

St Dunstons Review May 1990



12-14 Harcourt Street,
London W1A 4XB

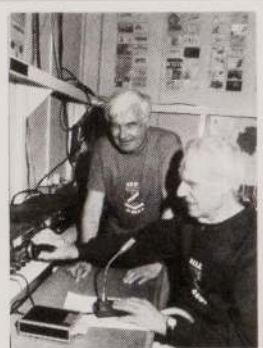
10p MONTHLY

Free to St. Dunstaners

MAY 1990

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Cover Picture: Ted John and Bill Shea in the Radio Shack: See Amateur Radio A.G.M. on Page 16.

From the Chairman

In this issue I bring you, albeit rather belatedly, warm-hearted greetings from St. Dunstan's (New Zealand). Towards the end of March they held an extremely well-organised and well-attended Reunion Weekend in Auckland and Mary and I went out to join them for it. By plan this was to have been their final reunion because their principal sponsor, The Commercial Travellers Association Blinded Services Trust which has largely funded them for many years, has recently lapsed.

In addition to the usual lunches and dinners, one of them being honoured by the presence of Their Excellencies The Governor General and Lady Reeves, there was a civic reception given by the Mayor of Auckland, Dame Cath Tizard (who is due to take office as Governor General next November) and a very moving and delightful service and wreath-laying at the War Memorial on the Sunday. Under the able direction of Bob and Thelma Sadler everything went without a hitch. I was glad of this opportunity to present Cyril Jenkin, acting Chairman of the CTA Trust, who had staunchly supported St. Dunstan's (NZ) for 47 years, with an inscribed plaque. At their Annual General Meeting on the last morning it was decided to reverse their previous decision to stop holding reunions and to continue with a 'mini version' every second year at a venue to be decided by their Executive Committee — so they will continue to maintain contact with each other as far as possible.

The message I derive from all this is one of deep gratitude and pride that the long arm of friendship of St. Dunstan's still stretches to the furthest part of the world and embraces those fine and loyal men and women (there are 11 widows as well as many wives) who live overseas. For our part they may rest assured that we will continue to remember and help them.

Henry Leach



NOTICE BOARD



LEARN TO SWIM

Mobility and Sports Officer, Cherrie Duncan expresses her thanks to all St. Dunstaners for the suggestions they sent her regarding sports and leisure activities. One idea that is being acted on is the concept of a 'learn to swim week'. Any St. Dunstaners or their wives, who would like to participate, should contact Cherrie at Ian Fraser House. You are also asked to continue to send any more suggestions that you may have.

BBC RADIO CHANGES

From April Radio 2 can be heard on the FM (VHF) waveband as well as the medium waveband but from the end of August on FM (VHF) only. It will be found between 88 and 91 MHz.

In the light of the Broadcasting Bill the BBC is altering its radio services. Over the next few years the FM (VHF) waveband will become the only outlet for Radio 1, 2 and 3 and the main outlet for Radio 4. However Radio 4 will also be on the long wave which is expected to carry many Radio 4 programmes but will also carry special event coverage, eg. state occasions at times in the future.

The only national service provided by the BBC on the medium waveband will be Radio 5, a sport and education service.

By now nearly all St. Dunstaners will have a radio which has a VHF or FM waveband and will be able to receive all the BBC services once familiarity with tuning the dial has been mastered. The correct radio frequencies are in the *Radio Times* and daily papers.

For good FM reception it is recommended that the radio aerial is extended fully. Try it vertical or horizontal or at an angle and experiment by pointing it in different directions whilst tuning until you get the best results.

SWEATSHIRTS FOR SUMMER

White sweatshirts with the St. Dunstan's crest on the front, are available from the Supplies Department at Headquarters. The size fits a 42 inch to 44 inch chest and costs £7.50 including postage. 36 inch medium T-shirts are also available at £4.00, while a limited number of thinner quality T-shirts can be purchased for £2.25 each.

LAST CALL FOR HMS DAEDALUS

All those wishing to put their names forward for a place at Camp in August should apply to Elspeth Grant, High Acre, Catmere End, Saffron Walden, Essex, LB11 4XO, telephone 0799 22874. The closing date has been extended from May 3rd to May 12th. Those who indicated their intention of applying in the recent survey should do so as soon as possible. The survey was anonymous and it is impossible to determine who, in fact, said they would like to come.

NOT FORGOTTEN — GARDEN PARTY

Homes Booking Clerk, Frances Casey, informs us that St. Dunstan's will not be taking part in the 'Not Forgotten' Garden Party, which is to be held in the grounds of Buckingham Palace on Tuesday, July 31st. This is due to its close proximity to St. Dunstan's 75th Anniversary Celebrations to be held at Buckingham Palace the following day.

We are sorry if this disappoints any St. Dunstaners but it was felt that most St. Dunstaners would prefer to go to the 75th Anniversary Celebrations held on Wednesday, August 1st.

ADMISSION TO SERVICE HOSPITALS

We learn from the Officers' Association that Service Hospitals in the United Kingdom, mainly in the southern half of England, may accept a limited number of National Health Service patients for investigation and treatment.

This is possible if the type of case is one which the hospital is equipped and staffed to handle or if long-term treatment is not required.

Priority will be given — so far as is practicable and subject to the decision of the Hospital Commanding Officer — to the treatment of War Pensioners and others suffering from disabilities contracted during their service in the Armed Forces. Similar consideration will also be accorded to long-service Service Pensioners and the hospital may also be able to help other retired Service personnel, or their widows, with advice or treatment as out-patients, with subsequent admission to hospital if necessary. Ex-servicemen and women wishing to avail themselves of this facility should, in the first instance, ask their General Practitioner to refer the case to the Commanding Officer of the Service Hospital of their choice.

It is stressed that War Pensioners seeking treatment for their accepted disabilities should inform their local War Pensions Office so that they will be eligible for travelling expenses and treatment allowances in connection with the admission.

Service Hospitals in the United Kingdom:-

Cambridge Military Hospital,
Aldershot, Hants.

Duchess of Kent Military Hospital,
Catterick, Yorks.

Queen Elizabeth Military Hospital,
Stadium Road, Woolwich, London
SE18.

Royal Naval Hospital, Haslar, Gosport,
Hants.

Royal Naval Hospital, Plymouth, Devon.

Princess Alexandra Royal Air Force
Hospital, Wroughton, Swindon, Wilts.

Princess Mary Royal Air Force Hospital,
Halton, Aylesbury, Bucks.

Royal Air Force Hospital, Ely, Cambs.
(Restricted to local residents only).

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.

Mrs. Margaret Jones, of Maesteg, near Bridgend, who joined on March 6th.

Mrs. Jones was injured by an explosion of detonators while working at the Royal Ordnance Factory at Bridgend, during the Second World War. This accident left her with no sight in her right eye and impaired sight in her left eye. She ran her own fish and chip shop in Maesteg from 1948 to 1959, when she had to sell the shop as her vision deteriorated further.

Mrs. Jones is married and has one adult daughter.

Admiral Sir Frank Twiss K.C.B. D.S.M., of Westbury, Wilts, who joined on March 6th.

Admiral Sir Frank Twiss entered the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, in 1924 and served in the Royal Navy until 1970, when he retired as Second Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Personnel. His service included a period of time as a P.O.W. in the hands of the Japanese during the Second World War. His eyesight later deteriorated as a result of the privations suffered during his capture. On leaving the Navy Sir Frank became Gentleman Usher of Black Rod in the House of Lords, finally retiring in 1978. He also served as a Member of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

He is married and has two sons, both in the Royal Navy, and one daughter.

Mr. Stanley Gordon Pearce, of Exeter, who joined on March 6th.

Mr. Pearce enlisted in the Royal Artillery in August 1939 and served in India and Ceylon during the Second World War. He was among the last Gunners to use the mule borne pack howitzer. He was discharged from the Army in 1945 on health grounds and was employed in industry until his retirement.



HIGH FLYER

Arthur Birkett pictured after his flight in a glider. During the flight he reached an altitude of 2,000 feet, and looped the loop twice on the way down.

TIMBER!

Alex Nesbitt surveys the damage caused by a tree that was blown down at his home in Teignmouth during the recent storms.



ARNHEM REMEMBERED

The stamp on the right was issued recently by the Polish Republic to honour Maj. Gen. S. Sosabowski, father of St. Dunstaner, Dr. Stan Sosabowski. On the left is the card of the Polish Airborne Forces in Great Britain.

42 ZJAZD POLSKICH SPADOCHRONIARZY - LONDYN 9-10.IX.1989



THE POLISH AIRBORNE FORCES ASSOCIATION IN GREAT BRITAIN

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Nancy Bickley, Peacehaven

I am overwhelmed at the kindness and warm hearted support which I have received from everyone at St. Dunstan's at this sad time, when my cherished friend, Walford, was taken from me. May your true and loyal friendship continue to uphold me in the days to come.

I thank you all very much. May Walford's son, Gareth, and relations also know they are remembered at this time and may we all be given strength to bear our sadness.

From Terry Bullingham, of Aberdeen

Alf Bradley's letter in the April edition of the *Review* indicates that my use of title may have caused some confusion in my presentation of the minor modifications to the Standard English Braille System, passed at the 1988 London Conference and ratified by the Braille Authority of the United Kingdom.

Radical reform of the braille system is no longer under consideration by the Authority, or any other body for that matter. Readers will recall that St. Dunstan's was opposed to such initiatives from the outset. This decision does not, however, prevent minor modifications and revisions from time to time as circumstances dictate. These need not affect the readability of the code and the objective is to enhance it ensuring it keeps abreast of contemporary requirements. A system that remains static ensures its obsolescence and eventual demise.

When readers have had the opportunity to study the modifications in detail, they will discover there is no cause for concern. I apologise to Mr. Bradley for the confusion and assure him that there is no intention to establish an elitist body of brailleists.

EDITOR'S NOTE. The changes listed above are set out elsewhere in the May 'Review'.

REFLECTIONS

By the Reverend C. Le M. Scott

Events make history; events all over Eastern Europe have changed our fears for the future; and given us hope that our grandchildren will not have to live with background fears of a nuclear war.

Easter, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, releases us from the ultimate fear of eternal death. Many of my friends — perhaps most of them — do not accept this release, and bear ultimate fears bravely. They often argue — and some live up to it — that efforts within this lifetime should go to improving this world. For the unbeliever hopes of a future existence reduce the importance of this one. Greater freedom, less guilt, more justice and less poverty should make this life more worthwhile.

Those touched by the Resurrection story try to add to such concerns a balance of both scepticism and boundless hope. Those improvements we put such store on so often disappoint; and one might well doubt whether our grandparents, with their experiences and hopes, were less happy than we — and that our grandchildren will display virtues beyond our own.

The believer demands that some things are eternal. A simple act of assistance or courtesy, a good song well sung, an enterprise vigorously pursued, in fact any choice made wholeheartedly towards truth, towards loving kindness, is an asset which never dies. Neither failure nor the passage of time can reduce its value. The Resurrection of Christ guarantees that nothing in life is lost; that our voyage towards the glory of God's kingdom in heaven and on earth is finally successful.

ALL THAT JAZZ

A selection of jazz tapes by Benny Green and other artists have been donated to the Public Relations Department. Anyone interested in acquiring the tapes should write to the Public Relations Department. The tapes will be distributed on a first-come-first-served basis, and replacement tapes are not required.

A Moment to Spare with Syd Scroggie

WHA'S LIKE US

Even here in Strathmartine, where our chief concern is to prevent the passage of time, rumours have reached us recently of a move to get independence for Scotland, that a political party has actually been embodied with this end in view.

Now we are aware that Scotland had its own king, its own government, its own territory in the past, that it had to fight hard to keep an aggressive England at bay, and in fact here at Roseangle, framed and hung on the wall, is a reminder of these times in the shape of a facsimile of the Declaration of Arbroath. 'We fight not for glory,' this says, 'nor honours nor riches but for liberty alone which no good man lays down but with his life.'

However, England won in the end, not by the sword but by stealth, and most of us have got used to the fact that we Scots now share one sovereign with the English, one government, and in however inferior a capacity form part of the United Kingdom. I say most of us, but now it would appear there is a disaffected minority in our midst, and that under the banner of an independent Scotland we are being urged to secede from the Union, hitch up our kilts, and march forth into Europe, there to pursue an independent destiny.

But the trouble is that Scotland is no longer Scotland, not the one our forebears would have recognised anyway, but only the same as pretty well everywhere else with only the vaguest Scottish attachments to distinguish it from the rest. Our language has gone, our religion has gone, our law is going and the same pop culture that prevails in London and Liverpool does so also in Glasgow and Edinburgh.

Worst of all, what was in days gone by a proper Scottish patriotism has become a mere aggressive assertion of a historical Scottishness which is now as dead as the dodo.

The Scottish National Party, as seen by us here in Strathmartine, is an amusing quirk on the contemporary political scene, nothing more, for it is back with the Battle of Bannockburn. 'Here's tae us, wha's like us,' used to be the toast at convivial gatherings North of the Border, and a century ago there might have been something to be said for this assertion. For Scots then had something unique and important to offer the world. Now that we have lost our soul, exchanged it for a mess of pottage, this toast has a hollow ring. Hollywood means more to us now than Holyrood House.

BRaille WATCH REPAIRS

The free braille wrist or pocket watch issued to all St. Dunstaners is repaired and replaced free of charge and should be returned to the Supplies Department at Headquarters when any trouble arises. If necessary St. Dunstaners can request the use of a loan watch while their own is away for repair. Each Wednesday repairs are sent to Mr. Knowles, in Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex, and returned the following week.

All watches are marked with a number, often inside the watch, which is noted on our record cards with the word 'free' beside it so we can keep track of it and not charge for repairs.

Often St. Dunstaners have other watches of various types purchased at the RNIB concession price. These are not repaired free of charge. A record is also kept of these watches and their numbers. When one comes in for repair it is checked, a charge is made, and in these circumstances a bill is returned with the watch.

The only St. Dunstaners who should benefit from free repairs to all their watches are the handless who sense the time by using their tongues and their watches need more frequent attention.



TIMES REMEMBERED

Fourth in an anniversary year series of articles.

THE THREE 'R's — reading, writing and repatriation

Tom Hart talking to David Castleton

Tom Hart.

'We went over as an emergency force about five days before Dunkirk to help with the evacuation. We didn't know we were to be the rear-guard — they just said that some German Armoured Division, Light Armoured Division, had broken through and they'd been cut off and we were just going over to do the mopping-up.'

'By that time the Germans had got through to Abbeville and along the coast and certainly Boulogne and on the way to Dunkirk. But the resistance put up at Calais was such that two German Armoured Divisions stopped and also, by the Grace of God, old Hitler stopped them going on to Dunkirk as well.'

Rifleman Tom Hart was among the defenders of Calais. Just 23, he had volunteered in April 1939 thinking that a war was in the offing. Born in Liverpool, he had migrated to London to work for a printing firm. He had hopes of promotion in war-time service in the Army but events were to prove otherwise.

'Funny thing about it you never thought you were going to get wounded, you never thought you were going to get killed and you never thought you were going to be taken prisoner of war. You lived with the

idea that somehow or other you were going to get out of it.

'We were in Calais and, as the Germans infiltrated and their tanks came, the chaps who had been holding the outer defences fell back into the old town. It was all street fighting. I remember standing in a doorway when Airey Neave passed me. He was a great chap. He took over part of the defences and got wounded. As he was passing me with the help of two R.A.M.C. chaps, he turned round and said "Look out for ricochets."

'I got a letter from Jack Newbiggin from Australia, he came over in 1988 and visited me. He was the only chap that I know was with me when I was wounded. It sounds a bit like Errol Flynn but in his letter he wrote: "PS. Your last words to me, You're a man now Jackie but I'll go first."

'And the next thing I was clobbered by a hand grenade. It's quite true we were in this house and it was getting pounded so we had to go. He had a Bren gun and a magazine so it was stupid the way I went out first and got the hand grenade.'

So, in May 1940, Tom Hart awoke in hospital, a wounded prisoner of war. The next thing I remember was somebody saying to me, "Well, you are a bit better than

you were a few days ago." Again this may sound rather stupid but I said, "That's because I have got the will to live." I can remember that quite plainly. When I came to I remember very well it wasn't a question of me saying, "Where am I?" or anything like that. I knew exactly what had happened to me.

'I was totally blind. My head had a terrific bandage round. Because the grenade splinter hit me right across the face it took part of my nose off. I knew it was my eyes that had caught it because of the big bandage round my head. When I look back, I had no pain at all. By the time I came to, Calais was in the hands of the Germans and we were all prisoners of war.'

Later Tom, with his fellow prisoners, was evacuated to a hospital just outside Brussels. 'We were in open trucks and I remember a German soldier gave me half a bottle of brandy. I suppose he felt sorry for me. The Germans were always very economical. They always had one truck and then it pulled a trailer and we were in the trailer being towed along by the truck. It wasn't too bad really. We went through Arras and Lille to this place just outside Brussels. There all the British prisoners of war were brought together — wounded prisoners — it was an old university.

'We were lying on the floor on palliasses on mattresses and I was there until about the end of September, 1940. We literally starved, we had no food at all. I think the Germans had captured so many prisoners they didn't know what to do with them. They had captured the whole of the French Army and the remainder of the British Army. 90% of the people were badly wounded and didn't have the food to get them going.

'The German Commandant came along to me one day and said he was sending me to a hospital in Cologne. It was a marvellous hospital run by Catholic nuns and nurses and I was the only prisoner in the hospital for six months. I had medical treatment and very good food. I was lucky because most of the other prisoners who went to the prisoner of war hospital were very badly off for food. I had several operations at this hospital. In fact my wife and I went back about twenty years after

the war and met Sister Alwana, the nun who had looked after me.

'I used to go up to the eye specialist with two young German escorts. We were all sitting there one day talking when, suddenly, a voice roared at us because we hadn't jumped to attention. It was the Professor of the hospital and he asked the Sister to take all our numbers. When the Sister came, I gave her my regimental number. She said, "No, I want your prisoner of war number." There was a German officer sitting by and he said, "Haven't you had any letters from home?" This was round about October or November, 1940 and so up to that time I hadn't been registered as a prisoner of war. That was the first time my people knew I had been taken prisoner.'

In limbo

Until then, for his family, Tom had been in limbo. It was much the same for himself. 'At that time I was betwixt and between. I mean you knew what had happened but you never knew what the future was going to be. I think getting with Dennis Fleisig and Billy Burnett was a help because they were in the same boat.'

Tom met them when, after some months, he asked to be transferred to a hospital with British prisoners. 'They sent me to a hospital in Hagen, where mostly they were French but Billy Burnett and Dennis Fleisig were there and the three of us were in one room. This was in March or April 1941.

'I have fond memories of Billy in those times. On one occasion in Klosta Heina he was in bed and this German came in and started tearing off Billy's blankets saying, "Raus, raus" and old Billy bent down and got hold of his boot and chucked it and it hit the German on the side of the head. He was brought up before the Commandant and given three days bread and water. The conclusion to that story is that when the German came in next morning he had his tin hat on!

Eventually Tom was fit enough to go to Stalag IXC. First there was a week at a massive camp in Germany: 'They had about 5,000 Poles and about 5,000 French with

about a dozen British chaps and we were all in the same room. I believe about a day later Billy Burnett went off to another camp and Dennis Fleisig was sent off to Poland. Why they didn't send us to the same camps I don't know.

'Stalag IXC was near Herford with a hospital that pertained to the camp. When people were getting fit from the hospital they were sent to the camp. So in the camp they had leg amputations, arm amputations — all the chaps who were waiting for repatriation.'

A repatriation was due in September 1941. Only those who could not fight again could be repatriated and because he had been in Cologne Tom had not passed the necessary International Commission. 'In September, 1941 they collected everyone who had passed the International Commission into IXC, to be ready for the train that was going to take them and I met a lot of my old friends. So all these chaps were saying goodbye to me but the morning the train was going to go off the German orderlies came for me and I was taken down to the German doctor who said, "You've missed the Commission but I'll sign your papers." So there I was marched down for the train, with sudden hope. Then I was actually put on the train amidst the cheers of everybody hanging out of the windows.'

Hopes were dashed when the train reached Rouen. A disagreement between the Powers cancelled the repatriation and the prisoners faced machine gun toting guards and a journey back.

'We all sang Land of Hope and Glory but didn't mean it. At the time it was terribly disappointing.'

Before the abortive repatriation took place an experiment had begun in the hospital attached to IXC. Lord Normanby, who had been wounded in the leg, had taken an interest in half a dozen blinded prisoners including Douggie Parmenter, Jimmy Shepherd and Freddie Wareham. He had found the braille alphabet in an old dictionary and he had started to teach them by pushing matchsticks through pieces of paper.

It was to be some time before Tom Hart joined the experiment which, ultimately,

became nothing less than a branch of St. Dunstan's in a German prison camp. This was because, along with a whole group of prisoners, he became detached from the main body at Rouen. While most of the wounded prisoners were sent to IXA/H at Klosta Heina, his journeyings took him to Poland to spend a freezing Christmas.

'We were in a great big barn — it had three or four hundred of us in. We had bunks four tiers high. I think it was a barn they used to keep cattle in. There were four big fires and, of course, any spare beds soon went on the back of the fire and the Germans used to go mad but they could never catch anybody because all the evidence was burned before they ever got round to it.'

'We were only there for about three weeks. This was an intermediate camp before we went to Schilberg, near Poznan. When we got to XXI/H that was an old school. There the accommodation wasn't too bad.'

Lone blind man

Here Tom Hart was a lone blind man, 'But you were more taken care of being isolated like that than in a group because there were so many people wanting to do things for you. The only thing I found a nuisance was when you had to go to be deloused. At the other place it was heat but in Poland it was a gas chamber. You used to have to take all your clothes off, put them on to bales and put them in the gas chamber. Then the Germans used to chuck them all out in the snow to get rid of the gas smell. Fortunately I had very good friends and they used to get my bits and pieces together.'

Tom had not been there very long when he was visited by a British medical officer who said, 'You shouldn't be here.' He was aware of the work Lord Normanby was doing and whatever representations he made, they soon showed results. 'They never gave you any warning, the Germans, I was just in the room one morning and a bloke shouted "Hart" and I was off.'

'So, in May, 1942, I travelled over to Klosta Heina where Lord Normanby and all the braille school had moved to. There



Lord Normanby (right), with Lord Fraser (then Sir Ian) and Alan Williams at Church Stretton.

I joined the braille school. Lord Normanby had assumed the job of headmaster of the school and we also had Major Charters, who was the ophthalmic surgeon from Liverpool Eye Hospital who had been captured in Greece. He had been sent to this camp as well and bit by bit they were getting all the eye cases in from different areas. Then you were assessed by Major Charters to be put in the St. Dunstan's category.

'Lord Normanby organised it just like a school. We had terms, we had holidays. We didn't go anywhere but we had term holidays. He advertised and got different people in to help him. We had a camp magazine, a camp paper that used to go out. He got a chap called Mountcastle from London to teach typing — another prisoner, they were all prisoners, and an Australian, Alan Williams, who taught us book-keeping and economics. We had Brown, a New Zealander, who taught music and Lord Normanby as head of the school.'

The school had the co-operation of the Germans not just in collecting blinded prisoners together but in providing facilities. 'They gave us a room and they adapted several typewriter machines into the English method and they also allocated a German blinded officer who was sent to us through the Red Cross to help to teach us braille, Captain Adolf. He'd been blinded in the First World War and he was a lecturer at Heidelberg.'

'Eventually through the Swedish Red Cross we started getting paper, magazines, journals and equipment from St. Dunstan's and we had a pukka school fitted out — braille books, typewriters, braille writers. Lord Normanby formulated a curriculum we had to follow. We used to have end of term examinations.'

'I remember one time Douggie Parmenter instigated a mutiny because he thought Lord Normanby was working us too hard. So we all downed tools. Lord Normanby came in and with about three words we were all back to work again.'



St. Dunstan's Band at Klosta Heina, clarinetist, Tom Hart is seated on the extreme right of the front row.

'It was marvellous, really, because after a while with the typewriter you were able to do your own letters home and you could also write braille letters to people who could receive braille letters and your people at home could send letters to London, where they were translated into braille and sent out to you through the Red Cross.

'That was very good, also, by the beginning of 1942, Red Cross parcels started to come through very well indeed. So we were well off in the camp for food. The German rations were very meagre but supplemented by the Red Cross parcels we did very well. Each evening we used to have one of the chaps from the camp read a book to us for about an hour and Captain Adolf used to come in because he was isolated in his room. One night after the book he said, "Excuse me, gentlemen," and he went off. The next morning I had to go to his room for a braille lesson and I said to him, "Why did you leave, weren't you feeling well?" He said, "No, Mr. Hart, I didn't have any tobacco and I couldn't settle down." I said, "Well, I've got plenty of tobacco." He said, "No, I know, I get stopped in town by all the German villagers asking me for coffee and various things that we can get from you..." But his principles were that he would wait

until he could be supplied by Germany. We thought he was taking it a bit too far but we admired him.

'There must have been about 22 St. Dunstaners, not counting the Australians and New Zealanders who had some sight. There was only one totally blind New Zealander, Tom Wood, who died three years ago. They came into St. Dunstan's category but they were semi-sighted.'

As in all St. Dunstan's establishments, music played its part in rehabilitation at Klosta Heina. Most of the instruments came from St. Dunstan's through the Red Cross. Tom played the clarinet: 'After a style. We only did two entertainments a year because Lord Normanby didn't want it to interfere with our studies. We used to have a band practice once a week and then about once in six months we used to put a concert on for the whole camp. We were very well received. We did put a cabaret on as well as the band.'

Among Tom's souvenirs is a programme: 'ST. DUNSTANERS ON PARADE. To be presented in the Dining Hall, Block 11, on Saturday 10th April, 1943.' The band opened the concert with its signature tune "Smile, Darn You, Smile", there was a mouth organ solo by Tom Wood, a recitation by Sid Doy, a comic song by Jimmy Legge and songs by Bill

Young who had a fine bass voice. Sketches included "The Fiery Dragon", a night club scene in which Tom Hart played a cossack in a costume made from Lord Normanby's pyjamas. Tom danced with a St. Dunstaner in drag. 'The only trouble was he was the hairiest bloke you have ever seen and all over his shoulders and arms he had to shave. Captain Adolf had brought in his wife's dresses. He had a backless sort of gown. It was surprising how much costume they could make up.'

The concert ended with a choir of six St. Dunstaners and a finale from the band. 'Teddy Nash-Larkham was the band-master. He was just outside St. Dunstan's but he is still associated with St. Dunstan's a lot. In fact he spent a fortnight down at St. Dunstan's just a little while ago. He is a very good pianist. Those were the fun and games.

Lord Normanby psychologist

'Psychologically, Lord Normanby was very good because he didn't give you too much of a break. He kept the whole school going the whole of the time. You could be walking round the compound and he would say, "Bring your machine up and I will give you some letters to write." Then he'd say, "I'll have those for signing tomorrow at 12 o'clock." So you had to take it down in braille and put in on the typewriter. I think he used to correspond quite a bit with Lord Fraser, or Sir Ian as he was then.

'Also in the camp was Colonel Ansell. Of course, he was the gardener. He wasn't a member of the school because he had a little bit of sight then. Also there was Lieutenant Woodcock, the Canadian who got blinded at Dieppe, Captain Halloway, an elderly skipper from Liverpool — a marvellous bloke. They were all associated with the school.

'Every month you had a rumour going round that we were going home and every time we had a rumour we had a special repatriation brew. We made a special cup of tea and one of the chaps would put his head out and shout, "Brew up" and Lieutenant Woodcock would come dashing across for his special cup of tea out of the repatriation brew.

'Until, in 1943, around about Septem-

ber '43, Tom Wood, the New Zealander, was sitting outside on a bench and the Commandant of the camp came over and was talking to him and said, "Well, you might be going home in six week's time." A thing like that coming from the Commandant went round the camp like wildfire and special brews were going on all the time. Then it died down for a little and then they came round and started giving us labels.

Biggest scoop

'Then one morning, about five o'clock, the door of our ward was flung open and a chap came in. It was the biggest scoop of all, "The train is down in the station." We got up, we marched down. It was a hospital train. There were three-tier bunks on the train and the chap who was looking after Freddie Wareham said, "Do you want the bottom one?" He said "No, no, too near the rails, rattling around." "Do you want the top one?" "No, every bloke smokes and the smoke goes up." While he was saying this Lord Normanby came and said we were on the wrong train, we'd have to get off. Well, you should have heard Freddie. So we all had to go back to the camp and we stayed there until the Monday.'

That train had been a special, collecting those prisoners who were confined to bed. The right train arrived and the homeward bound prisoners began their journey via Hanover. 'We got into Hanover when the R.A.F. was bombing the town, fortunately they weren't bombing the station that night. From Hanover we went up to the Baltic, Rugen. There the train pulled on to a train ferry and crossed to Sweden, then we went to Gothenburg.

'From Gothenburg all the St. Dunstaners got on to the *Atlantis* which was a hospital ship. We went right up the North of Scotland and down into Liverpool. It had been on the radio that we were due there and as we came up the Mersey, there was a convoy going out and they say that all the ships were keeled over because all the troops were on one side giving us a cheer. All the boats and the ferries were sounding their hooters. Actually the St. Dunstaners didn't go on deck, we stayed

down below and had lunch while everybody else was up on deck getting their first view of England.

'When we got into Liverpool, Sir Ian and Chips and all those people were there to meet us. Lord Normanby was with us and that was the end of the school. I think that Matron Paine, who was in charge of Church Stretton, was very worried because she didn't know what standard of braille had been taught by somebody who had never known braille before. After we had been a few days at Church Stretton we proved that our braille had reached a high standard and I think she approved of Lord Normanby's course.

'We went to a military hospital at Chester, we were only there for two or three days just having medicals. We went on to Church Stretton by coach, about 22 of us. We arrived at Church Stretton, where we

were escorted into the village by a military band. All the flags were out and also the villagers. On the coach one or two of the boys were in tears, I think it was the first time emotion had come out. We felt we were back home. The crowd really welcomed us home.

'St. Dunstan's had got a tea party arranged and all the girls, like Gwennie and Brenda, were outside Belmont waving little flags as we went past on the hill to the Longmynd Hotel. I met Padre Nugee then, he was about the first person I met because he had been with the Rifle Brigade and Tony Naumann, he was K.R.R. Then, of course, all the staff came round, interviewing, sending telegrams home wanting us to meet people and later that same night I met Mabs who later became my wife. Lord Normanby came with us and stayed with us overnight and then it

Dougie Parmenter sets foot on British soil again at Liverpool.



'There really might have been a coronation', wrote the Express and Star reporter describing the scene as the returning prisoners arrived at Church Stretton.

was a sad farewell. He had done so much in helping everybody to get back on their feet and saved us from a couple of years of just useless waste of time. Otherwise we could have just been sitting around at camp. Whether somebody else could have taken on the task one wouldn't know but he was the man who did it. I think, also, his title must have had some little sway with the Germans in getting Captain Adolf and allowing us to get these teachers in from various camps. At one time, I believe, he got on badly with the Commandant who was going to send him to an Offlag and it was only efforts by Captain Adolf and a few other people that kept him there. He is a very kindly man, an absolute aristocrat who could shoot you down in a couple of words. At the same time he had no need for that because you had a great amount of respect for him. We all realised that we were going to benefit from the school. It

was going to be the future and it passed the time away. We had to learn to read and write all over again. When you realised you couldn't correspond and you couldn't read and then you found you could type and you could read braille, you set out to achieve those two things in a very short time.

'You wondered what the future was and the other thing you worried about was how your friends and people would react to you. I'd had quite a bit of my bone knocked around. Psychologically you feel a bit upset and wonder what are they going to think? How are they going to feel about you now and when they first meet you what are they going to say? This all went through your mind. The school helped you to overcome that in a way, not from the physical point of view but from a mental point of view. You were able to say, "Well, so what?"'

ST. DUNSTAN'S AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING A SPECIAL EVENTS STATION

by Arthur Taylor, Short Wave Listener

During the evening of Friday, March 2nd, members met in the Winter Garden for individual discussion and to make plans for operating the Special Event Station the following week.

At the commencement of the A.G.M. the following morning, the Chairman paid tribute to four members who had gone 'silent key' since the meeting in October last, and the assembly stood in silence to the memory of Vic Reeves, G01QJ, Jeff Bond, VE3WJB, and Walford Davies and John Cowan, both short wave listeners. Letters of condolence had been sent to their families.

We were delighted that Bob Davis, G4ZIK, was able to be with us. It was six years since Bob had been able to attend a meeting and he expressed his appreciation of the warm welcome he had received. We are grateful to Bob for his expertise on some equipment with which he was familiar during the course of the week.

Once again the aerials had suffered during the gales but, thankfully, we were able to call on two of the stalwart supporters, John Houlihan and Dave Mitchell, to erect the new antennas which arrived by special delivery on Saturday morning. We are indebted to them for their tireless efforts on behalf of the Society.

Mention was made of the forthcoming visit to Jordan which had come about as a result of a personal invitation from King Hussein I, who had been made an Honorary Life Member of the Society in July last year. These happenings have been widely publicised in various magazines appertaining to amateur radio and other media. A vote of thanks was passed to Robin Bellerby, G3ZYE, for his assistance in arranging the holiday in Jordan and for drawing up a most interesting and comprehensive programme of events whilst there.

Four members of the Committee were re-elected, Bill Shea as Chairman, Ted John as Secretary/Treasurer, Trevor Phillips and Arthur Taylor, with Ray Peart being elected in place of Jim Blake, who stood down after three years service, for which he was applauded.

Ted John paid particular tribute to his XYL (wife), Beryl, for all her support and assistance in preparing the account books for audit. Mr. Ted Nicholas, our new auditor, presented his first statement of accounts, which was accepted without question.

The 'T' and sweatshirts with the Society's logo and the member's name and call-sign, were distributed and worn with a great deal of pride. Many complimentary remarks were received regarding the presentation and quality of the garments.

On Saturday evening, members were joined by their guests for an excellent dinner in the Winter Garden, followed by a dance in the Annexe. Our grateful thanks to Paul James and the catering staff for preparing and serving such a superb meal. Opportunity was also taken to wish Paul, Billy and Kath, who were responsible for forming the company of P.B.K. Ltd., well in their new venture and congratulate them on their enterprise.

The G3MOW Memorial Trophy for 1989 was awarded to Robin Bellerby, and Barrie Cook, G4BWJ, very kindly accepted it on behalf of Robin who was out of the country on business.

On Sunday morning, and each successive morning, members met in the Winter Garden to draw up a rota for operating the Station. As GB75STD was a Special Event Station, unlicensed were able to pass greetings to stations in the United Kingdom, Canada, Falkland Islands and America. An example of this facility my XYL (wife), Jane, was able to speak to her brother, Frank, VE3PT, a licensed ama-

teur in Winnipeg, and I too, also had the pleasure of speaking to him some 4,000 miles away. For years I have listened to a gentleman by the name of Lloyd Marsh, VE3PT, who lives near Niagara Falls, and I was pleased to send greetings to him. It truly was wonderful to have these personal contacts.

During the week some 300 contacts were made from all over the globe, and many stations congratulated St. Dunstan's on its 75th Anniversary and complimented members on the high quality of our signals and exemplary standard of operating. One gentleman had been stationed at Ian Fraser House when it was used as a Naval Establishment and played in a brass band which accompanied St. Dunstaners on their annual trip to Midhurst. Another remembered taking a St. Dunstaner for his amateur radio examination, and a lady, a short wave listener, telephoned especially to say how much she enjoyed listening to our two-way conversations — it made her week. A Welshman from Bangor, Gwynedd, joined us to say that he had never before worked with such a cheerful and entertaining Special Event Station!

There is no doubt that, from the Society's point of view, the week was an outstanding and unqualified success, and we are all grateful to XYLs (wives) who became initiated into the wonders of logging, to Alf Lee, G4DQS, who has the unenviable job of sending out all the cards confirming the contacts, to Wally Lintott for keeping the shack in a habitable state, to all the operators who gave so much pleasure with their individual styles of operating either by phone or CW (Morse), to Tony Cook, G0LGM, for his unfailing support, and last, but by no means least, John and Dave, without whose help and guidance the station would not have been on the air.

The Society would like to express its most sincere and grateful thanks to Major Neve and staff at Ian Fraser House for their kindness, care and attention to our members during their stay, coupled with our gratitude to staff at Headquarters for their contribution to an enjoyable and beneficial week amongst a lot of very good friends.



Barrie Cooke accepts the G3MOW Memorial Trophy from Bill Shea on behalf of Robin Bellerby.

NOTES FOR YOUR DIARY

1990 Meeting on July 21st extended to Thursday, July 26th, in order to run another Special Event Station. No special plans as yet for extending the meeting on October 13th.

1991 Provisional dates are:

March 2nd — Annual General Meeting and possible extension to March 8th.

July 20th — Ordinary Meeting with possible extension to July 26th.

October 12th — Ordinary Meeting — no special plans as yet for extension.

Please remember that St. Dunstaners are welcome to apply to reserve accommodation as far in advance as they wish. You are strongly advised to contact Miss Frances Casey, Homes Bookings Clerk, at Headquarters, to make all your reservations as soon as possible.

Adjustments to Grade 2 Braille

A n international conference on English Braille was held in London in September 1988. Some 30 resolutions were adopted, and these have been ratified by the Braille Authority of the United Kingdom (BAUK). Most of the resolutions concern the setting up of international study groups and technicalities of interest to professional brailleists. However, some affect everyday braille, and these are outlined below.

1. Sequenced words

Normally, the words 'and', 'for', 'of', 'the', 'with', 'a' are written unspaced from one another, and the words 'to', 'into', 'by' are unspaced from a following word. At present, however, this 'sequencing' is restricted where a sense break or natural pause occurs. Such restrictions will be abolished.

Examples:

by and large; for and against; to and fro;
 the book I was looking for the other day;
 she was referred to by name

by and large; for and against; to and fro;
 the book I was looking for the other day;
 she was referred to by name

2. Units

In future, braille units will reflect print practice more closely. Unit abbreviations will appear before or after the number, depending on print. Monetary units which follow the number will be unspaced from it, while other units will be spaced from the preceding number. The capital sign will show upper case, which will help with such distinctions as capital M in Mega and small m in milli. Note that, where a single-letter abbreviation follows the number, the letter sign is used. In other cases the letter sign is not necessary. Special braille abbreviations will no longer be used, and therefore print abbreviations will be followed. The sign for degrees has been adopted from the maths code and should be unspaced from the number.

Examples:

⠠⠠⠠	pounds sterling	⠠⠠⠠⠠	degrees
⠠⠠⠠⠠	dollars	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	metres
⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	pence	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	centimetres
⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	million pounds	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	Hertz
⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	per cent	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	milliAmperes

More detailed technical information can be found in the *Braille Mathematics Notation*.

3. Fractions

The numerator 1, hitherto omitted, will now be shown. As in the past with all other numerators, the dot 6 separation sign may be needed to clear up ambiguity.

Examples:

⠠⠠⠠⠠	one quarter
⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	one followed by full stop
⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	one eighth

4. Double poetry sign

This sign (dots 3-4-5/3-4-5) is never used where poetry is set out line by line, now the usual method in braille. Even where poetry is set out continuously using poetry line signs, the double poetry sign is only used to indicate verse in a predominantly prose work. The double poetry sign will be abolished.

These changes will come into effect on 1 May, 1990.

Observations

by Patrick Flanagan

The recent meeting of President Bush with South American heads of state held in Cartagena, Colombia, was not a major event in itself, however the subject of the meeting attracted the attention of the world media, for three powerful men had come together to discuss drugs.

The drug in question happens to be cocaine, but the problems this drug and its more powerful derivative, crack have caused has made it necessary for the President of the United States to go to South America and try to enlist the services of the armed forces of Colombia, Bolivia and Peru to help destroy the drug at source.

The social problems caused by drugs in the United States have brought some areas to the brink of disaster, with many inner cities becoming virtual no-go areas for police and local authorities, leaving the sale of narcotics as the only means of gainful employment.

Britain's drug problem is not on the scale of that of the United States, but is growing. Recently the Home Secretary, Mr. David Waddington visited the United States and heard how Authorities in the City of East St. Louis, are coping with the crisis. There the local attorney sends his staff home early because they would be shot after dark. Mr. Waddington also saw the quays which were once used to ship cotton to his grandfather's mills in Lancashire, now they are used by the local gangs to dump bodies.

The use of drugs and their effect on society is not a new phenomenon, throughout history man has sought mind-altering narcotics to escape the pain of the real world and indeed often incorporated them into religious ceremonies. Peoples as diverse as South American Indians and Celtic tribes used magic mushrooms to attain an hallucinogenic state, moreover

on Salisbury Plain in mid-summer hippies can still be seen partaking of the very same magic mushroom.

When a drug becomes respectable it is sometimes viewed more benignly. Alcohol and tobacco are examples of drugs that have climbed from the gutter and firmly established themselves as acceptable stimulants. These drugs are now so widely used that it is often forgotten they are drugs at all, however tobacco smoking has become less acceptable than in former years when the majority of the population smoked.

Alcohol is still the major stimulant of the western world and is so enmeshed in the social fabric that it is accepted by individuals who would balk at the thought of taking drugs. A recent report estimates that seven million people in Britain alone are drinking above sensible levels, even so, it is unlikely this will prompt Mrs. T. to call a summit with the brewers and distillers to help combat the problem. Again we run into the old acceptability problem.

Other countries (especially Islamic countries) regard the use of alcohol as sinful and view those who consume it in the same light as we view cocaine or heroin abusers. They also punish offenders who break the alcohol law just as we punish drug pushers and users. The European mind finds it difficult to accept the comparison between drugs and alcohol and if arrested for possession of alcohol in an Islamic country feels rather hard done by.

There is no ideal solution to the problem other than to travel the road of moderation, but moderation in what? Gin? Vodka? Beer? Magic mushrooms? In the meantime we'll just have to philosophise over the dangers of the various narcotics, preferably over a few pints. Mine's a pint of bitter!



Balancing the Books

by Ted Bunting

Mae West

Author: George Fells & Stanley Musgrove

Reader: John Rye

Duration: 12.50 hours

Catalogue number: 5220

In ordinary circumstances, I'd be about as likely to recommend anyone to read the biography of an American actress, as I would be to shove a porcupine down my Y-fronts. But say what you like about the institution called, Mae West, 'ordinary' she definitely was not.

Miss West, in fact, as I found out to my great surprise, was one of the most remarkable women I've ever heard of. It was not that she was the most beautiful female who ever wiggled her hips; for even in the mid-most of her youth she was not more than average shapely or pretty; and nor was she possessed of overwhelming talent, either as a singer or as an actress. But whatever that ingredient is which is necessary to produce 'Star Quality', Mae West surely possessed it by the bucket-full.

She had staying power too. Although she habitually wore six-inch heels to compensate for her lack of height; (when not in bed with the men who had accepted her invitation, 'Come up and see me sometime'), she was also fully conscious that the 'Mae West' character she had created for herself was much larger than life, and required ceaseless dedication to be played to her full satisfaction.

And, as this superb life story shows, Miss West played her part to perfection. Refus-

ing to allow diabetes, blinding cataracts, or advancing age to interfere, she successfully, and incredibly, performed the role of a desirable sex-goddess, for the best part of eighty-seven years.

Mae West, perhaps, will not be remembered as a great singer, nor yet as a great actress or writer, but I'm not talking about a life-jacket when I say she will be remembered as the 'Great Mae West'. Read it for yourself and see if I'm not right.

Come Up and See Me Sometime!

* * * *

Storm Island

Author: Ken Follett

Reader: Robert Gladwell

Duration: 13.75 hours

Catalogue number: 3441

I've not heard such an action packed thriller as this one, since I used to tune in the radio to 'Dick Barton; special agent'. And this story is about a special agent too; but not one on 'our side', because the central character here is a ruthless Nazi killer, heartless and cruel, who was at large in blacked-out Britain in 1944. Not only was he free to prowl the city shadows, but he also obtained some vital information which he knew could change the course of the war to Hitler's advantage. Resourceful as he was, not to mention utterly determined and caring for no human life save his own, it seems that nothing can prevent

Balancing the Books *continued*

him from carrying out his desperate mission.

However, if you want to know more about the story than this, you must get the book for yourself, because all I'm prepared to say further, is that if you enjoy a rattling good yarn, spine-chilling and spiced with a touch of romance, you'll not be disappointed with 'Storm Island'.

A Nazi Killer on the Prowl

* * * *

Going To Blazes

Author: Arthur Nicholls

Reader: George Hagan

Duration: 7.25 hours

Catalogue number: 3478

You don't go to the top of the ladder when you've reached 'the top of the ladder' in the Fire Service. I've learned that from this splendid autobiography, which follows each rung of Arthur Nicoll's career from probationary fireman to Brigade Chief. And that's not all the information I've gained from it either. I've learned, for instance, about the different types of incident which firemen might expect to tackle; I've learned about the tackle which they have to inspect, clean, and maintain on a daily basis; and I've learned a bit of something about the training and the discipline which is necessary for the running of an efficient public service.

Interesting, this book most certainly is. I'll admit there's nothing very funny in it; not even a small boy with his head in the railings or a big fat woman in the bath with her big toe stuck up a tap; but it has brought me to a greater appreciation of an organisation I think we all tend to take for granted, and I have no hesitation in recommending it to you.

From Probationary Fireman to Brigade Chief

* * * *

AIR MARSHALL SIR DOUGLAS MORRIS

Air Marshal Sir Douglas Morris, K.C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., D.F.C., died on March 26th at the age of 81. Sir Douglas was a member of St. Dunstan's Council from 1968-1985. He will be remembered by his fellow Council Members for his wise contributions at their meetings and by St. Dunstaners who met him at the many reunions he attended.

Although he was born at Margam, in South Wales, he was brought up in South Africa, returning to England in 1930 to join the Royal Air Force, where he was nicknamed Zulu. During the war he was a night fighter ace — once shooting down five enemy aircraft in one night — and led a fighter wing over Europe. In post-war years he had an outstanding career which culminated in his appointment as Air Officer Commander-in-Chief, Fighter Command.

Everyone in St. Dunstan's will wish to join in an expression of deep sympathy to Lady Morris and members of her family.

JOHN BARROW

Many St. Dunstaners will be sorry to learn of the death of John Barrow after a long illness. He was 69. John first came to know St. Dunstan's through his work as a photographer on the staff of the *Brighton Herald*. When that newspaper was amalgamated with the *Brighton Gazette* he became a freelance and, in this capacity, began his long association with this organisation. He covered many of the events at Ian Fraser House including Royal visits.

An ex-serviceman himself, he served in the Royal Air Force, he enjoyed the company of St. Dunstaners and members of the various societies holding their meetings at Ian Fraser House will remember him with affection as do members of the P.R. Department with whom he worked in close association.

St. Dunstan's was represented at his funeral on 15th February by Major Arthur Neve, Manager, Ian Fraser House and David Castleton, Public Relations Officer. We offer sympathy to his son and other members of his family.



'On the piste', Gerry Jones goes through his paces.

BROKEN TRADITION, NOT BONES

by Ray Hazan

The temperature in the Alpes rose to 25 degrees centigrade, but in the middle of winter! There was no snow, then there was too much snow. An avalanche killed one of the reps in a chalet on the edge of a neighbouring village. It was hardly an auspicious start! But as the time for departure drew near, conditions miraculously improved and we seemed set for a successful holiday.

It was a tired group of people that hit the snowline in Les Deux Alpes at 11.30 p.m. on Saturday 3rd March. But spirits immediately rose as we greeted our guides already firmly ensconced in the bar. It was good to greet old friends, Peter and Maya Zamudio, Mick Thorpe and Martin Blank, and for the first time, Philip Beaton. It was as if we had never left off!

Indeed, it was with a feeling of 'deja vu' that ski passes were organised, equipment hired, and that first delicious taste of the slopes. Having returned to the same resort as last year, everything was familiar and it might have been an extension of the previous year — one good reason for returning. There were other familiar

faces, Joan, Richard and Sean Wortley, Marion Jones, Roberta Johnston, and for the first time, Betty Sheriff. We were, in fact, in a different hotel, but more centrally located. Chris and Maxine the manageress and her husband made us feel very welcome.

The days slipped by in an endless delight of sun, snow and fun. Alan and Maya covered their usual thousands of miles, skiing from dawn till dusk. The highlight of Charlie Daly's week was his 'para penting'. Charlie was strapped into a double harness with his instructor, one Patrique, having forsaken his ski guide Mick. With a highly manoeuvrable chute behind them, they proceeded to ski off the edge of the mountain. They were able to spiral down, cross the valley and land very gently. Charlie found it a lot more exciting than being towed on the end of a chute behind a speedboat.

We were blessed with two paras on the trip. Ray Sheriff had tried skiing once before, but many years ago. Peter Zamudio's skill and patience, combined with Ray's determination did them both credit.

Ray soon discovered that skiing muscles and walking muscles do not belong to the same pair of legs!

Gerry skied with Philip and Ray with Martin. Both Ray and Gerry suffered minor injuries which meant some loss or curtailed skiing. But when it went right, it was a supreme feeling of achievement.

This year we broke with tradition, for the first time, we did not hold a race amongst ourselves. Indeed, as it turned out, it probably would not have taken place as high winds got up and the resort was forced to close down on our last afternoon. However, Alan, and the ski guides did enter the inter company race. Alan won a pair of ski sticks, Peter and Maya a dinner date for two, and Go Ski, our company, won the overall trophy. It was decided to award the St. Dunstan's Alpine bell to Charlie Daly for his high flying act.

As explained in previous articles, the apres ski can be as tough as the skiing itself, at least, that is what we would like you to believe! Saunas, jacuzzi, ice skating, a pop quiz, a rather lewd cabaret by the ski reps, and I think I have left something out, making up for dehydration with all that sun... We even got in some tandem riding. A four wheeler, 2 seater side by side vehicle was an advertising gambit for the sports shop, but provided an hilarious hour.

The 'stavely' award went ahead as usual. This is presented to the biggest twit of the day. Two, who shall be nameless, received the award for breaking the course record in early rising, 10.30 a.m. Was it confidence or otherwise that one of the guides put Gerry in the chair lift to go down, then himself skied down to be waiting for Gerry at the bottom. Or was it for the same instructor who found himself in the loo without any paper — ou est le papier! But the final word must go to Charlie who astutely waited until the award ceremony was over, and then left his skis behind in the resort. We all know who is receiving the first award next year!

The group would like to thank the Commanding Officer, 5 Heavy Regiment, Royal Artillery, Lt. Col. Kelly. We are indebted to our guides, who cared for us both on and off the slopes. We thank St. Dunstan's without whose help the trip would not have been possible.

D. F. Robinson's GARDENING NOTES

I hope that the winds will have dropped by now and you can get all the bedding plants in their places in the border to have a good show for the summer and early autumn. For those of you who have not raised the plants yourselves there will still be some available in the garden shops.

Ensure that you have the soil in good order when the items are planted in the flower borders and the vegetable patches. Do ensure that you water all the plants well after planting and it might be a good thing to put down some fertiliser in pellet or powder form to give the plants a good start. Slugs are on the rampage now so sprinkle slug pellets and spray all the plants with an aphid deterrent.

Vegetables

Fork over the areas to be used so that any rain can get down to the roots of all the items that you have planted out. It is a good time to sow some extra seeds of salad plants such as radish and lettuce to give you a follow up all through the summer.

Put in stakes for the taller growing plants, such as broad beans and peas with plenty of string on the stakes or plastic netting tied to the canes for the peas, as these tend to spread when growing and netting will keep them off the ground. Tie in the runner beans regularly as they grow very quickly.

During dry weather it would be a good thing to spray the flowers so that they will set the beans all right and give regular feeds of liquid fertiliser.

Earth up the early potatoes and you can also put in a few of the late crop in case some of those planted at the normal time are not doing too well. Plant out brussel sprouts in well limed soil plus the early sown cauliflowers and onions which were early sown in boxes. Tomatoes can be planted in their growing positions from the pots in which they were grown from seed. Put in canes to keep the plants upright and kept firm from the winds. Water and feed regularly.

Fruit

When you have had a dry spell it would be a good idea to fork over the soil round the trees and roots of other fruit plants, then give them a good hosing of water, leaving the hose going for some time. Thin out the fruit on the apple and pear trees in order to give you a good quality and size of fruit.

Cut away some of the suckers on the raspberry plants and all the runners on strawberry plants which won't be needed for making young plants. Do remember to put some straw between the strawberry plants as fruit are starting to form and this will keep them nice and clean. Some slug pellets scattered around will keep the fruit firm with no holes.

An anti-aphid spray should be used every so often as the pests will stop the fruit forming properly and will mark the fruit. A liquid one will help to get the trees and bushes going well and you will have good quality fruit and plenty of it as well.

Lawns

The grass on the lawns will be growing rapidly so get the mower out at least once per week with the blades set pretty low and don't forget to put the grass box on. Tidy the outer edges of the lawn and if there has been a rather dry spell set the hose and sprinkler going for some time so that the moisture will get right down to the roots of the grass. After you have done the mowing clean up the blades and put some oil on all the moving parts so that the machine will work really well every time it is brought out for use.

Flowers

Get all the half-hardy annuals set in their positions on the flower borders, keeping the taller ones to the back. Remember to put the fibrous rooted begonias right in the front and spaced about six inches apart. Set all the dahlias in position with stakes for the taller varieties, the smaller types can be used in spaces left in the flower beds. One can still put in the gladioli if you had forgotten to put them in earlier.

Busy lizzie, verbena and stock always

give a really fine show all summer. Keep some of the busy lizzies for use in troughs and pots near the house. Don't forget to keep the sweet peas going well and tie into the stakes or plastic netting you have used up the wall of the house or made as a tiny hedge for the division in the garden. Cut away all the old flowers as there is a tendency for sweet peas to end their flowering if the flowers set seeds.

Delphiniums and peonies will be growing well so tie them to stakes to stop them falling over when winds come along. The tuberous begonias will be about to give good flowers so set them in groups in the garden. The whole of the borders will need plenty of water especially in the dry spells so use the hose regularly and give feed in the shape of pellets or spray with liquid fertiliser. Put down some slug pellets and also spray with an anti-greenfly spray which you can mix up yourself using washing-up liquid using the watering can.

Greenhouse

The sun will be giving all the heat that is needed in the greenhouse since the need for extra heat for the raising of seeds for the garden is past. Try to keep the windows open all day and even during the night. On really hot days open the doors but put up some protection against cats and dogs getting inside.

Many cuttings of plants can be taken now to set you up for winter as pot plants or even to have good size plants for the garden next season. Quite a number of items will be ready for a good show of flowers in pots, these items can be both fibrous rooted and tuberous types of begonia, gloxinia and achimenes. These can be used as house plants or kept under glass. Do remember to keep them fairly moist and give doses of fertiliser every so often, the same applies to any other pot plants that you have.

Tomatoes will be giving you some ripe fruit but the main crop won't be along for a while. Spray all the flowers with tepid water regularly to give a good set of fruit. Pick off any side shoots along the main stem leaving the flowers and branches of fruit. Tie in the main stem to the tall canes as they grow and give plenty of water plus

Gardening Notes *continued*

fertiliser once per week. Where you have grow bags make a few holes near the bottom of the bags so you will have some drainage.

Insects and disease may be showing themselves so spray with an insecticide or use the smokes in the early evening with all the windows firmly closed until morning. When you open the windows in the morning keep a handkerchief against your mouth and nose and don't do any work for a hour or two. Get all the seed trays and growing pots cleaned thoroughly and put some disinfectant in the washing-up water you are using. Then put them all safely away for next season.

CLUB NEWS

BRIGHTON SOCIAL CLUB

Fourteen members left Ian Fraser House at 10.30 a.m. on April 2nd for the bi-annual challenge to the civilian blind friends at Hastings, we lost this time by 4 games to 3. While having tea, a raffle was drawn, the gifts were given by Albert Hobson's team, the prizes were won by players from each side.

Bob Osborne presented Albert with the trophy and invited them to visit us at Ian Fraser House later in the year. We thank Major Neve for the transport and Benny for the safe journey.

BRIGHTON CLUB BRIDGE

Pairs Match Results Played 4th March 1990

1st	G. Hudson & Mrs. Tebbitt	57.3
2nd	A. Dodgson & Dr. J. Goodlad	53.1
3rd	J. Huk & Mrs. Andrews	50.0
4th	Wally Lethbridge & Mr. R. Goodlad	47.9

5th	R. Goding & Mrs. McPhearson	46.9
6th	Bob Evans & Mrs. Barker	44.8

Individuals Results Played on the 10th March 1990

1st	Bill Allen	60.2
2nd	Bob Evans	56.8
—	G. Hudson	56.8
4th	Mrs. McPhearson	55.7
5th	Bill Phillips	53.4
—	Alf Dodgson	53.4
7th	Wally Lethbridge	48.9
8th	Vi Delaney	46.6
—	Reg Goding	46.6
10th	Billy Burnett	45.4
11th	Bob Fullard	43.2
12th	J. Huk	33.0

We played a match in the West Sussex inter club league against Crawley on Sunday, 18th March and won by 81 match points which translates into a win by 16 victory points to nil.

The team was:

Reg Goding, Bob Fullard, Bill Allen, J. Whitcombe, Bill Phillips, Alf Dodgson, Vi Delaney, Wally Lethbridge.

This result gives us a very good chance of qualifying for the semi final round.

CORRECTION

In the obituary of the late Mr. E. Sturgess, of Speen, Aylesbury, which appeared in the March *Review* we printed a number of inaccuracies.

Mr. Sturgess who died on January 25th was in fact 75 years of age, and not 76. He served in the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Airborne Division, and was dropped into France on 'D' Day. He was wounded on June 15th. We also stated that Mr. Sturgess was an upholsterer, when in fact he was a cabinet maker.

We apologise for our mistakes, and again send our sympathy to his widow and family.



The happy couple, Phillip and Jayne Booth who were married in September.

FAMILY NEWS

GREAT GRANDCHILDREN

Congratulations to:

Mrs. E. Pugh, of Forest Row, widow of the late *Harry Alfred Pugh*, on the birth of her third great grandchild, Dominic, who was born last November, to her grand-daughter, Gillian and her husband, John.

GRANDCHILDREN

Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. N. Cook, of West Ewell, Surrey, on the birth of a second grandson, Andrew John, on March 3rd, to their son, John and his wife, Marie.

Mrs. D. Mantle, of Selsdon, Surrey, widow of *Charlie Mantle*, on the birth of a second grandchild, Charles Peter, on March 3rd, to her daughter, Kay and her husband, Ray Cocklin.

MARRIAGES

Congratulations to:

Mrs. Peggy Booth, of Wimborne, widow of the late *Peter Booth*, whose eldest son, Phillip was married to Miss Jayne Mundon, on September 30th last, at Weston-super-Mare.

Mr. and Mrs. Bill Griffiths, of Blackpool, on the marriage of their grand-daughter, Kim Michelle, to Jose Manuel Montero on March 20th. They will reside in Madrid.

RUBY WEDDINGS

Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. C.D.H. Barker, of Westward Ho, who celebrated their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on March 29th.

John and Olive Robinson, of Darlington, on the occasion of their Ruby Wedding Anniversary which they celebrated on April 1st.

GOLDEN WEDDINGS

Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. R.W. Evans, of Saltdean, who celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on March 23rd.

Sam and Violet Watson, of Walsall, Staffordshire, who celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on March 22nd.

FAMILY NEWS *continued*

PEARL WEDDING

Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. F.W. Tucker, of Coed-y-Cwm, Ynysybwl, Nr. Pontypridd, who celebrated their Pearl Wedding Anniversary on March 19th.

SILVER WEDDINGS

Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. T. Gann, of Barkingside, Essex, who celebrated their Silver Wedding Anniversary on March 25th.

John and Peggy Yorke, of Hull, North Humberside, on the occasion of their Silver Wedding Anniversary which they celebrated on March 27th.

DEATHS

We offer condolences to:

Miss Elsie Aldred, of Warrington, on the death of her sister-in-law, Ella, who passed away on March 5th.

The family and friends of Mrs. Dorothy Blanks, of Cambridge, widow of the late *Charles Blanks*, who passed away on March 28th.

The family and friends of Mrs. Minnie Rae Castle, of Romford, widow of the late *Fredrick Castle*, who died on March 12th.

The family and friends of Mrs. Norah Elizabeth Codling, of Rudgwick, West Sussex, widow of the late *A.J. Codling*, who died on March 5th.

The family and friends of Mrs. Florence Herbert, of Northampton, widow of the late *Arthur Herbert*, who passed away on March 18th, aged 86.

The family and friends of Mrs. Ethel Jackson, of Bridlington, widow of the late *George Jackson*, who died on March 27th.

The family and friends of Mrs. Violet Alice Sedgley, of Truro, widow of the late *John Sedgley*, who died on March 2nd, aged 90.

In Memory

It is with great regret we have to record the death of the following St. Dunstaner and we offer our deepest sympathy to his widow, family and friends.

R.C. Botly, *London Royal Fusiliers*

It is with sorrow that we record the death of Reginald Collinson Botly, formerly of Worcester Park, who passed away at Pearson House on March 30th. He was 90 years of age, and had been a St. Dunstaner for 71 years.

Mr. Botly enlisted in the London Royal Fusiliers in 1918, and was wounded six months later when he was blinded and lost four fingers of his right hand. He trained as a netter and worked for St. Dunstan's for many years. He married in 1950. He and his wife were keen gar-

deners and active members of their church and local blind club.

In 1967 they moved into a new bungalow in Worcester Park where they continued to lead a busy social life. Over the years they greatly enjoyed their holidays abroad, particularly in Holland, where Mrs. Botly had relatives, and at Ian Fraser House. Following his wife's death in January, Mr. Botly became a resident at Pearson House.

We extend our sympathy to their two nieces and all members of the family.