

St Dunstan's Review



February 1994

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Cover Picture: Terry Walker tests a tactile aid to crossing the road. Full details on page 11.



From the Chairman

I write these words with mixed feelings of sadness and delight.

Sadness that, after more than 21 years of dedicated and highly effective service to St Dunstan's, the time has come for Bill Weisblatt to retire and he will do so in the course of the next few months. His quiet but firm leadership, his gentle efficiency, his professional knowledge and his wise, compassionate handling of all sorts of situations will be greatly missed by everyone, not least myself.

Delight, that Gerard Frost, currently our Chief Accountant, has agreed to take over from Bill as General Secretary. I can think of no better or more fitting person to fill this highly responsible post and he has my total confidence. The new Chief Accountant has yet to be selected and a further announcement will be made.

I wish you all a very Happy New Year.

THANK YOU FOR CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Members of staff at HQ, Ian Fraser House and Pearson House, Visiting Staff and those who have retired, thank the many St Dunstaners and other friends, including widows, at home and overseas, who have sent Christmas greetings, and regret they are unable to respond individually.

To all of you, however, we send the warmest greetings and good wishes for your happiness and health in 1994.



NOTICE BOARD



NEW SIZE REVIEW

This issue of the *Review* is the first to be printed on new bigger pages. We have used the extra space to increase the size of the text presented.

We apologise for the delay in publication that this has caused.

As usual, any comments or suggestions you may have are greatly appreciated.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY COMMENTARY ON BBC TV

The following is an extract from a letter received from Ian Smith, the producer of the BBC's outside broadcast of the Remembrance Sunday service at the Cenotaph:

'I write to send you our apologies for failing to verbally identify the contingent from St Dunstan's during the march past at the Cenotaph on Sunday.

'Although we saw them on camera, with Sir Henry Leach at the head of the party, it was unfortunate that our commentator had already committed himself to talking about a preceding contingent and by the time he'd finished, your party had passed through the shot.

'As I say, I do apologise, especially as you went to such efforts to send us so much information, as you always do, and I can promise you it had all been transferred to commentator's cards for use during the live programme, but alas, circumstances prevailed which prevented them from being used.

'During the eight years that I have been privileged to produce the programme from Whitehall on Remembrance Sunday, I think I'm right in saying, it is the first time we have failed to mention St Dunstan's during the coverage.'

USED CASSETTES AVAILABLE

The PR Department has a number of used C10 audio cassettes available for disposal.

They are without lugs and will require a piece of cello tape to cover the holes to allow recording. Anyone who would like to avail themselves of blank cassettes should contact the PR Department.

PILGRIMAGE PLANS

The Royal British Legion have announced a programme of 19 pilgrimages for 1994. Administered as part of the Government's Pilgrimage Scheme, it includes visits to war graves in Normandy, Belgium, Ambon and Ypres.

A pilgrimage to Mons marks the 80th anniversary of the first clash with German armies in the First World War. Other trips will mark the 50th anniversaries of Kohima, Imphal, Cassino/Anzio, Normandy, Antwerp and Arnhem.

In some instances there are substantial discounts for war widows, though prices may fluctuate.

Full details of destinations and prices can be obtained from **The Pilgrimage Department, The Royal British Legion Village, Aylesford, Kent ME20 7NX. Tel: (0622) 716729/716182/717172.**

Plans are also being laid for 50th anniversary events next year, in particular: victory in Italy; the liberation of Colditz and recapture of Berlin; VE Day; the recapture of Burma; and the end of the war in the Far East.

Registration (which does not constitute a booking) for the 1995 pilgrimages is now being accepted.

FISHING WEEK

It has been suggested that a week's fishing be held from June 6th to 10th, based at Ian Fraser House. This week will also incorporate the A.G.M. and fisherman's dinner.

CHANGES TO £10 NOTE

As anticipated in the December *Review*, following the changes in the £5 and £20 notes, a new style £10 has been released. The main changes are:

On the front of the note, an additional denomination symbol '£10' in black replaces the crown feature in the top-right corner.

On the back of the note, an additional dark brown denomination symbol has been placed in the top-right corner near the head of Charles Dickens.

The existing version of the £10 will continue to circulate in parallel with the new version.



YPRES 75 YEARS ON

At the annual Act of Remembrance at the Menin Gate in Ypres, Belgium, Roy Thompson laid a wreath on behalf of St Dunstan's. Our photograph shows Roy at Ieper Town Hall.

Laurie Kerr, son of the late St Dunstaner, Horace Kerr, also laid a St Dunstan's wreath at the Menin Gate and he and his wife, Vivien, took part in the Service of Remembrance the following day at St George's Memorial Church. Laurie also took time to explore the area around Ypres, visiting Pilkem Ridge, Sanctuary Wood, Hill 60 the Pool of Remembrance formed by a land mine crater and the remains of the Ypres-Commin Canal, where his father was wounded in 1917.

PR DEPARTMENT: RESPONSIBILITIES

In order to reflect the additional role of fund raising, the PR Department responsibilities have been realigned.

Ray Hazan (Ext. 2230), as PRO is overall in charge of the Department, with the particular tasks of budgeting, publicity and fund raising, which includes policy, recording and acknowledging of all donations.

Peter Yates (Ext. 2231), as Assistant PRO becomes Editor of the *Review*. All matters relating to the *Review* and photographs should be addressed directly to him.

SEABORNE SERVICE

Whilst enjoying a cruise recently, St Dunstaner Richard Bingley helped to organise a shipboard Remembrance Sunday service.

The service took place aboard the MV *Sea Princess* sailing between Oporto, Portugal and Southampton and was conducted by the ship's Master, Captain Michael Moulin. Richard read the Lesson which was taken from *Ecclesiasticus* Chapter 44, Verses 1-14.

STRIKE GOLD AT DAEDALUS 1994

This year will see an extra special sporting week at HMS Daedalus, Lee-on-Solent. 'It will be the 50th Camp,' said Organising Secretary Elspeth Grant. 'We hope that as many old campers as possible will apply to take part in the celebrations - and new campers also, of course.'

The Camp will run from Friday, August 5th until Saturday, August 13th.

St Dunstaners should contact Elspeth at High Acre, Catmere End, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 4XG, or by telephone on 0799 522874.

FAREWELL TO IAN AND NANCY

Ian and Nancy Dickson closed the curtains in Ansell House for the last time in December. The couple will be known to many St Dunstaners as the hosts in their home away from home. After over 18 years of service, Ian is embarking on a well deserved retirement in Shropshire.

In the wake of 30 years travelling the world as a fitter in the Royal Air Force, he joined St Dunstan's at 'the old building' in Old Marylebone Road.

He became manager of the London Club and was heavily involved with bridge and domino activities. In 1983, Ian and Nancy took over the management of Broadhurst Gardens, West Hampstead. This St Dunstan's hostel later became known as Ansell House.

They moved with Ansell House when it was transferred to Harcourt Street - opposite the site of St Dunstan's old HQ, where they had started.

Fresh arrangements are being made to maintain the high level of care for those who visit Ansell House.

DERBY SWEEPSTAKE 1994

St Dunstaners and widows can now apply for tickets in this year's *Review* Derby Sweepstake. Last year's winners shared prize money worth £621.60, the biggest stake for about five years.

Tickets are still only 20p each and will be issued consecutively to a maximum of 25 (costing £5). Applications should be made as soon as possible. Closing date is Tuesday, May 17th.

Each applicant should send their name and address, the number of tickets required, and an SAE, to The Editor, DSS Department, *St Dunstan's Review*, P.O. Box 4XB, 12/14 Harcourt Street, London W1A 4XB.

Cheques should be made payable to St Dunstan's and crossed. Loose money should not be sent unless it is registered. Every application made in the British Isles must be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

The total money subscribed, less the cost of printing expenses, will be described as follows:

50 per cent to the holder of the ticket drawing the winning horse.

20 per cent to the holder of the ticket drawing the second horse.

10 per cent to the holder of the ticket drawing the third horse.

20 per cent to be divided equally among those drawing a horse which actually starts the race.

No prize won in the sweepstake will be paid to any person other than the person to whom the winning ticket was sold.

The draw will take place in London on May 20th. The race is being run on Wednesday, June 1st.

SOUTH AFRICAN RETIREMENTS

Bob Watson, Honorary Treasurer, and Admiral H.H. Biermann, Vice-Chairman, have retired from the Board of the St Dunstan's Association for South African War-Blinded Veterans. Their places have been taken by Bud O'Brien and Colin Eglin respectively.

Bob Watson and his wife, Iris, have also emigrated from South Africa to Australia, but will be keeping in touch with St Dunstan's through the *Review*.

Ken Frater has been appointed a director of the Association. His wife, Angela, is a great-niece of Sir Arthur Pearson.

RUNNYMEDE THANKS STEVE

St Dunstaner Steve Blake of Chertsey, Surrey has been feted for his work with other disabled people.

Runnymede Disability Liaison Group presented him with a certificate of appreciation for 'the Achievement and Contribution you have made in enhancing the lives of disabled and handicapped people in Runnymede.'

BRILLE n' SPEAK GUIDE

A User's Guide to Braille n' Speak by Olga Espinola. Blazie Engineering, 1993. Bib no. 71391.X2548(7).

The Braille 'n Speak is a computer that lets you braille into it and responds to you with speech. This manual explores its modes, features and functions. In each chapter commands and the tasks they perform are examined, with detailed examples of how to apply them to your daily life.

TICKETS FOR THE CUP

The cream of British football teams will square off at Wembely in the F.A. Cup Final on May 14th. It is possible that St Dunstan's will be allocated tickets.

Any St Dunstaner wishing to go should send their name and address to Pat Carlton at HQ. A draw will be held if we receive tickets.

THIRTY YEARS BEHIND THE PRESIDENTIAL WHEEL

To celebrate 30 years as President of the Bullnose Morris Club, Ken Revis was recently presented with a silver bell by the Club members. The bell was mounted on a plaque with a braille inscription made by the staff of the IFH Workshops and Terry Walker. Our picture shows Ken thanking Terry, Gary Glowa and John Walker at IFH.



FUND RAISING ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to the following, who have been involved with contributions:
Several Royal Navy ships and colleges.
The Royal Artillery and Black Watch Regimental Associations.
The Health and Social Security Recreational Association.
The Hospital Saving Charitable Fund.
Several St Dunstaners, including Norman Hewitson and Harry Walden, through the sale of toys.
The Rank Foundation.
The Rayne Foundation.
The Commacchio Group, Royal Marines, who donated their prize money after winning the Great Haggis Race.

SEND YOUR STORY NOW!

Don't forget to send your tale for the 1994 Story Writing Competition.

You can write on any subject, in any style, fact or fiction. An independent panel will assess the entries.

First prize is £60, second prize £25 and there are now three runners up prizes of £5 each. The first and second prize winners will have their tales published in the *Review*.

Full rules were published in the October *Review*, but entries should be received by the closing date, April 30th 1994.

Send your tale to Story Writing Competition 1994, *St Dunstan's Review*, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1A 4XB.

RNIB BRAILLE RADIO TIMES ENHANCED

The existing RNIB *Braille Radio Times* has been expanded to provide more information, with programme details available for Classic FM and Virgin 1215 stations, improved cast lists for drama programmes and a new information page.

The publication is available in one complete package or two sections. The new, second section is called *3-FM* and contains listings for both BBC Radio 3 and Classic FM. It costs 12 pence.

Existing subscribers now get both sections automatically, but can change their subscription to receive only one. For more information, or to start a subscription, contact RNIB Customer Services on 0345 023153 (for the price of a local call).

NEW DATE FOR WARMINSTER

The Warminster Camp for 1994 will now take place on July 7th to July 11th.

WALK FOR ST DUNSTAN'S

It is my intention to make the South Down Walk, April 18th-22nd, a sponsored event for St Dunstan's, as we did several years ago for HASICOM. Please contact me at HQ for sponsorship forms.

Ray Hazan

METRO SPORTS ON NEW TRACK

A new venue is being organised for the 1994 National Metro Sports in July. Last year, Terry Bullingham and Stan Tutton maintained a strong St Dunstan's profile in the field and track events.

Details will be announced soon, but application forms are already available from Derek Mileman, 29 Gilda Court, Watford Way, London NW7 2QN. Tel: 081 203 1286.

CALLING ALL BOWLERS

Will all bowlers please return their tournament forms to Mrs. Joan Osborne, 128 Lustrells Crescent, Saltdean, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 8FL.

NEW SAILORS

A training weekend for newcomers to sailing is being held at Windermere, Cumbria on April 23rd-24th.

For details, contact Debbie Brown, RYA Seamanship Foundation, RYA House, Romsey Road, Eastleigh, Hants SO5 2YA. Tel: 0703 629962.

NEW LOW-FLOOR BUSES

Minister for Disabled People, Nicholas Scott, marked the United Nations International Day of Disabled Persons by previewing the first of London Transport's new low-floor buses on December 2nd, 1993.

The British-made single decker is one of a total of 68 eventually destined for service with London Buses and has been specially designed to give easy access to disabled and elderly people (including wheelchair users), as well as parents with buggies.



100 NOT OUT

Two members of the St Dunstan's family have recently celebrated their 100th birthdays.

The festivities united four generations when Mrs. Esther Furniss of Saltdean received her telegram from The Queen on December 10th, 1993. Mrs. Furniss, pictured far right with great grandson, Shaun, was joined by friends and family including her son, Billy, and grand-daughter, Judith.

Mrs. Furniss is the widow of George Furniss, a First World War St Dunstaner.

Mrs. Gladys Shenton of Lower Quinton, Stratford-on-Avon, toasted the start of her second century on December 19th, 1993. Mrs. Shenton is the widow of Roland Shenton who served in the Royal Army Medical Corps.



RNIB TELEPHONE NUMBERS

The RNIB now has a telephone number on which members of the Talking Book Service can call from anywhere in the UK for the price of a local telephone call. It is 0345 626843.

Out of office hours messages may be left on an answering machine connected to 0345 6666. The main RNIB number remains unchanged at 081 903 6666, as does the book information line 081 903 6668.

ORANGE BADGE PARKING

The Disability Network has produced a series of maps showing the location of reserved Orange Badge parking in more than 200 local authority areas across the country.

The maps cost 25p each and can be obtained from: Disability Information Network Services, 1st Floor, 54/56 Ormskirk Street, St Helen's, Merseyside, WA10 2TF.

BRIDGE REFRESHER COURSE

A bridge refresher course will be held at Ian Fraser House from April 18th-21st (inclusive). Bert Ward would welcome any new faces, and some of the old ones! Bookings should be made in the normal manner to IFH.

FAREWELL TO NORMAN

After an association of almost 29 years, the *Review* bids farewell to Mr. Norman Barnes, Managing Director of our printers, Creative Press (Reading) Limited and the Twyford Printing Company.

In addition to the *Review*, Creative Press are also responsible for the printing of the Annual *Review*, all our headed note paper and general office stationary.

In the guise of the Barnes Design + Print Group, Norman also oversaw the printing of two St Dunstan's publications - *St Dunstan's a story of accomplishment* in 1965 and *Blind Man's Vision* in 1990.

With all our printing requirements, help has been no further than a telephone call away; Norman's answer to all our frantic requests for late copy to be added, a new layout to be used or two reams of a new design of headed note paper to be delivered to the Estates Office in Cheadle Hulme, yesterday, was always seemingly 'No problem'. A state of affairs that has much benefited St Dunstan's.

Norman retired at the end of December 1993 and we wish him and his wife, Jan, a very happy, 'No problem', retirement.

Mr. John Hunter is the new owner of Creative Press and the *Review* looks forward to continuing a successful association with him.

A ST DUNSTAN'S FAMILY

In memory of John Lawson

St Dunstaner John Lawson, known as Jack, died after a short illness on December 18th, 1993. He was 84 years old. The circumstances that brought him to Church Stretton shocked even the staff of St Dunstan's who had grown used to the appalling injuries inflicted by war.

'To me nothing could equal the tragedy of the Lawsons,' wrote Lord Fraser. 'I had never seen such human misery. I doubt if St Dunstan's had been put to such a test.'

This is not just the story of John Lawson, but that of his family...

ANYONE tuning their radio to the mocking cackle of Lord Haw-Haw would have heard the ersatz aristocrat regularly celebrating the might of the Luftwaffe. On one night in September 1940 listeners would have heard him declare the destruction of the British Aluminium rolling mills at Bank Quay.

'Warrington - that little town of fish and chip shops - has received a taste of the Third Reich's power,' he said.

It was a bitter taste, not sweetened by the fact that the Aluminium mills still stood. The German Bomber had missed its intended target, hitting instead a tea-party and social at the neighbouring Thames Board Mills.

That lack of precision killed 16 people and injured 43.

Among the crowds was Jack Lawson, a member of the Home Guard who worked as a groundsman for Thames Board Mills, with him were his wife, Mary, and daughters, Sylvia, aged five, and Ann, aged 18 months.

'I saw the plane, but didn't realise it was German,' Jack later recalled. 'Then I heard the noise and that's all I remember.'

When the lone raider struck, Jack, Mary and Sylvia were blinded. Ann was killed.

The Home Guard volunteer and his family came to St Dunstan's. Lord Fraser described the trauma that arrived with them thus: 'His wife and child came with him. Sylvia Lawson, five years old, was bewildered and frightened. The mother, bereaved of one child and unable to see the other, clung to the blind daughter she could no longer look after, but who needed looking



After surviving the bombing of Thames Board Mills, John and Mary Lawson had to come to terms with life as a blind couple.

after as never before. The father was dazed and stunned.

'When the mother had been calmed down our nurses taught her to bath her child, and that was the beginning of recovery for both of them.

'Within a few weeks the mother was dressing herself and the girl, knitting clothes, and learning to cook and make beds. Meanwhile the father, his mind more at rest now, was going through the normal course of training.' Jack qualified as a telephonist and returned to Thames Board Mills.

Despite a natural desire to keep the family together, it was concluded that, with both Jack and Mary blind, it would be necessary to separate them from Sylvia. With some reluctance, they took the advice to send her to the Sunshine Home at Southport.

'We had assured them their daughter could not go to a better place,' said Lord Fraser. 'We were immediately proved wrong.'

Soon after Sylvia's arrival, the home was struck by a bomb. She escaped injury but three nurses were killed. Jack and Mary took her away from the home to live with her grandmother.

Lord Fraser used his influence to get Sylvia a place at a college for girls and later she followed in her father's footsteps by becoming a telephonist. After a series of operations she recovered some sight.

'Now she is married and has two children, and a dreadful tragedy has an almost incredible happy ending,' concluded Lord Fraser.

Jack and Mary had another daughter, Jaqueline, in 1947. Jack remained in his telephony post until retiring in 1972. The years passed quite happily, Jack and Mary celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary in 1984 and their growing family of grandchildren gave them great pride and pleasure.

Sadly, Mary passed away in 1991. Jack was able to come to terms with his loss, though unveiling a memorial to those who died at the Thames Board Mills revived many memories. 'It was a very sad occasion, and a bit of an ordeal emotionally, particularly as my wife died only in April,' he said at the time.

Speaking of the blindness that had cursed his family, Jack said: 'My wife said we must make the best of it and there was no point in regrets.'

In that respect, Jack's story is the story of all St Dunstaners. Life dealt him a rough hand but he carried on living it.

DECISION DEFERRED

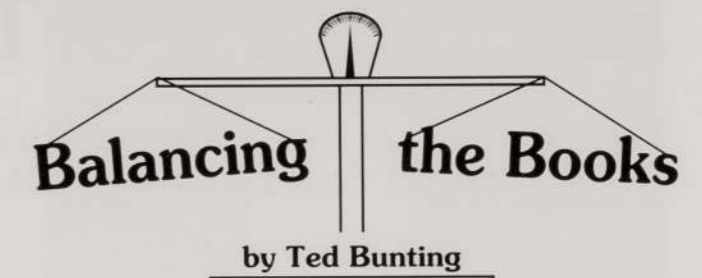
by Terry Bullingham

Further to my article in the October *Review*, the Braille Authority of the United Kingdom deferred decisions around the introduction of capitalisation into 'British Braille', at its meeting of December 15th, 1993. This issue will be reconsidered in July 1994, when more consumer opinion is available.

The reason for this delay is that the ramifications of the proposed changes are sufficiently important that it is desirable that all braille users should have ample opportunity to make their views known, rather than any tendency for the Authority to impose its own views on the braille-using public.

To this end, a shortened version of Bill Poole's paper on the subject will appear in a forthcoming issue of *The New Beacon* and publicity will be sought in the media, *In Touch*, etc. The full text of Bill's paper is still available on request from myself or Terry Walker.

I urge St Dunstaners, who have not yet done so, to make their views known, either to Terry Walker or myself.



The Naked Island

Author: Russell Brandon

Reader: Robert Gladwell

Duration: 14 hours

Catalogue number: 6519

'We will remember them,' we avow in the eleventh hour of the eleventh month, and rightly so; but lest we forget not only the war dead but also the many prisoners who were inhumanely treated too, we should all re-read books like this once in a while.

It tells of life and death in Malaya, Singapore and Thailand; it tells of events which should not be forgotten whilst men still pretend to be civilised. There are, by the grace of God, still survivors of those hellish prison and labour camps, but there is no chance that these people will ever forget the way they were abused by the sons of Nippon, because sadly, as the author of this excellent book makes crystal clear, cruel, sadistic and uncaring were the only types of captor they would have met there.

Post-war governments of course, mindful of world trade, have made much of the fundamental differences between Oriental and Occidental cultures to excuse, as best they can, the crimes the Japanese committed. But systematically working and starving men to death, or depriving them of even the most basic of medical needs, is not something that anyone below the rank of 'saint' should be allowed to excuse or forgive.

Russell Brandon was no saint and in *The Naked Island* he freely admits it. He tells how he and his comrades stole from and cheated their hated captors at every possible opportunity.

For hate the Japanese he did; with an intensity which actually seems to have increased his determination to survive. Hearing the words he wrote down will surely make you understand that if all the 'honourable followers of Bushido' had fallen on their swords when Japan surrendered there would have been no tears from Russell Brandon.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the Editor are always welcome. Drop us a line or tape at 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1A 4XB

From: Vera and Bernard Mason, Romsey, Hampshire

Bernard and myself have recently spent six weeks at Ian Fraser House, originally because I was ill, but after three weeks Bernard developed problems.

We have so much to be thankful for to all the staff, from managerial to the C.A.s, porters, drivers, etc. Everyone was so helpful and very concerned and without their help we really do not know what we would have done.

In this day and age where thank you is seldom used, and means nothing to many folk, we would like to say a BIG THANK YOU to everyone at Ian Fraser House. Please continue to keep up the good work from a very grateful St Dunstaner and his wife.

From: Audrey and John Perfect, Yealmpton, Devon

In regard to the chapel services at I.F.H. which were the subject of Richard Bingley's letter published in the *Review*, and in which Richard suggested that the hymns were not well known, that modern hymns had been included and that braille readers found difficulty in following the order of service, we believe that most of the hymns could be described as old favourites, well known even to those who are not regular church-goers.

To our knowledge modern hymns have not been included.

We can to some extent sympathise with Richard's point about the brailled order of service. Not being Anglicans - my wife and I are members of the Methodist Church - we found that it was necessary to read through the braille a couple of times in order to familiarise ourselves, but the service sheet quickly became easy to follow.

We are regular attenders at chapel services when staying at I.F.H. Every Sunday service follows an identical pattern so it is not difficult to get into the way of it.

One thing we find amusing is the gymnastics required when shuffling between braille hymn sheets and the order of service. The fluttering of pages and the minor confusion merely adds spice to our share in the service.

From: Terry Walker, Ian Fraser House

I feel moved enough to reply to the letter which appeared in the December *Review* regarding our new Chaplain and his choice, amongst other things, of hymns.

The writer, a well respected 'Boys Own Hero' who has often spoken of his role as an Intelligence Officer, seems to me to have forgotten much of the skill of a man in such a position.

Our new Chaplain has brought a breath of fresh air into the ever changing Ian Fraser House; he gets involved, he is seen, he organises, he participates and above all he encourages.

I have heard from others of his High Church practices. Well, perhaps if we were to attend the Church of England (where he comes from) we would all find out that the Church has moved forward since the 1950s. Perhaps it is more to the point that we have been allowed to fall behind. However, it is not my point to get involved in that kind of discussion.

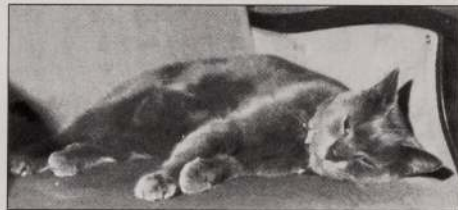
In fact, I seem to remember overhearing the writer offer to buy us all new hymn books. Or was I wrong.

Rather my point is, let us give this bloke a chance. We may not like his attempt to bring us kicking and squealing into the Nineties, but we ought really to do it with a deferent style. I know that he is a man to whom you can talk and he will listen. A word in the ear is always better, I think, than the present day journalistic broadside we have become used to reading in the press against our Royal Family. Surely we know better?

BLUE RULES

Common belief has it that Pearson House was established for the benefit of St Dunstaners. Those in the know, however, realise that it is the true domain of one Blue Velvet

Pearson. The friendly feline keeps his age secret but will celebrate his official birthday on February 24th.



STRIDE AND TESTED

Terry Walker explores the latest developments in blind road safety

WE WERE met by Marian Edwards, the Project Officer for the 'Crossing Trials' and other research involving visually impaired and disabled people.

The Transport Research Laboratory (TRL), an Executive Agency of the Department of Transport, has worked on all kinds of developments since its formation.

In 1935, the Rt. Hon. Hoare Belisha, MP, gave his name to the Belisha Beacon. These were the first ever pedestrian crossings, consisting of two rows of bright steel studs across the road to form a ten foot wide safety area for the pedestrian. At the edge of the road two poles were sited, carrying the now familiar orange sphere with a flashing light.

The TRL also worked with Barnes Wallace in the development of the bouncing bomb.

The TRL's function is Transport and Road Research, covering both road surfaces and under road surfaces, pipe works, bridges and transport research. I have a personal knowledge of their work on the problem of jack knifing and the roll over of articulated vehicles. They also look into the safety of verge users, drivers and pedestrians.

It is clear that the TRL has a very wide sphere of operation in their efforts to reduce accidents and make public areas, roads and footpaths a safer place.

During the last two years the Cranfield Institute, under contract to TRL, has completed a study of accidents to visually impaired people in the outdoor environment. This is inclusive of railway and bus travel, roads, footpaths and shopping precincts. This report is now in the editing process.

The St Dunstan's party consisted of: Team Leader April Hadert, Technical Advisor Jean Hollis, Fred Bentley, Craig Neller, Ian Spence, Mike Sutcliffe, Peter Watson and Terry Walker.



This tactile diagram indicates the presence of an island at the crossing's centre.

THE TEST AREA

Mini roundabouts, the Pelican crossing and sleeping policemen, are just a few of the things in common use today, which have been on trial at TRL's experimental road layout. Some of the first sleeping policemen are still to be found at Crowthorne.

The Small Road System is a typical network of roads, laid down for testing and has many features to be found on roads around the country (n.b. there are no buildings, bridges, major roundabouts, etc.).

I asked Marian about the white lines found on the edges of motorways which make a terrible racket when we drive over them. These 'Vibrallines' as they are known, were not trialled at TRL but Marian has used them in her development work, which proves the value of co-operation between interested parties.

Her use of a slightly modified Vibralline to provide a central delineator down a shared

cycle way provided the safety required to guide sight-impaired people who previously were unaware of the cycles presence, or even if they did know, on which side they were to travel in safety.

Tactile surfaces have now been designed to guide people safely through shared pavements and keep them walking within the safe areas. Twenty different surfaces were trialled initially, and six of those are either in current use, or are undergoing further trials.

Any St Dunstaner who wishes to see one of these floor tiles will be able to do so at Ian Fraser House, where Mrs. Cherrie Duncan has a selection on display.



Above: ZZ spots! Fred Bentley compares a couple of Zebra crossing indicators that have been bolted to a Belisha beacon.

Above Right: Everyday traffic conditions are simulated at the Transport Research Laboratory.

Ideas for development and research arrive at TRL from all sources – the Department of Transport, groups with specific interests, which includes the disabled sector, as well as the motor industry, cycle clubs, etc.

Marian's special project is to trial facilities for visually impaired people to help them to find and locate pedestrian crossings. Once found, they should be able to identify what type of crossing it is.

We were invited to support and supply information on new facilities for crossing systems, currently being evaluated at Pelican, Zebra and uncontrolled crossings. It was our job, to walk a specified course and do just that; locate and identify the crossing, and wait at the commencement of that crossing for further instructions.

At the start of the exercise we were all asked to listen whilst a set of instructions were read out. This was to ensure that each party of 'guinea pigs' received identical instructions. We were also told that we were not on trial, but that the products were.

I walked the streets and through the blister paving stones laid on the approach, managed to locate quite easily, the three types of crossing.

PELICAN CROSSING

At the Pelican test area, a series of loud speakers mounted in the centre of the road, provided a very accurate simulation of road and traffic noises. These noises were, if anything, of a greater volume than would be the case in most towns.

SOUND INDICATORS

To draw a user towards the control button of a Pelican crossing, two audible indicators are currently being evaluated. The first is a mechanical tapping noise of equal periodic tapping (like a small hammer striking a metal plate). The second is a similar unit, only with a variable rate of tapping, coupled with a variable volume of sound. On approach it seemed as though a hammer was striking a plate and gradually getting quieter with approximately five taps per cycle.

The people of Sweden are currently using an indicator panel on the side of their control box. The tactile map is located on the Swedish box which makes the ticking noise at TRL. If it was adapted for general use at crossings in the UK the sound indicator and the map would be in/on the one control box with the push button. If the right hand is passed on to the outer edge of



the box, the plate may be easily identified. There is a series of raised bars indicating the number of traffic lanes and the type of traffic with a pair of parallel lines which indicate the length and direction of the central reservation.

Finally, a second series of raised bars indicates the location of the second road crossing.

In practise, I found that by sliding the first, second and third fingers of my right hand up the plate, the index finger encountered a series of bars laid at 90 whilst the third finger was travelling over a smooth surface. I then encountered the two parallel bars indicating the central reservation.

Finally, my index finger went on to a smooth plate whilst the third finger encountered a series of raised bars. This, to me, was a very clear indicator.

ZEBRA CROSSING

The Zebra crossing had been equipped with two metal plates, each approximately three inches (75mm) by four inches (100mm), wrapped around the pole giving a surface which followed the general contour of the pole. Each plate carried a large embossed Z section on the surface, thus indicating a Zebra Crossing.

There were two samples on the pole which I encountered. The first embossed letter had a thickness of approximately 25mm and length of 100mm; the second had a thickness of approximately 10mm and length of 100mm. We were asked to comment on the suitability of each, though I considered that either would fulfil the task required.

THE UNCONTROLLED CROSSING

Uncontrolled crossings are those where a footpath, following a major road, crosses intersecting roads. Many of these types of crossings have, over the past few years, been equipped with a dropped kerb. This is to allow prams and wheelchairs to negotiate a safe and easy crossing. The only trouble here, for blind people, is that one is liable to be found in the middle of the side road with no indication of one's vulnerable position.

TRL have, on their road layout, placed a series of blister paving at the approach to the crossing. The stones are laid out in a rectangular shape on the footpath to a distance of two and a half metres from the roadside.

In practise, I was easily able to understand the signal given by the blisters and stand safely on the edge of the road prior to making a safe crossing.



We have also sound-boxes. A tapping sound attracts blind pedestrians to the crossing control button.

The tactile paving at an uncontrolled crossing is buff coloured, as opposed to the red paving used at controlled crossings. This gives an extra clue to partially sighted people.

RUBBERISED PLASTIC MATTING

In the reception area, we were shown a series of rubberised plastic mats. Each mat was 400mm square and the patterns on it were approximately 5mm high.

The first had five raised bars spaced equally across its length, each bar seemed to be 45mm wide. These were rounded at the ends and were called 'Guidance Paving'.

The guidance tiles were laid within a pedestrian area to indicate a direction in which to travel. We were told that these lines could run alongside the shops in a shopping precinct and where an entrance occurred, a set of lines would be laid at 90° to the normal run to indicate the entrance.

Again at 400mm square, the second tile was equipped with eight ribbed bars some 10mm wide running across its length. 'Corduroy' is the name given to this one. It is intended for use at the top or bottom of steps and other similar hazards and gives the message 'hazard, proceed with caution'.

The final tile we saw carried a series of raised buttons about the size of a new penny, each carrying little raised points similar to a braille form to provide a non-slip surface. The buttoned tiles were intended for use as indicators for the edges of platforms in railway stations. Two patterns are at present under consideration for this purpose.

Talking to Marian, I learned that these tiles, when laid on paving outside, must be laid in a temperature of at least 17°C (a warm summer's day) to ensure fast setting of the adhesive. Marian indicated that, where councils have failed to secure the tiles correctly, the fault was either laying in adverse conditions or failing to clean all the

area of the tile to be sealed; it had been proved in tests that tiles had only been cleaned with a circular wiping motion and the corners had been missed, with the result that the corners lifted.

Towards the end of our visit, I found out that these patterns of ribbed or corduroy sections, etc., were also being laid in concrete, similar to the Blisters mentioned above.

TRL are currently evaluating six different patterns or materials for surface recognition and marking. The Blister paving mentioned here was first trialled at TRL. Visually impaired and physically disabled people were asked to comment. No adverse comment of any kind was received.

The surface was put out to 20 trial sites throughout the country, also with good results. Later, the Department of Transport received reports that the 7mm domed section was not satisfactory and people felt unstable when walking on it. The surface was modified by shaving 2mm off the top of each dome, leaving a 5mm high truncated dome. These were again trialled, this time successfully.

Instructions were given to manufacturers and a large number of stones were made and distributed. Unfortunately, many Blister tiles were made to a finished height of only 3mm and are not distinguishable or, therefore, useful to visually impaired people.

Hopefully this problem has now been rectified and all future productions will have a dome profile of 5mm. It makes one think!



Tracy Savill observes as Terry Walker gets to grips with a tactile crossing guide.

REUNITED ONCE MORE

Area Reunions resumed with a happy experiment for the South West

FOLLOWING our Chairman's announcement that area reunions were to resume, the waters were tested with an impromptu South West Reunion at Ian Fraser House.

Speaking at the Reunion Dinner, St Dunstan's President, Colin Beaumont-Edmonds, said: 'The Council has always regretted stopping Reunions, so we're delighted that this one is taking place.'

'We get the impression you have all enjoyed your stay.'

Details of future reunions will be published in the *Review*, but in the meantime here are a few views from folk who attended the South West Reunion.

From: Max and Joan Ash, Ringwood, Hampshire

The South West Reunion at Ian Fraser House was a great success. My wife and I enjoyed this type of get-together more than in a hotel.

It was a good opportunity to meet new St Dunstaners and their wives in a relaxed atmosphere. We were blessed with sunshine which enhanced the outings.

Our three days were rounded off by an excellent dinner. Our thanks to Liz Pearce for all the arrangements, especially the transport, which went like clockwork and not forgetting the care and humour of our driver.

From: Kath Wiles, Quintrell Downs, Newquay, Cornwall

Having lost my husband recently, I was rather apprehensive about attending the Reunion, but thanks to Liz Pearce persuading me, I must admit I thoroughly enjoyed every minute.

The travel arrangements were excellent and the organised outings to Petworth House and to Eastbourne were superb.

We were all treated to a marvellous welcome supper on the day we arrived. I met so many old friends and was introduced to a number of new ones.

The following day, we visited Petworth House and in the evening we enjoyed a lovely concert given by Dave Master's Big Band, then on the last day, after our trip to Eastbourne ...well, what can one say about the wonderful dinner served up by Kozy and her band of helpers. Thanks Kozy, you did a grand job.

I would just like to extend my most grateful thanks to Liz Pearce and everyone at Ian Fraser House for making me feel so welcome. Long may the reunions continue.

From: Connie Evans, Broadstone, Dorset

It was an adventure into the unknown for me. Fairly recently widowed, I couldn't have been offered a better way of getting over the first hurdle.

Transported so caringly to Ian Fraser House, I enjoyed every moment. I have made new friends. I have certainly regained some weight.

I appreciate all that was done to make the break so enjoyable – the programme was excellent and I found Ian Fraser House astonishingly homely for such a vast house. So very well run in every way.

I would like to say a big 'thank you' to everyone contributing to the Reunion. May I say a special 'thank you' to Liz Pearce and to say how very nice it was on returning home to be welcomed by a letter from Miss Lord and her Welfare Staff.

I most certainly hope to accept your offer to return to Ian Fraser House.

POET'S CORNER

The following was received from a St Dunstan's widow who wishes to remain anonymous.

The sky was cloudy, overcast, the day we wandered carefully.

Through the valley graveyard, where the lads rest peacefully.

They could not see the cloudy sky, nor the birds that were flying high.

They had given their precious gift of sight that you and I and others might

Live out our lives in peaceful years, without dread worries of war's fears.

So sleep, grave heroes; take your rest, and we will try and do our best

To Remember what we owe to you.

Each time we open our own eyes to watch the birds or cloudy skies,

Humbly we will bend a knee, and thank our God for such as thee.

HARD WORK AND HAPPINESS

Celebrating Saturnalia

St Dunstan's style



Nun but the brave! Mike Bell and Sandra Allen at Pearson House

CHRISTMAS and New Year at Pearson House was a mixture of hard work and happiness.

The Nursing Care Wing had every room occupied and sadly it had to be 'no room at the inn' for some St Dunstaners. A lot of staff were stuck down by influenza, but those who remained worked very hard to ensure all our St Dunstaners had a most enjoyable Christmas and New Year.

As always, the festive season started with a visit from the children of Southover Primary School who delighted St Dunstaners and staff with their lovely songs and carols. After they had their sticky buns and squash and been visited by Father 'Bomber Bangs' Christmas, the children spent time chatting with the St Dunstaners and it is impossible

Matron King pontificates on the evil weed.



to decide who enjoyed themselves the most.

In the lead up to Christmas, we also had visits from a Salvation Army Band and from a choir from the Church of the Good Shepherd who sang carols on each Nursing Care Floor as well as in the Winter Garden.

The Christmas Concert on December 20th was great fun, for the performers and the audience. Two St Dunstaners took part in the show, Les Copeland and Jim O'Donnell and as always they gave performances worth cherishing.

Tony Ross accompanied the cast in his usual inimitable style. Our thanks go to all the cast and the supporting staff who helped make it a memorable afternoon.

On Christmas Eve, the traditional Carol Service was held in the Winter Garden, conducted by Father Brian Tyler and the music was supplied by Rosemary Barley on the piano. The singing was enhanced by a few friends of Pearson House from the choir of St George's Church. After the Service, we all enjoyed a few glasses of hot spicy mulled wine and mince pies.

On Christmas Day, Deputy Matron Brenda King escorted Father Christmas as he gave presents to all the St Dunstaners. Westcott House was full to overflowing with families of St Dunstaners and they all joined in the celebrations. Christmas lunch was washed down with plenty of Christmas spirit which continued throughout the party on Christmas Night.

Parties and dancing, outings, bingo and quizzes continued throughout the week, leading to our New Year's Eve Dance and Party for those with enough stamina to keep going. By the time we had toasted in the New Year with champagne, I do not know who was most exhausted, the St Dunstaners, their visitors or the staff. But we did enjoy ourselves.

Matron Chris King



From top left to bottom right: Les Copeland thanks 'evan for leetle gers'; Ken Martin and Jim O'Donnell doff their hats to a swell audience; Master of the monologue, Albert Grimshaw, aided by John Willard, raises a chuckle at IFH; Jim Fraser hits the high note; Cap'n Kozy and her Howling Commandos are the darling buds of Flannegan with Who do you think you are kidding Mr. Hitler.

NEW YEAR'S EVE FANCY DRESS

I've heard that once people retire they pay no attention to time and this was very evident in the New Year's Eve Fancy Dress. Lilian Smith clearly thought it was Spring when she bounded in as a March Hare and Elizabeth Dacre and Mary Stenning were trying to sell us programmes for Rottingdean Summer Fair.

The circus was definitely in town with Doris, Alice and Ethel clowning around – they should have known better at their age!

Albert Hobson and Gaynor definitely did know better telling us that they were 'not silly – just crackers'. The Christmas variety, of course. Some people really do find some use for the leftovers.

The only other man brave enough to dress up was Len Graves, resplendent in black and gold. Danny La Rue eat your heart out – Mrs. Birdcage is coming to town!

Now some people are really lazy when it comes to fancy dress and Joan Osborne really was! 'The Last Straw' and I'll bet she pinched that from PBK.

Sue and Carol as the judges decided to follow the Prime Minister's lead and make it honours for all, so everyone got a prize.

Sue Reynolds



A LONG ENGAGEMENT



Dick Beaumont tells David Castleton of how the war delayed his wedding plans

Dick and Beryl in a rare moment together before his regiment set off for Tobruk.

continent and to and fro along its northern coast as the battle swayed. It began when, as a young junior bank clerk in Pretoria, he had volunteered for the Pretoria Highlanders. After training, his regiment was posted to duties in South Africa ending up at Windhoek in South West Africa.

'From there they called for volunteers to go up to Egypt and, of course, everybody wanted to go. They had a draw for it and I was one of the lucky ones. We were given a week's leave and we went to Pretoria but when I got there I found a telegram waiting to say that I must report immediately.'

On mobilisation Dick had become engaged to be married. 'I saw Beryl once - she and her mother came across to Pretoria from Johannesburg. It was the last time we saw each other until the end of the war.'

Dick and his South African comrades became part of the 'great push', advancing westward through the North African desert. 'Warfare there was very, very mobile. I was put in a trench mortar detachment and we travelled in our own truck. Only eight men, a sergeant, a corporal and six men including our driver.'

This small group saw plenty of action. 'One of our first jobs was to relieve the Australians still in Tobruk. We were making contact all the time with the German armour. We had armour as well but ours was hopelessly outclassed. They had the Tiger tanks with a seven pounder gun and we had little peashooters, two pound anti-tanks.'

'Most of our work was patrols. We used to go out at night - not taking on the enemy but trying to find out where they were and what they were doing. Our patrols did clash at times but we were specially equipped. They gave us these desert boots - we called them brothel creepers - and we carried grenades and sub-machine guns instead of our normal arms. We left the mortars behind, of course.'

One of our officers came along with an LDV, he had a bunch of people on the back. Actually there were two vehicles and he said: "Come on, hop on the other one." We were packed like sardines. He had charts of the minefields and a compass. He was navigating and we were following him. We were being shot at the whole time - machine guns and artillery. A shell landed right next to us but it didn't burst, luckily, or I should have been in kingdom come by now.

'We were going along quite merrily, passing the Cameron Highlanders' lines, and they were still holding out. They thought we were Germans attacking their positions so they shot us up with a mortar and blew our truck to smithereens . . .'

That's how Dick Beaumont described the events that led up to his capture in North Africa during a daring attempt to escape from Tobruk. He continued: 'The truck had lost its front wheels. An officer went out on a recon and discovered it was indeed the Cameronians. They were in prepared positions that the Italians had built so he signalled back to us and we all went along and got into these trenches.'

'There we were being shot at and shelled. Eventually around about midnight their colonel surrendered so then we all had to leave our arms, chuck the bolts away, leave our bayonets . . .'

Dick Beaumont had travelled a long way to this unfortunate meeting with the Germans - most of the length of the African

'It was all on foot and you had to go quietly, steering by compass and by counting footsteps. We had to find our way back retracing our steps. We were relieved when we got back to our lines. It was quite scary. You had to be very careful because it was pitch black and very rough going. If you dropped anything it made an awful clatter in the still of the night.'

By day there was the threat from the air. 'A Stuka attack is really very frightening, particularly if you are not dug in. They usually came in flights of ten and they were frightening in that they came right at you and besides aiming their bombs they had machine guns going in front and as they pulled out to go up they had a machine gun at the back.'

'We got bombed by the RAF once. We saw them coming over and we were all standing there cheering. The next thing, we got a stick of bombs right across us. So there was a wild dash for identification. That was one of the things about mobile warfare, its fluid nature, nobody ever had a very good idea of who was where.'

Dick's part in the North African campaigns ended at Tobruk. The 'Great Push' had ended in retreat and Tobruk had fallen. Some thousands of allied prisoners were gathered together at Benghazi. 'From there we were shipped across to Bari sitting in the hold and, luckily, we weren't torpedoed on the way. We landed at Bari and stayed at a transit camp there for a while. Then they took us to a camp at a place called Gravina. The block-built buildings were all partitioned off into sections with wooden double decker beds. We didn't get very much to eat.'

Later, the prisoners were divided into small groups and sent to farms to work on the land. At the time of the Italian armistice Dick and a fellow prisoner made a break for freedom.

'First of all we were making for the Po, we got there but there were Jerries on the bridge. We had to move in different directions according to what information we could get. We used the rations that we had and we were helped by farmers and we stole what we couldn't beg. Then we met an Italian who volunteered to take us to the Swiss border and get us some civilian clothes.'

'We decided that Andy would go first.' They went up by train towards Switzerland and met somebody who guided them over the border. He got away but still had to spend the rest of the war in Switzerland. There was no way back.



Dick and Beryl on their wedding day.

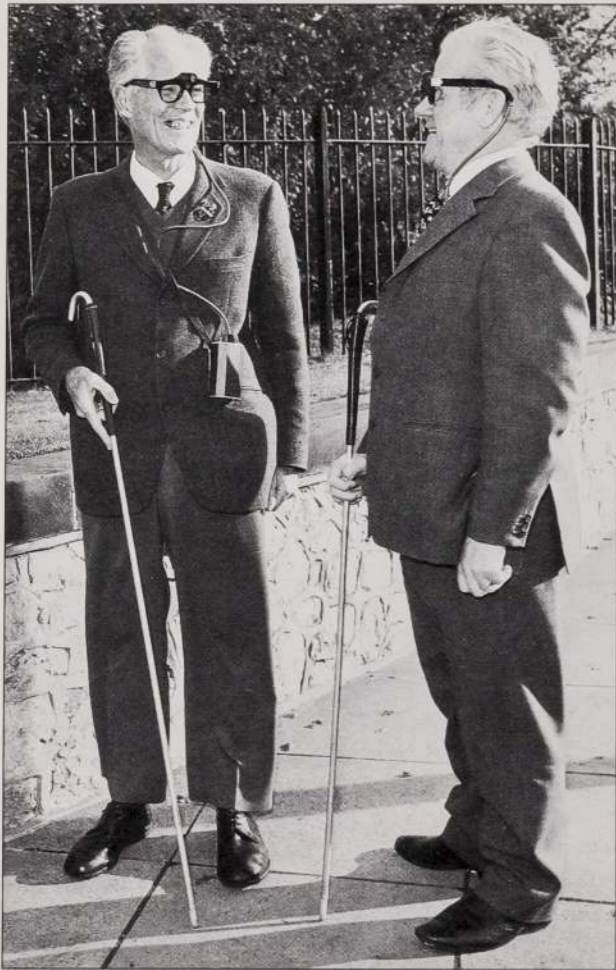
'I was joined by another chap who had been in the South African Police who was also on the run. We were on a farm when we were given away. The Carabinieri pitched up there one day and took us away.'

So Dick Beaumont and his new friend fell into the hands of the Germans. They were sent to Pavia, an Army training centre occupied by SS battalions. 'They were a pretty decent crowd. There was a big barrel of wine there and they said we could help ourselves as long as we didn't get drunk. That wasn't bad at all. I didn't mind being with the SS. There were two battalions: the Hermann Goering and the Adolf Hitler. They were crack regiments with crack equipment. We used to drop their ration boxes to see if they would bust. Some of them did and they had chocolate and all sorts of things.'

All good things come to an end and Dick and his fellow prisoners found themselves on a train bound for Germany: 'We were in cattletrucks, steel doors bolted and only room to squat down. The journey lasted about three days and we didn't have much in the way of food, only some black, ersatz coffee.'

'It wasn't neglect because if they had it they gave it to us. We found that once we got into their bigger camps we got army rations, which were quite sufficient.'

'We went out on working parties, clearing railway lines of the snow in winter and



Dick aided the late Walter Thornton in testing the ultrasonic spectacles.

levelling railway lines down near the Czech frontier. It was very cold.

'In the spring we moved off to an industrial complex, a lignite mine, benzine refinery, brickette factory and power station, all working off the lignite. This was a big opencast mine, not very deep, 50 feet, perhaps. We worked with pick and shovel levelling for a big machine with a conveyor belt.

'It was very hard work but we were adequately fed and housed. We had a lot of air raids, day and night. We were very lucky and only got one or two chaps killed. They blew the refinery through the roof. The Americans used to come over in the daytime, high level bombing. At night we had the RAF doing their night bombing and early in the morning we had the RAF rapid strike planes coming to drop bombs on the factory buildings.

'Then the Germans started to march us eastwards away from the allied attack and almost walked us into a Russian advance from the other side. We were between two fires. They turned us back and by then we'd

had it. I had a half section of South African chaps. We left the group. The German guards were no longer interested. We went off and met up with an American patrol. When they discovered we were allied prisoners, they put us in a sort of a farm and gave us cigarettes and their little packed boxes of rations which were good.'

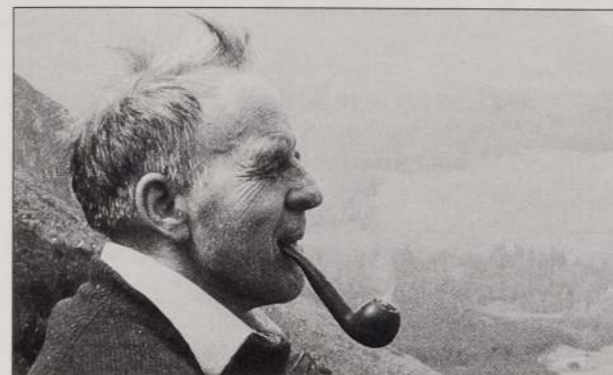
Finally Dick arrived at a dispersal centre near Brighton. From there he travelled to Glasgow to board the P & O *Strathaird* for the voyage home to South Africa. 'In the meantime I cabled to Beryl from Brighton as soon as I got the chance. She had no idea where I was or what I was doing. I was posted missing originally. They did hear from me as a prisoner. There was a form you could send and in Italy we actually got a few letters but things broke down later. I went back and I was demobbed. They gave us three months leave and we got married.

Dick returned to his original employers, the Standard Bank of South Africa but there was a legacy from his wartime service. His sight began to fail. Despite operations by a German specialist he became blind and joined St Dunstan's in South Africa in 1968. In 1988, sadly, Beryl died. Dick's daughter, Alison, lives in England. She worked with St Dunstan's on the evaluation of the first Kurzweil reading machine. Needless to say, they keep in close touch and Dick gave this interview during one of his visits to her in London.

A Pretoria Highlander at ease. Dick Beaumont during the war.



A Moment to Spare with Syd Scroggie



POLTERGEISTS?

'There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,' said you-know-who, 'than are dreamt of in your philosophy,' and one of these things turns out to be psychokinesis.

Alan Logan grew up in one of Dr Barnado's establishments, a pretty grim place by all accounts, where an outdated Victorianism ruled by terror and the lash. He told me a funny thing used to happen when he opened the common-room door and walked in. A big marble clock would start sliding to and fro on the mantelpiece of its own volition.

Now, it was actually Alan, distant though he was from it, who was moving that clock around, subconsciously marshalling and focusing the energy required from resources within himself. Like the rest of the boys he was crushed by the system, his soul crying out for freedom and this moving the clock satisfied a desire for expression that was harshly subdued by rules and regulations.

That clock stood for a dictatorial authority unassailable in the ordinary way, and if Alan could move it, as move it he unconsciously did, his soul took satisfaction in what was a kind of victory over oppression.

What you've got here is a case of psychokinesis, specifically an instance of that anecdotal evidence on which the lobby for its existence exclusively rests. The phenomenon has never been successfully reproduced under laboratory conditions.

It's psychokinesis, if there is such a thing, which accounts for 'poltergeist' activity, for this can only occur when some person is present in whose psychic interest it is to move things around, open windows, slam doors, induce coal to fly about, all these things at the same time happening without the knowledge of the person concerned - at

least the conscious knowledge that he is the cause of them.

There are no such things as poltergeists, entities in themselves, but only this mysterious energy subconsciously functioning in the interests of a human soul at pains to establish some kind of equilibrium in itself.

Denis Fagan was a bit dischuffed with me when we got to Ben Alder Cottage, one November night, a hard dark journey to an unfamiliar object.

His soul longed to get even with someone who might have been seen to be in command, repressing the natural desire of a young chap for independent control of his destiny. This explains what happened next morning.

I took a packet of biscuits out of my rucksack and put them on the mantelpiece, saying, I'll just leave these here for the gods of the bothy.' The biscuits soared across the room coming gently to rest on the floor, standing on end.

It was in the interest of Denis's soul, you see, to frustrate my intention. Rebellion was called for, and it satisfied the cravings of Denis, however unaware of this he might be, that those biscuits shouldn't do what an inordinate authority commanded.

Some day, they'll measure the energy that emanated from Denny, understand its capacity to accomplish this and that, but at the moment it amuses me to think there was just a hint of apology in the fact that the biscuits, which might have been smashed to bits, landed so gently that not one of them was broken.

Judith Whip-Goode told me the following story. A husband and wife were constantly at odds with each other over a certain vase.

One wanted here, the other there, and the matter remained unresolved until one evening they were invited out. On their return, the disputed vase lay shattered in bits on the floor.

One of them did it, however unconsciously, as a means of settling the dispute, but as to how is a problem for Science which has yet to conceive what questions to ask.

One thing is certain: the supernatural of today is the natural of tomorrow, and in due course this 'poltergeist' energy, its nature, properties and function, will be as plain to all as Boyle's Law and the principle of Archimedes. But what a dull life if no room is left for the utterly inexplicable.

EXPANDED MEMORIES OF A CD ROM DRIVING MAN

COMPUTER WEEKEND,
NOVEMBER 20th-21st, 1993
by Ray Hazan

It was a weekend packed with information – literally, for CD ROM featured high on the agenda. The initial session is always an Open Forum, during which any new ideas and experiences are shared amongst participants.

Paul Dilley gave an excellently clear talk on 'How the computer works' – the difference between expanded and extended memory, BIOS and buses, drives and DOS. A recording of the talk is available on tape, ref. CT 7.

Many were very pleased to learn that Mike Gammon's hotline is to re-open. All enquiries must be directed to Janis Sharp initially. Please try and call her between midday and 1230 or between 1530 and 1600 so as not to interrupt her teaching period.

Mike went on to describe how, if you have an ink jet printer or with less effect, a dot matrix printer, it is possible to call into your letter a graphics file containing your signature.

Anyone interested should send Mike a

copy of their signature. He will have it scanned and return it as a file, which you can call in at the appropriate location and overcome the problem of requiring help to sign your letters.

Most people connect compact disks with music. They can, in fact, hold vast quantities of text and are an ideal medium for dictionaries and encyclopaedias. Doug Field very kindly supplied his computer into which Paul fitted a CD ROM drive and this was demonstrated to an impressed audience. There is a large range of disks available, though many are not accessible with speech.

Some contain several dictionaries on the one disk and can even produce sound effects as well as play conventional music CD's.

A little controversy often livens up the proceedings and this was provided by the pros and cons of DOS 6. The unhelpful answer was 'Deuce – 40 all!'

Computer weekends take place on April 16th-17th, during which the dinner and a more in depth look at CD ROM's will be taken, and on November 19th-20th.

Our thanks in 1993 to all staff at IFH, to Mike Gammon and all guests and helpers.

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.

On November 24th, 1993, Mr. Maurice Bull of Stretton, Burton-on-Trent joined St Dunstan's. Mr. Bull served in the Royal Air Force Regiment from 1947 to 1948, when he was injured in a training accident.

After leaving the Royal Air Force he worked first as a gardener, then as a green keeper at his local golf club.

Mr. Bull married his wife, Dorothy, in 1951.

Also on November 24th, 1993, Mr. Clive Woods of Southampton joined St Dunstan's. Mr. Woods was drafted into the Royal Marines in 1942, eventually

joining 41 Commando who were amongst the first ashore on D-Day. He was wounded in August 1944, losing the sight of his right eye, and eventually discharged in 1946.

Mr. Woods returned to his pre-war job as a builders' merchant, retiring in 1982 at the age of 58. He married his second wife, Yvonne, in 1960. He has three daughters.

Mr. Frederick Davies, BEM of Maesteg, Bridgend, Mid-Glamorgan joined St Dunstan's on December 16th, 1993.

He was injured in 1942 by a premature anti-tank grenade explosion whilst on a training exercise. This resulted in the loss of his right eye and forearm.

Before the war, he was a coal miner, but after his accident he started a new career as a spray painter. Mr. Davies and his wife, Rachel, have an adult son and daughter.

CLUB NEWS

BRIDGE

Horsham Match

On November 21st, 1993, our old friends from Horsham visited IFH for a friendly match. We confidently turned round at half time leading by 13 I.M.P.S. However, the second half saw a strong rally by our visitors, who eventually ran out winners by 45 I.M.P.S.

Our team on this very enjoyable occasion was: Wally Lethbridge, Bill Phillips, Alf Dodgson, Vi McPherson, Jo Huk, Shirley Holborough, Reg Goding & Audrey Clement.

Beginners Bridge

Bert Ward, aided by Vi McPherson, gave tuition to a small group of beginners and improvers between November 26th and December 3rd, 1993. It proved most successful.

Future dates are being planned for beginners, improvers and those

who simply wish to revise. Watch the *Review* for further details. All bridge players are most welcome to the club which meets all year round at IFH. St Dunstan's widows most welcome.

Bridge Congress, IFH, December 3rd-6th, 1993

Once again, we all had an enjoyable time and were kept in order by our very capable friend Roland Bolton.

Competitions played at IFH on December 3rd

Sir Arthur Pearson Cup

Pairs

Peter Surridge &
Audrey Clements

Paul Nuyens Memorial Trophy

Teams of four

Bill Phillips, Wally Lethbridge,
Bill Allen & Jo Huk

Competitions played at IFH on December 4th

Lord Fraser Cup

Individuals

Pat Padley

Alf Field Memorial Cup

(Datum Scoring) Pairs

Ralph & Kay Pacitti

Competitions played at IFH on December 5th

Sir Arthur Pearson Cup

Teams of four

Bert Ward, Reg Goding,
Pat Padley & Gwen Hannant

Drummer Downs Cup

Pairs

Ralph Pacitti & Pat Padley

Victor Ludorum

Reg Goding

Drive held at IFH on December 6th

1st Mrs. Carol Berry &
Mrs. Pat Padley

2nd Alf Dodgson &
Mrs. Vi McPherson

Drive held at HQ on December 11th

1st Bill Phillips &
Madeleine Skerrett

2nd Alf Dodgson &
Mrs. Vi McPherson

Christmas Drive played at IFH on December 12th 1993.

Numbers were depleted by illness, but six St Dunstaners, partnered by their markers, enjoyed a

pleasant afternoon. Prizes were presented by Dr. Jane Goodlad.

1st Alf Dodgson &
Mrs. Vi McPherson

2nd Mrs. Pat Padley &
Mrs. Carol Berry

FAMILY NEWS

BIRTHS

We offer our congratulations on the birth of:

Hugo Bell on October 9th, 1993. He is the grandson of Mrs. Sibyl Bell of Haywards Heath, Sussex, widow of David Bell.

Grace Whitcombe on October 29th, 1993. She is the grand-daughter of Johnnie Whitcombe of Eastbourne.

Rebekah Robinson on December 3rd, 1993. She is the great grand-daughter of Mrs. Jennie Hodgson of Ferryhill, County Durham, widow of David Hodgson.

MARRIAGES

Congratulations to:

Dawn and David Nicholson on their wedding on September 4th, 1993. Dawn is the grand-daughter of Mrs. Lily Acton of Ovenden, Halifax, widow of Percy Acton.

John and Caroline Burton on November 27th, 1993. John is the eldest son of Ken and Sylvia Burton of Washington, Tyne and Wear.

John Trent of St John's Wood, London on his marriage to Diana Daniels on January 5th, 1994.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Islwyn and Wyn Hughes of Llanynhenedl, Holyhead who celebrated their Silver Wedding anniversary on December 23rd, 1993.

Julian and Margaret Stevens of Rottingdean on their Ruby Anniversary on December 27th, 1993.

Fred and Ellen Holding of Horwich, Bolton on their ruby day on January 16th, 1994.

Noel and Doreen Cowley of Beenham, Berkshire who celebrated their Golden Anniversary on December 4th, 1993.

Preston and Reta Woon of Taunton, Somerset on their golden day on January 1st, 1994.

Jack and Betty Davies of Brampton, Huntingdon on their Golden Anniversary on January 14th, 1994.

Harry and Sylvia Meleson on their Diamond Anniversary on December 25th, 1993. Harry is a resident at Pearson House.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to:

Cheryl Ellis on qualifying as a midwife. The 19 month course required the delivery of over 40 babies. Cheryl is the daughter of Trevor and Joan Phillips of Paignton, Devon.

DEATHS

We regret to announce the death of:

Mrs. Maria Broomfield on November 3rd, 1993, aged 81. She was the wife of Frederick Broomfield of Addlestone, Surrey.

Mrs. Gladys Smith of Seaford, East Sussex on November 8th, 1993, aged 88. She was the widow of John 'Tony' Smith.

Mrs. Elizabeth Petty of Garforth, Leeds on November 20th 1993, aged 78. She was the widow of Harry Petty.

Mrs. Evelyn Linacre of Wallasey, Merseyside on November 24th, 1993. She was the widow of Maurice Linacre.

Mrs. Joan Thomas of Telscombe Cliffs, East Sussex on December 5th, 1993. She was the widow of Wally Thomas.

Mrs. Amelia Gadd on December 15th, 1993. She was the wife of Reginald Gadd of Fulwood, Sheffield.

Mrs. Hilda Maskell of Hunmanby, nr Filey on December 18th, 1993. She was the widow of George Maskell.

John Bingham on January 5th, 1994. He was the husband of Mrs. Margaret Bingham of Macclesfield, Cheshire.

Mrs. Doris Steel of Christchurch, Dorset on January 8th, 1994. She was the widow of Hector Steel.

Mrs. Elizabeth Carmichael on January 10th. She was the wife of John Carmichael of Wallingford, Oxfordshire.

Our sympathy goes to their families and friends.

In Memory

It is with great regret that we have to record the deaths of the following St Dunstaners.

Gordon Pennington, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

Gordon Frederick Pennington of Barry, South Glamorgan died on October 27th 1993, aged 73.

He was a craftsman in the R.E.M.E. from 1940 and was a PoW in the Far East from February 1942, suffering severe malnutrition. Returning to civilian life, he became a senior technician in local government.

Mr. Pennington was Chairman of the local council and Vice-Chairman of the War Pensions Committee for Wales. He was very much involved with ex-FEPoWs in Wales and secretary of The Royal British Legion Housing Association Ltd., Wales. He also served as a co-opted member of the Area Health Authority Committee for the physically handicapped.

A keen gardener, he loved sailing and passed the RYA Seamanship Advanced Sailing course. In wrought iron work he was very competent producing tools of his own design.

Our sympathy goes to his son, Barry, and all the family.

David Robertson, Seaforth Highlanders

David Hood Stevenson Robertson of Godwick, Dyfed died on November 7th 1993, aged 79.

Mr. Robertson, known as Jock, served as a Lance Corporal in the Seaforth Highlanders from 1940 to 1943. He was posted to North Africa and wounded on the last day of the Battle of El Alamein, losing one eye and suffering injuries to the other, though he regained some sight after surgery.

Upon return to civilian life, he and his wife ran a small newsagents until retiring in 1979. Mr. Robertson became a St Dunstaner in 1991.

Our sympathy goes to his daughter, Anne, son, John and all members of the family.

James Costello, Royal Army Ordnance Corps

James Joseph Costello of Preston, died on November 12th 1993, aged 78.

Mr. Costello served as a Corporal in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1940 until

1946. He was wounded on Crete by shrapnel embedded in his face in 1942.

A lorry driver before enlisting, Mr. Costello was a bus driver until 1971. He became a St Dunstaner in 1975. For several years he was a judge at the annual Garstang Rose Show, judging the quality of the roses by their smell.

Our sympathy goes to his wife, Jenny, their son and daughter, and all members of the family.

Maurice Durrant, Royal Air Force

Maurice Gerald Durrant of Driffield died on November 13th, 1993, aged 71.

Mr. Durrant served in the RAF from 1942 until 1944, when he was wounded in a detonator explosion in Italy. He became a St Dunstaner in 1962 and after industrial training worked as a press operator until retiring in 1974. He was active within his local branch of BLESMA.

Our sympathy goes to his sister-in-law, Mrs. D. Spencer and all members of the family.

Robert Cunningham, Royal Air Force

Robert John Cunningham of Rottingdean died on November 17th 1993, aged 62. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1969.

'Bob', as he was known, joined the Royal Air Force in 1949. He left the Service in 1954, but re-enlisted in 1959, serving for 12 years, first as an electrical engineer, then as an RAF Policeman.

After becoming a St Dunstaner, he worked in industry until retiring on health grounds in 1980. Bob married his wife, Vanna, in 1991.

Our sympathy goes to his wife, Vanna, son, David, daughter, Teresa, step-daughter, Dawn, and all members of their families.

Amy Robinson, Sussex 4 Unit, Civilian Nursing Reserve

Amy Alice Robinson of South Croydon, Surrey died on December 1st 1993, aged 89.

Mrs. Robinson was the widow of Alfred Robinson, a First World War St Dunstaner who served as a gunner in the Royal Garrison Artillery. She became a St Dunstaner herself in 1987 as a result of injuries received during an air-raid in 1941. At that time she was a nurse attached to the Civilian Nursing Reserve.

Our sympathy goes to her son, Barry, and all the family.

William Beatty, Royal Ulster Constabulary

William Johnston Beatty of Ballinamallard, Co. Fermanagh died on December 17th 1993, aged 65.

A farmer by occupation, Mr Beatty was a full-time Reserve in the RUC and was wounded in an explosion in November 1977. He continued farming after losing his sight and became a regular visitor to Ian Fraser House.

Our sympathy goes to his wife, Joy, their five sons, and all members of the family.

John Lawson, Home Guard

John Walter Lawson of Warrington, Cheshire died on December 18th 1993, aged 84.

He became a St Dunstaner after a German attack that also blinded his wife and daughter.

Our sympathy goes to his daughters, Sylvia and Jaqueline, and all members of the family.

A full tribute is on page eight.

John Chatfield, Royal Artillery

John William Chatfield of Worthing died on December 26th 1993, aged 74. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1971.

He enlisted with the Royal Artillery in April 1940 and served as Gunner with a Search Light Battery. He was taken prisoner by the Japanese in February 1942. At first he was in Changi Gaol, but was moved to Saigon Docks and then the Burma Railway.

After the war, Mr. Chatfield worked at a bus garage, but later became a drilling and tapping operator. He retired in 1979.

Our sympathy goes to his three children, Michael, Stephen and Jennifer, and all the family.

George Jakins, Royal Air Force

George Henry Jakins of Guildford died on January 1st, aged 84. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1946.

Enlisting with the RAF in February 1941, Mr. Jakins served as a Leading Aircraftman until 1946. He was a PoW in the Dutch East Indies and the privations suffered led to a deterioration of his sight.

Before the war he had been a grocery manager, but after training at St Dunstan's, he joined his brother-in-law's boot and shoe repair business in Rugby.

Our sympathy goes to his wife, Millie, daughter, Hilda, and all members of the family.

St Dunstan's Review

PENSION SUPPLEMENT

JANUARY 1994

REVIEW OF WAR DISABLEMENT PENSIONS AND ALLOWANCES AND SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

War Pensions have been uprated fully in line with prices. The special Ministry of Defence ex-Gratia Payments to pre-April 1973 War Widows will also be raised from £47.84p to £48.70p per week. These rises will take effect in April 1994.

DETAILS OF INCREASED WAR PENSION RATES

DISABLEMENT BENEFITS

	Existing Weekly Rate £	New Weekly Rate £
Disablement Pension for Private at 100%	97.20	98.90
Over Age 65 Allowance with assessments of:		
40 to 50 per cent	6.50	6.60
Over 50 per cent and not exceeding 70 per cent	10.00	10.20
Over 70 and not exceeding 90 per cent	14.30	14.55
Over 90 per cent	20.00	20.40
Unemployability Allowance:		
Personal allowance	59.55	61.10
Increase for wife or other adult dependant	33.70	34.50
Increase for child	9.80	9.80
Second and subsequent child	10.95	11.00
Invalidity Allowance:		
Age on qualifying date:		
Under 40	11.95	12.15
Under 50 but not under 40	7.50	7.60
Under 60 (55 for women) but not under 50	3.75	3.80
Constant Attendance Allowance:		
Special maximum	73.40	74.80
Special intermediate	55.05	56.10
Normal maximum	36.70	37.40
Half and quarter day	18.35	18.70
Comforts Allowance:		
Higher rate	15.70	16.00
Lower rate	7.85	8.00
Mobility Supplement:	34.90	35.55
Allowance for Lowered Standard of Occupation (Maximum):	36.64	37.28
Exceptionally Severe Disablement Allowance:	36.70	37.40
Severe Disablement Allowance:	18.35	18.70

DISABLEMENT BENEFITS (continued)

	Existing Annual Rate £	New Annual Rate £
Clothing Allowance:		
Higher rate	124.00	126.00
Lower rate	79.00	80.00
Unemployability Supplement permitted Therapeutic Earnings limit (Annual):	2184.00	2236.00

DEATH BENEFITS

	Existing Weekly Rate £	New Weekly Rate £
Widow's Pension - Private's Widow:		
Standard rate	72.90	74.70
Childless widow under 40	16.83	17.28
Rent Allowance (maximum) for War Widow with children	27.75	28.25
Age Allowance for elderly widows:		
Age 65-69	8.35	8.50
Age 70-79	16.10	16.40
Age 80 and over	23.95	24.40
Ex-Gratia Payment to Widows:		
Whose husbands were discharged before April 1973	47.84	48.70

INCREASES IN SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

RETIREMENT PENSIONS

	Existing Annual Rate £	New Annual Rate £
Basic rate	56.10	57.60
Married couple	89.80	92.10
All pensioners receive an extra 25p per week from their eightieth birthday		
Blind Persons Tax Allowance	1080.00	1200.00

ALLOWANCES

Mobility Allowance:	31.40	31.95
Adult Attendance Allowance:		
Highest	44.90	45.70
Middle	30.00	30.55
Lowest	11.95	12.15

EXAMPLES OF INCREASES IN PENSIONS AND ALLOWANCES

It is emphasised that the following are examples only and do not cover every St Dunstaner.

Totally Blind:	Employable		Unemployable	
	Present £	New £	Present £	New £
Basic Pension	97.20	98.90	97.20	98.90
Constant Attendance Allowance	36.70	37.40	36.70	37.40
Comforts Allowance	15.70	18.70	15.70	16.00
Unemployability Supplement			59.55	61.10
Invalidity Allowance (over 50 but under 60 on qualifying)			3.75	3.80
Additional Allowance for Wife			33.70	34.50
Total per week	149.60	155.00	246.60	251.70

Guiding Vision:	Employable		Unemployable	
	Present £	New £	Present £	New £
Basic Pension	97.20	98.90	97.20	98.90
Constant Attendance Allowance	18.35	18.70	18.35	18.70
Comforts Allowance	7.85	8.00	15.70	16.00
Unemployability Supplement			59.55	61.10
Invalidity Allowance (over 50 but under 60 on qualifying)			3.75	3.80
Additional Allowance for Wife			33.70	34.50
Total per week	123.40	125.60	228.25	233.00

A War Widow (Private's Wife):		Present £	New £
Aged 65-70	Basic Pension	72.90	74.70
	Age Allowance	8.35	8.50
	Ex-Gratia	47.84	48.70
	Total per week	129.09	131.90
Aged 70-80	Basic Pension	72.90	74.70
	Age Allowance	16.10	16.40
	Ex-Gratia	47.84	48.70
	Total per week	136.84	139.80
Aged 80 and over	Basic Pension	72.90	74.70
	Age Allowance	23.95	24.40
	Ex-Gratia	47.84	48.70
	Total per week	144.69	147.80