



St Dunstons
Review
June 1988

CONTENTS

Museums, Manuscripts and Murder	4
Walter Thornton, O.B.E.	6
Reunions	8
Heigh Ho Silver	11
Partnership for Life	12
Amateur Radio Society	14
On this Day...	17
A sound view of computing	18
Club News	20



Cover Picture: A scene from 'Partnership for Life', St. Dunstan's new film shows one of our climbers ascending Barmouth Slabs.



From the Chairman

Pearson House in the heart of Brighton is one of our oldest and proudest possessions. It became part of St. Dunstan's in 1917, quickly established its unique place in our organisation and has grown in importance ever since. It is partly a Residential Home for those elderly St. Dunstaners who (for a variety of reasons) can no longer manage in their own homes; and partly a Nursing Home staffed by a resident Matron with a full, professional Nursing Staff. The Home is also available to St. Dunstaners' wives and widows wishing to convalesce there after illness.

But, over the years, the image of this fine establishment became somewhat distorted. In the minds of most St. Dunstaners it was perceived as a place which you entered 'vertical' and left 'horizontal' — or, to put it more crudely, you went in alive and came out dead. I think it is time I put the record straight on this. I will do so quite bluntly as you would wish.

By the very nature of things most of our people going to Pearson House are elderly, unwell or unable to fend for themselves. As the years pass, the number needing to make use of the Home

From the Chairman *contd*

is inevitably increasing. With this in mind, eighteen months ago we embarked on a major updating and refurbishment to take Pearson House properly into the 21st Century.

The entire building has been modernised and re-decorated — in a phrase 'sharpened and brightened up'. The Nursing Home capacity has been doubled, the bedrooms re-equipped and a Residents' Bar installed adjacent to the main lounge. Last, but by no means least, Miss Christine King has been appointed as Matron; after some 20 years' professional experience she has quickly made her mark and now the whole place is humming with life again — as it should be. A few weeks ago they held their first *Thé Dansant* with conspicuous success!

As you know from last month's *Review*, on 16th June the 'New Look' Pearson House will be formally re-opened by Mr Ion Garnett-Orme accompanied by his wife, Katharine. After a lifetime devoted to St. Dunstan's there could be no more fitting people to get the new commission away to a good start.

I hope you will take heed of what I have said and will no longer have any misgivings about using Pearson House whenever you find it necessary. It has been brought up to YOUR standards for YOUR service. Its unofficial motto is: 'only the best will do'.

TEMBANI REUNION

Another opportunity to stroll down memory lane has been arranged at I.F.H. from November 25th to the 28th, for all those who were at Tembani, South Africa, during the war.

Those who enjoyed last year's get-together will no doubt wish to meet again this year, and those who missed out, please try to join us this time.

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.

Kenneth Archibald Jennings Maple, of Rushton, Northants, who joined on April 26th.

Mr. Maple served as a Private with the 6th Royal Norfolk Regiment during the Second World War and was wounded in Malaya, where he was taken Prisoner of War. He is married with two grown up daughters.

Sir John Fletcher-Cooke, of Sherborne, Dorset, who joined on March 7th.

Sir John, who is 76, was a District Officer in the Malayan Civil Service at the time of the Japanese invasion. After a brief spell in the Federated Malay States Volunteer Forces, he was directed to Singapore and given permission to serve as Intelligence Officer in the Royal Air Force. He was a Prisoner of War in Japan from 1942 until 1945 when he suffered severe injuries. He was M.P. for Southampton West from 1964 to 1966. He is a married man.

William Hugh Williams, of Bromley, Kent, who joined on March 3rd.

Mr. Williams served as a Staff Sergeant in the R.A.M.C. in the Second World War. He was wounded in May 1942 during the invasion of Madagascar. He is married with one son.

Please book early through H.Q.

Stirring up old memories, those who remember Cockie Hoogterp, who used to visit with Princess Radziwill, will be pleased to know she is hale and hearty at 95, at a Newbury Nursing Home enjoying 'double gin and perhaps a double kiss,' despite being reported dead over 50 years ago.



The Abbey House Museum in Canterbury.

Museums, Manuscripts and Murder

A day's visit to Canterbury

by Sean Kelly

Canterbury is always worth a visit at any time of the year, but more recently it has had even more to offer the blind visitor, and St. Dunstaners in particular. For, along with the magnificent Cathedral and numerous other places of interest, Canterbury has recently been playing host to two other exhibitions — a 'hands-on' exhibition at the Canterbury Heritage Museum and 'The Image of St. Dunstan' at the City Royal Museum. I went to Canterbury to see the two exhibitions, and to talk to Brian Stewart, who was involved in the organisation of both the exhibitions.

First stop was the Heritage Museum, a beautiful mediaeval building which used to be, amongst other things, a house for poor priests. The priests would sleep round a fire in the main hall of the building, the home of the 'hands-on' exhibition. The smoke would rise from the fire, and before escaping through the roof, would stain the wooden roof beams with soot. This excellently preserved roof is still visible today. The museum is organised as a time walk, with the 'hands-on' exhibition independent of this, the idea being to progress through the history of the city from its earliest days until the

present day. This journey reflects, of course, the history of Canterbury, and includes writer Joseph Conrad's favourite writing table and chair, and 'The Invicta,' the world's first passenger steam locomotive amongst many other exhibits.

Although the 'hands-on' exhibition is formally ended now, a number of the most popular exhibits will remain on display in the museum, including a pump-pedal penny farthing. I asked Mr. Stewart how the exhibition had come about. 'It began when we organised a special one day display for blind people, but this was so popular that it had to be extended to a week. Following this success, we decided to organise this second exhibition, and again the popularity has resulted in the exhibition being extended for a week.' The staging of the exhibitions has helped the staff to learn, and also provided them with a few surprises. 'Wall plaques, which we expected to be very popular, were not as popular as, for example, Joseph Conrad's writing table,' said Mr. Stewart. He also added that although the exhibition was difficult to organise, it had been worthwhile, and had generated a lot of interest. Even without the 'hands-on'

exhibition, the museum is still very attractive, and Mr. Stewart noted that around two thirds of blind visitors went on to go through the 'time walk,' in which a number of these exhibits can be examined by blind visitors. The museum will also provide a guide for any blind visitors who are unescorted.

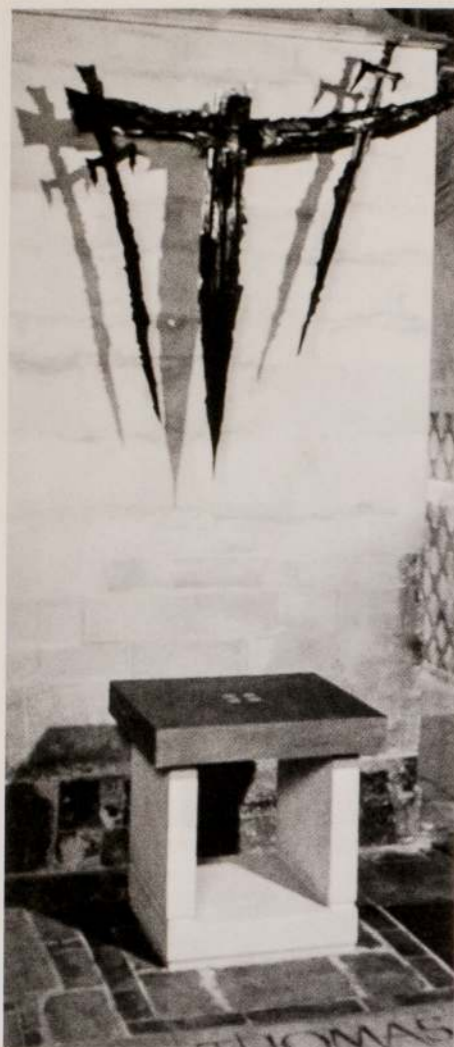
Just a few minutes walk from the Heritage Museum is the City's Royal Museum, which is currently holding an 'Images of St. Dunstan' exhibition. This is the most important exhibition of Anglo-Saxon treasures to be held in England outside of London. This exhibition is made up of portraits of St. Dunstan in paintings, stained glass, and woven into vestments, as well as a number of Anglo-Saxon artefacts which relate to St. Dunstan. It has taken many years to organise, and the exhibits have been collected together from all over the world. In fact, St. Dunstan is the earliest Briton to have his handwriting authenticated as genuine, and the books which contain this writing are in this exhibition. Many of the items on display are priceless, and this is reflected on the great care which has been taken to protect the manuscripts. The lighting is very carefully controlled to prevent damage to the manuscripts, as is the humidity level. 'We had to take humidity readings for three weeks before any of the exhibits were



'The Invicta,' the world's first passenger steam locomotive.

The 'Hands On' exhibition at the Abbey House Museum.





The Altar at Swords Point, on the spot where Thomas à Beckett was murdered.

brought here, to indicate that there were no fluctuations in the humidity levels.' The care and organisation which has gone into this exhibition have once again proved to be worthwhile, as it has been very successful so far. The exhibition is on until June 18th, and once again is worth a visit if you are in Canterbury. (The Museum regrets, however, that there is no wheelchair access to the gallery level, where this exhibition is being held).

A visit to Canterbury would not be complete without seeing the famous Cathedral, of course, and this visit was no exception. The Cathedral is reached through the Christchurch Gate, a small unassuming archway which conceals the beautiful Cathedral which lies just beyond. The cathedral is of course, the site of the murder of St. Thomas, and inside the Cathedral there is the magnificent 'Altar of Sword's Point' which is on the spot where Thomas was murdered. This is only one of the many attractions of this beautiful Cathedral, which alone makes a visit to Canterbury worthwhile.

Canterbury, however, has many more attractions than the three which I have mentioned here, and has the additional advantage of everything being within short walking distance of each other. This historic city has much to offer every visitor, and if the opportunity to visit arises, take it!

Walter Thornton, O.B.E.

A tribute by David Castleton

With the death of Walter Thornton, on March 31st, the blind world in this country has lost an outstanding personality, who made an enormous contribution to the welfare of those sharing his disability through his pioneering work in means of independent mobility for blind people.

Blinded while serving with the Royal

Air Force in 1944 by a German flying bomb, Walter showed his interest in getting about by himself in early days of training with St. Dunstan's in its war-time home, Church Stretton in Shropshire. Although sustaining many bumps along the way, he developed the techniques which later were the foundation for the



Walter Thornton using the binaural sensor with the long cane.

work on mobility in which he became an acknowledged expert.

On completing his training he took up employment with Cadbury's at Bourneville, Birmingham where he became responsible for the company's activities on behalf of the young men it employs — organising club and sports activities.

In 1962 he became involved in research sponsored by St. Dunstan's into an ultra sonic guidance device for blind people. Although this gave the blind user much information about his surroundings, its signals were complicated and it was not taken up widely.

Three years later St. Dunstan's asked Walter Thornton to visit the Veterans' Administration's Centre at Hines, Illinois, United States where a new method of mobility devised by Dr. R. Hoover using a long, lightweight cane was being developed. He came back an enthusiast for the new technique.

He was the moving spirit behind the establishment of the National Mobility

Centre in Birmingham, where instructors in the long cane technique are trained, and he was Chairman of the Advisory Committee of the Centre. He attended international conferences on the subject of mobility for the blind.

His service to blind people generally did not end with mobility. In 1982 he became Chairman of the Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, campaigning vigorously and successfully for funds for an ambitious scheme for the Queen Alexandra College to expand its facilities for further education for young blind people. He was Chairman of the Midlands Council of the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind.

In 1973 he was awarded the O.B.E. for his services to the Federation of Boys' Clubs in Birmingham.

His autobiography, appropriately entitled 'Cure for Blindness' was published by Hodder & Stoughton in 1968.

He leaves a widow, Margaret, and a son and daughter, Andrew and Catherine.

Reunions

Brighton, April 9th

The reunion season opened in impressive style at the Bedford Hotel, Brighton on Friday 8th April when more than 200 people including St. Dunstaners, their wives or escorts, guests and staff gathered to meet many old friends and make some new ones, including Sir David Muirhead, K.C.M.G., C.V.O., the Member of Council presiding.

The guest of honour was The Worshipful the Mayor of Brighton, Councillor Raymond Blackwood, who was accompanied by the Mayoress, Mrs. Blackwood. There were no fewer than 46 other honoured guests, the widows of St. Dunstaners.

Opening his remarks after lunch, Sir David said, 'The Council and all St. Dunstaners are much honoured by the presence at this reunion of Councillor Blackwood and Mrs. Blackwood. As Mayor of Brighton, Councillor Blackwood presides over the affairs of a Borough which has always shown considerable kindness and co-operation to St. Dunstaners and we are most grateful for a long and happy association. We also welcome very much Mrs. Scott of the War Pensioners' Welfare Service'.

Sir David explained that Lady Muirhead was unable to be with him at the reunion through illness and conveyed her good wishes. He also informed his audience that Miss Penny Lord, Southern Area Superintendent, was likewise unable to be there, 'She is bravely carrying on under the heavy burden of multiple sclerosis and I am sure you would wish to send her our very kindest regards and good wishes.'

Giving the latest statistics of St. Dunstaners, Sir David told his audience that there were 1,150 St. Dunstaners, '751 in the U.K. of whom 38 belong to the First World War and we are delighted to have

some of them here today'. In all there were nearly 70 St. Dunstaners at the reunion, 'You will know how pleased we are to see you again with your escorts and also the widows of those who have gone before.'

'We thought of you all in the South and South-East England when, last Autumn, those savage winds hit you very hard. By God's good grace St. Dunstaners were spared any casualties but there was dramatic damage to the Chapel and to the pool at Ian Fraser House. Our many other properties were damaged far less than we feared.'

Sir David concluded by repeating his welcome and looking forward to the next meeting in Brighton. He was followed by St. Dunstaner Jim Padley: 'Sir David, it is a great pleasure to have you here for your first visit to Brighton and may it not be the last'. Jim went on to say how sorry all were to hear of Lady Muirhead's illness and to ask Sir David to take with him their good wishes to her, 'We are saddened, too, by the news of Penny Lord, she is, of course, known to everybody in the room here. Penny is very dear to our hearts and we would be pleased indeed if you would pass on to her our best wishes'.

Hurricane

He echoed Sir David's thanks to Brighton through its Mayor before turning to the hurricane: 'Though I'm afraid the Met. Office will not admit it was a hurricane!' He and his wife, Pat, were staying at Ian Fraser House at the time for the Amateur Radio Week-end, 'It was soon after midnight that the winds came and panes of glass were blown in. Windows were being blown out of some of the bedrooms but Bob, of the Maintenance Department, was there with his helpers. They had been



Two First War St. Dunstaners, Harry Wheeler and Bob Young enjoying the Brighton reunion.

called out at one o'clock in the morning and they were tearing about that building trying to block out some of the wind that was blowing through.

'Major Neve had been called out and he was organising the staff. There was no power and the first thing, of course, was cups of tea for those who had been disturbed and this was produced — I don't know how. The kitchen upstairs was absolutely devastated. Our thanks go to every member of the staff of Fraser House for the work they did that particular week-end'.

Jim Padley also thanked staff at Headquarters and concluded: 'The support that every section of activity within St. Dunstan's receives from headquarters and from Simon Conway and Arthur Neve at Ian Fraser House is absolutely fantastic. We thank you very much indeed'. There is always a busy dance floor after lunch at Brighton and this reunion was no excep-

tion. There was plenty of chat and laughter around the floor too. Tea and the prize draw brought an end to a successful day.

Ipswich, April 21st

The Ipswich Reunion took place on Thursday 21st April, the day following the launch of St. Dunstan's new film, 'Partnership for Life'. The intention is to show the film at each reunion so that St. Dunstaners and their wives have an opportunity to see it. The showing on video took place soon after lunch and the film was well received by an expert audience! It is described more fully on another page in this issue.

The group that gathered at the Ipswich Moat House included 18 St. Dunstaners, their wives and escorts, 12 widows and six guests among whom was Miss Margot Midgley, now retired but affectionately

remembered as Area Welfare Superintendent.

Ipswich was honoured by the presence of our President, Colin Beaumont-Edmonds, M.C. and his wife, Joyce. Speaking after lunch to welcome everybody on behalf of the Council, he said that this was their first visit to Ipswich and that they were looking forward to seeing more of the city next day. He continued with a welcome to two St. Dunstaners attending their first reunion at Ipswich, Claude Powter-Robinson and Edward Stebbing. 'We hope you will enjoy the reunion and that it will be the first of very many reunions that you are able to attend'. The President also made a point of welcoming the widows attending. 'It is so nice to think so many of you are coming here on a day like this'.

'Just looking down the list and seeing how you all fill up your time, I see that all but one of us are now retired. I see no less than seven gardeners and twelve different occupations to fill up a retired life — well, like me, you probably find your life is just as busy as when you were at work'.

Turning to the repairs being carried out at Ian Fraser House, the President reported on progress on the pool and the Chapel roof referring to information from Commander Conway and that already published in the *Review*. Despite the restricted accommodation available during the period of the repairs and other essential work, he assured his audience that activities and life at Ian Fraser House will continue.

After giving the statistics of St. Dunstaners and widows, Colin Beaumont-Edmonds spoke of the surviving First War St. Dunstaners. 'I think they must all be in their nineties. Although there are none of them here, it was, after all, the First War ones that we came across early in our lives in blindness who gave us such an example that we have been able to base our successes and achievements on. Later we are going to see the new film 'Partnership for Life' and it strikes me that our successes as St. Dunstaners have been very much the result of a partnership with our wives and fellow St. Dunstaners'.

Replying on behalf of St. Dunstaners, Wilf Saxby had some thoughts on blind-

ness: 'One thing blind people must always do is to make sure that they have everything planned in advance — one step ahead. It is nice for people to say we are happy to help you and they show a great deal of kindness but the greatest thing for any blind person is for someone to say we desire your help because that means that you are really accepted; that people are relying on you to some extent. I have just been helping in the Parish where I work and I was very touched by the people who came to me and said we want you to do this and if you need any help we will give it to you'.

He then recalled his early days of blindness and the help he received from another St. Dunstaner in adapting braille and organising files. '... this long instruction and help which I have never forgotten because I have used it all these years. Now, unfortunately, I had forgotten the name of this person but I've always wanted to thank him. Now, I'm going to ask the President — Colin, it was you wasn't it?'

'I have told you this little tale today because I want you all to realise that as our President he will not just be a figurehead but someone who will further the cause of St. Dunstan's whenever he can. He will see things, not from his own but from our angle and so it gives me great delight to thank him for coming this afternoon and to ask him to take our thanks and appreciation to all those who provide the services from which we all benefit'.

At the conclusion of the speeches Mrs. Nora Moss presented a bouquet of flowers to Mrs. Joyce Beaumont-Edmonds and when, in her words of thanks, Joyce let slip that it was her birthday, the company burst into a hearty rendering of 'Happy birthday to you'.

The film showing followed which still left time for old friends to get together once more, take tea and, for the fortunate ones, collect their prizes drawn by Mrs. Beaumont-Edmonds.

P.O.W. Reunion

Due to pressure of space we have to hold over the P.O.W. Report to the July Issue.

HEIGH HO SILVER

by A. 'Tiny' Poignton

This particular silver is not related to the Lone Ranger and Tonto, but indirectly to Tonturi, the make of exercise bike supplied to me by St. Dunstan's which enabled me to strengthen my leg muscles in order to achieve the Swiss Silver Ski Award this year. Several lessons on the dry slope at Borowski in Newhaven also helped — just as well as the October Hurricane prevented me from exercising in the I.F.H. pool. No, not water skiing, but snow.

After three pretty hard winters in this country we have enjoyed a mild one, which was also too mild for business in the ski regions of the Alps, with no snow in January, regarded as one of the best months. Fortunately by March 5th there was plenty of snow in Chateau d'Oex.

The departure time of 8.15 meant rising at four, and leaving at five, arriving in good time at Gatwick Airport. Things seemed to be going all-right, and all passengers boarded in plenty of time, but departure time came... and went. We were informed by the Captain that the baggage had not been loaded in time, and we had lost our take off slot. It seemed that they were not expecting people going on a ski holiday to take such things as skis with them.

We took off at 11.04, having spent two and a half hours in a closed aircraft with 330 other passengers, a number of whom had colds and sore throats, which spread to most of the other passengers. We landed in Geneva at twelve o'clock, and there followed a two hour journey to the Hotel D'Lours, where we were greeted warmly by Messieur and Madame Lang and their excellent staff. We were soon unpacked and enjoyed the traditionally superb cuisine of the establishment. On the pistes there was abundant snow, even prior to the falls which we had most nights whilst we were there.

On Monday, Michel Bertholet, my guide, advisor and friend of many years collected me from the hotel, and took me to La Moullin at the foot of Mont Chevril, and eight runs down the 650 metre piste served to loosen up ones ski technique.

On the third day we went to the three kilometre blue run at La Bray, which last year left me feeling that I had gellatinous muscles and latex joints.

This year the boring hours on the Tonturi had paid off, and although I knew I had done a longish ski run, with many practice turns on the way down, I still had muscles and joints at the end. There were a few falls on the way down, but in powder snow this is like diving into mashed potato, only it is a little colder. This was followed a day later by a red run, technically more difficult, but with fewer falls.

On Tuesday my son Michael took a trip in a hot air balloon, which was fortunate as this was the only day of the holiday when the weather was perfect for this trip. I returned to La Moullin to practise the parallel turns in order to take the test for the silver medal on the 16th, which I managed to pass, having done both the red and blue runs again. On the red run on the Thursday I was, unknown to me at the time, videoed by members of the Chateau D'Oex ski school.

We met some very interesting people on the holiday, although I found the change of diet required, shall we say, some adjustment. I asked Michel if he would call at the pharmacy for me, which he did, and returned with, would you believe, 'Physiolax'.

All things must come to an end, and Saturday 19th saw us packed and loaded on to the coach, and at the airport in plenty of time, only to find out that the aeroplane would be three hours late. In the end it was five and a half hours late, but at least we weren't cooped up in the plane. Once on the aeroplane no time was wasted, and we landed in Gatwick just over an hour later, and it was raining.

Was it worth it? I have been trying to get that silver medal for three years. Next years ambition is the black runs in the White Highlands, and I have already been on the Tonturi, and am informed that the scaffolding is going up around the swimming pool.



The film crew prepare to film Johnny Cope in the bowling rink.

PARTNERSHIP FOR LIFE

The new film about the work of St. Dunstaners and St. Dunstan's received its premiere recently. This report by David Castleton.

A new film about St. Dunstaners and the work of our organisation had its premiere at the cinema in the Shell Centre in London on April 20th. An audience of around 150 people including St. Dunstaners appearing in the film, Sir Henry Leach, Members of our Council, representatives of other organisations and the specialist press, applauded at the end of the showing.

Entitled 'Partnership for Life', the film was produced for St. Dunstan's by Cinexsa Films. Our St. Dunstaner, Jimmy Wright and his partner, Robert Davies, both took a close personal interest in the production, Mr. Davies travelled with the crew to each location.

The Director, Doug Aitken, brought an experienced and imaginative mind to the problem of covering the many facets of the work of St. Dunstan's in a 28 minute film and reactions so far to the premiere

and to the showings at reunions indicate that he has succeeded brilliantly.

The film is intended to be a means of conveying information to sighted audiences in a graphic way. Through loans of films or videos to teaching hospitals, colleges, schools, clubs and societies and through our speaker service we hope to increase awareness of the potential of blind people generally, of the ways in which sighted people can help and ensure that doctors and social workers who may come into contact with potential St. Dunstaners remember our organisation and put them in touch with us.

'Partnership for Life' is a story of a comradeship between blinded men and women towards the goal of acceptance in the ordinary community and there are flashes of the humour that has always been a part of that comradeship. This is well illustrated by a letter to the *Review* by

Geoffrey, the son of the late Wally Thomas. This is read, movingly, by Spike Milligan as friends, staff members and activities mentioned in the letter are shown on the screen.

The film shows mobility training, courses in braille, typewriting and computers at Ian Fraser House. It shows the quality of life of St. Dunstaners living at Pearson House and the care that surrounds them. Scenes of archery, bowling and swimming emphasise the part that sport and recreation play in the life of St. Dunstan's.

In their own words new St. Dunstaners explain how their training and the influence of their colleagues helped them adjust to the problems of blindness. They are Mike Kelbie and Jamie Cuthbertson. Their more experienced colleagues are Ray Hazan, Terry Bullingham, Mike Tetley and Des Chandler, who are all shown at work, while David Bell speaks for St. Dunstaners who have handicaps additional to blindness.

The film ends with a sequence showing some of our climbers on a rock face in Wales, symbolising all that can be achieved by blinded ex-servicemen and women with some aid from those who can see. That relationship in St. Dunstan's is summed up in the title 'Partnership for Life'.

One of our lady St. Dunstaners, Dorothy Martin seen in the workshop at Headquarters.



St. Dunstaner Albert Paulson 'stars' with Trevor Lloyd, Estate Manager.

Note: people have asked if it would be possible to purchase video copies of 'Partnership for Life'. Professional standard copies can be provided: VHS copies — £15 each. Betamax — £18 each. Orders may be sent to The Editor, *Review*, at Headquarters with remittance by cheque or postal order made out to St. Dunstan's.

AMATEUR RADIO WEEKEND

April 9th/10th, 1988

by Arthur Taylor, Short Wave Listener

The Annual General Meeting of the St. Dunstan's Amateur Radio Society took place during the weekend April 9th/10th, 1988, at Ian Fraser House. Such occasions as this are not to be missed and this was quite evident from the number of members who gathered in the Annexe on Saturday morning.

In his opening address, the Society's Chairman, Bill Shea (G4AUJ), welcomed all those present and the business of the day began with the news that Sir Henry Leach was unable to attend in his capacity as the President of the Society as he was confined to his bed with a bout of influenza. Best wishes were sent to him for a speedy recovery.

Last October's hurricane which so severely disrupted the meeting held that particular weekend had inflicted irreparable damage to the aerial system at Ian Fraser House. Despite a lot of hard work by our willing band of local helpers it would not be possible for any long-distance contacts to be made, but it is hoped that the station would be fully operational in the not too distant future. Because of the success of the visit to Arreton Manor last Summer, it is now proposed to pay another visit to the Isle of Wight on Sunday, 24th July, ie. during the course of the Amateur Radio meeting at Ian Fraser House that weekend. Preliminary enquiries have already been made of the Station Manager of Niton Radio which is situated at the southernmost point of the Island. Provided that sufficient numbers can be found to make such a visit a feasible proposition, the necessary arrangements will be put in hand.

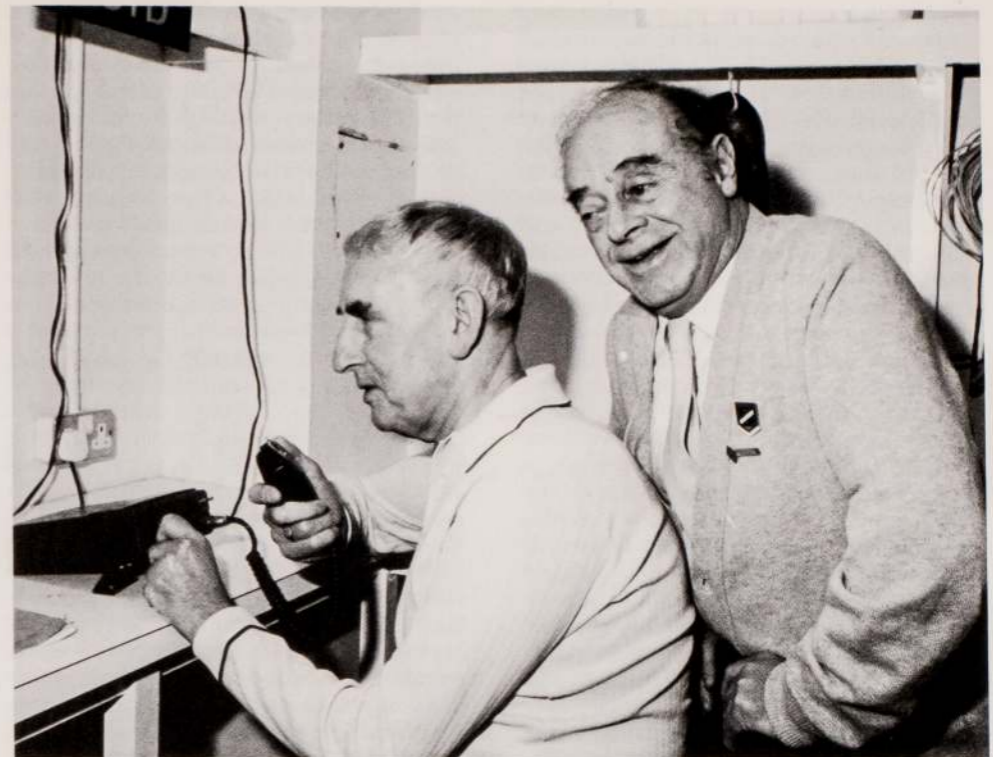
Ted John reported that the Society was in a sound financial situation. This was particularly heartening because during the current year there would have to be some expenditure incurred on the aeri-als and equipment. The Society was always

looking for new members and any St. Dunstaner who joined would be assured of a warm welcome. It goes without saying, of course, that everyone is entitled to attend our meetings and drop in on us in the shack in the hope that they will find that amateur radio is just the sort of hobby that they have been looking for.

Bill Shea suggested that an award scheme should be set up that would be open to licensed operators and short wave listeners alike. His scheme was similar to that operated by the Royal Naval Amateur Radio Society and involved all of the 29 letters which go to make up the name of the St. Dunstan's Amateur Radio Society. The basic principle is that if the *last* letter of the call-sign of the amateur either contacted or heard relates to any of those 29 letters, then it counts towards the award.

Anyone participating in the scheme will be expected to produce the relevant log data, such as call-sign, date, time, signal strength, etc., and those who produce a full sheet of the 29 letters will be given a certificate. The period of the award scheme is from this meeting until that in October. Whether those concerned will have to stand a round of drinks in the bar has not yet been decided but, again, this award scheme will only go ahead if sufficient numbers express their interest — please contact Ted John.

The morning's proceedings closed with the election of officers. Both Bill Shea and Ted John said that they were willing to continue as Chairman and Secretary respectively and, there being no other nominations, they were elected unanimously. George Cole (G4AWI) said that on this occasion he would prefer to stand down as a member of the Committee, and Peter Jones (G3DRE) paid him a very handsome tribute for all the work that he has done for the Society. This was heartily agreed by all present. Both Jim Blake



Alan Reynolds at the microphone with Vic Reeves in the Amateur Radio Society's Shack at Ian Fraser House.

(G0BUQ) and Alan Reynolds (G3VRI) were re-elected to the Committee with Trevor Phillips (G0IBH) winning the vote for the vacancy.

After lunch, members and guests assembled in the Annexe to hear Robin Bellerby, M.A., B.Sc., G3ZYE, deliver his talk on the subject of RAYNET and its use during the hurricane that struck the South Coast during the early hours of Friday, 16th October, 1987. As an Honorary Life Member of the Society, Robin hardly needed any introduction to those present and he had their attention right from the start.

He began by explaining that RAYNET, which stood for Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network, was born out of the East Coast floods disaster of 1953 when inland-based amateur radio operators picked up distress calls from ships at sea that were not being answered by any of the recognised emergency services. Acting upon their own initiative, they took it upon themselves to relay those messages, but in

doing so, they realised that they were breaking the terms of their licence. Many of them reported this fact to the Radio Society of Great Britain but, in view of the part that amateur radio had played in the disaster, a general amnesty was granted. The potential of using amateur radio as a means of communication in the event of an emergency was quickly realised and, today, RAYNET exists internationally.

Robin continued with his own personal account of what happened during the early hours of 16th October. He vividly described what had occurred around his own home and, later on, what he saw in the town. Despite warnings on the local radio for people not to venture outdoors, he had gone out in his car to visit the College where he is the Principal and subsequently became involved with the local RAYNET group.

Because all the normal public utilities had been disrupted, the group set up a portable generator in the grounds of their

Headquarters in order to provide power for their equipment. In doing so, they incurred the wrath of nearby residents who threatened to call the police if the noise persisted. They accordingly moved the offending generator into the building and, in consequence, they had to suffer the fumes that it gave off. Eventually, the residents were as good as their word and complained to the police. Much to their surprise, however, they were informed that if they persisted with their complaint, they, and not the RAYNET group, would find themselves under arrest. As Robin remarked, it would have been interesting to have found out what sort of charge could have been laid against them. Despite the reaction of those people, it was hardly surprising to learn that, on the other side of the coin, neighbours who had hardly spoken more than a few words to each other in years were now helping each other in their moment of crisis.

There were also the baser sides of human nature that emerged that night. They were the looters who were able to operate quite freely due to the lack of a police presence on the streets, and the builder who was charging £51 a time for tarpaulins that had been provided free by the emergency services for the purpose of protecting damaged roofs. It was quite evident that RAYNET was able to provide a good emergency communications system when all the normal facilities had been put out of action.

Later that evening, a dinner was held in the Winter Garden followed by a dance in the annexe. In his after-dinner speech, Bill Shea said it gave him great pleasure to welcome our guests and added that he was sure that everyone present would join him in wishing Robin a safe and pleasant journey to Malaysia on the following morning.

The time then came to announce the winner of the G3MOW Memorial Trophy, which is awarded annually to the person who, in the opinion of the members, had done most for the Society during the previous year. In the best traditions of an Oscar award ceremony, Robin drew the card from the envelope and declared John Houlihan (G4BLJ) to be the new holder of the Trophy. John is also an Honorary Life Member of the Society and, after his

exploits on the roof of Ian Fraser House last October to examine the damage to the aerials, it is not difficult to understand why the members voted for him. Typically, John's reaction was that there were others who deserved the award more than he. In this connection, the Society is indeed fortunate to have such willing volunteers as John Houlihan and John Brandhuber (G4PDY) who give up a good deal of their time and expertise to ensure that the Society's station is well maintained.

There followed the presentation of a Society's plaque to Barrie Cook (G4BWJ), who is retiring as local representative of the Royal Air Force Amateur Radio Society and likely to move away from Hove. We are grateful for his friendship and help, and wish him and Pam best wishes for the future. In his speech of thanks, Barrie revealed that, after getting his licence in 1974, his very first nervous contact was with a St. Dunstaner. His contact had congratulated him on obtaining his licence and had followed this up with a very colourful report on the poor quality of his signal strength. In fact, Barrie delivered that line in such a perfect imitation of a character amongst us that nobody was in any doubt that George Cole was the person concerned. As Barrie remarked, 'Nobody ever forgets their very first contact!'

On Sunday there was a good deal of activity and, despite the restrictions caused by the damage to the aerials, some interesting contacts were made on the 80 and 2 metre bands. In the morning, members were able to join the Royal Naval Amateur Radio Society's net that was being operated from *H.M.S. Belfast* on the River Thames at Greenwich. This year sees the 50th Anniversary of the Ship's entry into the service of the Royal Navy, and to mark the occasion a special call-sign, GB5RN, has been allocated by the Radio Society of Great Britain. After lunch, contact was made with the Radio Amateur Invalid and Blind Club's net and, for the uninitiated, this is the Club which does so much good work in promoting the hobby with the disabled.

Altogether this was a very successful weekend and the Society would like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff

at Ian Fraser House for the very big part that they played in making it so.

The next meeting of the Society at Ian Fraser House is on Saturday, 23rd July, 1988, when, following a luncheon, Louis Varney, G5RV, of international reputation, will lecture on 'The Early History of Wireless — Some Facts and Fallacies'.

A new Morse Code Instruction tape by Norman Kendrick (G3CSG) has been added to the Tape Library at Headquarters. Anyone requiring a copy should send

four blank C90 tapes to the Public Relations Department, quoting the reference No. R77.

The Society has received a very kind offer of help from Mr. Alan Nesbitt, son of the St. Dunstaner of the same name who lives in Devon. He is willing to assist any member in the London area in any way he can. He is licensed, call-sign unknown, and his address is Nursing Wing, Putney Hospital, Lower Common Road, London, SW15 1HW. Telephone 01-789 6633.

On this day . . .

by Sean Kelly

Perhaps I should begin this month with a warning, for I have discovered a little known fact which may be of relevance to some readers. If you are planning on doing any shopping on June 1st in Tunisia, don't, because it is a National Holiday, and so all the shops will be closed. Having got that worry off my mind, I shall now turn to the regular matter of this column, namely irregular matters and anniversaries.

On **June 5th** eighty years ago, England played their first international football match against a foreign country, Austria. The match was played in Vienna, and England won 6-1.

June 7th 210 years ago saw the birth of George 'Beau' Brummell, in London, the grandson of a valet. Beau was to change dramatically the way fashionable men dressed, but his style could hardly be accommodated in today's fast world. He would spend hours preparing for any occasion, and would not leave the house unless he looked immaculate, leaving behind him piles of clothing that had got creased or dirty while dressing. A personal friend of the Prince of Wales, he lived an expensive and flamboyant life, and eventually began to gamble. This eventually forced him to flee to France, leaving behind a number of unpaid bills. He later died in the Caen Lunatic Asylum in 1840. Unlike his fashions, dying in lunatic asylums didn't catch on.

June 10th 300 years ago was the birth date of James Stuart, the only son of King James II, at the St. James's Palace. (Note: This James Stuart has nothing to do with the James Stewarts' from the last issue. For one thing, he spells his name differently, and for another, he wasn't destined to be a famous actor).

On **June 21st** 175 years ago, the Battle of Victoria took place, in which Wellington secured a decisive victory over the French in the Peninsular War. Wellington, of course, was to give his name to a famous character in 'The Perishers'.

Finally, it was ten years ago, in the summer of 1978, that a gang of workmen were having a little trouble cleaning a section of the Chesterfield Canal. Bikes, prams etc. had been removed, but a large chain was proving difficult. They persevered however, and eventually succeeded in yanking the chain, and the large piece of wood it was attached to, clear of the water. Having done this, they 'knocked off' for a break. Some time later, a whirlpool was noticed in the canal, arousing the suspicion that something was not quite right. (Whirlpools are not common on canals — ask any canal boat captain). The workmen were summoned, and at this point they realised that millions of gallons of water were draining into the local river, the Idle. The workmen had, in fact, pulled out the plug of the canal.

A SOUND VIEW OF COMPUTING

by Peter Jones

The advent of the Acorn speech system in 1983 prompted me to seek the sponsorship of St. Dunstan's to carry out a feasibility study to ascertain whether a totally-blind person could operate and use a computer with the aid of this speech facility. There were talking computers available at this time to those blind persons being educated or seeking employment, but the packages were expensive for a person like me who had retired after some 35 years as a Government telephonist, and would not be eligible for financial assistance from either the Department of Education and Science or the Manpower Services Commission. I could not, at this stage, envisage exactly what use I would be able to make of a computer. However it seemed worthwhile to investigate what could be achieved. I was a good 'Guinea Pig' for I had never touched a computer before the Acorn B.B.C. Model B computer was delivered, fitted with the speech system and accompanied by a cassette recorder. All for less than £500, which was about a third of the price of the other systems.

The Acorn speech system, modelled on the voice-print of Kenneth Kendall, gave excellent voice quality and enunciation, although its drawback is that it cannot produce text to full speech translation. The output being spoken letter-by-letter. There is a vocabulary of whole words that can be spoken but these have to be called by a command statement. This sequential letter-by-letter reading was acceptable, however as Braille is read in a similar manner. I was most fortunate to have friends who could hold my hand and guide my footsteps through the jungle of computer jargon and operating procedures. Terry Hadley recorded a description of the computer keyboard and described the various operations that the machine could perform and the way in which a program is written, and as a novice I found

this tape recording absolutely invaluable. Another friend wrote programs for me which spoke the characters as they were printed on the screen either from the keyboard input or the text displayed on the screen from a program that was being run. I played happily but found that the sighted programs proved unmanageable and difficult to use with the reading programs, and I felt that a program would need to be written especially for the system I was using.

The real break-through came with the writing of a Datafile program by Terry Hadley in July 1983. His program works just like a card-index system. Information is stored under a 'Key Name' and then is retrieved by entering the 'key Name' and pressing 'RETURN'. This program instantly appealed to me as it provided the means for a blind person to keep personal directories or telephone numbers, addresses and appointments in an instantly retrievable manner. In December 1983 a text editing program was modified for my use and proved to be extremely useful and very easy to manage. As a natural progression I obtained an electronic typewriter on which to print out the text I had created such as letters and memos.

Although the letter-by-letter read-out of the internal speech system was adequate for the short length of the information in the Datafile program it proved to be rather tedious when using the text editor, and so I decided to purchase a text to speech synthesizer, and the Micro-Vox was chosen. This meant a re-write of the programs to run them with the new voice system and it was decided to change from cassettes to disks to facilitate the copying and distribution of programs. After some favourable feed-back from those who had tried the programs I decided to compile a beginners package and this was launched in March 1986. The package consists of a

copy of the keyboard description by Terry Hadley, a short tape giving additional information about using the programs and the program disk SDPROG1. The suite of programs on the disk have been written to be user-friendly and to provide self-teaching which inspires confidence in a beginner. The program 'Keytalk' provides keyboard training to familiarise a novice with the position and characters of all the keys, some of which are peculiar to computer keyboards. The disk also carries the datafile, text editing, diary and text reading programs. The current version of the disk 'SDPROG1' is for use with the Toucan or Braid voice synthesizers. A streamlined version of the Datafile program has been written especially to meet the needs of telephonists who wish to create their own directories. SDPROG2 is the sound program and SDPROG3 a visual version for use by the partially-sighted as it produces double height characters on a screen display. Should any reader like further information about the programs mentioned above then please get in touch with me.

Peter H. H. Jones,
69, Prospect Road,
Bradway,
Sheffield S17 4JB
Tel. 0742 369199

GARDENING NOTES

by D.F. Robinson

Hopefully the weather should be fine and sunny now, with the plants and flowers showing well in the garden. In any dry spells keep all beds well watered, including the lawn. Boost plants and flowers by giving them a dose of powder fertilizer, or granules which I find easier to spread, and which will last a little longer. A spray against aphids will also be a good idea at this time.

Vegetables

Hoe and water vegetables regularly, in addition to spraying regularly with insecticide, and put down slug and snail

repellants where there are young plants with leaves at ground level, particularly if the weather is wet. If cauliflowers are forming their curds, give them a good dose of fertilizer, and break a leaf over the curds. Lettuces will need a fair amount of watering, but try not to overdo this as they will tend to go to seed. Pick peas and broad beans as soon as they are a good size, remembering to pick off the growth at the top to stop black fly from taking over. Earth up the main crop potatoes, and put stakes in place for runner beans. Early set onions will be a good size, and with a dose of fertilizer now they should be ready to pick in a month's time.

Swedes, turnips and ridge cucumbers can be sown on well dug beds with the addition of fertilizer. Later varieties of the cabbage family, such as savoy and sprouts can be planted out now. Tomatoes can still be planted out if the weather is good and the soil warm. Main crops of carrots, beetroot and onions started from seed can now be thinned out.

Lawns

Set the blade at the lowest level, and cut the grass regularly, tidying the edges after the second or third cutting. If the weather is dry remember to give the lawns plenty of moisture.

Fruit

Give trees a mulching of compost or soil in addition to a dose of water from the hose, which will keep the root system moist for the rest of the season. Cut away branches which are growing too strongly and any superfluous growth to keep the centre of the tree nice and open so that air and sunlight can get in. If trees are heavily laden give them support and thin out to give better and larger fruit later. Shorten side shoots on raspberries and young shoots on currants. Strawberries should be given plenty of water, and ensure that plenty of the shoots are layered for new plants next year.

Flowers

The planting of half hardy border annuals should be nearing completion, or be completed by now. Cut down the flowers of any perennials which are looking the worst for

Gardening Notes *contd.*

wear in order to get another show later in the year. Thin down the buds on early carnations, adding stakes if they are getting tall. Tuberos begonias should be planted in their flowering spots. Set stakes for chrysanthemums which you cut down last autumn. Get some compost round the base of rose bushes which will be starting to give a good display, and give them a good dose of water after any dry spells. Over the whole garden you will find insects, so get the insecticides out regularly.

Greenhouse

Keep ventilators fully open during the day, and half open during the night, and give all plants plenty of water in hot sunny weather. Heating can be switched off until early autumn. Azaleas and cameillias will be growing well by now, so place them in a shady position in the garden where there is little or no wind.

The seeds of calceolaria, cineraria, cyclamen, primula, dianthus, carnation, geranium, candytuft and linaria should be planted in the greenhouse now in preparation for winter and early spring. All the plants for flowering should now be transferred to their flowering pots. Tomato plants should be giving good fruit by now, so pick off all side shoots, remove fruits which are showing good colour leaving the rest to mature, and water and feed regularly. Cut cucumber fruits as they reach a good size, and water and feed them regularly. Get smokes going in the early evening with everything closed.

CLUB NEWS

BRIGHTON CLUB

ENTERTAINMENTS SECTION

On April 18th a party of 14 members travelled to Hastings to play 5's and 3's with a civilian blind club, having been invited by Albert Hobson. Unfortunately Joan

Osborne was not well enough to travel. We stopped for lunch which everyone enjoyed, and then we were beaten 4-3.

Tea and cakes were provided by the winners, and after a very happy afternoon we returned to Brighton. Our thanks to Commander Conway for the transport.

BOWLING

On March 26th we were pleased to welcome the Woolston Bowling Club. As this coincided with the St. Dunstan's National Bowling Handicap, we were able to call upon players not usually present, which was an advantage. Woolston were unable to forget their 18-nil defeat of 1987, and were very keen to avenge themselves.

Bowling was excellent throughout, and in spite of bringing their 'star' players, the result was a draw. During the speech of welcome Jackie Pryor was in very good form jokewise, and, I think, a better comedian than a bowler. Many thanks to the ladies for working so hard — we really enjoyed an excellent tea. Following tea a dance was held in the Annexe and Major Neve, who is the President of the St. Dunstan's National Bowling Club presented the prizes to the winners of the Handicap. Congratulations to Tom Simmon and Peter Surridge, winners of the totally blind and partially sighted competitions respectively.

Many thanks to Commander Conway for providing a buffet supper which everybody enjoyed.

A. Miller

BRIDGE

Individuals — April 16th

1st R. Goding	69.0
2nd R. Pacitti and Miss Sturdy	54.8
4th R. Evans	50.0
5th W. Phillips and W. Lethbridge	
and J. Padley	45.2
8th Miss Stenning	35.8

Pairs — April 17th

1st Mr. and Mrs. R. Pacitti	60.4
2nd R. Evans and Mrs. Barker	58.3
3rd Mrs. A. Clements and Mrs. Tebbit	53.5
4th W. Phillips and Dr. J. Goodlad	51.4
5th R. Goding and Miss Sturdy	46.5
6th Mr. and Mrs. J. Padley	45.1
7th Miss Stenning and Mr. Douse	43.1
8th W. Lethbridge and Mr. Goodlad	41.7

THREE WAY COMPETITION — APRIL 30th AND MAY 1st

The annual competition for teams of eight between Brighton, London and Provinces was held at Ovingdean recently. Twenty St. Dunstaners took part, with the London team being made up by Mrs. King and Mrs. Meleson, the Provinces by Mrs. Clements and Miss Sturdy. The matches were very interesting and enjoyable and the winners were Brighton with 18 victory points, followed by the Provinces with 8 points, and London with 4.

During the play of the matches many drives were held for non playing teams with markers. On Saturday afternoon a general drive was held when 19 St. Dunstaners, 7 wives and 10 markers took part. At close of play Mrs. Dacre presented the

cup to the winners, and individual prizes, and also to the winning pairs in the general drives, who were:

1st M. Tybinski and Miss Stenning	1950
2nd R. Pacitti and Mrs. K. Pacitti	1760
3rd W. Lethbridge and Mr. Goodlad	1750
4th Group Captain and Mrs. McMillan	1430

The teams taking part were:

London — R. Goding (Captain), W. Allen, H. King and Mrs. King, H. Meleson and Mrs. Meleson, W. Miller and R. Fullard.

Provinces — Mrs. Vi. Delaney (Captain), G. Hudson, H. Ward, R. Palmer, P. Surridge, M. Tybinski, Mrs. Clements, Miss Sturdy.

Brighton — W. Phillips (Captain), R. Evans, W. Lethbridge, J. Padley, A. Dodgson, R. Pacitti, R. Freer, J. Whitcombe.

Bill Phillips concluded the proceedings by thanking Mrs. Dacre for presenting the prizes, and went on to thank all the markers for their work at the competition and over the year. He made presentations to Bob Goodlad and Maurice Douse for their work. In a brief reply Mr. Douse offered personal thanks to the Markers and to Bob Goodlad and Peter McMillan for their assistance in directing competitions.

FAMILY NEWS

PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to:

Roger, son of Mrs. Josephine Greatrex and the late *Mr. Harold William 'Bunny' Greatrex* M.B.E., M.M., of Telscombe Cliffs, Sussex, on obtaining his doctorate in Mandarin (Classical) Chinese. He is a lecturer and researcher in Sweden.

Jill Unsworth, grand-daughter of *Mr. Len Withington*, of Wigan, who won the J.C. Horse-jumping Championships on April 4th.

Julie Ann Wiles, grand-daughter of *Mr. and Mrs. George Wiles*, of Newquay, who

passed out on March 31st with the Q.A.R.A.N.C.

SILVER WEDDINGS

Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. J. Donbavand, of Hove, who celebrated their Silver Wedding Anniversary on April 20th.

RUBY WEDDINGS

Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. J. Chatfield, of Worthing, who celebrated their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on March 29th.

Mr. and Mrs. R. Crombie, who celebrated their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on May 10th.

Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Pennington, of Barry, South Glamorgan, who celebrated their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on March 27th.

Mr. and Mrs. R. Phillips, of Steyning, Sussex, who celebrated their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on April 24th.

Mr. and Mrs. G. Roake, of Catford, who celebrated their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on March 28th.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Shepherd, of Reading, who celebrated their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on May 8th.

Mr. and Mrs. Donald Slee, of Penrith, Cumbria, on the occasion of their Ruby Wedding Anniversary which they celebrated on April 21st.

Mr. and Mrs. Trevor Tatchell, of Cardiff, on the occasion of their Ruby Wedding Anniversary, which they celebrated on March 27th.

BIRTHS

Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Bull, of Ebbw Vale, on the birth of a second child, Charlotte Louise, on April 7th.

GRANDCHILDREN

Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. N. Cook, of West Ewell, Surrey, on the birth of a grandson, Matthew James, born on April 17th, to their son John and his wife Marie.

Mrs. Muriel Newton, widow of the late Roy Newton, of Oldham, on the birth of a grand-daughter, Hannah, on October 18th 1987 to her daughter Diane and son-in-law Paul.

Mrs. Sylvia Knight, of York, on the birth of twin grand-daughters, Nicola and Sam-

antha, on April 2nd to her son Nicholas and daughter-in-law Carol.

GREAT GRANDCHILDREN

Congratulations to:

Mrs. R. L. Cooper, widow of the late Mr. S. A. Cooper, of Hastings, on the birth of a great grand-daughter, Katherine Rebecca, on April 1st, to Mr. and Mrs. Richard Bourne, of St. Leonards-on-Sea.

DEATHS

We offer sympathy to:

Mr. Hugh Lofthouse, of Tenerife, whose wife, Ailsa, died suddenly on April 8th whilst on a visit to England. We offer our sincere sympathy to her husband, son and daughter, and to all members of the family.

The family of Mrs. Nellie E. Birch, widow of Mr. Wilfred Birch, of Wimbledon, who passed away on April 15th, aged 90.

Alfred Hurley, on the death of his mother, Daisy, on December 10th 1987, aged 96.

Mrs. Annie Jolly, widow of the late James Jolly, of Newbold Verdon, on the death of her son-in-law who passed away very suddenly on Easter Sunday. His widow is Mrs. Jolly's only daughter, Jean Collins.

Gwen Obern, of Aberdare, on the death of her only brother, Glyn, who died on April 30th, aged 68, leaving a widow and a family.

Mrs. Ada Smith, of Great Yarmouth, on the death of her daughter, Irene Chambers, on March 25th.

The family and friends of Mrs. Denise Tweedie, widow of the late Captain Thomas Tweedie, who passed away on April 26th.

The family of Mrs. Mary Hutchings, widow of the late Alfred Sydney Hutchings, of Welwyn Garden City, who passed away on April 5th, aged 90.

In Memory

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

F. R. Dickerson, 2nd Cambridge Regiment

Mr. Frederick John Dickerson, of Bristol, passed away in hospital on April 24th following a short illness. He was aged 65 and had been a St. Dunstaner for 47 years.

Mr. Dickerson enlisted at the age of 17 in the 2nd Cambridge Regiment and was wounded five months later in a land mine explosion when he was totally blinded. He was admitted to St. Dunstan's in 1941 and following his period of training at Church Stretton was employed as a telephonist. After a few years working in London and Birmingham he moved to Bristol where he was employed by Barclays Bank from 1951 until his retirement in May 1983.

He was a keen bridge player and regularly participated in the bridge weekends and congresses at Brighton, London and Harrogate. It was whilst at Ian Fraser House on holiday that he fell ill, and he will be sadly missed by the staff and his many friends at Brighton.

We extend our sympathy to his widow, Margaret, their three children and to all members of the family.

J. L. Douglass, Royal Engineers and Wiltshire Regiment

Mr. John Douglass, of Ruislip, passed away on April 12th. He was aged 91, and had been a St. Dunstaner for 48 years.

Mr. Douglass was a First World War veteran, having first enlisted with the Royal Engineers, and later transferring to the Wiltshire Regiment. Following an eye injury, he was discharged in 1919, and worked with a blacksmith for some years until he gave this up owing to failing sight. He trained at Church Stretton and was a telephonist in industry until his retirement in 1966. He was a keen braillist and radio enthusiast and enjoyed many holidays abroad with his wife. They celebrated their Ruby Wedding Anniversary in May of last year.

He leaves a widow, Marion, one son and three grandchildren, and we send our sincere condolences to them and other members of the family.

W. H. Duerden, Royal Field Artillery

Mr. William Henry Duerden, of Burnley, Lancashire, passed away on April 25th, aged 91. He

had been a St. Dunstaner for six years.

Mr. Duerden joined the Army in 1915, and served as a Gunner with the Royal Artillery. During the First World War. He was injured by mustard gas in 1918, at Armentieres, and was discharged from the Army in 1919. Following his discharge Mr. Duerden worked until 1967 as a school caretaker, and his sight began to fail a few years later.

When Mr. Duerden joined St. Dunstan's he was already a widower, and lived alone, taking care of himself with the help of his son Kenneth and his family who lived nearby. During this time, Mr. Duerden had a very active social life, took a keen interest in local church activities, and attended a luncheon club each week.

In October 1986 Mr. Duerden's only daughter, Thelma, died suddenly, and he felt her loss very deeply. By this time he was becoming more frail, and after a bad fall was confined to hospital.

Mr. Duerden will be sadly missed by his son Kenneth, and his grandchildren and their families.

R. Finch, 1st Worcestershire Regiment

Mr. Robert Finch passed away on April 1st, at Pearson House, where he had been living since being widowed in 1979. Mr. Finch was 94, and our most senior citizen in terms of years as a St. Dunstaner. Mr. Finch enlisted with the Army in 1914, just a few days after his 21st birthday.

Mr. Finch was wounded at Mametz Wood, in France, and was discharged from the Army in 1917 after losing his sight and some of his hearing. Following a period of training, Mr. Finch took up work making mats, which he enjoyed greatly, and at which he became an expert. His work was sometimes entered for exhibitions, and he often won prizes.

He was the holder of the Old Contemptibles Trophy, a beautiful silver cup awarded to the last surviving member of the St. Dunstan's Old Contemptibles Association, who were members of the first British expeditionary force to France in 1914, dubbed by the Kaiser 'Britain's Contemptible Little Army.'

Mr. Finch will be sadly missed by his family and friends, and also by Matron and the staff at Pearson House.

W. S. Parish, R.A.F.

Mr. Wilfred Stephen Parish, of Norwich, passed away on April 22nd. Mr. Parish was 74 years old, and had been a St. Dunstaner for 14 years.

Mr. Parish enlisted with the R.A.F. in 1940, and served until 1942 when he was taken prisoner and was held at Java. By the time he was discharged from the R.A.F. in 1946 he was not in good health, and his sight was impaired to some extent, but in spite of this he worked for as long as possible as a clerk at his local social services office.

During his 14 years as a St. Dunstaner Mr. Parish was in almost constant pain, and was mainly obliged to stay at home, although he and Mrs. Parish managed to make the journey to Ian Fraser House for holidays in the married quarters in 1986 and again in 1987.

Our sympathy goes to his widow, Edna, who nursed her husband so devotedly, their daughter Margaret and son Graham and their families.

Mr. Walter Parnell, Ox. and Bucks. Light Infantry
Mr. Walter Parnell, of Wem, Shropshire, passed away suddenly on April 4th, aged 77. He had been a St. Dunstaner for just over one year.

Mr. Parnell enlisted with the Army in 1929, and served for 16 years, almost to the day. He was wounded twice during his service, once by a gunshot wound, and later by the explosion of an anti-tank grenade. Following his discharge in 1945, he worked as a groundsman and caretaker until retirement age. When Mr. Parnell joined St. Dunstan's he was not in good health and had become rather frail. He was, however, greatly helped by his three daughters, who visited him often, giving him every possible help and moral support.

Mr. Parnell leaves a widow, Edith, and three daughters, and his grandchildren, by whom he will be sadly missed.

W. Thornton, O.B.E. R.A.F.

Mr. Walter Thornton, of Birmingham, passed away on March 31st, aged 73. He served with the Royal Air Force and was blinded by a flying bomb in 1944.

A full tribute appears on page 6.

A. Walker, South Lancashire Regiment

Mr. Albert Walker, of Bolton, Lancashire, passed away peacefully in his sleep on April 16th. He was 90 years old, and had been a St. Dunstaner for 26 years.

Mr. Walker joined the South Lancashire Regiment in 1915, and served as a Private until he suffered two injuries, a gun shot wound, following which his right eye had to be removed,

and also a cordite injury to his left eye. When Mr. Walker joined St. Dunstan's in 1962 he was already retired, but he learned the crafts of rug making and string-bag making, and as a keen gardener he also put in many hours hard work in his greenhouse and garden. Sadly Mrs. Walker died in 1972, and owing to poor health Mr. Walker was later obliged to give up his home, and consequently lived at Pearson House from 1976 to 1982. Mr. Walker wished very strongly to return to Bolton, and it was there that he lived with his daughter, Mrs. Marlene Burns, for the past six years.

We offer sympathy to Mr. Walker's children and their families, and also our thanks to Mrs. Marlene Burns for everything she did for her father in his final years.

E. White, Royal Navy

Mr. Eric White, of Osset, Yorkshire, passed away on March 29th following a long illness. Mr. White was 70, and had been a St. Dunstaner for two years.

Mr. White served in the Royal Navy during the Second World War, and was a Far East Prisoner of War from 1941 onwards. Upon his return to England and his discharge from the Navy in June 1946, Mr. White made a remarkable recovery from his period of imprisonment, and was able to take up a job in a factory manufacturing springs, where he worked until retirement age. Mr. White's sight began to deteriorate recently, and he joined St. Dunstan's in 1986. Mr. White visited his local day centre whenever he felt healthy enough, and enjoyed regular visits at home from his children, grandchildren, and friends and neighbours.

Mr. White leaves a widow, Kathleen, a son Howard and daughter Margaret, and their children, to whom we send our sympathy.

S. M. Williams, Royal Engineers

Mr. Sydney Maurice Williams, of Gillingham, Kent, passed away at Pearson House, on April 29th, aged 91. He had been a St. Dunstaner for three months.

Mr. Williams served in the Royal Engineers throughout the First World War, but as the result of an explosion he suffered damage to his sight and loss of hearing. Following his discharge, he was employed as a Civil Servant in the Chatham Dockyard for the remainder of his career. Sadly, his wife and son predeceased him, but he was able to remain in his own home until six months ago.

We extend our sympathy to all his relatives.