

St Dunstons Review

June 1987





From the Chairman

A tribute to our Voluntary Helpers is long overdue. I give it now with warm gratitude for all their work.

Their activities range from Archery to Bowls; from Bridge to Reading Aloud; from Walking to Playing the Piano or the Organ; and an infinite variety of Escorting. Often they are the Lynchpin of that particular activity and indeed without them it might collapse.

They do *our* thing in *their* time — at *their* expense for *our* convenience. We owe them a very genuine 'Thank you — well done — please keep it up.'

Henry Leach

REUNIONS

BRIGHTON, April 3rd

The first reunion of the 1987 season was held at the Bedford Hotel in Brighton on Friday, April 3rd. Altogether 181 people were present to ensure a fine send-off for this year's series. They included 58 St. Dunstaners with their escorts, 29 widows, seven of whom came with escorts, and 28 guests and staff. Lieutenant-General Sir Maurice Johnston, a Member of St. Dunstan's Council, accompanied by Lady Johnston, presided and the principal guest was the Mayor of Brighton, Councillor Jacqueline Lythell.

After lunch Sir Maurice formally welcomed St. Dunstaners and their guests, particularly Councillor Lythell, 'Who has been kind enough to say how much she feels Brighton welcomes St. Dunstan's in its midst. She was also kind enough to say how much she is enjoying today.

'Part of the function of a reunion is the ability, in convivial circumstances, to meet new friends and renew acquaintances and both my wife and I value this as a most enormous privilege.'

Saying that we live in a tremendously changing world, Sir Maurice commented: 'Abiding values still hold in places like St. Dunstan's, where standards are maintained. I was reminded of this when we sang "The Queen". It is symbolic of St. Dunstan's that these standards are maintained. They may seem old-fashioned to some people but I believe it is terribly important.'

Praising St. Dunstan's standards, Sir Maurice first singled out the people who serve St. Dunstaners, 'I would here pay tribute to the many in this room who have done an immense amount on that score. I would also like to pay a tribute the other way round because I think one of the things that has struck me more forcefully than anything else in the year and a half I have been on the Council of St. Dunstan's is the tremendously high standard of the St. Dunstaners themselves, who are always well turned out. They are always polite, they are always full of fun and it is a very inspiring thing for me to meet St. Dunstaners and I am very glad to be among you.'

Harry, better known as Johnnie, Cope spoke for his fellow St. Dunstaners in reply to Sir Maurice. After thanking him, Lady Johnston and the Mayor for attending the reunion, Johnnie turned to the wives of St. Dunstaners, 'Who make themselves look 21 for this occasion and they try to make their husbands look 21 too but that's a hard job, so thank you wives. I must not forget our widows because in the past for their late husbands they have done a wonderful, wonderful job.'

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Cover Picture: Bob Osborne and Tom Simmon congratulate each other on a splendid 'end' in the Totally Blind play offs during the Bowls Handicap. See article on page 20.



Mayor of Brighton, Councillor Jacqueline Lythell, speaking to Mr. and Mrs. Johnnie Cope at the Brighton reunion.

Johnnie Cope concluded with thanks to Miss Stewart and Mrs. Jackson not only for organising this reunion but for their hard work all the year round. He also thanked St. Dunstan's staff generally and, lastly, the management and staff of the Bedford Hotel. The formal proceedings were concluded with the presentation of a bouquet

to Lady Johnston by Mrs. Benham.

In the afternoon Ken Lyon's band played for dancing, Lady Johnston conducted the prize draw and there was the usual lively interchange between St. Dunstaners meeting again, sometimes after many years.

IPSWICH, April 16th

Mr. Charles Cadman welcomed the 17 St. Dunstaners, who arrived at the Moat House Hotel for the reunion. He was particularly delighted to see the 11 widows present. He was pleased to welcome Mr. and Mrs. Whymark attending their first reunion. 'St. Dunstan's goes from strength to strength. Those of you renewing your acquaintance with Ian Fraser House will be delighted, I am sure, with the married accommodation.

'Many activities go on, from the climbing of Mount Everest to bowls. It gives one great confidence in the people who make up St. Dunstan's'. He went on to tell his audience that he was the Royal British Legion's representative on the Council,

and how the RBL was much interested in our activities. He made passing reference to an article in the RBL Journal which wondered how the reduction of £1.25 in the TV licence fee for a blind person was arrived at. He concluded by referring to members of staff present.

Mr. Wilf Saxby responded on behalf of the guests. He started by relating two East Anglian stories to illustrate the moral that experts frequently miss the information that others seek. He said there were too many experts around and not enough wisdom. 'Mr Cadman has done a great deal with the British Legion, and has brought into our Council much of the experience he has gained working with ex service-

men, over many, many years. We appreciate his being with us today'.

Referring to remarks by the Chairman in the *Review*, he regretted that some St. Dunstaners had wasted others' time. He felt sure no-one would wish to waste Irene Newbold's time.

Mr. Saxby concluded by thanking all who had contributed to the success of the day, and for all the help received during the past year.

LIVERPOOL, April 24th

Bright sunshine accompanied the 33 St. Dunstaners and 25 widows into the St. George's Hotel. The guests were met by the Chairman and Lady Leach as they entered the bar, and by the music of David Vaughan Williams on electronic organ as they entered the dining-room.

The Chairman extended a particularly warm welcome to Terence Bray, Gerald Jackson, Ken Taylor and their wives, attending their first reunion. Mr. Haslam, aged 89, was the only 1st War St. Dunstaner present. It was the 44th wedding anniversary of Charlie and May Haig, who received much applause. Jack Beattie was wished many happy returns.

The Chairman went on to recount several reminiscences of war time and post war naval experiences in and around Liverpool. He gave various 'snippets' of news. Sir Henry much regretted that Matron Penny Goodwin had had to take early retirement. 'This, as you will realise, is a highly important post. We are sorry to see her go, and are grateful for what she has done'. Broadhurst Gardens has recently been refurbished, and the Chairman highly recommended it as an overnight stop for those passing through or visiting London. 'It has been variously referred to as the hostel or Broadhurst Gardens. I am pleased to report that St. Dunstan's Council have endorsed the decision as of June 1st, to call it Ansell House as a token of esteem to our past President. The lift in the annexe at Ian Fraser House was expected to be in operation within the next three weeks. It was



Vincent Stack on a visit from Australia demonstrates how the Aussies down their Castlemaine XXXX's.

doubtful, but hoped for, that the refurbishing at Pearson House should be completed by the end of the year. He reported that our President, Colin Beaumont-Edmonds had just returned from a visit to Australia and New Zealand. 'I mention this just to show you how close we try to keep in touch. My wife and I will be visiting Canada soon. It is important that the family of St. Dunstan's remains international'.

Margaret Bingham replied on behalf of the guests. After welcoming Sir Henry and Lady Leach, she thanked members of headquarters staff both present and past for coming. 'It has been a lovely day and we thank Carol Henderson for organising it'.

Sadie Stokes presented a bouquet to Lady Leach. The guests mingled throughout the afternoon. It was sad to hear that Len Wiggins was retiring, though continuing on a part time basis. It was happy to see a 93 year old widow and her granddaughter joining in the general merriment. In all, a multi-coloured and faceted jig-saw, which, when assembled, created a varied and pleasant picture.

A Sense of Humour or — The Autobiography of a Husk Part Two

by Geoffrey Preston

In 1947 the late Geoffrey Preston, compiler of crossword puzzles and former contributor to the Review through 'Nelson's Column', completed a short autobiography covering the early years of his blindness and his time at St. Dunstan's. Mrs. Isobel Preston has kindly permitted us to extract those sections of Geoff's manuscript which refer to days at Church Stretton and, later, Avenue Road, and these are reproduced below.

Here is a small picture of life in the room occupied by Alan Milne, Bertie McConnell and yours truly. I retired to bed between ten-thirty and eleven with the wireless on — as a rule, just before midnight in came the other two, both of 'em over six feet and noisy in proportion — both would prepare for bed then Alan, before getting in, would do some exercises for the good of his stomach muscles, which necessitated a prone position on the floor, hard breathing and doubtful, noisy encouragement from Bertie, who occasionally co-operated to the extent of standing his fourteen stone on Alan's chest and diaphragm, presumably to test the value of the exercises — then they got into bed and the real evening performance began when Bertie produced his penny whistle, which he called a recorder, and practically broke all the glass in the establishment until a distortion of the National Anthem told us we might sleep. The latter part is a trifle unfair because Alan and I usually sang to the strains of the penny whistle and thus influenced the selection of attempted tunes.

Strange as it may appear from the last paragraph both of these chaps worked hard during the day.

Bertie Partington arrived to learn braille shorthand and Tom Lukes, a Canadian, to try and pick some knowledge up in an engineering firm in preparation for his return home. Alan Milne, having acquired enough shorthand, left us at this stage and Bertie having acquired a guide dog in addition to shorthand also went at Easter.

I returned to Avenue Road in May in good spirits to meet a full house. There were seven chaps down from 'Battlefield', four of whom I had not previously met. Keith Johnston-Stewart, John Sheridan and Ronald Bridges, who seldom appear in my narrative because they could see a little and liked to get away from the constant worry of dodging the less fortunate in the house. I believe that space is essential to a semi-sighted man whereas to a blind one it is just a nuisance devoid of landmarks. Maybe I am entirely wrong, anyhow it is a tenable theory. The fourth was Pat Owens, who saw a little but was cumbered by a thigh length artificial leg.

Jimmy Wright and Stewart Spence were in hospital together in East Grinstead and Lady Forres, Isobel Pepall and I went to see them. We lunched en route, delivered various comfits to them, had tea with them and thought they seemed remarkably well and cheerful. Stewart's legs seemed much better and his speech a little quicker. Jimmy was in and out of the theatre all the time in the midst of a programme of plastic operations. After tea we drove back to Avenue Road. Next Michael Neville had to go into hospital at St. Albans so we duly escorted him there.

I steadily turned out puzzles and a Shropshire paper started publishing them in June. June was a full and enjoyable month except for the weather. The first excitement was Derby Day when Pam Metcalfe, Seppings Lidiard, Will Rathmell, Bertie Partington, Isobel and I piled into a large hire car, driven by Jack Jarvis, an old acquaintance of our Avenue Road



Geoff and Isobel with friends at the Derby in 1946.

fraternity, noted for his good nature and knowledge of London. We drove through the drizzle and parked in a good spot slightly nearer Tattenham Corner than the finish on the stand side. Will and Sep nipped out of the car immediately and through the drizzle made for a beer tent leaving the four of us in the shelter of the car. The girls gave Bertie and me a commentary on the feverish scene around us, gypsies screamed and hawkers circulated shouting their wares. Eventually the bookies began to do business.

Pam and Bertie got out to have a look around and a gypsy came and told Isobel she had a lucky face and sold her a charm then wound up by telling us both that we would win all the afternoon. Next a hawker sold us some apples at a ridiculous price, but they were very good. The others returned and lunched in the car from a capacious basket of tasty food. The first race began just after lunch and Will and Sep backed the winner, whilst we four had to be content with also rans. It cleared up for the big race and we got snaps of our party. The fifth race annoyed me considerably. I was on a 'good thing'; at the 'off' my horse was dreamily standing broadside on to the course, then it proceeded to canter home a furlong behind the field in a six

furlong race. At the end of the last race Will and Sep had won comfortably on the day. Pam and Bertie were more or less all square and Isobel and I had learned that gypsies, like dreams, work in opposites. The day ended well and by six we were back at Avenue Road where we 'one and all' 'took off our hats' to the organisations responsible for the traffic arrangements.

My training consisted mainly of general reading in an attempt to get some sort of literary background for my crossword making. Mrs. Barbara Ormerod had been helping me with the project since before Easter and had become a good friend.

Just before the end of the summer term we were informed that when we came back to training in September, a governmental training allowance for rehabilitation training would come into force. This necessitated a new addition to the staff. Captain W. P. Hill was that new member and he combined advice on training with his administrative duties.

To qualify for the allowance a man had to have a specific programme with a definite aim in view. I had the latter but carefully dodged the former so the chance was given me to help the new Matron by passing out of training to become Secretary of the house. My job was to help in any

possible way, with entertainments as my main responsibility. A telephone that I could work without assistance became number one priority. Peter Nye, the man responsible for my typewriter, undertook to have a telephone ready by September. It seemed to me that the duties would not be too arduous to cause my abandonment of crossword making and the whole arrangement pleased and challenged me.

The idea of training allowances filled me with foreboding because money always causes bad spirit and petty jealousies which I feared might ruffle our serenity at Avenue Road.

Although I have given little evidence of the industry of our household, nevertheless there was little slacking and not much enforced idleness caused by wartime injuries or general health.

All things considered, I went home that summer as happy as a sandboy and feeling near to being in circulation once again.

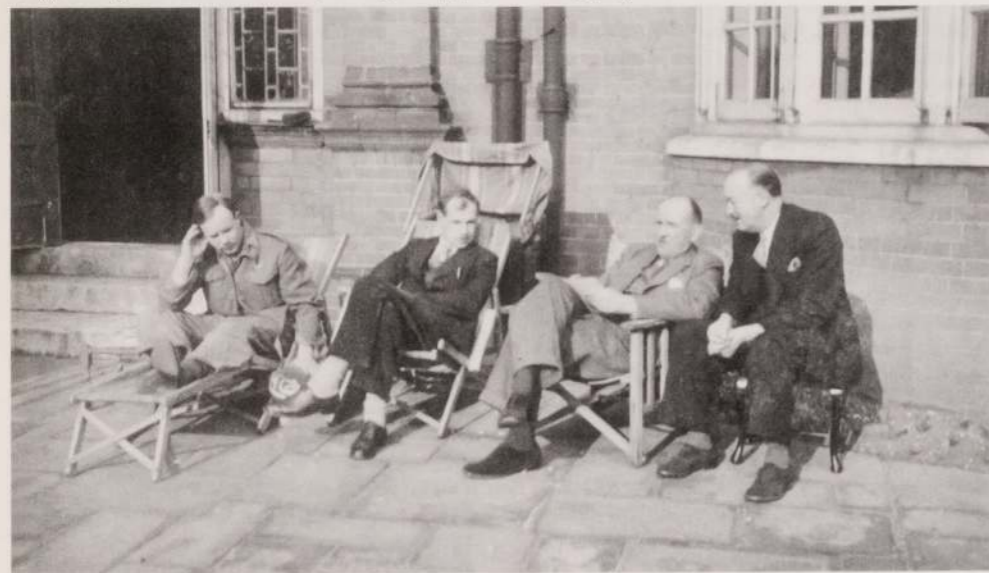
In September I returned to Avenue Road to concentrate a little on my new duties. My telephone was installed on the 15th and it must be described in detail for it was a sterling piece of work.

It was an ordinary instrument with three additions. First, in place of the cradle

on which a normal instrument rests I had an upright metal rod with a spring clip at the top into which my phone was clamped, the rod was adjustable and mine was adjusted to suit my height and head angle in a sitting position. Second, the phone was dead until I put my foot on a spring plunger which under pressure gave the same result as picking up the receiver on a normal phone. And third, the ticklish part, was the dialling mechanism. By a process of gearing it proved that the dial could be worked by a downward pressure like a typewriter. Thus I got another machine to work upon, two banks of figures; the top five odd and the lower even. The whole thing though ingenious was extremely simple to work.

It was September 18th, that my job got under way. Prior to that, I had tested my phone and only once did it prove unsatisfactory; an amusing occasion; I decided to ring up Sep at his flat, after getting the number alright, I said, 'Hello Sep, I'm on my new-fangled machine and I can cut you off at a moment's notice'. Then my foot slipped and we were cut off. I laughed so hard, I couldn't start to ring him again and when he appeared next morning he was quite indignant about it.

Geoff, sitting outside Avenue Road, with Syd Scroggie, the late Seppings Lidiard and Bill Hill (reader).



Miss Bridget Beckwith was the new Matron and Miss Pamela Metcalfe an old friend, Miss Gladys Prior, a Canadian who had come from Stretton at Easter and Miss Monica Reynolds who joined us to make up for Isobel's departure for Canada were her assistants with myself as telephone boy and entertainments officer and possessing the title of Secretary, which lifted my chest some six inches and was a perpetual source of amusement to my pals in the house.

At the outset I asked the new Matron to delegate to me any unpleasant or embarrassing telephone calls she may meet. As a consequence of this I expected a great amount of amusement. My first call was the only really amusing one I recall; it was a call to Selfridges in quest of two lavatory brushes; I got through and a voice said, 'What department do you want?'

'I'm not sure, but I want two lavatory brushes'. Then I was put through to the Toilet Department and after I had made my request I heard a gasp followed by a voice tinged with powder and perfume saying, 'This is the Toilet Department'. Then with a flash of intelligence I said, 'Have you a brush department?'. Next minute I was through to the brush department where a bloke asked me, 'Do you want a Da-di-di-di handle or will you have a Di-di-da-di handle?'

'Just two of your best brushes and we will collect them in half an hour', I replied.

Guest nights

Every month starting in September, we had a guest night at which functions the female staff went out to dinner whilst we listened to an interesting man of the world giving us a talk concerning his own subject or experiences. Each guest night we had a single guest, amongst them was included an ex-Commissioner of Police, an eminent Counsel, one or two M.P's and, most interesting of all, the Secretary of the T.U.C. As secretary it was my business to write letters of thanks to these gentlemen and I did so with great enjoyment and a certain amount of literacy, I hope.

At this point I was offered a small job as proof-reader to the Sound Recording



Geoff with Isobel and Mary Burgoyne.

Committee, who record books so that by use of records and a gramophone-like machine the blind can read a book without requiring human agency. The job was to start on January 8th and I accepted it with alacrity as it consisted of two and a half hours a day listening and flaw-spotting in the first processed records of all and any book the Committee may choose to record. Each book recorded is put into the Talking Book Library for the sole use of the blind.

This seemed to be just the job as far as I was concerned although its future possibilities were practically non-existent. The fact that I could do a useful even necessary job of any nature whatsoever was as balm to my shattered vanity. There were a few problems but they would dissolve as they all do on application of the correct acid. I could not put on or take off records but once more Peter Nye came to the rescue and promised to produce by mid-January a machine to carry eight records entirely controlled by foot pedals except the needle changing. Of course the original



Relaxing outside Avenue Road.

loading of records on to the machine and their removal when read I would not be able to manage, but as each record lasted twenty-five minutes that was not terribly important.

Recording studios

On January 8th I reported to 8 Hinde Street, just off Manchester Square, the abode of the recording studios, which had just moved there. In fact when I arrived the recording machinery was not quite ready to operate because parts were still in the process of moving from the wartime recording headquarters. Consequently there was a lull in the volume of recordings for me to check, which, however, did not affect me immediately since before records came to me they went through a mysterious operation known as 'processing'. That first day I met my boss, Mr. Pinder, who was the head of the recording organisation and Miss J. Cooch, his secretary, who was to initiate me into my task. The job consisted of listening to record after record, each of twenty-five minutes duration and making a report on each on my typewriter. In the very early stages it

became apparent that the readers of the books during actual recordings, seldom if ever made errors so that my reports were concerned with technical flaws either of recording or processing. Each record began with the title of the book and the number of the side, e.g. 'Alice in Wonderland, Side six'; at the end of each odd number record the reader says 'Continued on the other side of this record'; at the end of each even side, the caption is 'This book is continued on the next record. Recorded for the sole use of the blind'. For the first fortnight or so I had an ordinary machine which took one record, consequently Miss Gooch, who had an office directly under mine, had a great opportunity of acquiring a sylph-like figure because every twenty-five minutes I would ring her up or do a war dance over her head.

Disturbing noises

Each morning I went to the office at 9.45 and listened hard until 12.15, more often than not in competition with a pneumatic drill and other disturbing noises. Although I never actually went to



In later years at Ian Fraser House with the late Lord Amory of Tiverton.

sleep on the job I found my eyes very heavy after lunch at Avenue Road and started a programme of siesta unless I was busy on a puzzle.

At the end of the month Peter Nye produced the foot pedal machine which would hold eight records. It was the size of a radiogram and when Miss Gooch put the records in the rack I had but to depress the left hand pedal and a record fed on to the turntable then the pick-up came over automatically and started to play. Wait! If I wished to hear part of the record again I had a right hand pedal which lifted the pick-up and moved it back a quarter of an inch or so. The speed, volume and tone controls were all on the sides of the machine and big enough for my blunt right arm to operate. I was very pleased and felt less of a nuisance after its advent.

By this time I had completed a little more than four years fairly regular massage of the left arm and leg and although

the coarser movements of the leg steadily improved the finer movements of foot and hand showed little sign of improvement. The feeling in leg, foot and arm was reasonably good but the hand had not as yet really responded. I am told that patience is a virtue. I prefer to correct that a little and say the acquiring of patience is the virtue. One doesn't take patience off the peg, dust it a little and wear it at will. I mention the point because it is my belief that man is, despite all his conceit, naturally born without virtue and must learn and work for all or any virtues he might in the fullness of time come to possess.

EDITOR'S NOTE

On May 7th, 1947, Geoff Preston married his former Matron, Isobel Pepall. His manuscript ends with his account of their wedding.

TRIBUTES

WALLY THOMAS

Although I don't have Wally's eloquent way with words, I would like to say how much I have admired him for his courage and cheerfulness over the last 43 years, despite his great handicap. He was indeed a remarkable man — to have known him was to have loved him. God Bless you Wally! You will be sadly missed by all your friends.

George Roake, of Catford

JOHN RAYMOND YABSLEY

It was with much regret that we learned of the death of Ray Yabsley whilst at Ian Fraser House undergoing a Picture Framing Course.

Ray was a FEPOW and all his colleagues suffered terrible privations whilst POW's. I knew Ray in his capacity as Personnel Officer with Richard Thomas & Baldwin Steel Works in Ebbw Vale and he was very highly thought of by all his colleagues. It was my privilege to attend the funeral held at St. James Church, Tredegar, Gwent on Friday, March 27th. The church was full and it was a great tribute to Ray in that the renderings of the Hymns *Jerusalem* and *Crimond* were moving and especially to hear the B.L. prayer at the end of the service.

It was I am sure a great comfort to his widow, Monica, and the family to know that he was so highly thought of and will be greatly missed by all those who were privileged to know him.

Trevor Tatchell

D. F. Robinson's GARDENING NOTES

Now is about the best time of summer with plenty of colour and a whole lot more to come along. You may be getting a good idea of crops to come on fruit trees and also vegetables will be showing their worth — if some items are not very good more seeds can be sown.

Vegetables

Keep beds regularly watered and hoed against weeds. Some climbing types such as bind weed should be dug out very deep or painted with weedkiller on the leaves to kill them off but don't use spray or you may kill other vegetables in the area as well. Spray if pests arrive, but black fly on broad beans is better dealt with by picking off shoots which have these pests on them.

Some extra watering on lettuce tends to stop them going to seed. Peas and broad beans should be picked regularly and it is quite a good idea to sow more seed for later crops. Earth up potatoes if not already done. Ensure there are plenty of supports for runner beans and give them an extra feed for good growth and formation of good flowers, so there will be plenty of beans at an early date. Carry on sowing a few seeds of lettuce and radish to keep salad crops going well.

Plant out some broccoli, cauliflower and some savoys for a late crop. Get ridge cucumbers, marrows and outdoor tomatoes in their fruiting quarters — some nice warm spot, and add some manure at the time of planting. Water all these items in well when planted out. Make the main crop sowing of turnips, plus some carrots for a late crop. Snails and slugs may be a pest especially in wet weather so give a good sprinkling of pellets so that leaves of the plants are not eaten more, especially of the cabbage family and lettuce.

Fruit

Mulch all round apple and pear trees in the root area to keep moisture in the right place, and the fertiliser if it is set under the mulch. Thin out fruit if there is rather a large crop and at the same time cut away any new growths tending to make the centre of the tree too thick. Regular spraying of all fruit trees and bushes should be carried out so that fruit is clear when picked and set for keeping later in the year.

Cut back all young shoots on currant bushes. All surplus and weak canes on raspberries should be pulled up or cut away below ground level. Layer all runners for young plants on strawberry plants but discard some if there are too many. Give plenty of water to all fruit so that

roots continue to grow well for good crops and fine growth on all trees and bushes. This extra moisture with a dose of fertiliser in the shape of *Growmore* will give a good set and fine quality of crop.

Lawns

Keep grass well mown, and add fertiliser to boost growth from the roots and you will have good colour. In dry spells set a sprinkler going in the late afternoon. When you have got the lawn nice and moist, a rolling would be a good thing. Any large weeds such as dandelion showing after dosing with a weedkiller can be removed with a small hand fork and turf levelled off with your feet.

Flowers

Use the hoe regularly to keep weeds down and fork lightly to open up the soil. Give a sprinkling of *Growmore* to give old perennials and shrubs a help at root level in order to push on growth and the formation of flowers. Cut away all flowers which have finished so that new shoots can be grown to give fresh flowers. Taller growing items should be staked and tied in to help against strong winds. Get all half-hardy annuals planted out with the smaller ones in the front and taller ones further back to give a good show.

All types of perennials can be sown in special beds to give good sized plants for next season. Quick growing annuals can also be started from seed for a late show. Dahlias and sweet peas will need special attention now to give good size blooms. Tie in sweet peas as they grow up. Taller dahlias will need to be staked and tied in and to have really good sized blooms some of the buds must be stopped. Where you have outdoor carnations or pinks see that they have stakes and tie them in and disbud to give good size. Plant out tuberous begonias which are well grown.

Give a light sprinkling of slug pellets to keep these pests and snails away from young, tender growth which they are after. Insect pests will be on their way so get the sprayer out at once as a precaution even if there are none about. Make certain that you wash your hands and face especially at

the nostrils after use plus clean the sprayer.

Roses will be starting to give a fine show of colour, so keep buds down to a minimum on the hybrid-T's to have really good blooms. Give soil at root level a dose of special rose fertiliser and water in if the earth is very dry. Spray against greenfly and other pests more particularly black spot. Take any leaves which show signs of the disease including the yellowish ones and consign to the dustbin or burn, don't put on the compost heap as it is very contagious.

Greenhouse

There will probably be no more use for heating now as even at night temperatures will be high enough for all plants. Even the windows will need to be left open the whole time except when there are high winds about. Pests and diseases will be on the rampage now so light smokes a couple of times during the month. Remember to set them off in the evening and open up everything including the door in the morning for a few hours before doing any work inside. Where you have only a few plants in pots left it might be a good idea to give the place a clean out with water including a disinfectant.

Most plants in pots will be needing quite a bit of watering and a feed a couple of times during the month. Clear away any blooms which are past their best so that new ones can make a show. Plant up those items which were started earlier in the year, so you can have colour later on.

Azaleas and cyclamen which are now past their best can be repotted in other pots with new compost. They can be placed outdoors for three months in a warm place so they can make a good start for a show later on. Seeds of calceolaria, cineraria, cyclamen, geraniums and various types of primula can be sown for producing good plants for next year. Cuttings of regal pelargoniums can also be taken. Tomatoes will be growing well now and have given you some early fruit, so pick regularly. Pick out all side shoots but obviously, leave the flowers as they come along. Give them a spray of water to make them set better. Keep the main stem tied in. Water regularly and give plenty of feed.

For God's Sake — Stop!

Ray Hazan on St. Dunstan's skiers

Photographs by
Adrian Loska and
Peter Zamudio



Like the anchor threads of a spider's web, they came from all over — London, Lincoln, Leicester, Cornwall, Newcastle, Sittingbourne, Paignton, Dortmund, Padeborn, Celle, and Switzerland — all heading for one focal point — 'a blue thistle'. This is the English translation of 'Le Chardon Bleu', a hotel situated just outside the French village of Verchaix, about an hour's coach ride from Geneva. Readers of previous ski reports will not be surprised by the inevitable tales of delays at Gatwick, cramped seating and everything wrapped in plastic. Nothing has changed!

We should have guessed what the trip was going to be like when we hit Victoria station that morning. Passport photographs are required to be stuck onto the ski lift pass. You may remember last year, one of the party spent the entire week with someone else's picture on his. This year, 3 people managed to jump in and out of the booth, so as to share the same strip of 4 pictures. When the printed film emerged from the booth it bore the face of one unknown woman, and the 3 members of our party. We are reasonably sure there was not a candid camera around!

The above incident was not quite of 'Stavely Award' merit, but one which followed at Geneva airport certainly was. Let me explain 'Stavely' (pronounced in broad Lancashire accent) first. It is a Territorial Army Regiment's colloquialism for a 'wally' or 'twit'. Every evening at dinner, the Chairman of the Stavely committee would announce that day's contenders for the title. The recipient would have to down a Malibu, a sickly, sweet concoction of coconut juice and whatever. The first recipient was seen with a pair of skis slung across his back, trying to board the coach, without success. This is not surprising as skis are nearly six feet long, which is some four feet wider than the door! The Malibu was downed with good grace, though he did try to blame one of the sighted members of the group for encouraging him to board. Have some St. Dunstaners no shame?

Standing outside the florists at Geneva airport, conspicuous by the lack of pink carnations, were new and old friends. Peter Briscoe from Hertfordshire has recently purchased 'Le Chardon Bleu' and was to brief us on our journey. Peter and Maya Zamudio are very old friends. Peter

recently retired from 5 Heavy Regiment, Royal Artillery, and is now living and working in Switzerland with his bride of 10 months. Because one of the Army guides was unable to come, they had brought along Catherine, a young Swiss ski instructress; it was a fair swap by MCP or any other standards!

We fell into the hotel just in time for the evening meal, to be served by Peter Briscoe's wife Meg, their daughter Helen, and her boyfriend, Sean, who all helped to run the hotel. Waiting hungrily, (for the food), were the remainder of our party, Captain Nick Lipscombe of 5 Heavy Regt., and Lieutenant Jan Burrows, Women's Royal Army Corps, attached to 3 Royal Horse Artillery, Sandie Boocock, wife of a previous escort on our trip and her two children, Olivier and William, a TV camera team from the British Services TV in BAOR. Thus with four St. Dunstaners, Gerry Jones, Charles Daly, Don Planner and Ray Hazan, Mrs. Stella Attfield and daughter Caroline, Rachel and Sean Wortley, Helen Wilkinson (daughter of Les Thompson), Adrian Loska, Nick Wright, two minor Hazans, and our escort, Major Peter Barnes, 7 Royal Anglian, the party numbered 22 all together.

Sun and snow

We awoke to a sun covered vista of snow and slopes on the other side of the valley. French bread and coffee were consumed at speed and the party was raring to board the mini-buses down to the ski hire shop — typical first day keenness. In fact this eagerness to get on lasted throughout the week, with the buses rarely leaving late.

There followed three glorious days of sun, good snow, the inevitable Stavely, who rarely left our sides, and most wonderful of all, empty slopes. To wend one's way down a piste with voices all around and the swish of air as a 'racer' passes by can be a sobering experience! Our guides, all first timers except Peter and Maya, stepped into their roles with cool ease. Jeanne and myself spent time waiting for the camera team to catch up with us! Mind you, the camera man did have the extra 26 kilos to carry. With trepidation, I have to recount that on day two, I was skiing for all



Ray Hazan enjoying the run.

I was worth only to learn afterwards that Peter Zamudio was doing the camera work skiing backwards in front of me, if you please. I am seriously considering pulling out of skiing. Surely I had been travelling at least 75 mph!?

The latter half of the week was disappointing weather-wise, which in turn affected our ability to get out on the slopes. Rain lower down and snow blizzards higher up the slopes restricted visibility. For some reason though this did not over concern the St. Dunstaners, the guides tended to panic at not being able to pick out the precipices! The most uncomfortable part, though, are the chair lifts when the weather is inclement. Ten minutes on a chair suspended 30 feet above the slope is not the place to be in a Force 5. However, Verchaix offered a range of slopes, so we were able, for the most part to find suitable areas. A warm 'gluwein' in a cafe was always a tempting haven in the worst of the storm.

A skiing trip does not consist only of getting wet on the outside — one must think of the inner man or woman! Fellow St. Dunstaners will surely be proud to hear



With his guide in close attendance, Gerry Jones skis down the slope.

that it was their colleagues who generally saw everyone else off to bed in the evenings. This prompted a comment 'The first night we saw the guides off; last night we saw the hotel staff off'. There was a pause, then came the reply — 'Tomorrow, it's deforestation!' But however late the night, the buses always left on time the next morning!

On one evening, a French couple came to entertain with accordion, barrel organ (or was it a hurdy-gurdy?) and bloomers. The music totally drowned out the bubbling of the hot oil in the centre of the table in which we cooked our meat fondue. The owner of the bloomers, who could hardly be described as young, chic and Parisienne danced with all the men and generally was the life and over-size soul of the party. It was a quieter evening sing-song when one of the locals from the village came to accompany us on his guitar. We gave our usual thank you dinner to

the guides, rounded off with a disco, and, of course, there were the Stavely presentations!

There was the Stavely who believed button lifts were meant to be sat upon, and wondered why he got a wet and shredded bottom. There was the person who took three and a half days to account for 45 francs (about £4.90). It took an experienced soldier nearly an hour to locate a sauna from a marked map. There was the St. Dunstaner who delicately dropped his lump of sugar into his coffee, paper wrapping and all. There was another who actually believed the guiding instruction furnished by another St. Dunstaner, and wondered why he ended up first in the shower and then the wardrobe! A 'group Stavely' was awarded twice; once for the party who went for a sauna, when the weather was too bad, only to find there was no heat, and the other party who went for a swim, only to find an outdoor pool

devoid of the essential in liquid form but in white flakes.

Our ski race is a sacrosanct event. Even the weather respects this moment, and let up for a short while to allow its happening. Five slalom gates were set up, and the St. Dunstaners were the first to set off. Peter Barnes supplied the most amusing commentary as gates were missed, skis passed either side of the pole marking a gate, and guides overtook their partners! Don Planner retook the trophy, a large alpine cow bell. He was closely followed by Gerry and then Charlie. Someone has to be tail end charlie, though his name happened to be Ray. This year, the guides generously donated a miniature cow bell for the winning youngster of the party. William Boocock, aged 13 won, and T-shirts were awarded to the runners up, the Hazan brothers. Finally, one of the more hilarious moments, the guides' race. Bravely, they are blind folded and allow the younger members of the party to guide them down. It would be impossible to emulate Peter's commentary of 'Jeanne out of Padeborn, mounted by Rachel, who refused at the first gate'. It was the culmination of much of what the week meant to us all. A companionship, an understanding of one another, of putting oneself into other shoes, of appreciating the beauty of living and what life has to offer. That Peter Zamudio won was neither important nor unexpected. But that they all had a go was brave to the extreme.

Abject apologies

So another glorious week passes into history. The party thank St. Dunstan's and the Commanding Officers, 5 Heavy Regt., R.A., and 3 RHA. We thank all those, young and younger still who accompanied us. There was never a grumble or moan, but smiles and generous offers of help. We thank our guides and escort from the bottom of our hearts, for, without them, the trip cannot exist. We can only apologise abjectly to Catherine, who took her job so seriously and conscientiously that she woke up in the middle of the night, sat bolt upright and screamed 'Stop, for God's sake, stop!'.



A St. Dunstan's shield in Chateaux D'Oex: Tiny Pointon with Michel and Lucy Bertholet.

CHATEAUX D'OEX

by Tiny Pointon

This time, on my annual trip to Chateaux D'Oex, I was accompanied by my 33 year old son, Michael, spending his first ever holiday with his 'clickety click' Dad. We arrived at the Hotel D'Lours and my usual room to be greeted by a very welcome and delicious meal. My ski instructor of many years now, Michel Bertholet, and his lovely wife, Lucy, called in just after we had finished unpacking to sort out details re skiing. As Michel was tied up with the Swiss Junior Championships terminating on the following day, my son went off to ski school in the morning and I observed with a running commentary, the slalom finals after which there was free glucein in the main square of the village.

During the fortnight Michael made full use of his White Highlands pass and skied not only at the local La Brayne run but also over to Gstaad where Roger Moore lives and beyond. I spent my six or seven miles a day skiing at Les Moulilins of Mount Chevrille.

The snow was well worn during the first week, polished by the waxed underside of many skis, having thawed a bit and then iced over which made for fast skiing. On

Friday, March 13th it snowed overnight, about 15cms, and cleared to give a lovely weekend, enabling locals to come out in large numbers and enjoy themselves teaching their kids to ski, and the restaurants did roaring business. I was thanking my lucky stars that I had been better prepared for this trip than I had for many years, able to make use of the swimming pool at IFH regularly, in conjunction with my stationary bike and half a dozen lessons on the dry slope at Borowskis, Newhaven. It was pleasant not to feel as I had in recent years, that someone had been to work on the back of my lap with soccer or ski boots.

It snowed again on Sunday night and early Monday morning giving one the impression of skiing in porridge. A few days earlier, one rapidly built up speed on a gentle slope until, as the gradient increased, one was told to do what was necessary (there is a river at the bottom of the piste and although it is stocked with trout there are other ways of catching them.) By Monday morning one had to work hard to push oneself over the same terrain and there was still a bit of ice at the bottom so one didn't get careless.

During the second week it snowed in Chateaux D'Oex some time every day. So this year was a considerably more varied experience than ever before. On the last day when we had arranged for a video to be made, it was snowing hard as I did my first warm-up run down the 650 metres run. Just on cue, as the camera man appeared so did the sun. Unfortunately he missed what I was told to be a most spectacular fall by my son just before he arrived. Still, with only one week's previous skiing, my son did achieve the Swiss Silver medal award which I still can't make — that is the worst of being too tall.

Obviously when skiing one does fall fairly often but at low trajectory. It is rather like dropping off a motor bike at 60mph, one just rolls and no problem. But one day during the holiday, when doing a fairly fast schuss, a lump of snow jumped out in front of the outer edge of my right ski and over I went. The first part of my anatomy to hit was my right cheek bone. While sorting out skis, sticks, etc., I did wonder if my dentures had dropped out

into the snow would they have been found, and then even more, what if it had been my plastic eye? One cannot really take them out and stick them in one's bum bag first as that would probably frighten all the kids off the piste. Come to think of it one has to remove such things when water skiing but that was a bit different, and not so many spectators.

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.

Joseph Miller, of Lochmaben, Dumfriesshire, joined St. Dunstan's on April 1st.

Mr. Miller served as a Corporal with the Straits Settlement Volunteer Force from 1928 to 1946, and his vision was impaired after being a Prisoner of War at Changi. Following his discharge from the Army, Mr. Miller worked as an architect, and since his retirement his hobbies have been gardening and playing the piano, which he plays by ear.

Walter Percival Parnell, of Shrewsbury, joined St. Dunstan's on March 25th.

Mr. Parnell served with the Oxford & Bucks. L.I. from 1929, was wounded in the UK by the explosion of an anti-tank grenade and was discharged from the Army in February 1945. Prior to retirement he was a groundsman/caretaker. Mr. Parnell is married with three adult daughters.

Thomas Thornley, of St. Helens, Merseyside, joined St. Dunstan's again on March 9th, having been with us for a few months in 1980.

Mr. Thornley served as a Private in the Cheshire Regiment during the First World War and was wounded in France. He was able to work as a wagon loader until retirement some years ago. Mr. Thornley is married.

COMPUTER WEEKEND, April 11/12th

By Ray Hazan

The second of our weekends was as substantially supported as the first had been — some 35 souls all told. This shows the continuing interest in this new medium of expression, and that new participants had not been frightened off by the jargon!

We started with the discussion of a paper submitted by Norman Maries. He proposed that manuals of instruction on whatever subject, be typed onto computer disk or cassette. This would give the user quick and independent access to the information contained therein using the word processing function on their computers. We all know how long it can take to 'skim' through a C90 cassette. He further suggested that these manuals and other software could be exchanged via the telephone line from computer to computer. The problem of copyright was raised, though it was hoped that this would be waived as long as the reading was for private use only. Although the practicalities of actually typing the manual onto disk has yet to be solved, it is hoped that anyone who has material will contact Phil Duffee.

For the remainder of the first morning, the Winter Garden sounded like a battlefield of robots — as speech synthesisers spoke out from all four corners of the room. Phil had ensured that there were plenty of units for people to get their hands on. We were grateful to our old (in time, not age!) friends David and Rita Calderwood, who helped guide beginners through the maze.

In the afternoon, Mr. Bramham Knight of Toucan Communications talked to us about how he started his company and his work for the handicapped. His voice synthesisers were produced originally for those with a speech impediment. He now provides BBC based systems for the visually handicapped, offering a personal and efficient service.

For several years now, IBM has dominated the world market with its business machines. They are expensive. Other manufacturers have not been slow in producing 'clones' or 'compatibles' that run

the same software programs at a greatly reduced cost. Amstrad is a typical example of this, at £600 as opposed to £2900. This makes the Amstrad and its extras slightly cheaper even than the BBC Master and its add-ons. However, the Amstrad is more than powerful enough for the average home user, where a second hand BBC would be quite sufficient.

On Sunday morning, Paul Blenkhorn demonstrated the program he has written in order to make the Amstrad talk. At £270 for the Mimic speech synthesiser and software, this is a remarkable bargain. One new aspect of his 'screen reader' program is the ability to have just certain parts of the screen read out where you know there is specific information. This is an enormous time saver. Visually handicapped people must surely be indebted to someone who has made commercially available equipment, cheaper than specifically designed hardware, available?

We were grateful to Padre Bootes, who is a great enthusiast, and who brought his machine in. He personally taught me how to incorporate sounds in my programs, and so my office now resounds to wails, sirens and scales! A 'spelling checker' was successfully tried out on the BBC. In all, a fruitful and interesting weekend.

Phil Duffee reminds all users of the register he is maintaining. Only two people have so far contributed. Please do not forget to contact Phil by letter rather than by telephone. Below are some useful addresses:

VDU Magazine (quarterly at £1 per issue). Details from:

M. Cassidy, 127 Almond Road, Gorleston on Sea, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, NR31 8EN

B. Knight, Esq., Toucan Communications, 18 Gingerbread Lane, Nantwich, Cheshire, CW5 6NA

Tape copies of the talks and software from:

P. Jones, Esq., B.E.M., 69 Prospect Road., Bradway, Sheffield, Yorks.



Bob Osborne, with help from Ted Brown, feels how close his and Tom Simmon's woods were. The first touched the jack, the second touched the first and the third connected with the second — fine bowling!

MARCH BOWLS HANDICAP

by Ted Brown, Chairman, St. Dunstan's Bowling Club

I must thank all those who turned up for the March Handicap and those who supported us so well all through the tournament. I am certain we could do a lot more varied competitions if we had extra bowling facilities — as our membership is increasing each time, we have to cut down the time of each game to be fair to all, and the visually handicapped bowlers need more time, not less. Anyhow, I have heard it said by a large number of people that this tournament was the happiest and most smoothly run tournament we have had for quite some time. I must congratulate all those concerned in running the competition so well, but without co-operation from the competitors that would not have been possible. Well done everybody.

The competition was divided into two classes: the totally blind, made up of two large sections, and they were all guaranteed seven games at the start and then the

finals; and the partially sighted in three sections, being the larger group of the two. They played six matches first, and then a Round Robin in the final. As everyone played more games this year, there wasn't much time to practise for the new players but I would like to congratulate everyone on the quality of their bowling, some being absolutely brilliant. It's a pity that television isn't available to let the public know how well they adapt themselves with different disabilities as well as blindness. Well done everyone.

A special trophy is awarded at the March tournament for the best beginner, which was won by Harry Davies — a very nice rosebowl presented to us by the firm who laid our new carpet down in the bowling green. And a very special gift was given to a bowler who never complained about what section she was in or who she was playing with or against. She goes in,

has a bash and I know she thoroughly enjoys every minute of it. I am of course referring to our Vi Delaney — well done champ.

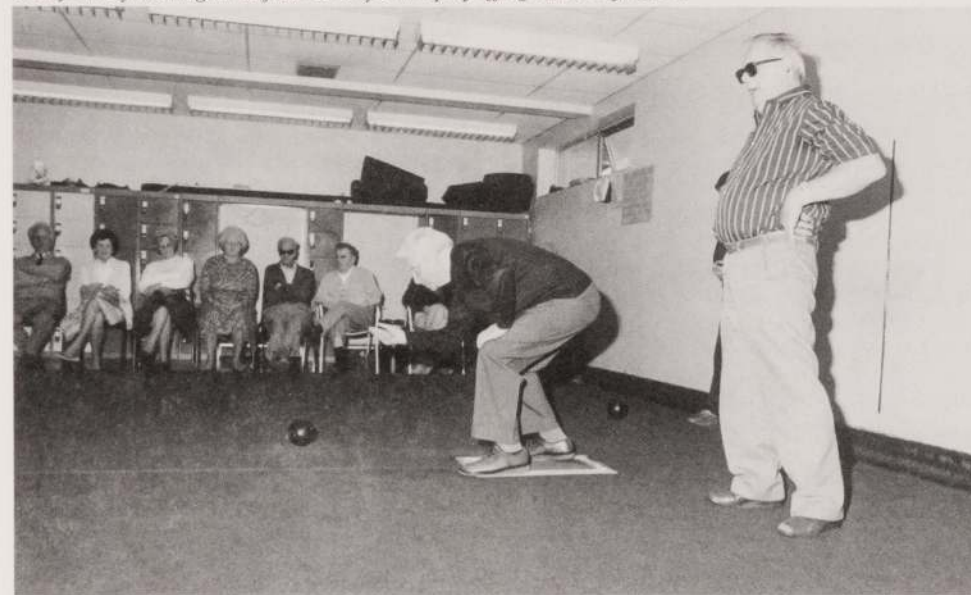
During the bowling fortnight we had two visits from two interesting organisations. The first were the television studios at Ian Fraser House filming the progress of Jamie Cuthbertson, who were very interested in the bowling and the way in which information is relayed from one end to the other. The second visit on March 9th was made by the members of the World Veterans' Federation holding their 45th Council meeting in Brighton. They came in small parties and were more than fascinated by the calling and the different positions on the mat. They understood more clearly when they were told how the bowler knew where the bowl had dropped in relation to the jack. I met two officials from Thailand who were quite surprised when I told them I had been there. I told them I helped to build their railway during the war. They spoke excellent English and were sorry when I told them I had been a POW under the Japanese. They shook my hand very warmly and thanked me for helping them with the bowling.

During the whole tournament two wives were very busy going round the building every day selling tickets for the raffle to be drawn at the presentation. I mean of course Grace and Nancy. I don't know the final figure offhand but I know it was a very good amount indeed — well done girls, you did a magnificent job.

At the end of the tournament we had a marvellous dinner in the Winter Garden. We had no special invited guests, but we had our good friends, the helpers and callers from Brighton. One special person introduced by the Chairman of the National Bowling Club was our new President, Major Neve, and he was received with a great deal of enthusiasm and affection. Two toasts were given, one to The Queen and the other to absent friends. I'm sure everyone enjoyed the dinner. As usual the Winter Garden looked like wonderland and I would like to thank Paul and Billy and his staff for a wonderful turn out.

After dinner everyone wandered over to the annexe for the dance, raffle and presentation which was carried out with the usual efficiency. I'm sure if the Major does too many presentations his right arm will be twice as long as the left! Another

Harry Preedy bowling in the final Totally Blind play-off against Percy Stubbs.





Geoff Bunting receives a presentation from Arthur Neve. In the background is Mrs. Bunting.

Ron Freer, winner of the Partially Sighted competition, in action.



ceremony took place after the trophies. Mrs Dacre presented to the Chairman of the St. Dunstan's National Bowling Club and the Chairman of the Brighton Sports and Social Club a pennant which will be flown wherever we bowl, so we can both use it. The inscription is 'St. Dunstan's Bowling Club'. The next large item was the giant raffle — that's the only word to describe it. There were 33 prizes in all which were donated by the players, wives and a lot of very good friends. I really don't know what to say except thanks a million everyone and I do hope you all enjoyed it.

Thanks

Now I come to a difficult part of this report, you've guessed — a large list of thank you's. It's in no particular order, so here goes. Starting at headquarters, the office staff and drivers — I'm sure you must all suffer with head-aches by the time we are all settled in. Many thanks to the staff at IFH: the transport drivers and office staff; the hobbies staff for keeping a large number busy while they are not bowling; and last but not least, the domestic and dining room staff — you certainly take some stick and still bounce back with a smile, well done all of you. A special thanks to Commander Conway, Major Neve and their staff for keeping us going with the ever-loving tea or coffee. A great big thank you to you all.

RESULTS

Totally Blind

Section 1

Percy Stubbs — 1st
Bob Osborne — runner up

Section 2

Harry Preedy — 1st
Tom Simmons — runner up

Final play off

Harry Preedy — 1st
Percy Stubbs — 2nd
Bob Osborne — 3rd

Partially Sighted

Ron Freer — 1st
George Hudson — 2nd
Walford Davies — 3rd

MOON CONFERENCE by Phil Duffee

At the beginning of January I attended a conference called by the Production Development Officer of the R.N.I.B., Mr. Tom Maley, in order to look at the future of the Moon reading system. The necessity of taking a fresh look at Moon has come about as a result of the invention of a Moon writing machine; the Moonwriter.

Moon has not been studied since it was first invented in the 19th century and thus its many drawbacks had not been evaluated officially at any time. Individual teachers, like myself, have commented on the difficulty of the student and teacher but these comments had not been collated. It was now felt that it was time this situation was changed due to the new lease of life generated for Moon as a result of the Moonwriter.

Representatives from all the organisations involved in the day to day use and teaching of Moon were invited so that they might see if it was time to make an in-depth study of the reading system to see how it could be improved.

The conference was attended by 20 men and women who were drawn from the teaching profession, the makers of the writing machine, the manager of the Moon printing branch at Reigate, Birmingham University and the two representatives from the R.N.I.B., who had called the conference. All agreed that some changes were long overdue.

It was unanimously decided to set up a working party of those present who would meet three or four times during 1987 so that those who were engaged in research, such as Dr. Michael Tobin of Birmingham University, Possum, the makers of the writing machine and others might report progress. The aim being to see how far changes need to be made and to arrive at some conclusion with regard to the direction any future research should take. It was accepted by all present that no change should be made lightly.

In view of the computerisation of the production of Moon at Reigate, any changes could be swiftly implemented once the decision had been made that the

change was necessary and to the benefit of both readers and teachers. Care would have to be exercised so that current readers would not have to cope with too many alterations to the system.

The concensus was that the first change was likely to be that reading style should follow that of braille, that is from left to right on every line rather than the zig-zag method currently employed. Research has already shown that this change would be acceptable to almost all Moon readers and would be easily assimilated into their reading style. In fact, reading from left to right would facilitate reading with both hands, thus making Moon reading quicker than at present.

The above suggestions are the main ones to come out of the conference. However, there were other things that need to be looked at and Michael Tobin is setting up a research project with Moon readers to test some of the suggestions. Results will be reported at the next conference.

Tom Maley is writing an article for inclusion in the *New Beacon* in the near future. This may give rise to comments from present Moon readers. We hope so as we would like to incorporate suggestions into our research.

It is obvious that we shall not please ALL Moon readers but those present at the first conference felt that most readers would welcome the changes. However, no changes will be made until the problems have been thoroughly researched and tested in the field, both by readers and teachers as the reason for making changes is to make Moon easier to read.

Some of the changes being tested are that the gaps between the letters and lines be enlarged slightly, that the letters themselves should be crisper and that some other sign be found for the P, Q and H. If any of our Moon readers would like to comment please feel free to do so. Send your letter to me at Ian Fraser House so that I may pass your opinions on to the others on the working party. I don't mind whether your letters are for or against, they are all grist to the mill.

AMATEUR RADIO AGM

by Bill Shea

On Friday, March 27th 1987, St. Dunstan's Radio Amateurs and SWL's were making their way to IFH wondering how their aerial systems were standing up to the gale force winds which were sweeping the country. In spite of the battering IFH was getting, the aerials stayed up and were working well, thanks to all the hard work carried out by the maintenance staff and our many friends in the Brighton area. After supper there was a Committee meeting, while the rest of the members broke up into small groups discussing the DX they had or hadn't worked and the one that got away! Others were in the radio shack operating the station.

On Saturday morning in the Winter Garden, Ted John, G3SEJ, our Chairman/Secretary/Treasurer, opened the A.G.M. with a welcome to our President, Sir Henry Leach and to those members who were present. A silent tribute was paid to Bill Stevens, G3TFK, whose death was reported in the March *Review*. Members were sorry to hear that David Castleton was unable to be with us. After the minutes of the 1986 A.G.M. had been dealt with, Ted John put on his three hats and gave his various reports. Members expressed their appreciation for his excellent work over the past year, and to Peter Jones for the production of 'Ragchew', our tape news letter. Sir Henry then took the Chair for the election of officers. Bill Shea, G4AUJ, Chairman, Ted John, G3SEJ, Secretary/Treasurer, Jim Blake, GOBEQ, and George Cole, G4AWI, were voted back on to the Committee, and Alan Reynolds, G3VRI, replaced Tom Hart, G4KPF. Arthur Holmes was congratulated on passing the Radio Amateur Examination with distinction. We look forward to him getting through his morse test and getting his 'A' licence. Discussion followed about the Society's future activities. After the meeting, members and their wives and escorts had lunch in the dining room with Sir Henry.

Back in the Winter Garden after lunch



Beryl John displays the shield commemorating the G3MOW Trophy she received for her service to the Amateur Radio Society. Behind her is speaker, David Laycock. Photo: John Barrow.

we had a very lively, humorous and interesting talk on 'Digital Information Technology'. This was given by David Laycock, Director of the Computer Centre for the Disabled, Polytechnic of Central London.

At six o'clock Saturday evening we met on the fifth floor with our guests for a pre-dinner drink. Our guests included Mr. and Mrs. Garnett-Orme, Mr. and Mrs. Weisblatt, Mr. and Mrs. Norman French, members of IFH staff and some of our friends from radio societies in Sussex. Paul James and his staff are to be congratulated for a most excellent dinner. After dinner, David Laycock presented the G3MOW Trophy. This Trophy is awarded each year for 'Outstanding Service to St. Dunstan's Amateur Radio Society.' This year the Trophy went to Mrs. Beryl John who has looked after the Society's books since it was first founded. Guests and members then retired to the annexe for dancing.

On Sunday morning members broke up into groups, some operating the station while others learnt soldering techniques from Peter Jones.

If there is sufficient support it is hoped to organise a visit to Arreton Manor on the Isle of Wight, on Sunday, July 26th. Arreton Manor has a number of museums and craft centres. Members will be interested in the Wireless Museum, while wives will be able to enjoy the Lace Museum and the craft centres. Will all those who are interested please contact Ted John, 52, Broadway Avenue, Wallasey, Merseyside, as soon as possible so he can make the necessary arrangements.

The Society has an Atlas 210X transceiver for sale with power supply and console for £300 ONO. Anybody interested please contact Ted John.

Any St. Dunstaner interested in Amateur Radio will be warmly welcomed at our meetings. These will be the weekends July 25th/26th and October 17th/18th.

CLUB NEWS

BRIGHTON — Bridge

We concluded our programme in the West Sussex League with a match against Lewes on March 29th. After a very close and enjoyable match, Lewes won by 10 victory points to 6. Our team: J. Padley, W. Lethbridge, R. Evans, R. Goding, R. Pacitti, A. Dodgson, M. Tybinski, R. Freer.

Brighton Bridge Club Easter Drive was held on April 5th. There were 20 players in all, including markers. The winners of prizes were:

R. Pacitti & Mrs. Pacitti	1500
R. Evans & Miss Sturdy	1260
M. Tybinski & Mrs. Andrews	800
Dr. J. Goodlad & Mrs. McPherson	580

Pairs — April 12th

M. Tybinski & Mrs. V. McPherson	62.7
A. Dodgson & Mrs. Buller-King	58.7
W. Lethbridge & Mr. R. Goodlad	55.5
R. Goding & Mrs. Tebbit	52.3
R. Pacitti & Mrs. Pacitti	50.0
Miss Stenning & Mrs. McMillan	45.2
R. Fullard & Dr. J. Goodlad	38.9
W. Phillips & Miss Sturdy	36.5

TRAVEL GUIDES FOR VISUALLY HANDICAPPED

London Regional Transport have produced two new initiatives to help visually handicapped people travel around in London: a new large-print bus map of central London; and an edited braille version of 'Access to the Underground', the guide to the tube system for elderly and disabled passengers. The booklet describes the characteristics of each line and gives a number of handy tips about train travel and station layouts, for example, listing stations with staircases for guide-dog owners. Both items are available free of charge from The Unit for Disabled Passengers, London Regional Transport, 55 Broadway, London SW1H 0BD.

Entertainment Section

We regret the passing of Mrs. Walch, widow of the late Joe Walch, and mother of Joan Osborne, after a long period of illness. All members wish to offer condolences to the family.

Phyllis O'Kelly

FAMILY NEWS

PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to:

Tamzin, grand-daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J.L. Douglass, of Ruislip, on winning the bronze, silver and gold medals for disco dancing, aged 9.

Personal Achievements *continued*

Frances and Zoë, grand-daughters of *Mr. and Mrs. Bert Ward*, of Leeds, who took part in the Mid-Somerset Music Festival, held in the Pavilion, Bath. They are both first violins in the Bath Society of Young Musicians Orchestra which won the Somerset Cup with a score of 85 points.

Caroline, daughter of *Mr. and Mrs. J. Attfield*, of Paignton, on having successfully completed a Secretarial and Business Studies Course at the Lewis Independent Secretarial College, Torquay. The course included a multiple examination for which Caroline received many passes with distinction.

R. Benson, of Billingshurst, who exhibited 'Picture Framing — as trained by St. Dunstan's' during April at the 'Made in Billingshurst Show'.

WEDDINGS

Congratulations to:

Jacqueline Ann, daughter of *Mr. and Mrs. C. Daly*, of Harlow, on her marriage to Vincenzo Giardina on May 24th.

Alison Elizabeth, grand-daughter of *Mr. and Mrs. F.R. Mills*, of Tavistock, Devon, on her marriage to Andrew John Wise on May 30th at St. Mary's Church, Tamerton Folliott.

Paul, grandson of *Mr. and Mrs. J. Wheeler*, of Wembley, on his marriage to Joanna Wright on September 22nd 1986.

RUBY WEDDINGS

Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. J.L. Douglass, of Ruislip, who celebrated their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on May 10th.

Mr. and Mrs. A. Guyler, of Hayes, Middlesex, on the occasion of their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on May 3rd.

Mr. and Mrs. G. Poole, of Peacehaven, who celebrated their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on May 9th.

GOLDEN WEDDINGS

Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. J. Donohoe, of Litherland, Liverpool, on the occasion of their Golden Wedding Anniversary on April 28th.

Mr. and Mrs. R.G. Shed, of Burgess Hill, who celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on April 18th.

GRANDCHILDREN

Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. A. Franklin, of Hoddesdon, on the birth of their grandson, Nicholas Stephen, a first child born on January 28th to their son, Christopher, and his wife, Stella.

Mr. and Mrs. M. Ash, of Exeter, on the birth of their grand-daughter, Jane Melanie, born on March 17th to their son and daughter-in-law, Stephen and Joanne Ash.

Mr. and Mrs. A. Lockhart, of Dagenham, on the arrival of their grand-daughter, Lucindia Charlotte, born on April 14th to their daughter, Jeanne, and son-in-law, Peter Neal.

GREAT GRANDCHILDREN

Congratulations to:

Mrs. Q. Waller, widow of the later *Mr. W.H. Waller*, of Ham Street, on the birth of her great grandson, Daniel James, born on October 28th 1986 to Linda and Robert Grey.

Mrs. C.H. Smith, widow of the late *Mr. J.H. Smith*, of Birmingham, on the birth of her sixth great grandchild, a little boy born recently to her grandson, Dr. Steven Smith and his wife, Kerry.

DEATHS

We offer sympathy to:

Mrs. M. Fallowfield, widow of the late *Mr. G. Fallowfield*, of Durrington, on the recent death of her aunt.

Mr. W.D. Faulkner, of Sutton Coldfield, who mourns the death of his mother on April 4th.

The family of Mrs. M.E. Fulbrook, widow of the late *Mr. F.C.W. Fulbrook*, of Brighton, on her death on April 13th after a long illness.

Mr. W.A.H. Gibson, on the death of his mother, Mrs. Gibson, widow of the late *Captain R.H. Gibson*, of Beauminster, on April 19th.

The family of Mrs. M. Maisey, widow of the late *Ernest Maisey*, of Plymouth, who passed away on April 12th.

Mrs. M. Mitchell, widow of the late *Mr. A.C. Mitchell*, whose only brother passed away on April 11th following a serious illness.

Mr. and Mrs. R. Moody, nephew of Mrs. E.A. Savage, widow of the late *Mr. A. Savage*, of Bollington Cross, near Macclesfield, following her death on April 11th, aged 85.

The family of Mrs. C. Outtrim, widow of the late *Mr. A. Outtrim*, of Hertford, who passed away on April 3rd.

Mrs. B. Pepper, wife of *Mr. E.G. Pepper*, of Coggeshall, on the death of her father on March 27th.

The family of Mrs. E. Walch, widow of the late *Mr. J. Walch*, of Brighton, who passed away in hospital on April 13th, a few days before her 93rd birthday.

Mrs. Walters, widow of the late *Mr. J.C. Walters*, of Hove, whose father passed away on March 6th in Birmingham.

The family of Mrs. D. Wardle, widow of the late *Mr. G.W. Wardle*, of Brixworth, Northampton, following her death on April 3rd. It was only on March 28th that she had spent a happy day celebrating her 89th birthday with her family.

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.

S.A. Belsham, Metropolitan Police Force

Sidney Albert Belsham, of Broadway, Worcestershire, passed away suddenly at his home on April 7th, aged 79. He has been a St. Dunstaner for over 40 years.

Mr. Belsham was a Constable in the Metropolitan Police Force which he joined in 1931. In 1940, whilst on motor-cycle patrol duty at Bedfont in Middlesex, he was blown off his machine following a bomb explosion and suffered severe injuries as a result. The injuries to his back were so serious that, for the rest of his life, he was confined to a wheelchair. His eyesight was also seriously affected but despite long periods of hospitalisation involving major surgery which continued intermittently over the years, Mr. Belsham bore his disabilities with tremendous courage and cheerfulness.

On joining St. Dunstan's, Mr. Belsham mastered braille and typewriting with great

efficiency. Before joining the Police Force, he had studied cabinet making at Shoreditch Technical College and was employed by one of the foremost furniture manufacturers in the country. It was natural, therefore, that he should resolve to continue with woodwork and joinery as his hobby, and from 1947 he continued to be busily occupied in his own workshop where he made numerous and varied items of furniture of exceptionally high quality and of intricate design. All this was carried out from his wheelchair and involved the use of electrical drills and other sophisticated power tools.

In 1983, Mr. Belsham celebrated his Golden Wedding Anniversary with his wife, Mary, who over many years, has cared for him with remarkable devotion. He also leaves a niece, nephew and other members of the family who will miss him greatly.

In Memory continued

E.G. Cork, Royal Artillery

Edward George Cork, of Salisbury passed away suddenly on March 31st, aged 76. Ted, as he was affectionately known, had been a St. Dunstaner for eight years.

During the Second World War he served as a Lance-Bombardier in the Royal Artillery from 1940 until his discharge in 1945. In civilian life, he was Postmaster at Verwood in Dorset until retirement in 1973. Mr. Cork was keenly interested in gardening and was involved in village activities. He greatly enjoyed a game of cards or dominoes and was frequently a welcome visitor at IFH. In 1983 he and his wife, Betty, celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary.

He leaves his widow, their daughters, Stella and Grace, and members of the family.

E.T.F. Proffitt, Royal Army Medical Corps

Eugene Thomas Francis Proffitt passed away at Pearson House on April 11th, aged 76. He had been a St. Dunstaner since 1952.

Mr. Proffitt served in the R.A.M.C. during the Second World War and on his admission to St. Dunstan's trained as a physiotherapist. He already had a full nursing qualification. His first appointment was to Queen Mary's Hospital for Children at Carshalton and he subsequently transferred to Epsom District Hospital where he worked part time and built up a busy and excellent private practice. He gave up his hospital appointment in 1969 and continued to work privately until 1984 when he retired on health grounds. His health thereafter deteriorated rapidly and he became a permanent resident at Pearson House in December 1986.

He leaves his widow, Ellen, to whom he was happily married for 46 years, and their adopted son and daughter.

H. Pye, 2nd Loyal Regiment

Harry Pye, of Preston, Lancashire, passed away in hospital on April 12th, a few days after his 69th birthday. He had been in our borderline category for some years, but became a full St. Dunstaner in 1974.

Mr. Pye was a Private during the Second World War in the 2nd Loyal Regiment and was a Prisoner of War in Singapore from 1942 until 1945 during which time he suffered severe deprivation. In 1947, he was trained by St. Dunstan's in braille and typewriting as well as joinery and, although a shoemaker before the war, mastered assembly and inspection work with skill. Mr. Pye was employed in industry, including a post with Shell-Mex Petroleum, until 1969 but retired two years later by which time his health was beginning to deteriorate due to his years in a prisoner of war camp.

Nevertheless, Mr. Pye continued to enjoy joinery as a hobby, designing and making superb models of shire horse carts as well as working in his garden and greenhouse. He also greatly enjoyed walks in the country with his wife, Doris, and their dog.

He leaves his widow, with whom he had shared 28 happy years.

W.C. Thomas, Royal Air Force

Walter Charles Thomas, of Rottingdean, died at Ian Fraser House on April 19th, aged 66. He had been a St. Dunstaner since 1944.

Wally, as he was affectionately known, enlisted in the R.A.F. in 1940 at the age of 20 and it was whilst serving in 6220 Bomb Disposal Unit in 1944 that he was wounded by a TNT explosion which left him totally blind and deaf. In the following years he underwent a number of operations but despite a brief return to perception of light and colour, none were ultimately successful. At an early age Wally had to face the knowledge that he would be doubly disabled for the rest of his life. He learnt to hear with his hands and in 1960 the account of his remarkable story *Life in My Hands* was published. This was widely acclaimed as one of the most original and moving books ever written in the annals of human courage. It described how he was blown up whilst helping dismantle a 2,200lb German bomb dropped on an American airfield in Essex, and his long fight back to a normal life with his family and a job with a firm of light industry.

In 1970, at the suggestion of his welfare visitor, he took up gliding which gave him the feeling of adventure which once again he eloquently described in the June 1971 *Review*. The cockpit canopy was removed to allow him as much sensation of flying as possible and a control box enabled the pilot to signal to him the movements to make with the joystick to control the glider. He returned again and again to enjoy the freedom of the air.

By the time he moved to Sussex ten years ago his health was starting to deteriorate. By then, however, he had visited Germany at the invitation of the League of Blind Ex-Servicemen and had been out to Cape Town to stay as a guest of St. Dunstan's (South Africa). He learnt new hobby skills and enjoyed the activities of the gardening weeks. Due to his wife's declining health he had recently been resident at IFH where he will be greatly missed by the staff, his many friends and fellow St. Dunstaners.

He was twice married and leaves his widow, Joan, and three children from his first marriage.