

**St Dunstans
Review
April 1988**

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Cover Picture: From the dreaming spires of Durham to the exotic East. See Alan Milnes' article on page 8.

From the Chairman

I want to say a few words about an organisation which has just been created called Forces Care. It is the brainchild of the Chairman of S.S.A.F.A. (of which I am a Vice-President) and the concept is that it should be an 'umbrella organisation' whose aim is 'to improve the support available to Service and Ex-Service men, women and their families by providing a welfare service: a network of local workers able to act as agents for any Service or Ex-Service charity or benevolent organisation'.

In essence this is an overdue and much needed exercise in communication. The widespread nature of its network should provide a more comprehensive coverage of those in need and on receipt of a call the existing, individual charitable organisations will, as appropriate, take the lead in that case. It is *not* a take-over bid; all partnership members will retain their full, normal autonomy. Its financing (which is not great for its 'agency' role) will be entirely independent.

Forces Care will be formally launched in about a year's time. In my judgement all responsible, relevant organisations should support it. St. Dunstan's does.

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New subject. In this issue we have set out in some detail the rules for fair play over bookings at Ian Fraser House. I hope you will read them carefully so as to avoid disappointment.

Henry Leach

Accommodation Bookings at Ian Fraser House

The facilities at Ian Fraser House were greatly improved in the course of the refurbishment that was completed in 1985 and, since then, the demand for accommodation, both for individuals and for groups, has been at a very high level. This has given rise to occasional difficulties, particularly at the more popular times of the year, such as Christmas, or when the larger societies hold their meetings, and some St. Dunstaners have written to tell me how disappointed they are at not being able to take a holiday at a time of their choice.

In the nature of things, we shall never be able to give everybody what they want all of the time but it is essential that we have a system that is understandable, straightforward to run and demonstrably fair and, to this end, the following guide-lines, prepared after consultation with the staff in Brighton and London, are set out for your information.

St. Dunstaners are welcome to apply to reserve accommodation in either double or single rooms as far in advance as they wish, and such applications will be acknowledged. However, no confirmation of a booking will be given by Headquar-

ters until six months before the beginning of the proposed visit. Where bookings are in excess of the available accommodation, allocation will be made by reference to two sets of factors:—

firstly, the nature of the visit, e.g., initial or vocational training, hobby activity or holiday, compassionate or welfare reasons;

secondly, the frequency of previous visits to Ian Fraser House and the distance from Brighton. In this connection, the accommodation year runs from 1st July to 30th June.

This probably sounds quite complicated but the principle is a simple one: we wish to encourage as many people as possible to make use of the excellent amenities at Ian Fraser House and, insofar as we are sometimes dealing with a commodity in short supply, we need to have a fair system of sharing out what is available.

Application for bookings should continue to be made through Miss Frances Casey at Headquarters in the usual way.

William C. Weisblatt
Secretary

Subversive Syd Scroggie?

Viewers of a recent television programme will have been surprised to learn that St. Dunstaner Syd Scroggie is a 'subversive.' Subversive, that is, according to the Economic League, described on World in Action as 'a right wing pressure group,' who produce a register of 'subversives.' This register is sold to around 2000 companies in Britain, who then use them to check job applicants. 'It does give you a slightly queer feeling. Big Brother and all that' said Syd, who came to be included in the register after writing to a newspaper concerning a painting of Nelson Mandela, pointing out that the painting was not intended as a political statement. This, in the opinion of the Economic League,

made Syd an anti-apartheid supporter, and therefore a subversive.

Perhaps 'A Moment to Spare' should be retitled 'Revolutionary Ravings'!!

DON PLANNER IN CHARITY MARATHON RUN

Don Planner will be amongst a team of runners who are running to raise money for the Royal School for the Blind in the London Marathon on April 17th, and is looking for sponsors. Don wishes to thank all of those who helped him raise £1,690.77 last year, and this year he is hoping to beat this — he is aiming for £2,000! If you wish to sponsor Don, then please telephone him on: 0202 730404.

Recollections of the Burma-Siam Railway

This is the concluding part of the article by Alf Lockhart on the building of the Burma-Siam Railway, completed 45 years ago.

By May, the camp at K3 was taken over by Australians. These were the 2/10th, 2/15th and the Anti-tank. The few remaining British stayed on and carried on as usual.

Malaria, dysentery, and now beri-beri were rife and still taking a heavy toll. At K3 the British became so depleted that it could not muster enough fit men to make a funeral detail for one of our men. In such cases we called on the Aussies. All through the summer the rain continued to pour down. An outbreak of cholera at Tonchan quickly spread to Kanu. There was not much that we could do about cholera. In such conditions as we were living, one is either lucky or one is not.

Doubtless because of the mud, yet another insidious scourge put in an appearance. This was the tropical ulcer. These are terrible things. They can eat the flesh at an alarming rate, and can even attack the bone. Constant vigilance was needed to protect these ulcers from blowflies. These flies seemed to lay their eggs in the wound, or even the dressing which covered it as they flew past, and the next day the ulcer would be full of maggots. It was not unusual to see a man picking out the maggots with a pair of tweezers made from bamboo.

By the end of July 1943 the railway had reached Kanu. With the arrival of the railway, most of the survivors of the 'E', 'W' and 'J' Bns. were sent down-river either to hospital camps or to other types of rest camps, to enable us to regain some strength. Thus the latter quarter of 1943 was spent in camps along the lower reaches of the river. In these camps food was fairly, and according to jungle camp

standards, plentiful. At Tamarkan I came across Major Moon, one of the Australian M.O.'s from Kanu Riverside. He was doing sterling work in the Surgical Ward. He saved many a man's leg with his skill in healing tropical ulcers. Unfortunately, many were too far gone and amputation was the only answer, if the man's life was to be saved. Not that this was always successful. Most men were at death's door when they were sent to such camps.

On the journey down to Tamarkan, I passed the much talked-about bridges at Wampo and Tamarkan. Although Tamarkan Bridge is the one depicted when the Bridge over the River Kwai is talked about by pundits, it has very

little to do with the British P.O.W.'s. In fact, this bridge was originally over a river in Sumatra. It was dismantled there by the Japs, and brought to Thailand along with a large number of the Dutch. The bridge that became the folk-lore of the railway was the bridge at Wampo. Wampo Bridge is actually a viaduct. It runs around a cliff which forms the bank of the river at this point. It is several hundred yards long, about 200-300 feet above the river, as far as I can recall, and is a most ramshackle, Heath-Robinson looking construction. I have been over both bridges a number of times, but Wampo Bridge always made my hair stand on end.

In December 1943, the railway was at last completed. There was a general regrouping of the various P.O.W. groups, which by this time had become intermingled. All 4 Group personnel in the area of Chung-Kai were brought together and encamped there until such time as the

*Malaria, dysentery and now
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still taking a heavy toll'*



A Drawing of the Kanu Camp in 1943.

new 4 Group base was established, at a place named Tamuan.

Several months were spent at Chung-Kai. The food was good and plentiful in this camp, but the huts were old and absolutely lousy. I don't mean lousy-rotten, I mean lousy with lice and bed-bugs. Fortunately, in the 4 Group intake was Colonel Dunlop — the Colonel I mentioned earlier at Kanu Riverside. He was most unhappy about the state of the hospital which, although it had doctors in charge, was almost completely staffed by volunteer helpers, mostly untrained albeit willing. Colonel Dunlop first collected all the R.A.M.C. and R.A.A.M.C. personnel who were in the camp and put them to work as nursing orderlies.

He then decided to get rid of all the vermin from the hospital wards. This he did by organising working parties to disinfect the hospital. Everything that could be boiled, was boiled. This got rid of the lice. The next job was the bamboo slats on which we slept. Many fires were built, and the slats were passed through the flames until all bed-bugs had been destroyed. After disinfecting the hospital, he then set about the 'messing' system at Chung-Kai. He organised a diet which suited the needs of patients suffering from various ailments. Where all this extra food came from, I do not know. But with Col. Dunlop in command, it certainly went to the ones most in need.

In May 1944 the camp at Tamuan was ready, and 4 Group established itself

there. This was a clean camp, not in the jungle but on the plains. Those who had recurring illness such as amoebic dysentery and/or malaria still had relapses, but on the whole the M.O.'s were able to cope. During the next twelve months, large parties of men were taken from Tamuan and sent to Japan. We were to learn later that a number of transports which had carried these men were sunk by Allied submarines. What a sad thought... to have survived the Railway of Death, only to be drowned — and by our own forces at that.

We who remained in Siam, were put to work keeping the railway in repair. Work parties were sent up and down the line, wherever the need arose. The biggest problem was the encroaching jungle. We were not greatly troubled by the R.A.F., except at Non Pladuk, where a large number of men were killed or injured.

When the end of the war came, I was in a hospital camp at Nikom Paton. In this camp were all ranks of British, Australian and Dutch prisoners of war. The first camp orders put up by the British Camp Commandant, read as follows: All British personnel below the rank of Sergeant will parade at 0630 hrs. tomorrow for P.T. Only leg amputees are excused from this parade.

What a profound thought... After more than three years of being worked to the point of exhaustion, all our Officers could do for us, was to organise a P.T. parade.

GARDENING NOTES

April is the month when everything should be growing well, and in many cases those items which you thought were dead will be showing shoots. Continue to use the hoe regularly on the flower beds, and use a fork to keep soil in a good condition and free of weeds. It might also be a good idea to add some powder fertilizer or pellets. Pests should be kept away by sprays, and slugs and snails by using baits. Those in the south may plant flower and vegetable seeds now, whilst those in the north would be better advised to wait until early next month. Paths should be maintained and sprayed with weed-killer, avoiding lawns and flower beds, of course.

Vegetables

Make sure that soil is ready to receive seedlings started under glass and hardened off, such as the brassica family and beans of all types. Brassicas should be given an extra dose of lime when planting either as seed or plants. Green items, and lettuce in particular, should be protected by slug pellets, whilst the soil pests which proliferate at this time of year can be combated by the use of special powders at the time of planting. Main crop potatoes can be planted towards the end of the month, and the early seedlings such as carrots, onions and parsnips should be thinned out. Sprinkle Growmore pellets where plants are growing to promote growth.

Fruit

All planting of trees and bushes should be complete now, and all pruning completed by the end of the month, although the earlier the better. A spray of insecticide towards the end of the month will help to keep insects at bay just before the opening of the buds. If soil is loose round roots due to inclement weather, add more and make

it firm, and add some strong stakes for support.

Lawns

Set the lawnmower blades high and give the grass infrequent cuttings during the month, and add a fertilizer cum weed-killer using a watering can. Trim the edges of the lawn, using a spade initially to make the edges square.

Flowers

You can now make a start on the hardy annuals for the borders, and tidy up perennials which should be growing well. Put some staking on the delphiniums, lupins and aquilegias to stop them being blown down when they are due to flower later in the year. Some of the early Spring flowering bulbs can be taken out to make room for annuals, although daffodils are much better left in place, tying down the leaves, which should be cut off when they die to provide food for next years bulbs. Polyanthus and primroses will be past their best now, and can be taken out and planted in sheltered areas until the Autumn when they can be replaced in their flowering quarters. Towards the end of the month half hardy annuals presently in frames can be planted in their permanent areas, although those in the north might once again delay until early May. Hoe the top soil to keep the weeds down and give a good tilth where seeds can be planted, at the same time adding anti-slug pellets. Add some fertilizer in powder or pellet form around the borders, so that all plants will benefit.

Greenhouse

There is still time to start some half hardy annuals, including achimenes, begonias, coleus, calceolarias, cinerarias, freesias, gloxinias and solanum in troughs for a

Christmas show. Transfer tomato plants to their fruiting pots or bags as soon as you can, and give them a good watering. Feed them twice a month until the fruit has formed, when you should begin to feed them more regularly. Pinch out all side shoots as they form at the junction of the leaves so as to have one stem remaining for the fruit. Azaleas and cyclamen will be past their best now, and so they may be transferred to the cooler end of the green-

house, where they should be watered regularly, but cut down the number of feeds. Turn down heaters during the day, especially during strong sunshine, but continue to close windows and ventilators at night, as frosts may still occur. Move geranium and dahlia cuttings which are getting big enough for borders into larger containers. Pests and diseases will be around now, and so light some combined smokes at night.

On this day . . .

Welcome to 'On this day . . .' a new series for the *Review* which will, month by month, present a guide to some of the more interesting, unusual or strange events which celebrate anniversaries in the current month.

The month of April has its fair share of events and anniversaries, not least amongst these being the formation of the R.A.F. on April 1st, 70 years ago. Three weeks later, the infamous 'Red Baron', Manfred von Richthofen, was shot down and died behind British lines. This is what is known as getting off to a good start. Fifteen years ago on April Fools Day V.A.T. was introduced in Britain, and people have been trying to treat it as a bad joke ever since. Eighty years ago, on April 8th 1908, Herbert Henry Asquith began his tenure as Liberal Prime Minister, a position he held until December 7th 1916, until recently the longest tenure in modern times.

If we move forward to April 9th, we find that 50 years ago, in 1938, the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square was opened. Perhaps one of the more unusual pictures held here is in the National Portrait Gallery, and is a portrait of the Duke of Monmouth, the illegitimate son of King Charles II. The rebellious Duke was beheaded in 1685, and was promptly despatched for burial. At this point, how-

ever, it was realised that no portrait of the King's son, albeit illegitimate, existed. The head and body were hastily reassembled, sewn together, dressed, and a portrait painted. Rumours that the artist described the Duke as 'one of my less troublesome subjects' remain unfounded.

On April 30th in 1938, the F.A. Cup was televised live for the first time. The match was between Preston North End and Huddersfield Town, and many of the stupid comments which announcers make whilst commentating on football matches can be traced directly back to this game. Makes you sick as a parrot.

Finally, 250 years ago, in 1738, a statue was moved from London to Ripon, where it still stands today. The statue is of King Charles II on horseback, crushing Oliver Cromwell. This is an Italian statue, and was originally intended to represent the King of Poland killing a Turkish soldier. Having completed the statue, however, the Poles could not pay for it. As there was not a lot of demand for such statues elsewhere, the sculptor was faced with a problem. Undaunted, he made a few alterations, and sold it to Britain as King Charles II and Cromwell. It would seem, however, that the sculptor was ignorant of British dress, and as a consequence it is probably the only one of Oliver Cromwell wearing a turban in existence.

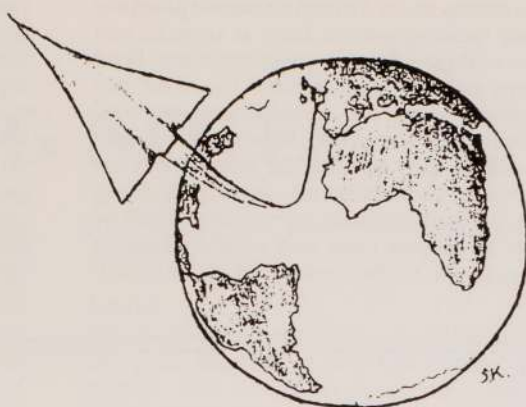
ROUND THE WORLD IN 120 DAYS

by A.J. Milne

It was literally true that Susan and I went round the world. We left Heathrow last July heading west, first stop Boston; in November we came into Heathrow from the east, some 16 hours after taking off from Singapore. I can assure flat-earthers, if there are any left, that it is not all a huge conspiracy. But, 'round the world' suggests visits to many different countries with diverse cultures, and in fact we only visited five. We went briefly to the USA, Japan, Malaysia and Singapore, and for two and a half months to Australia. However, we certainly felt by the end that we had done a lot of travelling: we made 22 separate flights and slept in rather more different beds in four and half months.

The excuse for the whole thing was a conference in Japan, one of those jamborees staged in the academic world from time to time to enable people in related fields to get together, read papers to each other, and above all, to talk — their professional preoccupation. The related fields in this case were Law and Social Philosophy, and I went as a representative of the latter. As I was due to retire from my chair at Durham University, I did not have to be back for the start of the new academic year, and so we grabbed the chance of extending our horizons. We went where we already had contacts, with the exception of Singapore; there we stopped to change planes and to have a few final days of 'lotus-eating' before returning to the rigours of the British winter.

Susan and I have both lived in the USA at various times, so it seemed an excellent



idea to visit old friends and haunts on our way to Japan. We spent four days in Boston, nine in New Jersey near Princeton, where I was once a Research Fellow for a year, two days in Washington and four in Chicago — all steaming hot. Finally we had eight beautiful days cooled by Pacific breezes in Berkeley, California, meeting old Milne friends and checking up on remembered landmarks. The Irangate hearings were shown daily on television: Olly North and Poindexter had already testified but other big guns were being questioned, including the Secretary of State and Attorney General. We were impressed by these proceedings, which it would be hard to conceive of happening in our own 'Mother of Parliaments', more's the pity! National public television and radio are paid for by private subscription and go some way to redeem the mediocrity of US commercial radio and television.

As a pipe-smoker, I was made powerfully aware of the strength of the anti-smoking lobby. In many public places, it is forbidden, and in restaurants smokers must eat in a sort of 'ghetto' segregated from other diners who have 'kicked', or never had, your unfortunate habit. Another change struck us on the fast and frequent Berkeley buses, which we used when we could dissuade our generous hosts from driving us: they are now often driven with great competence and authority by black American ladies.

Los Angeles airport is to be avoided if possible but to get our flight to Tokyo we had to join the fray there! This flight lasted

eleven hours, but, since we crossed the international date-line it appeared to have taken 27 hours. We left LA at 3 on Monday afternoon, and arrived in Tokyo at 6 on their Tuesday evening — and 2am Tuesday morning in our biological time. Jet-lag is not so acute when you fly westward and we slept it off; but I am still wondering what happened to the 16 hours lost from my life. On our first morning in Tokyo we set out to explore and immediately got lost, the first of many times during our 15 days in Japan. This was not (we thought) because we were exceptionally stupid, but because not only could we not speak the language, we could make no sense whatever of the street and shop signs and so could never locate ourselves. The Japanese, clearly used to bewildered foreigners, were invariably kind and helpful. There always seemed to be someone at hand who spoke just enough English to point us in the right direction. After two days we travelled to the conference in Kobe on one of the famous 'bullet' trains and all that has been said in praise of them is deserved. Unlike our own dear British Rail they never have reason to "regret any inconvenience which MAY have been caused. . ." Trains were always on time, travel very fast and so smoothly that you are hardly aware of it, are air-conditioned and have plenty of smoking compartments. The Japanese anti-smoking lobby, if it exists at all, has made no impression! The ride to Kobe took about three and a half hours, throughout which we seemed to be travelling through one great conurbation. I had not realised that 80% of Japan is mountain, and that almost all the major cities and industries are concentrated along 600 miles of the southern coast of Honshu, the main island. Useable land and space is at a premium, and this is why Japanese houses and rooms are small — not because the people are small.

The conference itself was held in a modern centre on a large man-made island in Kobe Harbour. We went there each morning on a monorail from the mainland, high above buildings and sea. The trains were totally computer-operated, having no driver or conductor. Fortunately a disembodied voice

announced each stop in English as well as in Japanese; we soon got used to it. More than half my fellow conference-goers were Japanese, and I was mightily impressed by them. They not only spoke but plainly also read and thought in good English, and were well informed about work in legal and social philosophy in the West. They were unfailingly courteous, with one rather puzzling exception: at a reception given by the Mayor of Kobe, when the time came for that worthy man to address us over the PA system, everyone stopped talking to listen except the Japanese guests, who went on chatting right through his speech! This seemed strange for people otherwise so correct and formal. There is also very little crime and no vandalism in Japan. City streets really are safe at any hour of day or night, and if you leave valuables behind they will be returned to you. But they are worried about violence within the family.

After the conference we went on to Hiroshima and visited the Peace Park and Museum — the latter one of many where nowadays you can take a cassette round

Alan and Susan Milne on a bridge in Okayama.



with you provided by the management to enhance understanding of exhibits. It is sobering to walk over the ground where the bomb fell. Hiroshima has been rebuilt and is a bustling city of about a million, with fine trams and department stores. Most of the people are too young to remember the bomb.

Soon we were in the air again bound for Kot Baharu, a small town in North Malaysia near the quiet and beautiful beach where a sombre plaque records the Japanese landing in 1942. An old friend from my time in Northern Ireland was running a school there, and we were guests at his bungalow for a week. Towards the end of our flight, Susan commented on the number of very elderly Malays in traditional

headgear who boarded the plane at Kuala Lumpur. We wondered if it was the local equivalent of 'Saga'? In fact the aged travellers

were returning from Mecca, the pilgrimage which every Muslim should try to make once in a lifetime; it was indeed a sort of package tour. It also reminded us that most Malays are Muslims; they constitute about 45% of the population, another 45% being Chinese who are mostly Buddhist, and 10% who are Indian and Hindu. All co-exist with a little uneasiness, the Malays owning most of the land and the Chinese being dominant in business and the professions. Malaysia is counted as a third-world country, and the friendly people in the villages were plainly poor; but there was fish in the sea, and a truly amazing range of vegetables and fruit in Kota Baharu's market. The sea was actually too warm to swim in pleasantly; it was like a hot bath, and not very refreshing.

And so to Australia. Susan's parents were both native Aussies; she has so many Australian cousins that, like Sir Joseph Porter in HMS Pinafore, she 'numbers them in dozens'. They were mostly concentrated in Adelaide and Melbourne, but with outposts in Perth and Sydney. My mother was born near Perth and came to the UK when she married; her younger sister, now aged 82, I last saw on her visit to

England when I was a small boy, and she is still living in Perth. So I too have Australian cousins — some of whom I had never met. Two nieces of my late wife Anita are also living in Perth — a marvellous city. We managed to see all these hospitable people starting in Perth and flying right across to Northern Queensland, and from there down to Brisbane, Adelaide, Sydney, Canberra, and finally Melbourne. This rather circuitous route enabled us to catch everyone at home. I was able to give my Japan conference paper at a number of universities, getting some idea of academia 'down under' and even turning a small but honest penny. With St. Dunstan's help I had contacted in advance the St. Dunstan's Blinded Soldiers of Australia'

'There was a truly amazing range of vegetables and fruit in Kota Baharu's market'

in each state and we were warmly and generously entertained by branches in Perth, Sydney and Melbourne. We also spent a day in

Brisbane with Ted Blackmore, now president of the Queensland branch, and his wife Connie. I had known Ted well in 1946-7 when he was over in London for training. We took up just where we had left off 40 years before and I thought he had not changed a bit. (I rather got the impression he thought the same about me). The years seemed to roll away, possibly helped a little by occasional liquid refreshment. Susan and I are most grateful to Ted and Connie and to all the other Australian St. Dunstaners.

Because it was Spring during our stay 'down under' cricket had barely started, although of course as Poms we were not allowed to forget Australia's victory in the world cup. Another game which really arouses strong passions is Australian rules football — a version of Gaelic football so far as I could understand. The season was coming to its climax during our first few weeks, culminating in their equivalent of the cup final.

Most Australians live well, having plenty of sunshine, space, fresh food, and inexpensive good wine. Sadly it is true, as we heard one of their spokesmen say, that the Aboriginal people do not share fully in this and have nothing to celebrate in

the bi-centennial. This is too big a subject to go into here. Perhaps the best to be said is that compared with even a generation ago more Australians are aware that there is a problem and that the past record is a shameful one. That said, we really liked Australia and found much to enjoy and admire; I recall thinking on one of our university visits that if I could not have had a career in Britain, one in the Australian universities would have been an acceptable alternative. I used to think that if ever I had to be a refugee, I would choose the US. Now I am not at all sure I wouldn't prefer Australia.

From Australia to the thriving and interesting tropical city of Singapore, and five days later we were at chilly Heathrow. Two final thoughts: it really does help,

when you visit a strange country, if there are friends or relatives to get you off the tourist tracks and initiate you into local ways. We missed that in Japan, notwithstanding the exceptional kindness of so many strangers. The second concerns air travel: What President Reagan is reputed to have said about the redwood trees when he was Governor of California — If you've seen one, you've seen them all — is certainly true of the interior of aircraft! Flying has taken much of the romance out of travel. But it is worth putting up with for what it makes possible — and I should also say that the airline was wonderfully helpful on the two occasions when we asked for a personal escort.

Would we do the trip over again? Yes — but not for a little while!

MAKE-UP TAPE FROM THE BODY SHOP

Many of our lady St. Dunstaners will be interested in the recent steps taken by 'The Body Shop' to help serve visually handicapped customers.

Over the past year, The Body Shop have been working closely with the RNIB to train staff to help visually handicapped people choose make-up and skin care products. One result of this collaboration has been the production of an audio tape 'Colour Sense by Barbara Daly' for blind or visually handicapped ladies, which aims to de-mystify the process of applying make-up. This 55 minute tape, deliberately timed to allow the listener to make-up as they listen, is available from all branches of The Body Shop, and retails at one pound.

A practical demonstration by The Body Shop, whilst sleeping dogs lie!

CLARINET WANTED

St. Dunstaner Don Planner is looking for a second hand clarinet. If you can help, then please telephone him on 0202 730404.



A Moment to Spare with Syd Scroggie

As Others See Us

It's a matter of trivial importance, I suppose, of passing interest even to Scots, that having been born on one Scottish festival, St. Andrew's Day, Winston Churchill elected to die on another, Burns' night — this half-English, half-American political genius thus accomplishing what to the best of my knowledge no Scotsman of note ever did.

It's perhaps, however, something of a consolation that nowhere in the Scottish Dictionary of National Biography can be found an eminent son of Caledonia, and there are a great number of these, whose life, with supreme inappropriateness, began, say, on St. George's Day, to end on the birthday of Wordsworth, Shelley or Keats. I don't bring Shakespeare into this because he's more than a mere Englishman, he's a world figure (and like others of this calibre, Euripides, Dante and Goethe, for example) may be said to have the entire globe for his tomb, this comprehensive sepulchre having been suggested by Pericles, quoted by Thucydides, as the only burial place big enough for famous men, however local the course of their lives, the inspiration of their genius.

Even though Burns has been translated into many languages, this is no more a mark of greatness than it is in the case of the author of Paddington Bear; he remains a local Scottish phenomenon, and although January 25th is annually celebrated in Moscow, a Scottish contingent being present, this is not so much a sign of a cosmopolitan aspect of Burns' talent as a wily Russian propaganda device aimed at representing the 18th-century Ayrshire ploughman as a Marxist before his time, a kind of Christian before Christ, like Seneca and Tertullian of old.

With this end in view they've translated Burns into Russian and made him a Soviet

cult figure, but the question remains — a very pertinent one in this context — what would Marshak's translation reveal should it be turned back into Scots again in a rendering faithful to every nuance of the authorised Russian version? The Scots who turn up in Moscow for this Soviet Burns' night are simple people, Marxists at best, glaikit fools at worst, and are quite unaware that when some commissar, high on vodka, stands up and recites 'To a Mouse' in its Slavonic version they are listening to a cynical travesty of what Burns actually wrote.

The Scottish poet saw his mouse as a fellow-mortal having its proper place in the general scheme of things, a place to be respected by Man as every bit as valid as his own; there is no political substratum of meaning in the poem, only an expression of that warmth of feeling so well handled by Burns in respect of men, women and animals as they came under the poet's sympathetic surveillance. Burns was like Abu Ben Adhem in Leigh Hunt's poem: he loved his fellow-men, and this love of his extended to all creation, all animate nature, and no one has ever done better than Burns in expressing these feelings, both for man and mouse.

Marxism doesn't love either man or beast, it promotes a cold, intellectual system, it's a page torn from the book of Christianity, as Toynbee puts it, and read wrongly, and should millions die, whether men or mice, it's nothing to Marxism provided that in the end, the system prevails. Means are justified by ends, and nothing could be further from Burns' philosophy than this bleak, Marxist view of the workings of life here on Earth. So I can only suppose the Russian version of 'To a Mouse', far from echoing Burns' tender

compassion, must begin something like this (as approved by those in the Kremlin concerned with this kind of thing):

*'Small symbol of an outworn scheme,
Well may you start away and scream;
For I with worker's ploughshare mean
to cause thy fall,
Crushing thy stupid Bourgeois dream
Once and for all.'*

To make it easier for our English readers I have translated the Scots into their

language, at least as much as this can be understood by a Scotsman. You can imagine the rest, but meantime in a thousand Scottish homes the haggis has once again been piped in, the 'Immortal Memory' proposed, 'Tam O'Shanter' recited, and Burns as he really was, Burns written by himself, presented to yet another generation of capitalists struggling to render workable a system preferable on the whole to anything so far devised to supplant it.

DINGHY SAILING COURSES FOR VISUALLY HANDICAPPED PEOPLE IN 1988

This year, the Island Cruising Club are again organising two courses in dinghy sailing for visually handicapped people for May 15th-20th and September 10th-16th inclusive at an all-in cost of £121 per head.

For further details about the courses and application form, contact the Island Cruising Club, Salcombe, S. Devon TQ8 8DR. Tel. 054 884 3481.

NORMANDY CAMPAIGN VETERANS

Central Weekend urgently want to contact veterans, especially from R.A.C./R.A.F. who took part in the liberation of Le Havre in September 1944. If you can help, then please telephone Jim Morrison or Kevin Dowling on 021 643 9898, or write care of Central Weekend, Central Television, Broad Street, Birmingham, B1 2JP.

AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY A.G.M.

The St. Dunstan's Amateur Radio Society will hold their Annual General Meeting at Ian Fraser House, on April 9th.

The guest speaker for the afternoon session, will be Robin Bellerby M.A., B.Sc. (G3ZYE), who will be speaking on 'RAY-NET (Amateur Radio Emergency Network) and the Hurricane'.

HOW LONG

by Syd Scroggie

How long does it take you to write one
I asked of a poet in his lair,
A bottle of Bell's on the table
And the smell of Gold Flake in the air.

How long does it take you I asked him
Do you find it a bit of a drag,
He replied as he sipped at his whisky
It takes me the length of a fag,

For although I don't know what it is yet
Somewhere in this psyche of mine
A poem has already developed
Complete to its ultimate line.

Don't suppose that I think for a minute
There's no place in poetry for thought
It's a poet's job to take down dictation
If a poet is to do what he ought.

And what is the difference I asked him
Between what you keep and you don't
For to chuck half your stuff in the basket
I have always observed is your wont.

What I take down correctly he answered
Rejecting what I want to say
Is the stuff that will live till tomorrow
Not die of its defects today.

I feel something stirring inside me
Said the poet, I know by its nag,
And he reached for his pencil and paper
Struck a Bluebell and lit up his fag.



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.

Sydney Maurice Williams, of Gillingham, who joined St. Dunstan's on February 3rd.

Mr. Williams, who is 91, served as a Corporal in the Royal Engineers throughout the First World War, and was injured as a result of an explosion. Subsequently, he was employed as a Civil Servant in the Chatham Dockyard. Sadly, his wife passed away after 35 years together and our St. Dunstaner is living in a residential home at present.

NO TAPE LEVY

There is to be no levy imposed on blank audio tapes, Kenneth Clarke, Minister for Trade and Industry, announced recently. Introducing the new Copyright, Designs and Patents Bill, he said that the argument was between the rights of the recording industry and the rights of the consumer, and the government had to decide in favour of the consumer.

Mr. Clarke said 'Not every blank tape is used to record copyright material and so the levy would have been an unfair imposition on many people.' He added that the levy would fall particularly badly on the blind.

PHONECARDS FOR BLIND PEOPLE

Specially adapted phonecards will make it easier for blind and visually handicapped people to use British Telecom's phonecard payphones. The new cards have a notch cut into them so that users can tell by touch the correct way to insert the card.

The notch is cut two thirds of the way along the right side of the phonecard, closer to the front than the back. Mr. Roger Gilbert, Manager of British Telecom's National Payphone Services, said 'This simple new development will, I am sure, be of immense help to thousands of our customers'.

John Kershaw, of Brighouse, West Yorkshire, who joined on February 3rd.

Mr. Kershaw served as a Private in the Duke of Wellington's Regiment during the First World War and was wounded in France. He was awarded the Military Medal for his actions as a Platoon Scout. Mr. Kershaw is married with a grown up family.

Clark and Smith Easiplay Tape Recorder.

This is a play-back only cassette player at the more expensive end of the market - £104, excluding VAT. The machine is wide at the base, 7" by 7" narrowing to 4" at the top, the whole being 7" high. The cassette is placed into the machine like a piece of toast between two very distinguishable guides on the top panel. Pushing the cassette down starts it playing. Once in, the cassette does not need to be turned over, there being an auto reverse and a track change key at the top which 'beeps' when on track one. The unit has 'cue' and 'review', and hitting the track change button puts it into 'play' again. The cassette is automatically ejected when the stop button is pressed and there is a manual eject if there is a power failure.

The sound quality is good, with two vertical, large slider controls for volume and pitch on the front panel. There are two sockets for earphones and a remote on/off switch. The unit is mains operated only. The wide base gives it good stability. In all, a useful home based play-back machine.

The one fault is the control keys. Though electronic, and requiring little effort, they are indistinguishable from each other, despite their raised symbols. It would be advisable to check them out before deciding to purchase, bearing in mind the cost of the unit.

CLUB NEWS

BRIGHTON BRIDGE CLUB

Pairs Results: Sunday February 14th

| | |
|---------------------------------|------|
| R. Pacitti and Mrs. Pacitti | 57.6 |
| W. Lethbridge and Mr. Goodlad | 53.5 |
| R. Evans and Mrs. Barker | 51.4 |
| R. Freer and Mr. J. Whittaker | 50.7 |
| R. Goding and Dr. J. Goodlad | 49.3 |
| Mrs. Douse and Mrs. A. Clements | 47.3 |
| Miss Stenning and Mr. Douse | 45.8 |
| J. Padley and Mrs. Padley | 44.4 |

Individuals: Saturday February 20th

| | |
|--|------|
| 1st - W. Lethbridge | 76.2 |
| 2nd - Mr. Douse | 57.2 |
| 3rd - R. Pacitti | 52.4 |
| Equal 4th - Mrs. McPherson and Miss Stenning | 47.6 |
| 6th - J. Padley | 42.8 |
| Equal 7th - R. Evans and Mrs. Pacitti | 38.1 |

West Sussex Inter Club League, 21st February

We played a match against Lewes on Sunday February 21st, and after a very close competition Lewes won by 9 points to 7. The members of our team were J. Padley, W. Lethbridge, R. Evans, Mrs. Barker, R. Pacitti, Mrs. Pacitti, R. Goding and R. Freer.

FAMILY NEWS

PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to:

Roger Greatrex, son of Mrs. Josephine Greatrex, of Telscombe Cliffs, Sussex, on obtaining his doctorate in Mandarin (Classical) Chinese. He is at present lecturing in Sweden.

Fiona Lowry, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. P.J. Lowry of Saltdean, who has passed her Part One Accountancy Examinations.

Mrs. F. Revell, of Watford, widow of St. Dunstaner G.A. Revell, on gaining the supreme award in a recent Ballroom dancing examination for the Latin American section.

C.M. Gill, grandson of St. Dunstaner F.W. Riley, who has recently graduated at Cranwell as Acting Pilot Officer C.M. Gill. Congratulations are also due to Mr. Riley's other grandson Andrew, who is a Flying Officer, and who will soon commence his training to be an Instructor for Air Traffic Controllers.

RUBY WEDDINGS

Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. R. Craddock, of Warrington, who celebrated their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on February 7th.

Mr. and Mrs. L.E. Stent, of Lancing, West Sussex, who celebrated their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on February 14th.

GRANDCHILDREN

Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. F. Bentley, of Saltdean, on the birth of a grandson, Mark Russel, born on September 8th to their son Michael and his wife Julia.

Mrs. F. Revell, widow of St. Dunstaner G.A. Revell, on the birth of a grand-daughter, Sarah, on January 11th, to their daughter Paula, and her husband Paul.

Mr. and Mrs. E. Slater, of Leyland, on the birth of a grandson, Christopher Philip, to their daughter Julie and her husband Anthony, on February 4th.

Mr. R. Spencer, of Croydon, on the birth of a fourth grandchild, Robert David, born on November 13th to Mr. Spencer's daughter May and her husband John Nobes.

DEATHS

We offer sympathy to:

The family and friends of Mrs. Ethel Arnold, widow of the late *Mr. Leonard Arnold*, of Poole, who passed away on February 18th aged 90.

Mrs. B. Bentley, wife of St. Dunstaner *Mr. Fred Bentley*, whose brother, Bill Farmer, passed away on December 24th.

Mr. Des Chandler, of Lewes, whose brother-in-law, Joe McCullough, passed away in South Africa on January 28th, aged 42.

The family of Mrs. Mary Cooney, widow of the late *Mr. Joseph Cooney*, of Worthing, who passed away in Cheltenham on February 10th.

Mr. John Donvaband, of Hove, whose brother passed away suddenly in Belgium on January 10th.

The family of Mrs. Bertha Gill, widow of the late *Mr. Charles Gill*, who passed away on February 13th, aged 92.

The daughter and grand-daughter of Mrs. Gladys Hill, widow of the late *Mr. Samuel Hill* of London, who passed away in Southampton on March 1st.

The family and friends of Mrs. Florrie Rogers, widow of the late *Mr. Albert Rogers*, of Woodingdean, who died in Hove on February 19th, aged 87.

In Memory

It is with great regret we have to record the death of the following St. Dunstaners and we offer our deepest sympathy to their families and friends.

N.H. Daniel, Canadian Army

Norman Henry Daniel, of Quebec, Canada, passed away on February 7th, aged 62.

Mr. Daniel served in the Canadian Army, and was wounded in Holland in February 1945, and suffered the loss of his sight. After treatment at Stoke Mandeville Hospital he returned to Canada for a while, before returning to England in 1946. He spent time at Church Stretton before commencing training for physiotherapy. Mr. Daniel married in 1947 and in due course he and his wife went to live in the West Country, where our St. Dunstaner took up a physiotherapy appointment at the Bridgewater and District Hospital.

In 1954 Mr. Daniel and his wife moved to Romford where our St. Dunstaner then worked at the Victoria Hospital until 1961, when he and his family finally returned to Canada. Mr. Daniel continued his physiotherapy work there and in the years that followed made a number of visits to England, during some of which he was able to take part in our Physiotherapy Conferences in Brighton.

Our sympathy goes to his widow, Betty, and their children, Susan and Stephen, and their families.

J. Griffiths, Royal Berkshire Regiment

We are very sad to record the death of Mr. John Griffiths, of Pearson House, who died on February 24th, aged 92.

Mr. Griffiths served as a Private in the Royal Berkshire Regiment during the First World War, and lost the sight in his right eye at the Somme in 1916 as the result of gunshot wounds. He had good vision in his left eye until much later in life, however. Following his discharge from the Army, Mr. Griffiths worked at the G.P.O. as a storeman, where he remained until retirement age. It was not until 1986 that Mr. Griffiths was registered blind, and then joined St. Dunstan's in 1987. At the time Mr. Griffiths was admitted to St. Dunstan's, he had been a widower for some years, and had been living with his daughter, Mrs. Tudor.

Unfortunately, following a period of ill health, Mrs. Tudor became unable to continue caring for her father, and in December of 1987 Mr. Griffiths moved to Pearson House as a permanent resident.

Very sadly, Mrs. Tudor died only a matter of hours after her father. We offer all sympathy to Mrs. Carol Appleton, grand-daughter of Mr. Griffiths and daughter of Mrs. Tudor for this sudden loss that she has had to bear.