Workington, on the occasion of their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on March 26th.

*Mr. and Mrs. F.J. King*, of Colindale, on the occasion of their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on April 10th.

## DIAMOND WEDDING

### Congratulations to:

*Mr. and Mrs. R. Wilson*, of Keighley, on the occasion of their Diamond Wedding Anniversary on April 3rd.

## GRANDCHILDREN

### Congratulations to:

*Mr. and Mrs. F.L. Jones*, of Birmingham, on the birth of their first grandchild, Emma Louise, born on March 14th to their daughter, Susan, and her husband, Mark Knight.

*Mr. and Mrs. R.C. Williamson*, of Darlington, on the birth of their grandson, Stuart, born on February 26th to their son and daughter-in-law, Ian and Christine.

## GREAT GRANDCHILDREN

### Congratulations to:

*Mr. and Mrs. W. Bradshaw*, of Porthcawl, on the birth of their great grandson, Gareth Anthony, born on February 23rd to Sara and Mark.

## Great Grandchildren Continued

*Mr. W.H. Wainman*, of Sheffield, who now has 27 great grandchildren following the latest arrival, a little boy born on February 16th to his grand-daughter, Freda, and her husband.

## PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

### Congratulations to:

Julia, daughter of *Mr. and Mrs. T.N. Parkinson*, of Blackpool, who has just taken her primary examination for the Trinity College of Music in London, and passed with Honours.

Sarah, eldest daughter of *Mr. and Mrs. P.O. Walker*, of Lewes, who was presented on February 27th, with the St. John Ambulance Brigade Grand Prior's Badge by the County Commissioner, Mr. Shipham, at the Divisional Headquarters at Lewes.

# 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.

### G. Broughton, Royal Artillery

George Broughton, of Maltby-le-Marsh, Lincs., passed away on February 26th, aged 90.

Mr. Broughton served as a Gunner in the Royal Artillery from September 1915 to February 1919, and in spite of the loss of vision suffered during his service, he was able, upon discharge from the Army, to follow work on the land. Mr. Broughton became a St. Dunstaner in 1971, by which time he had retired, but he remained a keen gardener and derived much pleasure from his greenhouse. Sadly, Mrs. Broughton died in 1976, just two months after they had celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary, but thanks to his devoted family he was able to remain in his own home in the village of Withern, Lincs., until the summer of 1984, when he moved to residential accommodation nearby. Mr. Broughton had been much saddened by the death of his only son, which occurred earlier in February.

## DEATHS

### We offer sympathy to:

*Mr. J.W. Thwaites*, of Blackpool, who mourns the death of his wife, Mary, who passed away on March 19th.

*Mr. F.H. Wareham*, of Poole, whose wife, Viola Marion, passed away on March 7th, aged 85. They had been married for over 33 years.

*Mrs. D.J. Buckley*, widow of the late *Mr. H.A. Buckley*, of Hove, whose eldest daughter, Linda Christine, died of a stroke on March 3rd, aged 35. Linda was married with two small children.

*Mr. and Mrs. L. Tanner*, of Morden, on the death of their son-in-law, Ronald May, on February 9th, aged 58.

*Mr. Phillip Wood*, of Crewe, whose wife, Winifred Mary, passed away in hospital on March 4th after a serious illness.

He leaves his only daughter, Mrs. Kathleen Skipworth, and members of the family.

### C. Burt, Royal Artillery

Carl Burt, of Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs., passed away on March 8th, aged 58. He had, very sadly, suffered complications with his health following an operation in December.

Mr. Burt served as a Gunner with the Royal Artillery from August 1946, and suffered a serious eye injury a year later whilst serving in Palestine. As a consequence, he was discharged from the Army in October 1948, but was able to continue in useful civilian employment as a school caretaker until 1976, when he was registered blind and came to St. Dunstan's. Despite bad health, Mr. Burt was able to do some training in braille and handicrafts, and enjoyed many visits to Ian Fraser House.

He leaves his widow, Claire, with whom he spent eight happy years.



## **In Memory Continued**

### **A.E. Gardner, Royal Welch Fusiliers**

Albert Edward Gardner died at Pearson House on March 30th, aged 87. He had been a St. Dunstaner since 1978.

Mr. Gardner enlisted in 1915 in the Royal Welch Fusiliers and was wounded at Armentieres in 1918. He subsequently became a civil servant and continued working after the normal retirement age, his sight only starting to fail in 1970. He and his wife lived near their son at Tunbridge Wells and celebrated their Golden Wedding in 1979. Sadly, Mrs. Gardner died in 1984 and Mr. Gardner became a permanent resident at Pearson House the following year.

He leaves a son, Dr. Donald Gardner, and his family.

### **G.E. Jeffery, Northamptonshire Regiment, South Lancashire Regiment and Labour Corps.**

George Ernest Jeffery, of Reading, passed away in hospital on March 25th, three weeks before his 88th birthday. He had been a St. Dunstaner since 1977.

Mr. Jeffery was discharged from the Army towards the end of the 1st World War, having suffered a severe gunshot wound to his face at Ypres whilst on active service. He was a Private in the Northamptonshire Regiment followed by a transfer to the South Lancashire Regiment and a short spell in the Labour Corps.

In civilian life, Mr. Jeffery remained in employment as an Area Manager with a firm of painting contractors until 68 years of age. Subsequently, he enjoyed working in his greenhouse, listening to talking books and going to our Brighton Homes where his cheerful disposition and knowledge of current events made him a popular visitor. Sadly, Mr. Jeffery's wife died in 1977 but from that time he was cared for with devotion by his daughter, Barbara.

He leaves his daughter, her twin brother, Mr. G. B. Jeffery, grandchildren and members of the family.

### **I. Ostle, Kings Shropshire Light Infantry**

Isaac Ostle, of Cockermouth, passed away in hospital on March 5th, aged 66. He had been a St. Dunstaner since 1945.

A few months after the outbreak of the 2nd World War, Mr. Ostle enlisted in the 4th Battalion of the Kings Shropshire Light Infantry. Whilst on active service in Germany early in 1945, he suffered severe injuries to his eyes and the amputation of his left arm.

Before the war, Mr. Ostle had been a poultry

farmer and on becoming a St. Dunstaner he joined one of his brothers in a similar venture. However, in 1949, Mr. Ostle and his wife, Sheila, moved to a new home and his own smallholding in Cumbria where he successfully raised and sold a great number of poultry with much support from his family. After several years, he decided to specialise in turkey breeding and also bred Labradors and Lakeland Terriers. Mr. Ostle was a country lover all his life, and ran his business ventures with tremendous enthusiasm and hard work. He ceased farming early in 1984 but remained keenly interested in gardening and his greenhouse.

In his leisure hours, our St. Dunstaner greatly enjoyed listening to tapes, the radio and his talking books. In 1983, Mr. and Mrs. Ostle celebrated their Ruby Wedding Anniversary.

He leaves his widow, Sheila, his son, Michael, and daughter, Christine, grandchildren and other members of the family.

### **A. Rayner, Royal Armoured Corps**

Albert Rayner passed away at Pearson House on March 13th, aged 74. He had lived with us there since 1975.

Mr. Rayner joined the Royal Armoured Corps as a Driver in December 1929, and, following the outbreak of the 2nd World War, lost his sight when wounded in action in Belgium in November 1944. He came to St. Dunstan's in the following February and trained for industrial employment which became his occupation for the next nine years. This was followed by a brief spell in shopkeeping, until Mr. Rayner was obliged to cease working on health grounds.

He leaves his son, Brian, and daughter, Veronica, and their families.

### **G.S. Thrower, Norfolk Regiment**

Gordon Spencer Thrower, of Diss, Norfolk, passed away on February 27th shortly after admission to hospital. He was 67 years old and had been a St. Dunstaner for only a year.

He served as a Private in the 1st Battalion, Norfolk Regiment, from February 1940 until his discharge in December 1944. Mr. Thrower took part in the D-Day landing and was severely wounded by an exploding mine in June 1944. Until his health seriously deteriorated, he was employed as a postman and poultry-keeper. With his wife, Molly, he had been looking forward to settling happily in a new home to which they moved only a few months ago. They had been married for almost nine years.

He leaves his widow who, although disabled herself, was a tower of strength to him.