



St Dunstons  
Review  
May 1988



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10p MONTHLY

Free to St. Dunstaners

MAY 1988

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**Cover Picture:** Charlie Daley whizzes down the ski slope at Verchaix, France. See Ray Hazan's report on page ten.



## From the Chairman

Following the completion of the extensive modernisation of Pearson House its official re-opening is planned for Thursday 16th June. We have asked Mr. Ion Garnett-Orme, Vice-President and our former Chairman, to perform this ceremony and he will be accompanied by his wife Katharine.

Mr. Garnett-Orme will unveil a plaque recording the occasion and marking another step forward in the task of keeping our Home up to date with the advances in equipment for nursing care and with improvements to enhance the quality of life of those St. Dunstaners whose permanent home it is.

## HOME ALARMS

There has been a lot written in the press recently about Home Emergency Alarms which are designed for use by the disabled, the elderly, or any vulnerable person living alone, to obtain help when needed. The alarm is activated by pressing a pendant which should be worn at all times. This triggers an alarm system linked by telephone to a control centre which in turn contacts relatives, friends, a doctor or the emergency services.

A number of Home Alarms are now

available to the public. Some local council and Social Services departments run an emergency alarm system free or at nominal charge. If you are interested in finding out more you should therefore contact them in the first instance. Where they do not, it is possible to buy or rent an alarm system from private manufacturers and your Welfare Visitor will be able to give you more information. In the case of widows, St. Dunstan's will pay for the cost of installation, and contribute towards or pay in full for the annual rental, depending on individual financial circumstances.

### IAN FRASER HOUSE BOOKINGS

The improvements and repairs referred to by the Chairman in the March issue of the *Review* will involve more extensive work, and consequently greater disruption than was anticipated. Bookings for the summer are already heavy and is clear that, unfortunately, some people are going to be disappointed. We shall make the maximum use of the available accommodation and shall let all those who are affected know the position as soon as possible.

It is a great pity that further problems should have arisen but the essential work must, of course, be carried out and we shall do our best to minimise the effect on those who wish to stay at Ian Fraser House.

William C. Weisblatt,  
*Secretary*

### RETIREMENT PRESENTATIONS

Following the announcement in the March Review of the retirements of Mr. Pat Leonard Payne and Mr. Stan Booth from their work as surveyors for the Estate Department, a number of St. Dunstaners have written suggesting opening funds for presentations. Mr. W. C. Weisblatt has undertaken to act as treasurer and donations may be sent to him at Headquarters by cheque or postal order in favour of St. Dunstan's.

### WALTER THORNTON

As we go to press, we are sad to learn of the death of Walter Thornton O.B.E., on Thursday March 31st. A full appreciation will appear in our June issue.

### ANSWERPHONES

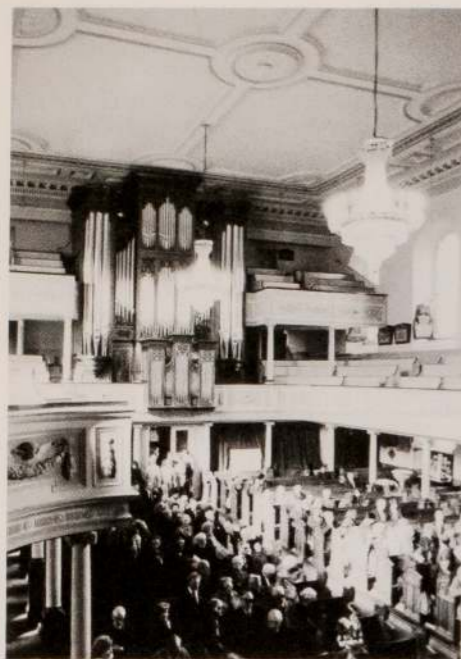
Several of our visiting staff are now equipped with answerphones in their homes so that messages can be left when they are away from home on duty. These machines enable them to get in touch with their caller at the earliest possible moment after their return. All that is necessary is to speak to your name and telephone number which is then recorded by the machine. It is as simple as that!

### COPY DATES FOR 1988

These are the final copy dates for the remaining issues of *The Review* for 1988. When submitting material please try to allow for delays in the post, and send material as early as possible.

July	June 1st
August	June 29th
September/October	September 2nd
November	October 7th
December	November 4th





## Thanksgiving for Avis Spurway

*The interior of St. Marylebone Parish Church during the service.*

Nowadays many memorial services are described as services of thanksgiving but the title has never been more appropriate than for the service held at St. Marylebone Parish Church on Wednesday, March 23rd. The Parish Church is a beautiful example of a large galleried church, still a thriving centre of worship and work for the community. It was well filled with the relatives and friends of Avis Spurway — St. Dunstaners and staff among them — all of whom would agree that the occasion was anything but sad. Which is just what Avis herself, with her robust attitude to life, would approve.

The Reverend Neville Kent, Rector of Heathfield, Bradford-Tone, Oake and Hillfarance, who followed the late Frank Spurway in that office, conducted the service, which was planned by Avis Spurway's daughters, Jandy Paton and Odeyne Lovell Smith, with his assistance. Four St. Dunstaners were invited to take part: Ted John, Jimmy Wright, Ernie Cookson and Billy Miller, all of whom were old friends of Avis through sports and the Daedalus camps.

Well-known hymns were sung: Praise, my soul the King of Heaven; Crimond; God be in my Head, and Guide me, O thou great Redeemer. Two of Avis's granddaughters, Sophia Lovell Smith and Fenella Paton gave readings.

It was Nevill Kent who put the feelings of the congregation into eloquent words in his address. He spoke, as an affectionate family friend as well as parish priest, of the spirit of adventure Avis inherited from her forbears; of the war hospital set up in the family home, Clopton Hall, by her mother where she first met the wounded of the Great War and of the beginning of her lifelong connection with St. Dunstan's recorded in her own biographical notes.

'She then records in 1920, "Became involved with St. Dunstan's". Now there's an understatement. What a pioneer and champion she became! One could go on: sports, camps, walking races, the front rider on a tandem. Can you imagine her? Because I can! Avis was no armchair organiser. She was always in the thick of it.

The peace of 1945 brought a new group for St. Dunstan's to help and so

began her idea of an annual camp at Leeson-Solent with the Fleet Air Arm there on hand to help. I ask you, could they ever have resisted her? This annual camp goes on to this day.

'She also exercised her caring talents alongside her husband, Frank's ministry as a parish priest. I followed Frank fifty years on in a parish and boys and girls who had grown old in those fifty years were still talking about him. Frank and Avis are still remembered. A strong, attractive, gifted pair, not always comfortable to be with and not always predictable, yet lives — my life, your life — lives touched by Frank and Avis will never be the same. An ordinary view of life, after contact with them, took on a new dimension.

'Avis Spurway, whom we give thanks to God for today, has walked through life lightly and with great style, attracting people, keeping in touch with so many of us worldwide. A mother figure — not the most conventional you ever did meet. A splendid grandmama both within her family and to so many more of us by a sort of unofficial adoption.

'Outrageous, yes, when the Paton family moved to Bombay in 1981, Grandmama joined them for several winters. One day in October she sent for me and said, "Neville, if you start doing this kind of thing at my age, you might come back in an envelope. What will you do with it?" I said, "Well, Avis, I expect I shall bury it alongside Frank's in Heathfield churchyard." And she gave me the most enormous hug and said, "You are a dear boy, that's what I hoped you would say."

'Outrageous, most certainly, yet very lovable. Always giving of love and joy and what's so important, giving freedom to others. She walked freely along life's pilgrimage and by so doing enabled others to experience freedom for themselves. What a rare quality of life we have seen in her. David, from St. Dunstan's had got it about right when he spoke to me on the 'phone the day after Avis died. He said, very simply, "Avis is very special to us." We all echo that sentiment. Today she shares more fully in the freedom of the resurrection life and we thank God with full hearts for sharing her with us. May she rest in peace and rise in glory, Amen.'

*Mr. Ion Garnett-Orme talking with Ted and Beryl John.*





# Bill Webster retires

by David Castleton

After 54 years service with St. Dunstan's, Bill Webster retired at the end of January. Many friends from among St. Dunstaners, staff and retired staff were at Pearson House to wish him well as he and his wife, Joyce, received from Simon Conway, Administrator, of the Brighton Homes, gifts from St. Dunstan's and from his colleagues.

In 54 years Bill has seen West House become Pearson House and has lived through three re-building programmes. He worked for ten matrons!

Now 80 years old, Bill was 26 when he arrived in Brighton in 1934. He had been a regular soldier for seven years with the Royal Artillery, part of that time in India. After his discharge from the Army he could find no work in his native Stockport. He had an army friend in Brighton so he travelled there: 'I went to a place near the

Clock Tower where they were finding work for ex-servicemen. The following day I was offered a job as an orderly at St. Dunstan's.'

Bill began as an orderly, then became a nursing orderly. His pay was £1 for a 77 hour week living in. 'We worked 28 nights straight off and then one night off. After a year I had a rise of 2 shillings and they stopped 2/4d for supperann!'

Bill met Joyce at West House. She was a housemaid and housemaids were strictly separated from the orderlies. 'We would walk on the beach when off-duties came together. We'd have to leave the House separately and do the same when we came back,' Bill recalled, 'But it was fun.'

'In July 1937 we got married but did not tell anyone', said Joyce, 'When we got back from holiday they found out and Matron

Mr. and Mrs. Webster outside the chapel where they married.



Thellusson asked us to get married again in the Chapel. It was nice and we had a bible as a souvenir.'

By the rules in those days marriage meant that Joyce had to leave St. Dunstan's, although she did go back when they were short of staff, and it was not long before Bill left temporarily — called up in 1939 to serve once again with the Royal Artillery. 'I went through Dunkirk, back to France on D Day plus one, then through Belgium, Holland and Germany. I was with the Field Artillery on 6" guns.' Bill came back a sergeant and earned a Mentioned in Despatches.

In 1938, not long before he was called up, Bill had been transferred to the new building at Ovingdean. But now in 1945 he found himself back at West House soon to become Assistant House Steward. He also helped as maintenance standby — 'I think I've done every job in the building over the years.' He became House Steward in 1966, a post he held until his formal retirement in 1975. After that he filled in for all sorts of people when they were away until in March 1979 he came back as a permanent part-time Care Assistant.

Now final retirement has come Bill can't quite believe it. 'It can't really sink in now. I won't be on the same footing but I would

still like to come in now and again.' Joyce commented, 'I used to tell him he thought more of St. Dunstan's than his own home!'

He has some special memories like the many journeys he made escorting St. Dunstaners, 'I used to make some 40 trips a year before and after the second war. Before the war it was thirty shillings from London to Manchester. I suppose the furthest I went was to Inverness and to Northern Ireland.'

Bill did go to Paris with the deaf and blind St. Dunstaners for their reunion.

'They were special people to me. I was generally with Joe Jordan but I remember the others like Wally Thomas. They couldn't find any

reason for him being deaf but they couldn't cure him. It must have been disheartening for him. You had to try to help by just simply talking about this and that to get them interested.'

At Pearson House all those years after they had met and married there Joyce and Bill accepted their gifts gracefully, moved among the throng chatting with old and not so old friends among St. Dunstaners and staff colleagues and cut a magnificent, celebratory cake. There is no doubt they enjoyed the day. 'We never had so much fuss when we married here!' laughed Joyce.

*'I think I've done every  
job in the building  
over the years'*

The interior of the chapel as it was many years ago, from an archive photograph.





# SING THY SONGS OF HAPPY CHEER

by Sean Kelly

Mrs. Doris Pearce is the widow of Wilfred Pearce, a first War St. Dunstan, and word reached us in the *Review* office that an interview might prove an interesting basis for an article. So, camera and recorder at the ready, I set off for Hendon, North London, and sure enough, we were right. Mrs. Pearce is a sprightly 88 years old — she put a fire out in her kitchen a few weeks ago — and has many memories from the post-First War days, and in particular the twenties.

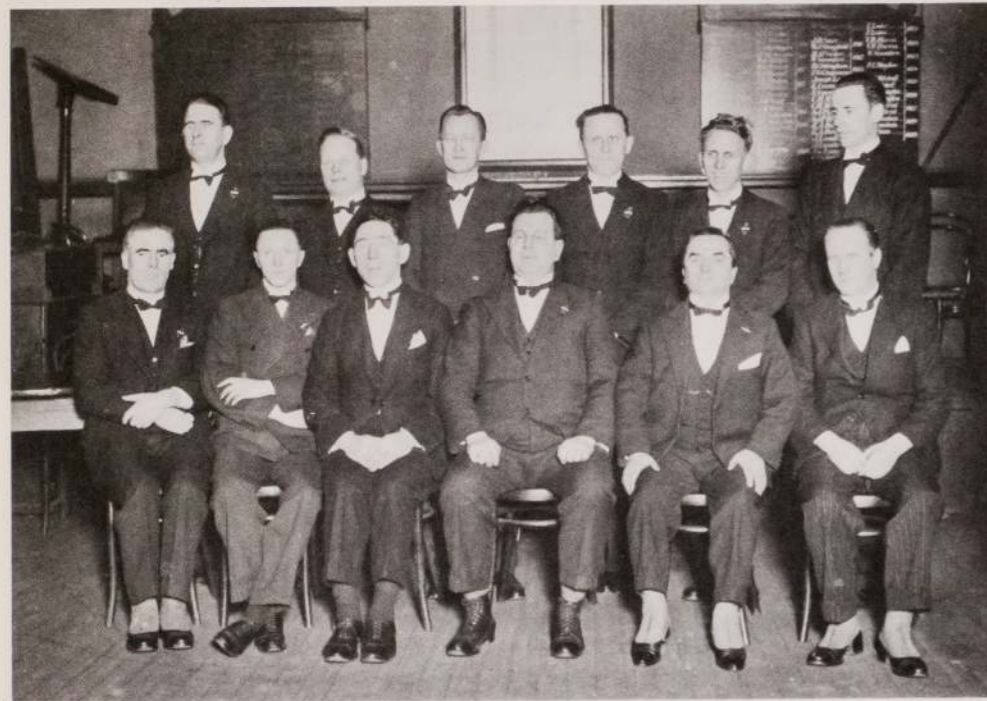
'I met my husband in Brighton, when I was staying with another St. Dunstan, and we married two years later in 1926. He was training at St. George's Lodge in Regents Park to be a telephonist. He was first training to be a physiotherapist, but they sent him up to Hampstead General Hospital to do a patient, and he passed

out! They wouldn't let him do that any more.'

Mr. Pearce was also very active, and was an eager member of the St. Dunstan's Choir. 'They used to meet on Friday evening in Paddington Street, off the Marylebone Road. I used to take Wilfred from Hendon all the way down. Often I was the only one to help them: So, of course, when they finished, they used to say "Doris, take me up to the pub!" I used to have to take umpteen of them, often two on each arm, up to The Volunteer on the corner of the Marylebone Road.

'Once a month, they would do a performance somewhere. They would all sing together, and then each would do an individual solo. Wilfred often did light songs for his solo — he had a fine voice. We used to go to all the hospitals, and some

*The St. Dunstan's Choir, circa 1930.*



prisons, to Holloway and to Pentonville. We visited some awful places — We went to the Home for Incurables in Ealing, and that was terrible in the young days. There was a ward for the shell-shocked, and nobody knows what it was like to see those men. There was one ward there that they wouldn't even let our boys go into.'

Doris has lived in the same house in Hendon for all of her married life, 62 years in all, since marrying in 1926. 'My husband's pension was £2.10 a week then,' she says, 'Then he got a job in Hendon as a telephonist with the Hendon Electrical Supply company, which is now part of the Eastern Electricity Board. That's why we moved to Hendon, and I've been here ever since! We had to struggle to buy the house on £5.00 a week. Then, just when we had nearly paid for it, we had a bomb from the Blitz. All the doors and windows were blown off. Two bombs came down together, one landed on the corner, and one on the next turning. Of course we had a fire-place, and my daughter was sat on the rug in front of it, and all the soot fell down the chimney. She had gold coloured hair, and we just could not get that hair clean for a while. We had to move out because of the bomb, but only stayed away for a short time.'

But apart from the bombs and other difficulties they faced, Mrs. Pearce remembers the 'young days' with a great deal of affection. 'We used to have a good time, all the men got on well together.' Mrs. Pearce also explained her obvious good health to me. 'It's how you look after



*Mrs. Doris Pearce.*

yourself, really.' Which all goes to show the obvious benefits of having a positive outlook on life.

## THE BRITISH SUMATRA BATTALION

'The British Sumatra Battalion' is the title of a new book, based largely on the secret diaries of the senior officer, Dudley Althorp, about this unique group of men from all three services captured by the Japanese in 1942.

The book, with a foreword by Countess Mountbatten of Burma, tells how this hotch-potch of men was transformed into a unit with the pride of an established regiment, and their life of degradation on the building of the Burma-Siam Railway.

The book is available from all good bookshops, priced £9.50, or by mail order from: Mr. A. Grafton, 44 Glebe Crescent, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV21 2HQ. Please include £1.50 for post and packing.

## RHINOG MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAM

The Rhinog Mountain Rescue Team based in Gwynedd, North Wales, would like to express their grateful thanks for a recent donation from St. Dunstan's. The money has been used to purchase six new aerials to improve their communications.





Ray Hazan shows how it's done.

## PROFIT AND LOSS

by Ray Hazan

Imagine, if you will, that you are looking down from a great height upon a snow white mountain side. You see tiny black ant-like dots being dragged uphill only to slide down again on strangely elongated feet. Can they be really serious, you ask yourself? Yet St. Dunstaners and hundreds of thousands of people do just so every year and call it skiing. What is it that drives them to this seemingly endless circuit, arriving back where they started?

The first delight of the trip is the fun of meeting up with friends at the airport despite the unearthly hour of 6.30 am. The intervening 11 months are as if they had never existed. The teenagers of the party seem to have grown by six inches, while other's hairlines have receded by the same. There are looks of apprehension on the faces of the first-timers. A fleeting catching up of news and then the dirty dash to the duty-free shop. Once again, we were expertly herded by our friendly and familiar escort, Peter Barnes. Unbelievably, for the first time in ten years, we were one short on boarding the aircraft! Had all the organisation started last August gone awry? It transpired that one, whom we shall call 'Miss Stavely' for the

moment, had left her passport at home in London. It was, nevertheless, with a sense of relief that the remaining 21 of us took off only 30 minutes late.

Though the flying time of one hour is less than that to either Belfast or Aberdeen, there is always the thrill of landing in pastures foreign. Geneva airport differs little from others, yet to hear the foreign announcements over the tannoy, french speaking officials and the handing over of your passport, if you have it with you, lends a change from the every day routine. Yet it was almost routine to meet up, for the second year running, with our three guides from Switzerland, Peter and Maya Zamudio, and Catherine, and Peter Briscoe, the manager of 'Le Chardon Bleu', where we were staying.

The 60 minute drive from Geneva to Verchaix was possibly disappointing for those who had not travelled this route before. In addition to the 'old timers', Charlie Daly, Gerry Jones and Don Planner, we were pleased to have back with us again, Alan and Joan Wortley, Bill Shea, Duncan Harris (son of John Harris) and friends. It was a real pleasure to welcome South African St. Dunstaner Peter Hall

and his wife Carolyn. Their concern may have been the lack of snow, but we others were quietly confident.

I have, somehow, never got round to asking the guides their reaction as the varied assortment of dark glasses, white canes and steel hooks approach them! The four guides from 5 Heavy Regiment, Royal Artillery, based in Dortmund, had had no previous experience in this novel form of skiing. They were a high powered team in rank, experience and ability. Lt. Paul Ingram looked after Charlie, Staff Sgt. Joe Elward skied with Bill, Craftsman Trevor Cuthbertson, R.E.M.E., with Don, and Sgt. Martin Blank with myself. The lunch-time pâté and beers were the 'entrees' to a liaison that was to grow more sustaining as the week progressed.

By Saturday evening, all preparations were complete; skis, boots and lift passes lay ready and waiting and the first 'Stavely' award had been presented. The award is made for the biggest 'Wally' or the silliest act of the day. A novelty this year was the creation of a women's section, as there seemed to be so many contenders. Rosemary graciously accepted the glass of Malibu for leaving her passport behind. Indeed, she must have so enjoyed this rather sickly drink that she re-applied two

days later, when, on arriving on the slope, wondered why she was not sliding as efficiently as others. It was explained to her that she needed her skis on the end of her feet, not in the store back at the hotel!

But what makes the whole holiday so exciting is that first moment on the snow. To hear ringing in your ear the commands to turn from your guide, to feel the wind in your hair, the swish of the snow against your skis in the turn, and the hiss as you ski straight is what it is all about. Occasionally, just occasionally, you feel the satisfaction of a turn perfectly executed — weight transferred from one leg to another, by bending and straightening the knees, the inside edge of the ski gripping the snow and the backs coming round perfectly together without any loss of speed. It is the reassurance of hearing your guide positioning himself above you on the slope to protect you from the speed merchants who fail to recognise the meaning of the yellow warning bib, akin to a white cane in the street. It is to breathe in the clean air, to sense the vistas of mountain tops, snow covered fir trees and the stillness that nature can create, far from the maddening rush and fumes of London. Above all, it is the end of a one and a

The happy crew in a pre-ski pose.





half mile non stop run, without a fall, which gives a tremendous sense of achievement to both guide and St. Dunstaner, a feeling that many of us were to know, for such has St. Dunstan's skiing progressed over the years.

Special tribute should be made to Peter Hall and Peter Zamudio. Big Pete Hall, at six foot four has also lost a foot. He is a well experienced water skier and found snow skiing quite a different challenge. The lack of feeling at the end of the shortened leg meant great difficulty in turning. The prospect of his weight travelling straight down the mountainside was not an inviting one to the others, let alone himself! He therefore transferred to a mono-ski, i.e. both feet are placed on the one wider than normal ski. This gave him a modicum of control with his good foot. It was, nevertheless, a challenge which he, combined with his guide's patience and skill, overcame with a lot of effort and a great deal more laughs.

There were the inevitable incidents — the Stavely for Don and Trevor as they set off from Maurillon for Samoens, only to find themselves back where they started. Trevor nearly qualified a second time

when he jumped off a chair-lift but for some reason omitted to tell Don to do the same. Don had to rejoin him from quite a height. I felt myself lifted into the air by a button lift prior to being dragged back down the slope. Because I was over the top of a blind crest, Martin had not been able to warn me to get off! There were the inevitable 'ostriches' scattered head down in the snow as our skis caught in new, unrolled snow drifts and we took a head long tumble. But there were no serious injuries.

There is the apres-ski — meat fondue and the lady in bloomers. We dipped our pieces of steak into pans of sizzling oil placed in the centre of the table, whilst a French accordionist squeezed and his female accompanist, in shocking apricot bloomers, dragged the males of our company onto the dance floor. There are those wonderful moments of relaxation following a hot shower after a day's exertions, the relating of the day's experiences, the laughter, the banter, the warmth of encompassing friends.

There are disappointments. The quality of food was insufficient until a complaint had been made, together with

concern over excessive charging. It seemed to rain every day, though apart from the last day, it never affected the upper slopes. But even the rain could not dampen the fun of our last day's race.

This is a serious and traditional event. With whoops of encouragement the blindfolded guides manage to take at least twice as long to complete the course as the St. Dunstaners! Gates were refused, instructions ignored and one wondered how any of us escaped without serious loss as they confused their lefts and their rights! The miniature cow-bell was won for a second time by William Boocock in 14 seconds, followed by Giles Hazan 0.8 of a second later. The St. Dunstaner's race was won by myself in 19 seconds. As a result, I promised to shave off my week's ungainly growth, and can assure the team that this has now happened.

The 'loss' side of the equation is always more than amply made up for during our last dinner together. In response to our

thanks the guides generously presented each St. Dunstaner with a memento of the trip, a mark of thanks for what they, the guides, had derived from the experience. They presented the three youngest members of the party with a badge for their anoraks, and finally, bottles of champagne to the first three in the St. Dunstaner's race. The bottles were shared by all present.

It had been a wonderful week's skiing, thanks to the care and concern of our guides. This combined with a great feeling of comradeship and the delightful company of the whole 33 members of the party, meant we ended fully in profit.

On behalf of us all, we express our sincere gratitude to Lt. Colonel Kerr, Commanding Officer, 5 Heavy Regiment for making our guides available, to Peter Barnes for his wit and patience, to Peter, Maya and Catherine for the sunshine of their company, and to St. Dunstan's for helping to make the trip possible.

Charlie Daley, closely followed by Lt. Paul Ingram.



## 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.*

**Mr. Frederick Herbert Morgan**, of Seaford, who joined on March 14th.

Mr. Morgan, who is 96, served as a Rifleman in the Monmouthshire Regiment from 1914 until 1916. He suffered a gunshot wound at Ypres and lost an eye as a result. He was a store merchant until his retirement. Mr. Morgan is a widower with two sons.

**Mr. Frederick George Mogford**, of West Twyford, London, who joined on March 15th.

Mr. Mogford is 75, and served as a Regimental Sergeant Major in the R.A.O.C. from 1942 to 1946. He served overseas in India, Burma, Malaya and Singapore. After his discharge from the Army Mr. Mogford was Chief Purchasing Officer for Cigarettes Components Ltd. until his

retirement. Mr. Mogford is married with one son.

**Mr. Frederick William Worton**, of Solihull, who joined on March 10th.

Mr. Worton served as a L.A.C. in the R.A.F. during the second World War in the Middle East, Persia and Iraq. He is married with a grown up daughter.

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### LAST CALL FOR DAEDALUS CAMP

Would all St. Dunstaners wishing to take part in the Daedalus camp this year, please send their applications to arrive by May 9th to Elspeth Grant, or telephone her on: 0799 22874.



## EASTER BONNETS AT IAN FRASER HOUSE

Easter Bonnets made a welcome return to Ian Fraser House at Monday's Grand Easter Dance. The competition was for ladies only, and we had a small, but quality, entry. Sue Reynolds and Sheila Morris put their hatless heads together to judge the entries.

After close inspection and much deliberation, first prize went to Louie Brooks for her 'chocolate swirl', Audrey Page's 'roses galore' came a close second, and pressing hard on the rails for third prize was Margaret Bingham. She did not seem to be quite sure whether it was Christmas or Easter with snow amongst her flowers! — But her Dragoon style hat was a winner.

The special prize for the most original entry went to Jane Farrant for a truly remarkable topper. Birthday girl Marjorie Ball was unlucky in the hat competition,



Mrs. Louie Brooks receives her prize from Sue Reynolds.

but waltzed off with the first prize in the prize dance, ably partnered by Mansel 'call me Fred Astaire' Lewis.

## Miss Ethel Annie Staddon 100 — NOT OUT!

During the last few days Miss Ethel Annie Staddon has been celebrating her 100th birthday with relations and staff at the Pelham Nursing Home, East Sussex.

On her birthday, the 3rd March, Miss Staddon received a congratulatory telegram from Her Majesty the Queen to mark this achievement.

Miss Staddon was born in Manchester and later moved to Watford where she worked for St. Dunstan's during the First World War. Between the wars she was a home visitor. During the Second World War she worked for the Red Cross Society. On retirement she moved to Rottingdean and for the last eight years has been a resident at the Pelham Nursing Home in Lewes.

On Wednesday, 23rd March, our St. Dunstan Paul Walker and his wife Phyllis went to see Miss Staddon, taking with them chocolates and a gold and orange bouquet of lilies, chrysanthemums and daisies on behalf of St. Dunstan's and St. Dunstan's men and women throughout the world. Miss Staddon, dressed in a

white blouse and blue skirt, looked very modern and was delighted St. Dunstan's remembered her. She sent her love and affection to the whole of our organisation.

## Light Entertainment

'Light Entertainment' is the title of a new recording added to the Tape Library this month. Compiled by St. Dunstan, Ron Smith, it includes old favourite songs and ballads, piano solos, monologues, including Stanley Holloway's famous 'Albert and the Lion' and a much less well-known sequel.

With his pianist and fellow duettist, Ernest Evans, Ron has put together an hour and a half of variety with something to please almost everyone over the age of 21! A C90 cassette sent to the P.R. Dept. at Headquarters will bring it to your tape recorder.

## DORA PENSTONE — A tribute by Phyllis Rogers

When I joined the staff of St. Dunstan's in 1957, Dora Penstone had already worked for many years as a braille secretary-typist, but I soon found her efficient standard of work coupled with an alert mind and friendly disposition qualified her for a more responsible position in the office and she was appointed my assistant and deputised for me when I had to be out of the office on other work.

Dora had a truly remarkable memory for names, family history, births of all children born to St. Dunstaners' wives, the occupation of the St. Dunstaner etc. and when taking telephone calls from St. Dunstaners she could greet them as members of a large family. She was in fact an outstanding member of the staff of Southern Area Welfare team. Dora's sense of humour was legendary. I well remember returning from lunch one day to find Dora on the office floor searching for something and when I enquired what she had lost, her reply was 'I've dropped my plastic eyes and I can't see without the darned things!' The younger staff would often play practical jokes on Dora but she never lost her temper and took it all in good part. Office birthdays were always celebrated with one of Dora's home made cakes — which were delicious. Her knitting was the envy of many sighted people and she won several prizes when entering handiwork competitions. The organisers of several exhibitions had no idea Dora was blind and her entry of a beautiful christening shawl won first prize, beating all sighted competitors.

Following her retirement from St. Dunstan's in 1969 she and her husband enjoyed a few years together and after his death, Dora became an ardent worker in her local Church where she frequently acted as a Lay Preacher. Her other special interest was the Shaftesbury Society for children's welfare and she was particularly pleased when BBC's John Timpson agreed to come and open a church sale of work, the proceeds of which were to be given to the Shaftesbury Society. I am quite sure Dora Penstone did a lot of other good deeds to help other people which we shall never hear about.

Whilst Dora Penstone may not have made newspaper headlines, her sterling character and her positive attitude to life was an inspiration to all who had the pleasure of working with her as did Cynthia Mosley, Pat Carlton and myself for many happy years. To Dora, her lack of sight was 'just a bit of a nuisance' and the world in general is a better place for people with her courage. She will be sadly missed but happily remembered by her many friends.

## Thanksgiving Service

Mr. Peter Matthews, a Member of St. Dunstan's Council, accompanied by Mrs. Matthews, represented St. Dunstan's at a Thanksgiving Service for the life of Dora Penstone at the Baptist Church, Croxley Green on 10th March. Dora, who was blind, worked for many years in our Welfare Department.

Tributes were paid to her courage as a blind person and for her work for St. Dunstan's, for the Shaftesbury Homes and for her Church. Mr. Matthews said that it was a very moving occasion. While in hospital Dora had made all the arrangements with the Minister for the Service. She had chosen the hymns and included one she had written herself, which we reproduce:

*I'm trusting in a Saviour dear,  
Who never fails to care,  
And in this quiet resting place,  
I come to Him in prayer.*

*I listen to His loving voice,  
To learn from Him His will,  
And then I ask for strength, that I  
may all his plans fulfil.*

*He pours out blessing as I rest,  
Before His throne of grace,  
And ere I leave that hallowed place,  
I see Him face to face.*

*O come to Jesus as you are  
And trust Him day by day,  
Then, when you give yourself to Him,  
He'll teach you how to pray.*

*O put your hand into His hand,  
He'll never let you down,  
And when, one day, you meet your Lord,  
He'll give to you a crown.*



## GARDENING NOTES

Considering the awful weather in the early part of the year, one wonders how things will progress in the garden this year. One only hopes that lots of sunshine will be on its way soon to brighten things up a little.

### Vegetables

The weeds will be growing very quickly, so keep a hoe going as regularly as possible. Pests will also be aiming for the leaves, and early broad beans and cauliflowers, so spray regularly. Slugs and snails will also be prevalent, so put some killer down, or set traps. Seeds such as lettuces, beetroots and carrots can be planted now, in addition to earlier greens which have come to nothing. Cabbages started from seeds indoors can now be transferred to their growing places. Remember to add some extra lime, and also soil pest powder. If the weather becomes really dry, water all plants, and add extra powder fertiliser, pellets or growmore.

### Fruit

Quite a few fruits will be forming on apple trees, so cut away a few, particularly on younger trees, in order to get good quality fruit later. Adding moisturiser to the roots will also be useful at this point. Give black or redcurrent bushes a clean up with an insecticide, and also add a dose of fertiliser. Cut away suckers on the raspberries, and also remove any extra runners from strawberries. Set straw round fruiting trees to keep them clean.

### Flowers

May is quite a busy month for the borders planted out to give a good summer show. All the half hardy annuals raised under

glass and hardened off can now be planted out, though hold back the planting if frost has been forecast. Give the planting sites a dose of water if they are dry, and also an extra dose when they are settled in. Spread some fertiliser after they have been planted. Begonias in tuber form can be planted out in sunny spots or put in urns or troughs near to the house to give plenty of colour later in the season. Geraniums, pinks and carnations can also be put out either in clumps, or spaced about one foot apart, remembering of course that they need plenty of sun. As the carnations tend to grow tall and flop over, stake them first, and tie them as they grow. Delphiniums and dahlias can also be staked to provide a protection from the wind.

Sprinkle some anti-slug and snail pellets between any freshly planted items, and give any plants a couple of aphid sprays a month from now on. Give roses a combined spray, and add a fertiliser to be taken in through the leaves. Set some canes round the rose bushes, and press extra soil around the roots.

### Greenhouse

Late summer and early autumn plants such as achimenes, begonias, gloxinias etc will be in their flowering pots, and these should be kept out of the full sun. To keep them cool, paint the outside of the glass with a solution such as CoolGlass, which can later be removed with a dry cloth in dry weather. Tomatoes will be going well and fruit forming. Shake flowers, or spray them with fine water to make them set better. Snip any side growths off, and tie the plants to a stake, give them plenty of water, and also one of the many special fertilisers available.

## MRS. SHEILA McLEOD

St. Dunstaners will be saddened to hear of the death of Sheila McLeod which took place on March 8th after a very long illness. Her death coming so soon after that of Avis Spurway is a second blow to the many who have for years enjoyed 'camp' at HMS *Daedalus*. Sheila joined Avis as a VAD some 45 odd years ago and became Treasurer of the camp funds, a post she held till a few years ago when her illness forced her reluctantly to take things a bit easier. Nevertheless she still managed to visit camp and last year even made the visit in her wheel chair when her many friends were able to greet her. She was quite devoted to all her St. Dunstaners friends and 'camp' was the highlight of her year to which she looked forward so eagerly. Nothing gave her greater pleasure than entertaining campers at her home in Stubbington and later their visits to her in the nursing home to which she retired.

Happily her family will still have links with the camp as her niece in law, Jane Fleetwood is now very much involved.

Her funeral took place at Stubbington and St. Dunstaners and the Fleet Air Arm were well represented among her many friends.

Elspeth Grant

Mrs. Pauline Buckley, widow of Commander Robin Buckley G.M., who was the Public Relations officer of St. Dunstan's for many years, passed away on March 22nd. We extend our sympathy and condolences to their four children and to all members of the family.

### GARDENING NOTES—Continued

Many people are against growing cucumbers at the same time, but I find that it is alright if they are grown at the end of the greenhouse, using the female variety only, and only letting a few fruits set. Remember to keep combined smokes going early in the evening with all the ventilators tightly closed.

## BRAILLE REFORM

by Terry Bullingham

A nationwide postal ballot will be held shortly to decide whether 'New Contracted Braille' (formerly 'Summerbraille 2') is presented as an alternative to 'Grade 2' at the International Conference on English Literary Braille in September. The ballot will seek to canvass the opinion of all Braille users, including transcribers and teachers of the visually handicapped.

It is essential that everyone with an interest in this matter has the opportunity to participate in the ballot. Two information documents: 'New Contracted Braille' and 'Braille at Risk', are available free of charge from RNIB Customer Services. Recipients of this material will automatically receive ballot papers. Other St. Dunstaners are advised to contact Customer Services to ensure they receive their ballot papers. Individuals whose interest is not known to Customer Services will not be eligible to vote.

A series of local study conferences will be staged before September to allow national debate of the issue. Venue details will be promulgated in the 'Review' and available from Customer Services (Tel. 01-837 9921 (office hours) or 01-278 9615 (24-hours)).

Mark Kingsnorth, of Woodingdean, has replaced Robert Fullard as our second representative on the Braille Authority of the United Kingdom and will be known to many in the Brighton area. I would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation of Robert's work on our behalf.

### ADDITIONS TO CASSETTE LIBRARY

The following cassettes may be obtained from the cassette library by sending a 90 minute cassette, in addition to your address and the reference number of the cassette, to H.Q.

G45. (C90) An introduction to Contract Bridge.

R76. (C90) Ragchew Number 24 — The November 1987 Issue.



# On this day . . .

by Sean Kelly

'Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May' wrote the Bard, but then, he probably didn't have time to fit blizzards, rain, snow and hurricanes into fourteen lines. He didn't seem to have space to include many of the anniversaries which May celebrates either. Probably because most of them hadn't happened when he was writing, but that's beside the point.

For example 60 years ago on **May 1st** the first non-stop train ran from London to Edinburgh, although when it arrived is not recorded. (To celebrate this event sandwiches with that genuine 60 year old flavour can be purchased in any British Rail buffet). **May 5th** 60 years ago saw Dixie Dean score a hat trick for Everton against Arsenal to take his total for that season to a record 60 goals. On **May 11th** a century ago Irving Berlin, composer of such classics as 'White Christmas' and 'God Bless America' was born — in Tyumen, Russia. On **May 6th** 75 years ago, James Stewart, destined to be a famous actor, was born in London. Unfortunately, on May 20th 80 years ago, James Stewart was born in Pennsylvania, America, and he also was destined to be a famous actor. Someone must have then told the young English James Stewart 'Listen sonny, there's a five years old American called James Stewart who's destined to be a famous actor, so you better change your name if you're going to be famous too.' So he became Stewart Granger, and the rest, as they say, is history.

One hundred years ago, Dr. Phillip Cross was hanged, and his actions serve as the perfect example of how not to commit the perfect crime: One — don't murder your wife with arsenic, the most traceable poison there is, and two — don't marry your mistress a fortnight later. Tongues began to wag, and the body of his wife was re-examined, and arsenic found. He was

sentenced to hanging, and in a tremendous show of solidarity his young wife left him. Knowing his luck, I bet the cooker was broken on his last morning, and he had to make do with cornflakes.

Two hundred and forty years ago, Jeremy Bentham was born, and at twelve years of age, entered Queen's College, Oxford, the youngest student to enter the college. As well as being a great law reformer, he might also be noted for a number of his strange quirks and inventions. For example, he designed a new type of prison, whereby with the aid of mirrors, the governor would be able to see what was happening everywhere in the prison, at all times. No one listened. He also invented a new language to better express legal terms. No one listened. He died in 1832, and requested that his preserved body be placed in the board room of University College in London. In return he bequeathed them his entire estate in his will, and they listened.

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## CLUB NEWS

### BRIGHTON CLUB — BRIDGE

#### MARCH 6th

We played in our third match against Bognor on March 6th, and we won by 14 points to 2. The members of our team were: J. Padley, W. Lethbridge, R. Evans, Mrs. Barker, M. Tybinski, R. Goding, W. Allen and R. Freer.

### PAIRS — MARCH 13th

1st	W. Lethbridge and Mr. Goodlad	54.9%
2nd	G. Hudson and Dr. J. Goodlad	52.1%
3rd	Reg Palmer and Mrs. Buller-King	51.4%
4th	Bill Allen and Mrs. Clements	50.7%
5th	M. Tybinski and Miss Sturdy	50.0%
6th	Bob Evans and Mrs. Barker	48.6%
7th	E. Hannant and Mrs. Andrews	46.5%
8th	P. Surridge and Mrs. McMullan	45.8%

### INDIVIDUALS MARCH 19th

1st	Mrs. V. Delaney and Mrs. A. Clements	59.1
3rd	W. Lethbridge and Dr. J. Goodlad	58.1
5th	M. Tybinski	54.5
6th	Mrs. Hannant	54.0
7th	R. Palmer	51.1
8th	F. Dickerson	48.0
9th	R. Goding	43.0
10th	W. Allen and G. Hudson	40.0
12th	J. Padley	36.4

### MARCH BOWLS HANDICAP

The annual March Handicap was held at Ian Fraser House between March 14th and 25th. There were 33 competitors taking part, which meant over 100 games of an hours duration each to be completed. To ensure that each player did not have to wait too long between games it was decided that games would be displayed in advance at the Bowling Green and Lounge Desk. Fortunately, with the co-operation of all competitors the whole tournament went very smoothly.

Owing to the number of games to be played some matches were played on the two days before the official start, and by the end of the first week we were slightly ahead of schedule. On Saturday March 19th we all enjoyed the National Bowls Club Dinner held in the Winter Garden. This was a first class meal, and we thank the catering staff for all their hard work in making this a success. After the dinner we adjourned to the Annexe for dancing and

drinking, and this completed the first week of the tournament.

During the second week play went on from 9.15 a.m. until 8.30 in the evening. On Wednesday March 23rd many of us went to Elmbridge for our annual match with the Elmbridge Club, and thoroughly enjoyed the game, and the company of our hosts. Altogether it was a wonderful fortnight, enjoyed by everyone. The handicapping proved successful, many of the matches being won by single shots, and the names on the trophies included some newcomers.

Finally, we must thank Joan Osborne for all the hours she spent working out fixtures, ably assisted by Jackie Pryor. Our thanks also go to all the staff, drivers, Simon Conway and Major Neve for all their help and co-operation throughout our stay, to Reg, Vi, Katie Stubbs, and all the wives who helped throughout the competition. Without the help of all these people the tournament simply could not take place.

Percy Stubbs

### RESULTS

#### TOTALLY BLIND

1st	T. Simmon
2nd	P. Stubbs
3rd	R. Osborne
4th	T. Renshaw

#### PARTIALLY SIGHTED

1st	P. Surridge
2nd	J. Mills
3rd	R. Palmer
4th	G. Bunting

#### CONSOLATION FOURS

W. Davies, J. Callum, J. Pryor and S. Jones

#### FUN FOURS

Brenda Bryant Duffy, R. Osborne, Sid Jones and W. Davies.

**Rose Bowl for most improved player:**  
E. Church



# FAMILY NEWS

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## PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

### **Congratulations to:**

David Tibbit, A.R.I.C.S., son of *Mr. and Mrs. B. M. Tibbit*, who has been appointed an associate partner of Crump, Newberry and Partners.

## RUBY WEDDINGS

### **Congratulations to:**

*Mr. and Mrs. Bob and Joan Osborne*, of Saltdean, on the occasion of their Ruby Wedding on April 24th.

## GRANDCHILDREN

### **Congratulations to:**

Mrs. Kathleen Bailey, widow of the late *Mr. J. Bailey*, on the birth of a grandson, John Douglass on February 2nd, to Penny and Tom Anderson.

*Mrs. M. J. Hamilton*, on the birth of a grandson, Benjamin, on February 23rd, to her son and daughter-in-law, Andrew and Jane.

## GREAT GRANDCHILDREN

### **Congratulations to:**

*Mr. and Mrs. Fred Harman*, of Hainault, on the birth of a great grandson, Thomas, on January 5th, to their grandson Paul and his wife Sue.

## DEATHS

### **We offer sympathy to:**

Mrs. Marjorie Chadwick, widow of the late *Mr. Clifford Chadwick* of Fareham, whose brother-in-law passed away in Lancaster on February 18th.

The family of Mrs. K. Cook, widow of the late *Mr. R. H. Cook*, of Worthing, following her death on March 16th.

*Mr. Ronald Harris*, of Thatcham, Berkshire, whose wife, Marjorie, passed away on March 20th following a fall.

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## 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.

### **C. H. Butler, Royal Artillery**

Mr. Charles Herbert Butler, of Southampton, passed away on March 7th, aged 76. He had been a St. Dunstaner since 1973.

Mr. Butler enlisted in the Royal Artillery in 1940 and served in the 14th Anti-Tank Regiment. He was wounded and lost his right eye in Italy in 1944 during the Allied advance. Although he continued to suffer from severe headaches as a result of his wound, he worked after the war with the Post Office until 1970, when he took retirement on health grounds. His hobby was woodwork and he and his wife enjoyed a busy social life as well as their coach trips to Scotland and Wales in recent years. They celebrated their Golden Wedding in October 1986.

We extend our sympathy to his widow, Irene, their son, and all members of the family.

### **W. W. Holmes, Royal Engineers**

Mr. Winston Wilfred Holmes, of Pearson House, passed away on March 4th, aged 73. He had been a St. Dunstaner since 1944.

Mr. Holmes enlisted in 1940, and served as a Corporal with the Royal Engineers until he was injured by a mine in Italy in 1944. He was discharged in January 1945 following training at Church Stretton, and ran a shop for many years. Mr. Holmes was a joiner before the war, and woodwork remained his main hobby. He also had an interest in music. Sadly, his wife died after 31 years of marriage. In later years he was able to maintain a high degree of independence with the help of his devoted guide dog.

He leaves a son, David, and we extend our sympathy to him and other members of the family.