

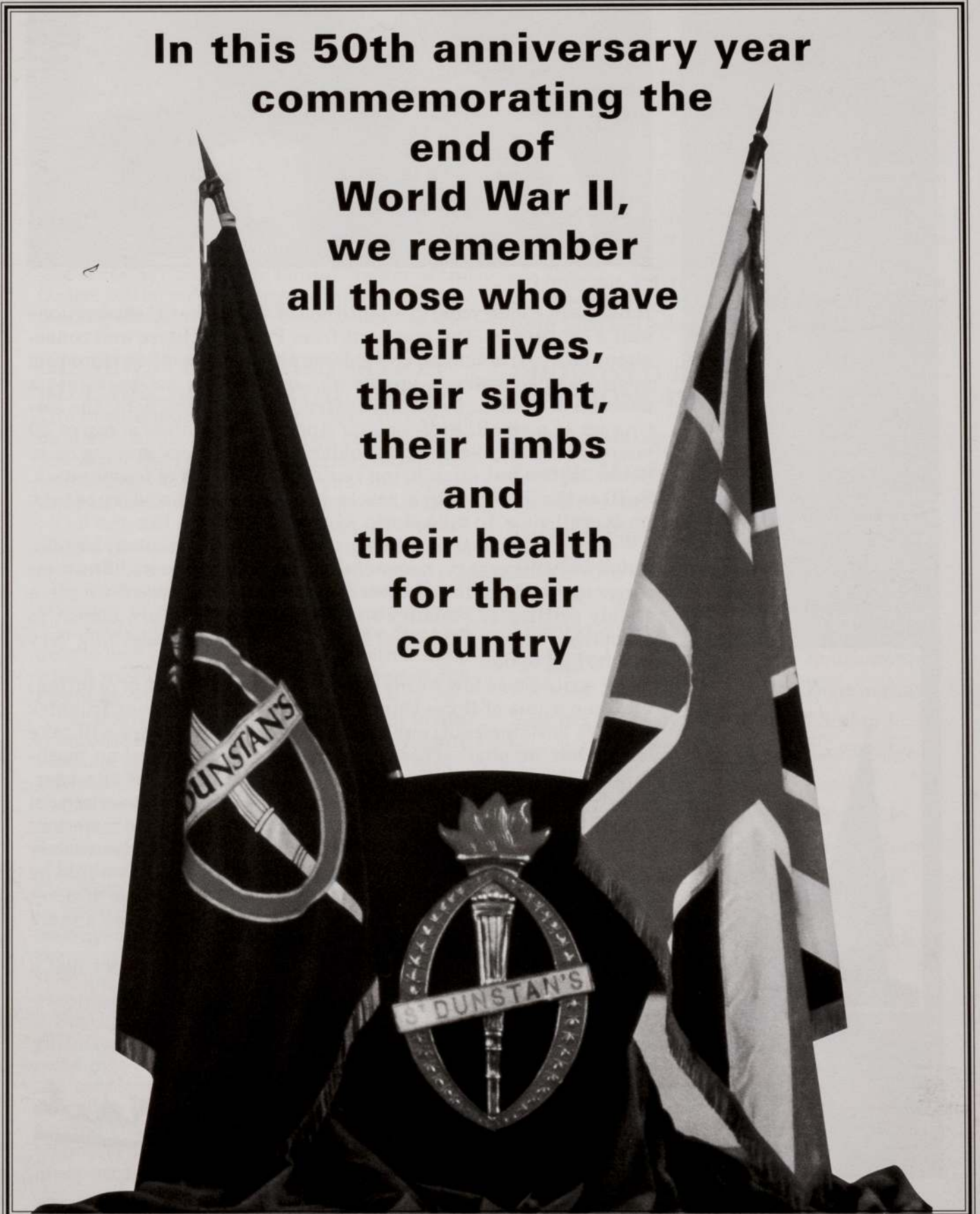


# St Dunstan's Review

December 1995

No. 861

**In this 50th anniversary year  
commemorating the  
end of  
World War II,  
we remember  
all those who gave  
their lives,  
their sight,  
their limbs  
and  
their health  
for their  
country**



12-14 Harcourt Street,  
London W1A 4XB

**BI-MONTHLY**  
Free to St Dunstaners

**DECEMBER 1995**

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**Cover Picture:** Five decades after the conclusion of World War II, we continue to remember the sacrifices made to protect our way of life. Remembrance Sunday report in full on page seven.

# From the Chairman



It has been a long year: the multitude of World War II celebrations half a century on; the move out from Pearson House and consequent reconstruction at Ovingdean; the various other slimming measures necessary to enable us - in time - to get back into a position of financial viability instead of deepening debt; the setting up of a small, professional Appeals Staff after a gap of 30 years; inevitably some of our older St Dunstaners moving on to better things but often being replaced by others of lesser years. So if, as the final month is reached, we stand back and try to take an overall view, to take stock, what do we see?

We see a good deal of change, too often forced on us by events, but always necessary, never change for change's sake. If now we turn our heads to look forward rather than backward we see a steady settling to stability and - those of us who are honest to ourselves - we see that what has come about (or something very like it) had to be.

As I write these few words (a month ahead because of printing) I am conscious of three things: in respect of our recent troubles we have bottomed out; our final and complete recovery will take longer but we shall achieve it; we have concentrated on maintaining the things that matter and cut the froth off the beer. Slowly but surely we are, albeit sometimes in different ways from former times, 'easing the screw' where we sensibly can to restore as far as possible the amenities, facilities and fun that we previously enjoyed. It won't be exactly the mixture as before - that would be inviting disaster - and some will bellyache and mutter 'it don't blow like it used'; others, the majority I think, will take a more responsible view and say 'And high time too.'

Thank you for your support during a difficult year, not just a long one. My simple message is:

'Tails up and have a very Happy Christmas.'

*Henry Leach*



# NOTICEBOARD



## SEASONS GREETINGS

Members of St Dunstan's staff at Headquarters, Brighton and all round the country wish St Dunstaners, widows and our many other friends a Happy Christmas and a peaceful 1996.

## THE ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE SERVICE 1996

The Queen has commanded that the next Service of the Order of the British Empire be held in St Paul's Cathedral on Wednesday May 8th 1996 at 11.30am. Her Majesty and The Duke of Edinburgh, Grand Master of the Order, will be present. Anyone interested in attending should contact Peter Marshall at HQ.

## DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION BILL RECEIVES ROYAL ASSENT

The most ambitious piece of legislation ever for disabled people became law on November 8th when the Disability Discrimination Bill received Royal Assent. It goes onto the statute books as the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

The Act will establish a lasting framework of rights for disabled people in terms of employment and access to goods and services.

Welcoming Royal Assent, Alistair Burt, Minister of State for Disabled people said: 'The Act is a fundamental advance for disabled people and will provide the foundation upon which we can build to achieve the end of discrimination.'

'For the first time it will be unlawful to discriminate against disabled people in the provision of jobs, services and property.'

'Disabled people will have greater freedom of choice, have the opportunity to compete in fair and open competition with non-disabled people and be able to live independently with dignity.'

'Implementation of the Act is to be staged. The National Disability Council will be set up in February 1996 to advise the Government on ways to end discrimination. It will also be responsible for providing advice on matters relating to the operation of the Act, with the exception of employment.'

'Further changes will take place after consultation. The new education measures will come into force by autumn 1996, followed by the employment rights and the right to be served in the provision of goods and services around the end of 1996.'

The Act also creates new powers to set minimum access standards for new buses, taxis,

trains and trams. Disabled pupils and students can expect more information on the arrangements made to help them gain access to schools, colleges and universities.

In addition, a National Disability Council will be established to advise the Government on ways to end discrimination. It will also be responsible for providing advice on matters relating to the operation of the Act, with the exception of employment. The National Advisory Council on the Employment of People with Disabilities will continue to advise the Government.

A brief guide to the Disability Discrimination Act (Leaflet DL40) is available by telephoning 0345 622633 (Calls charged at local rate, 24hrs).

## PROPOSED DATES FOR REUNIONS IN 1996

Tuesday March 5th	Brighton I
Tuesday March 12th	Liverpool
Tuesday March 19th	Sherborne
Tuesday March 26th	Exeter
Tuesday April 2nd	Cardiff
Tuesday April 16th	Norwich
Tuesday April 23rd	Brighton II
Tuesday April 30th	Southampton
Tuesday May 14th	Birmingham
Saturday May 18th	London I
Tuesday May 21st	Cambridge
Tuesday June 4th	Leeds
Wednesday June 5th	Newcastle
Tuesday June 18th	Nottingham
Saturday June 22nd	London II
Tuesday September 3rd	Belfast
Tuesday September 24th	Edinburgh

## ALARMING CALLS

Telephones can be transformed into alarm clocks with a handy new service, *Reminder Call*. Just dial \*55\*, and after listening to the automated voice, press the numbers for the time you want using the 24-hour clock, followed by #. So a call for 6am is \*55\*0600#, while a call for 6pm is \*55\*1800#. Each reminder call costs 12p.

## ST DUNSTAN'S DAY

We would like to remind all members of St Dunstan's family that December 9th is the anniversary of the death of our visionary founder, Sir Arthur Pearson, who died in 1921.

## CRAFTS

On Saturday October 28th, Lenie Hinton and Mary Scourfield, our handicraft instructors at Ovingdean, attended the art and craft competition hosted by the East Sussex Association for the Blind. The venue was at the Community Centre in Heathfield, East Sussex. There were several categories and we entered 12 items, gaining eight awards, including two first prizes. The full list of awards is as follows:

### First prizes

Margaret Bingham with a cake.  
Joseph Huk who entered a rug.

### Second prizes

Reg Goding with pottery bowl and jug.  
Ron Tingay entered a pair of leather shoes.  
Bert Wallage succeeded with a doll's cradle.

### Third prizes

Reg Goding made a wood-framed mirror and a drawer.  
Alf Waters entered a canework tray.  
Joseph Huk with a wooden rocking horse.

Congratulations to all those who took part.

## CAMP AT HMS SULTAN 1996

As all *Daedalus* campers will know, we are moving to HMS *Sultan* in 1996 for our camp. Will all those wishing to book please contact Elspeth Grant at High Acre, Catmere End, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 4XG or by telephone on 01799 522874. The dates of the camp are earlier than usual, to fit in with the Field Gun Crew's leave period, and will be Friday July 26th until the morning of Saturday August 3rd 1996. Applications should be made by May 10th.

## PROGRESSIVE PILGRIMAGE

An extensive programme of pilgrimages to prominent war cemeteries and memorials has been organised by The Royal British Legion for 1996. Destinations include Austria, Burma, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Israel, Italy, Malaysia, Malta, Poland, Thailand, Tunisia and Sri Lanka. For full details write to The Royal British Legion Pilgrimage Department, Royal British Legion Village, Aylesford, Kent ME20 7NX. Tel: 01622 716729.

## VIP HOLIDAYS

Details of 12 mainstream hotels in prime British resorts and cities, equipped to meet the needs of blind people, are held by Henshaw's Society for the Blind. For details, call 0345 697090 (calls charged at local rate).

## BT HAVE AN ANSWER FOR YOU

An answerphone service with a difference is now on offer from British Telecom. *Call Minder* can answer up to two calls at once - even if you are already on the phone. The service is currently available on a three month rent free trial offer.

Callers are invited to leave a message if you are unable to take a call. Messages can be retrieved from any phone, though charges are incurred if you call from any other than your own home telephone. Details recorded include the caller's number and time of call. Up to 30 messages can be stored. You can determine whether the answerphone comes in after four, seven or ten rings giving you time to pick up your phone. This delay can be adjusted from home by using a touch-tone telephone.

Available to most BT customers on modern exchanges, *Call Minder* costs £4.99 per quarter after the free trial. Further details can be obtained by calling Freephone 0800 800 150.

## TELL US WHODUNNIT?

This is the information you need. The year is 1928. It is claimed that Lord Dunstan has been murdered at Ovingdean Hall and the famous Raymond chandelier has been stolen. The police have found a smoking gun, dagger, garrotte, syringe, pepper pot and a tea strainer.

In a room, they have gathered their suspects: administrator Anna Coluthon; the well-known debutante and opium addict, Margo Janson; the butler, Smithers; war-hero Major Carrington and his Lordship's twin children, Christine and Christopher. Any one of them may be responsible, but then again, maybe not. These are the elements to be used in crafting a tale of mystery and suspense for this year's story contest.

As usual, stories will be judged by an independent panel. They will assess the entries and prizes will be awarded accordingly. First prize is £60, second prize is £25 and there are three runners-up prizes of £5 each. The first and second prize winners will have their tales published in the *Review*.

The competition is open to St Dunstaners, their wives or husbands, and to widows. Only one entry per person is permitted. The story should be between 500-1000 words, must be original and not previously published. Please type manuscripts with double line spacing.

Entries are to be submitted under an assumed name. Write your nom de plume, the title of your story, your real identity and full address on a sheet of paper. Seal this sheet in an envelope and write your nom de plume on the front.

Entries should reach the Editor, by the closing date, April 28th 1996, at Story Writing Competition 1996, *St Dunstan's Review*, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1A 4XB.

## FORT NELSON by Yvonne Rixon

*Daedalus* Campers visited Fort Nelson during their sojourn at Lee-on-Solent. This historic site might be of interest to those visiting the Portsmouth area.

For the first time since the feared French invasion 130 years ago, a unique example of Victorian military architecture at Fareham, is open for public viewing. Fort Nelson now houses the Royal Armouries' national collection of artillery, one of Europe's finest displays. Imaginative exhibits and innovative audio visual techniques bring this 19 acre fort to life. In an ideal setting visitors are taken through the ages.

An audio guide brings to life the sounds of battle and the story behind selected guns. A large model, carefully constructed for blind people, helps visualise the fort's layout. A smaller mobile version is available on card.

The fort holds an important collection of World War II anti-aircraft guns and modern conflicts are represented by the Iraqi Super-gun. Lifelike models occupy the finely restored barracks, depicting the lifestyle of Officers and men based there. Finally, one cannot fail to admire the ornate bronze guns on display.

Opening hours: April 1st to October 31st daily 10am to 5pm (last entry 4pm). November 1st to March 31st, Monday to Friday, 10.30am to 4pm. Anyone intending visiting the fort is advised to ring in advance so that the special facilities available for blind people can be arranged. Tel: 01329 233734.

## VJ COMMEMORATIVE VIDEO

A two hour video of the London events marking the 50th Anniversary of VJ Day has been produced. It includes all the key events over the August 19th/20th weekend and costs £9.99, (inc.p&p,UK only). Orders, with cheques/postal orders made payable to Evolutions VJ Account, to PO Box 2201, London W1A 1UZ.

## BEST BUYS

A demonstration cassette of a new weekly magazine, *Best Buys*, is out now. It gives details of special offers in supermarkets, responding to demands from blind people for information on price reductions to assist them in shopping. It lists reduced goods sold in stores such as Asda, Co-op, Iceland, Netto, Kwiksave, Safeway, Sainsbury and Tesco. A tone-index makes it easy to find sections relating to local branches.

Disability Network is seeking feedback from potential users. To obtain a copy, please send a 60 minute tape, together with a self-addressed 'Articles for the Blind' free postage label, to Disability Network, *Best Buys*, 8 Wolverhampton House, 123 Church Street, St Helens, Merseyside WA10 1AJ.



## FROM THE ARCHIVES

Can you assist in naming the *St Dunstaner* in this uncaptioned picture from our archives, taken on a bygone Remembrance Sunday? If you can help, please contact the PR Department.

## HOT AND COLD GIFT IDEAS

The RNIB is offering a couple of handy gadgets just in time for Christmas.

The first, priced £3.99, tackles the problem of accidentally leaving the freezer door open. *Freeze Alert* will buzz if there is an increase in temperature inside your freezer.

*Egg Boy* takes the hassle out of boiling that breakfast treat. The spring like cradle provides support during cooking and can be easily lifted out ready to serve. Supplied in packs of two, it costs £3.35. These items can be ordered from RNIB Customer Services on 0345 023153 (calls charged at local rate).

## FOUR WEDDINGS DESCRIBED

The film that put Hugh Grant on the map heads four new releases on audio described video. *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, which teamed Grant with Andie MacDowell, has been verbally enhanced by Andrew Sachs.

The other three releases come from the Disney stable: *Aladdin*, with songs by Tim (Evita) Rice, *Cool Runnings*, with the late John Candy, and *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, which includes a production report featuring interviews with Walt Disney.

To order any audio described videos, call RNIB Customer Services on 0345 023153.

## ALTERNATIVE VISION HOLIDAY PROGRAMME

A series of three friendly outdoor activity events, organised on a low-cost basis has been announced for 1996 by Alternative Vision.

### Welsh Mountains Week

May 18th-25th £100 approx.

A week's hard walking in the Brecon Beacons National Park, camping at Cwmdu in the Black Mountains. You must have good walking gear for all weathers and camping kit. Basic breakfasts, packed lunches and pub meals. Costs will be shared on a kitty basis, expected to be around £100 according to diet. Lambing season, so absolutely no dogs.

### South Downs Weekend

June 14th-16th £35

Staying at Eastbourne Youth Hostel on the Heritage Coast. Prime chalk downland walking, Beachy Head, the South Downs Way and the Wealdway. A hilly ten miles or so Saturday and Sunday with packed lunches. Trainers will be fine for walking, but bring wet weather gear just in case. Dogs are most welcome. Minibus pick-up on Friday 14th from Eastbourne Station.

### Woodlarks Camp Week

August 31st-September 7th £70

Our Fifth Anniversary Woodlarks Week under canvas tents at Farnham. A more traditional week with lots of forest walks and pubs, heated swimming pool on site, excursions to a theme park and a water leisure centre, and party night with live music. Families, friends

and guide dogs are most welcome. Part week campers welcome for £10 per night.

For further information or to book places, (deposits of £10 per person per event required, cheques should be made payable to Alternative Vision) call Jon and Sue Ridge on 01273 683273 or write to them at 24 Selham Close, Coldean, Brighton BN1 9EH.

## A PHILOSOPHY FOR LIFE

Keep your THOUGHTS positive...  
because your thoughts  
become your WORDS

Keep your WORDS positive...  
because your words  
become your ACTIONS

Keep your ACTIONS positive...  
because your actions  
become your HABITS

Keep your HABITS positive...  
because your habits  
become your VALUES

Keep your VALUES positive...  
because your values  
become your DESTINY

ANONYMOUS

Reprinted by kind permission of the South African Review, September 1995

## A silent moment to spare... with Sydney Scroggie

**Sydney Scroggie made this address at Bridgefoot on November 11th 1979. He considers it to be the best thing he has ever written.**

These lads, whose names are here inscribed, knew in their day the Dighty's sound, the whistle of a Rosemill blackie, the heather when it turns on Craigowl Hill, the leaves yellow as now we see them in the Strath. They knew the old Strathmartine, for it was their home. What did they do that we should pay them tribute

here today. They stood between the Kaiser and all his bad intentions, Hitler and his, and if unsubjected to any tyrant hand some remnant of Strathmartine is preserved today, at least in part we owe this to their sacrifice.

It was not so much for Britain they fought, died, and came to be inscribed upon this stone, but for Bridgefoot. For it was here, or hereabouts, that they were born and bred, learned their letters, took on local colour which distinguished them from other

men. The hero, Martin, here slew his dragon in bygone times, these men, in their day, ours, and in so doing preserved to us some essence of the life they knew and loved.

And so, in these same autumn leaves, Rosemill blackie, Craigowl heather and Dighty's swirl, as these are part of us, must there not always linger also something of them. Such sons, long buried in a noble grave, are nothing if not Strathmartine; Strathmartine, as this is precious to us now, nothing if not such sons as these.

## Remembrance Sunday, November 12th

The lead up to Remembrance Sunday starts several weeks before. Many St Dunstaners, wives and widows are involved in selling poppies and participating in other British Legion events. This year, for the first time since the outbreak of the Second World War, the country remembered the eleventh hour on the eleventh day of the eleventh month, when the guns fell silent in 1918. On Saturday, buses, shop tills and many people paused in silent tribute.

For only the second time in many years, St Dunstan's was invited to take part in the Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall. Following the 111 Standards, and serving members of HM Forces, St Dunstaners Reggie Perrin and Steve Pendleton, escorted by Dominic Marshall and Grant Cooper respectively, took part in the Muster to loud acclaim. Raymond Baxter on BBC1 TV's broadcast devoted a good few words to their background and Reggie's achievement on Mount McKinley earlier this year.

Sunday dawned overcast but dry. There were 70 St Dunstaners on parade, including 21 in wheelchairs. General Sir Peter de la Billière and Major General Andrew Keeling, who was recently elected a Member of St Dunstan's Council, were in the contingent. Sergeant Jarvis of the Coldstream Guards, kept us in step and helped escort the contingent to an excellent position, heading column C just behind the Cenotaph. No helicopters, traffic or even the rustle of wind disturbed the two minutes silence. We were left in peace to contemplate our lost comrades and our fortune at being alive. In

total contrast, followed the thumping of the bass drums, the blare of brass instruments and the loud cheers of the crowds as we marched off. The TV commentary alluded to Reggie's achievement as typical of the spirit of St Dunstan's. Bringing up the rear of the contingent was Dr Stanley Pavillard and his experiences as a FEPOW were referred to.

Hot toddies were not needed on our return to the Russell Hotel. Following an indifferent lunch, the Chairman first welcomed and thanked all those who had escorted, helped and organised the day. The Daedalus 'Dogs' received special applause, as did Peter Marshall, the prime organiser.

The Chairman went on, 'We are here in grateful humility to give thanks to those who fought and died in the cause of freedom and justice.' Sir Henry played down 'the knights in shining armour mystique'. War was a fight against the elements, hunger and thirst, pain and agony. The only redeeming feature, is that war is a great unifier. 'The nation becomes locked in the unity of survival and the will to win.' Sir Henry went on to quote a jingle from the First World War, told to him by his 'wise, clerical headmaster':

'God heard the embattled nations shout and sing,  
'God this, God that  
and God the other thing'  
God heard the embattled nations sing and shout,  
'Good God', said God, 'I've got my work cut out!'

'War shows people up for what they really are. The ordinary man from the local village post office, typical of many thousands, learns fear, is never the same again, but



*Fred Bentley and Sir Peter de la Billière on Remembrance Sunday.*

is actually a very brave person. War is not a game.' Sir Henry referred to accusations of some behaviour during the Falklands campaign, which were made with hindsight and inexperience.

The Chairman hoped that all future commemorative events would be 'swept up' in the annual, national day of Remembrance in November. He denied the red poppy was a symbol of warmongering, but represented the bloodshed for all our sakes. 'We remember those who made the supreme sacrifice. We remember those who gave their sight, their limbs, their health. We remember their widows and families, who carried bravely on despite their loss. We remember with hope and confidence, the younger generations and those to come. Hope that they will never be called upon to face the same challenge, but confident that should that be so, they will acquit themselves every bit as well.'

Reggie thanked the Chairman for his speech and 'speed march'. He was also grateful to Sir Henry for having escorted and provided a running commentary during the parade. Reggie was delighted to see many of his friends again and particularly welcomed Major General Keeling, a fellow ex-Royal Marine. He concluded by thanking St Dunstan's and proposing a toast to them.

The lunch seemed to end all too quickly, but our thoughts and feelings will endure for the remainder of our lives.

# TANDEMS - ONE UP, ONE DOWN

by Ray Sheriff



Ray Sheriff, dropping in for a bike ride.

Once again Betty and I travelled to the Netherlands to attend the 51st Anniversary of the Battle of Arnhem, September 16th-17th. A parachute jump by 25 ex-Arnhem Veterans was scheduled. The main objective was to drop onto the wartime dropping zone situated eight miles from the Arnhem bridge, which was to prove *The Bridge Too Far*.

This descent had been planned the previous year but due to adverse weather conditions the intention had to be aborted. Though, we did gain a consolation drop on the following day at a civil airfield 20 miles NE of Arnhem. Alas, not quenching the long-standing desire to touchdown on the wartime dropping zone way back in September 1944. Would we be lucky weather-wise this time? On Saturday 16th, the jumpers were transported to the airfield at Delan, approximately 15 miles away. On arrival at the airfield I knew from the doleful atmosphere that the weather was not looking good. I could imagine Betty en route to the DZ. Praying for the clouds to disperse and the sun to appear. At the airfield

the jumpers were rigged up and anxiously awaiting thumbs-up from the control tower. Already we were behind schedule. Suddenly there was a cheer as the sun appeared through the clouds. I felt a surge of joy and relief that at last, after 51 years, my feet would once again touchdown on 'Ginkel Heath.' My luck held good when I learned that Dougie Young, Sergeant-Major at the Parachute Centre would be my tandem master.

We had previously jumped together from a sky-van on Salisbury Plain May VE-Day. The aircraft for this occasion was yet another type of machine, a Dutch military aircraft, a Fokker 27 complete with a Dutch pilot. The exit door mid-starboard, there were 12 tandems plus two cameramen. To assist my exit, Dougie decided jumping number one of the stick.

At 12,000ft we moved to the exit door to await the red-green light. It seemed ages for the green to flash. The cameraman slid out first, holding his position on the side of the aircraft. He then followed us all the way down. Our free-fall lasted 6,500ft at

approximately 120mph followed by 5,500ft under canopy.

It was a super jump from exit to landing, which proved a soft one, thanks to the boss. My thoughts as we floated quietly down to earth flashed back to September 17th 1944, which was a similar sunny day. I was jumping number one from a Dakota, but only from around 600ft with a static-line 'chute. On landing we were not greeted with any signs of hospitality. However, the noise resounding from 30,000 Dutch well-wishers proved a very welcome contrast. So Betty and I were happy and relieved to have completed my seventh jump in Arnhem, safe and sound with no injuries. My thanks and appreciation to the staff at 'Joint Service Parachute Centre' Salisbury Plain. Needless to say I look forward to the next Para venue. In fact, the Sergeant-Major has already detailed me to volunteer for 1996.

On leaving the DZ, I was asked by officials of The Royal British Legion if I would oblige by starting off a 'Peddle for Peace' cycle ride, the participants being 22 cyclists who would, over four days, wend their way through Belgium and France and finally back to Dover. We duly arrived at the starting point, the *Bridge Too Far*, now rightly renamed - *Bridge to the Future*. A young Dutchman awaited with a tandem and, following a short ceremony, we cycled off ahead of the group, escorted by the police. It was a short 5km stint. We then waved the youngsters on their way and retraced our wheels back to the bridge. So, completing my second tandem ride in one day.

# THE MIRACLE by Polo (Fred Ripley)

I was in this monumental mason's. I worked there and the boss was away on holiday and he had left me in charge. Charlie and I were getting this angel ready to take to the churchyard where we were going to erect it, and somehow or other I stepped back and knocked it over. It fell on the concrete floor and its head was broken off.

I was terribly upset, knowing how expensive those white, marble angels were, and knowing how angry the boss would be finding it broken like that on his return. On an impulse, I left the workshop, ran up the yard and shut myself in a hut we had up there for storing things in. I desperately felt I wanted to be alone somewhere to get over the shock.

It was a gorgeous summer's afternoon and so tranquil up there at the bottom of the yard surrounded by neighbouring gardens. I often wondered what they thought of having a mason's yard next door with its heap of gravel and old gravestones lying about among the tufts of seedy grass.

I heard a bee buzzing about outside and I imagined it going from flower to flower collecting the pollen and I envied it its carefree life.

Then I prayed, asking God to get me off the hook somehow. But what did I expect God to do, I wondered? Make the angel whole again? No, that would be impossible, even for God, wouldn't it? Or perhaps he could cause the boss to drown while bathing in the sea at Sidmouth, and then the business would have to change hands and during the changeover Charlie and I could bury the angel at the end of the yard where the dandelions grew - then I realised



Actor Jon Pertwee materialised at St Dunstan's Headquarters to present Fred Ripley with the second prize in the Review's Story Contest. Fred revealed that he had worked on the development of fire control systems which Jon had to put into action during his Navy days.

what a heel I was, asking God to do those miraculous and dreadful things just to save my miserable skin.

Anyway, I liked the boss. He was a nice guy although he lost his temper sometimes when things went wrong. I liked his two little girls too. Sometimes when his wife called with them they would look in the workshop window to see Charlie and me at work. Charlie and I were the sole members of the workforce, except occasionally when the letter cutter came to carve an inscription on one of the memorials.

Eventually, I went back to the workshops and behold, the angel was standing there complete with head, looking at me with its marble eyes.

Charlie said 'I put its head on again. I couldn't bear to see it standing there with no head.' I went closer and could just discern the line where the break was.

The next morning the boss returned to work and, as if to pile on the agony, spent a long time in the office catching up with the accumulated mail.

Suddenly he burst through the door into the workshop, all bright and breezy and suntanned. 'I'm afraid I've had an accident with this angel,' I said. To demonstrate the extent of the damage, I took its head off and put it on the bench. To my amazement, the boss only smiled.

'You never do things by halves, do you Phil?' he said. Then he must have observed my emotional state because he suddenly became serious. 'Are you all right?' he asked. I didn't answer. I was too full up to speak.

He put his hand on my shoulder. 'Don't upset yourself,' he said. 'That's what we are insured for, that sort of thing.'

# LADIES' REUNION BIRMINGHAM 1995

by Margaret Bingham

This was the smallest Ladies' Reunion ever. The jolly crowd was made up of St Dunstaners Gwen Obern, Margaret Paterson, Eileen Williams, Cynthia Rouse, Marjorie Ball, Elsie Aldred, Winnie Edwards and myself, with guests Cynthia Mosley, Irene Newbold, David Castleton, Bill Weisblatt, Colin Bentley and two agency nurses.

The Wheatsheaf Hotel, where some of us had lunched the previous week with the Gardening Club, was our venue. It was so good to meet up again - 12 months is such a long time - and there was so much to talk about and - no doubt - bits of gossip to unfold!

The Arden Room was ours for the weekend, a bit cramped maybe but we managed to squeeze in all right. In his 'welcome' after dinner speech, Bill commented that a few of the ladies - including Barbara in Nursing Care, Ovingdean - were poorly and wished them all a speedy recovery. He then read out a letter from Mr Frost at Headquarters who wished us a happy weekend.

Gwen, in her capacity of chief spokeswoman at these get-togethers said it was time to be together again and was sure we would enjoy it. She suggested, and we all agreed, that a nice bouquet of flowers be sent to Barbara Davis and Penny Lord at HQ.

On Friday morning the coach left the Wheatsheaf for a visit to Birmingham's famous jewellery quarter in Hockley. (In 1993, the jewellery quarter won the best Industrial Museum Award.) For over 80 years the family run firm of Smith and Pepper produced jewellery from the factory that now forms one of Birmingham's premier tourist attractions. The excellently

presented 'time capsule' workshop has changed little over the years and when the factory closed in 1981 its entire contents were left exactly as they had been on the last day of production. Right down to the workers' final mug of tea!

We had a wonderful guided tour - our guides being members of staff. Using the most up to date techniques of video display and with phones available at various points, we were taken through the astonishing story of the jewellery quarter. The ancient craft skills are still practised in the workshops and you can commission your own design from the many craftsmen working in the area.

We spent a great deal of time in the well stocked shop with its selection of contemporary jewellery, books and souvenirs and I know quite a few of us couldn't resist the temptation to buy some memento of this fascinating place. After an excellent buffet lunch we returned to the hotel. Our grateful thanks to all members of staff for giving us such an interesting and memorable morning.

My escort, Freda Slade, a nursing sister from the Birmingham Nursing Association, was the daughter of George Lewry, Royal Artillery and blinded in the First World War.

On Saturday we left the hotel for a visit to a country market at Wellsbourne and we spent a few hours wandering around the stalls, feeling the texture of clothes, buying Christmas presents, cards and toiletries, which were so very reasonably priced. There were a great many people there, which is not surprising, and we St Dunstaners felt we had a very profitable and in-



*A jolly crowd! St Dunstan's Ladies invade Birmingham.*

teresting morning. A light lunch was served at the nearby Malt Shovel (some of the drivers' wives helped).

The Wheatsheaf Hotel is situated in the heart of the Midlands with Birmingham International Airport and railway station being situated near to it. Also it is near the M42 giving access to the M1, 5, 6, 40 and 69 so it is ideally placed for leisure or business activities. We found every comfort here, good food, well stocked bar, comfortable bedrooms and lounge (There were some very 'moving' moments here when more easy chairs had to be brought in from the surrounding areas to accommodate we ladies as we drifted in for a drink). The staff were kind and helpful and enjoyed our visit. Freda and I had a large room en-suite and I had no difficulty turning my wheelchair. The taps were a type I had never heard of before, they only needed a gentle lift

from a 'stump' or arthritic hand to turn the faucet on, and a slight downward pressure to cut the water off. The toilet flush was similar to a large soup spoon but the 'bowl' was flat. A porcelain seat on the front centre ledge of the bath with two taps underneath (as well as at the head) and a bar on the wall the whole length at the back. An awful lot of thought had gone into making this bathroom (only just completed) suitable for a disabled person, but there were one or two omissions which I pointed out and which - I am sure - will have been noted.

On Sunday morning some of us went to the Parish Church of St Cyprian, Hay Mill. St Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage (AD248-258) was shown as a real and caring man, who consulted his clergy and people on all decisions (He suffered warts, so the historians tell us!). The church

was opened for worship in 1874 and work began to incorporate the former chapel as the present chancel and to this was added the nave, gallery, porch tower and so on. All the beautiful stained glass windows depicted Saints carrying out various activities, (some rather macabre, such as St Winifred who was beheaded, holding her head!) St Dunstan was shown with a harp. The present coronation rite of the English Sovereign comes from that used and compiled by Dunstan for the crowning of Edgar in AD973). We were made very welcome at St Cyprian by both clergy and parishioners and I am sure we felt very uplifted by the lovely service.

Returning to our hotel we had a buffet lunch in the Arden and our guide for the afternoon, Mrs Diane Peron joined us. What an interesting and informative tour it was.

The coach stopped on a

bridge and she told us of the network of canals in Birmingham (13 in total). There are more here than in Venice!! The waterways date from the 18th century when they were used to take the city's goods to all parts of the world. Many of the canal areas have been restored and offer pleasant walks, shops and restaurants at the water's edge. The new heart at Birmingham is truly a cultural centre! Symbolised by a symphony hall within the International Convention Centre, and great credit must be given to all the planners and architects who built such a wonderful 'phoenix out of the ashes!'

Diane had contacted the Cadbury chocolate firm and a large box of milk chocolate bars had been sent to us. Thank you Cadbury's! Mrs Peron also told us about Bird's Custard and Typhoo Tea factories, both of which are in Birmingham. Thank you Diane for giving us such an interesting tour. The tables had been rearranged in the Arden Room to enable us to talk more easily to others at the further tables. There was much laughter and talk and our thanks to Gwen, Colin and Irene for their efforts to make our weekend so successful in every way.

A suggestion was made that maybe we lady St Dunstaners could manage two weekend reunions occasionally and Irene said she would be happy to help arrange an extra one at sometime.

Thank you Colin and your drivers for getting us to and from Birmingham and to everyone who helped, no matter in what capacity, to make it such a memorable weekend.

## *The Ripper unmasked*

by Simon Rogers

It has not quite sunk in, but I have helped to solve one of the great mysteries of all time - just *who* was the man who terrified London under the blood-stained guise of Jack the Ripper? A friend of mine has just published a book on the subject and has targeted, with the fullest conviction, a certain individual as the notorious murderer. For many years the subject has been a kind of holy grail for author Bruce Paley, one that led him to leave the New York law firm of Alan Dershowitz (who defended Klaus von Bulow), where he was an investigator, to take up the hunt on the streets of London. Now some seven years later, *Jack the Ripper - The Simple Truth* (Hodder/Headline, £10.99) has been lauded by Colin Wilson and Jeremy Beadle alike.

Moving across the Atlantic may have taken some of the distance out of the investigation, but the barrier raised by 100 years is rather more impenetrable. So why should a former Brooklynite succeed where all others have failed?

The strength of Bruce's theory lies in the mundane. He dismisses, though not out of hand, the grand conspiracy theories, lifting the Prince of Wales, Gladstone and all high society off the hook, opting instead for the enraged passion of a cuckold. More than that I shall not say, go buy the book if you really want to know the true identity of Red Jack.

My role in this grand unmasking was to secure various documents from Scotland Yard when finally declassified. These helped draw the finger of guilt firmly in one direction. And no, the Ripper was not really the sort of man who kept a diary...

## WILD SHERIFF

The Seven Sisters Marshals  
Walking Cross-Country Marathon,  
October 22nd

by Ray Sheriff

I feel sure the name 'Jim' will be quickly identified by St Dunstaners, whom a few years ago participated in walks planned by him. I have been fortunate in having Jim Wild as a good friend and walking companion for a period of 12 years.

Over this period we have travelled thousands of miles together in all brands of weather - hot, cold, wet and windy. 'Let's do a short ten miler today, it's horrible weather.' Out comes his map and he dictates his planned route of 15 miles, if I'm lucky! So off we go.

We have to date done 14 full marathons. The last of these we completed on Sunday, the 22nd. The weather for the oc-

casation was ideal walking conditions, with sunshine and a prevailing cool breeze. The allotted time for the course is nine hours, but we covered it in eight and a quarter. We were not over fatigued and could have gone further. Jim never removing his jacket or tie. (Likes to arrive home looking smart).

On our first marathon together, 12 years ago, the same course took us almost nine hours - reckon it must be a state of second childhood! Bearing in mind that the total of our joint ages amount to 157 years (82+75).

In conclusion, Jim wishes to convey his very kind regards to all those St Dunstaners who followed his treks, criss-crossing the Sussex countryside, during past annual walking weeks.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

**From: Teresa Mugan, Steyning, West Sussex**

On behalf of my family and myself, I wish to thank all our friends for the cards and letters of sympathy sent following the death of my dear husband, Tommy. They gave all of us much support and comfort in our great loss.

Thanks also to all staff at Ovingdean and Headquarters.

**From: Mike Tetley, St Albans, Herts**

Thank you for writing the article on the new Cobalt microwave which talks very clearly and I saw one demonstrated at the RNIB shop. I went to the shop with my guide dog and discovered that the RNIB had provided an area for the dogs to relieve themselves in an open area just beyond a unisex lavatory within the building. This is a wonderful facility right in the middle of London and the RNIB must be congratulated.

Please continue telling us about new products like the Canadian roller tipped long cane which I bought yesterday and looks promising as an additional aid in getting about.

## THE BLIND AND HANDLESS REUNION 1995

by Ted Miller

On October 4th, a very wet and windy day, we made our way down to Ovingdean for the Blind and Handless St Dunstan's Reunion. We were fortunate to have this opportunity to meet our friends although there were some very notable absentees. Bill and Alice Griffiths were unable to attend as their son is very ill in hospital and they were visiting him every day. We understand he is a little improved but still has a long way to go. Our prayers and thoughts are with them and all the family. John and May Proctor were not able to attend, as John isn't all that well, and Dickie Richardson's health is certainly not good enough for him to be with us. We would have loved to see them all.

We arrived at Ovingdean just in time for lunch and, after having our meal, we all got together to discuss our plans on what we were going to do for the next few days. We were happy to see Sybil Bell, who was Gwen Obern's escort for the week. We have heard, just recently, that Ivy Southall is not well and we do hope she will soon be feeling better. In the evening we all made our way up to the bar for a drink and were happy to see Winnie Edwards still her cheerful self. Tommy and Audrey Gaygan, Wally and Pam Lethbridge, Jozef Loska, Iris and I made up our little party. It was nice to see some old familiar faces, including Peter Wiltshire, and to meet some old friends amongst the 'perms'.

On Thursday, the weather was still very unfriendly what with the wind and rain. It wasn't the sort of weather in which to want to go out and admire the countryside, so we spent most of the day chatting amongst ourselves and reminiscing about the old days. The staff had arranged for us to have supper in the Winter Garden that evening where we met Karen Morane, Care Manager, and Mary Ruane-Morris, Head of Nursing and Residential Care. They made us so very welcome we really began to feel at home again. The catering staff did us proud, but before the meal we stood in remembrance of our dear old friend and late President, Mrs Elizabeth Dacre, who I'm sure was looking down on us and wishing us well. Mary Stenning joined us and had lots of tales to tell us of Elizabeth - she was helping Jozef during the reunion, and acting as his escort. After a splendid supper we made our way to the bar for a sing-song.

On Friday morning, after having a cup of tea in the lounge, Gwennie, our Chairlady, suggested we go into the stables as there were a few things she wanted to discuss with us. Sir John Gingell, who is our new President, popped in to see how we were getting on, and said he was looking forward to seeing us on Monday. In the evening we were invited to a supper party as guests of the High Sheriff of East Sussex, Mr Mayes-Smith and his wife, at their charming home, Bryckden Manor, near Heathfield in East Sussex. They had invited many of their friends, some of whom we had met before at their homes. As usual we had a really lovely evening and were made so very welcome. The evening ended far too quickly. Gwennie thanked our hosts for their kindness and I presented them with a St Dunstan's plaque which they said would be put in a place of honour to remind them of our visit.

On Saturday, we had lunch in the Winter Garden accompanied by Karen and Mary and Sir Henry Leach, who was on a visit to the home. He told us that things were slowly improving but it would take a while to get back to anything like they were. We were pleased to see and talk with him. Tommy and Audrey didn't join us, as Tommy wasn't well enough, Sir Henry popped in to see how he was before leaving.

On Sunday morning, we went to chapel for a short service and to meet the vicar of Rottingdean. We all thought what a friendly and cheerful person he is and it was a very nice service. What a change in the weather, after three bad days the sun came out and Sunday was a lovely day. After lunch we had been invited to afternoon tea with Wally and Pam in their home. A jolly little party arrived at about two o'clock and we had a very pleasant afternoon which we thoroughly enjoyed. Thank you Pam and Wally. After arriving back at the house for supper, we made our way to the bar before retiring to bed.

Monday was the day we were to meet the staff from Headquarters. So after breakfast we got together to have a talk amongst ourselves about whether there were any problems we had to discuss with them. After lunch we all met up in the Conference Room where our meeting with the staff was to be held. Gerard Frost took the Chair and we were pleased to see Cynthia Mosley and Marion Lurot present. Our escorts took the opportunity to do a bit of shopping in town while we were putting some of our problems to the Chair. Sir John Gingell

arrived a little later and joined in the discussions. After a cup of tea at about four o'clock, the meeting broke up and we then made our way to our rooms to get ready for the evening meal. Dinner was due to start at 7.30pm, so we duly arrived in the Winter Garden at about seven o'clock for a drink and some introductions were made to our guests.

Our guests included our friends Bill and Betty Weisblatt, Sir John and Lady Gingell, Mr and Mrs Mayes-Smith, Headquarters staff, also Mary and Karen from the house. If I have missed anyone out, please forgive me. At 7.30pm, we made our way to our table and after I had said grace, we all sat down to another excellent meal served as always by our most efficient catering staff. There was much chatter and laughter as we got on with our dinner. Tommy and Audrey had been able to join us for the last couple of days and we all

felt happy that he felt much better. Tommy proposed the loyal toast, before Sir John rose to give us a short, witty speech. He then asked Mr Mayes-Smith to give us a talk. It was lovely to have him and his wife with us. They had made us so very welcome at their home. Gwennie then rose to thank all the guests on our behalf, which she always does so admirably. Bouquets were then given by Winnie to Lady Gingell and Mrs Mayes-Smith with our very best wishes. Iris then gave Gwennie a little gift from us all in appreciation of the work she puts in on our behalf. We then said our good-byes before making our way to the bar for our final farewell drink.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff, and I mean 'ALL' the staff, for making our visit so enjoyable and I sincerely hope it won't be too long before St Dunstan's gets back to what it once was.

## TIME OF OUR LIVES

by Alex Nesbitt

(Reprinted by kind permission of *Saga* magazine)

I lost my sight when serving with the RAF in the Second World War. I was 22 years old. Most folk, if the subject of my blindness happens to come up during conversation, will express sympathy, say such things as 'Imagine - all that time without sight!' and give a few tut-tuts at the thought of it. Some will even joke: tell me I'm not missing much by being oblivious to what's going on round me today...

Not so long ago I had a very different reaction, and it gave me pause for thought.

My wife had stationed me at the back of a small baker's shop while she was at the counter. I seemed to be in a safely-isolated position, not in anyone's way, until, after I had heard the door open and close, a figure cannoned into me - and nearly sent me flying.

'Sorry about that,' apologised a male voice, 'afraid my sight's very poor, didn't see you standing there.'

'And I'm totally blind,' I chuckled wryly, 'So I also couldn't take evasive action.'

I heard the gentleman making a purchase at the counter and, my wife having already been served, we put the purchases away and the three of us left the shop more or less together. Once outside, we lingered for a chat. I was asked how long I had been blind.

'Over 49 years,' I told him, and I caught the click of his tongue, and when he spoke again there was an envious note.

'You're fortunate,' he sighed, 'you've had time to get used to the disability. I'm 65 and I'm having to start to cope with deteriorating sight, it's very hard to accept.'

I thought it an odd way to view our respective situations and after we had parted I gave the subject some further consideration; chatted his opinion over with my wife.

It's true, of course, that over the years I have come to

terms with my disability. As with any other handicap one has to make the best of the circumstances, to get on top of them before they weigh you down; and bitterness gets you nowhere, only a reputation as someone to avoid.

Probably I would find blindness hard to take if it befell me in my declining years: what was a challenge for a young man, hard as it was for him to take in those early days, might come as an endless endurance test to an elderly one. For me there have been compensations: a happy marriage, a kindhearted son, and a strong faith.

All the same - I have my doubts about being considered 'fortunate'! To have the faces of loved ones, and the world about me, nearer in time, would surely be worth a late-in-life infirmity? My visual recollections, sweet as they are, will be, for long as I live, cemented firmly in the year 1942.

## GARDENING WEEK BOROUGHBRIDGE

by Margaret Bingham

We all breathed a sigh of relief when our coach pulled up at the Crown Hotel, Boroughbridge, Yorkshire. It was to be our home for the next seven days. Those of us travelling from Ovingdean broke our journey at Birmingham, where the other club members joined us, and we had a very tasty buffet lunch at the Wheatsheaf Hotel.

Centrally situated in the bustling town of Boroughbridge, the Crown Hotel stands on the site of a 13th century manor house which was a rendezvous for the "rising of the North" rebellion of 1569 to put Mary Queen of Scots on the English throne. We found the Crown very comfortable, the food excellent, and the staff very pleasant and helpful. After the settling in process, cup of tea, unpacking etc. we had an enjoyable dinner and groups found the bar!

Our general meeting began at 9.30am, opened by Tom Hart who welcomed us and said how strong the club is and the only reasons for non-attendance were illness or the cost of our 'away meetings'. Two deaths were recorded, Charlie Rentowl and Elizabeth Dacre. Mrs Dacre was a friend to all and a great helper in several clubs in St Dunstan's. Both will be sadly missed. Apologies from John and Elizabeth, Bert and Gladys, Albert and Gaynor. We sent our best wishes for a speedy recovery.

Minutes of the AGM May 1994 were read and passed. There were no matters arising. Phil Duffee said the club is financially very healthy and the membership fee would still be £10. This could be given at any time along with gratuities. Tom then stepped down as Chairman and Bob Alty, who has acted as Vice-Chair, is now our Chairman.

John and Irene McDermott are our new treasurer and secretary. Margaret Bingham said she would like to continue representing the ladies at St Dunstan's. She also agreed to continue writing the report on the Gardening Week for St Dunstan's Review.

Before the session ended Miss Newbold informed us of an extremely generous gift, from a donor who wished to remain anonymous, for the use of the Gardening Club and the ladies. It was agreed that Irene should buy a card which we would all sign and add thanks.

Our party consisted of 32 people, including two nursing sisters from the Nightingales agency in London. They were escorts for Winnie and myself and as both came from Sydney, Australia, our club had quite an antipodean flavour.

We departed for Ripley Castle later that morning and found it to be a fascinating place. An idyllic setting amongst the gardens and woodland, Ripley Castle has been the home of the Ingilby family since the 1320's and the family is justly proud of its heritage. Sir Thomas Ingilby (BT) was educated at Eton College and inherited the castle and estate at the age of 18. He together with his wife and family reside in the castle from which a thriving business is carried out, catering for banquets, dinners and conferences.

As can be envisaged the castle exudes history as soon as one enters. Lady Jane held Cromwell at pistol point throughout the night to allow her brother to escape. In return Cromwell ordered the shooting of the royalist prisoners being held at the castle. The bullet holes of the firing squad can still be seen in the walls of the gatehouse.

There were the original oak ceilings and wall panelling with pictures by artists such as Gainsborough, creating a wonderful atmosphere. We were allowed to touch various objects and there was always staff nearby to answer our questions. The grounds were extensive and not far from the castle was a large lake which could be seen clearly from the huge windows. A beautiful view! Many of the trees in the grounds are hundreds of years old and there were many game birds.

On Sunday a group went by coach to St Winifred's. The others to St James' Church which was only a few minutes walk from the hotel. We were made very welcome by the minister.

After a delicious lunch we departed for York. Not the easiest place to walk around with its narrow cobbled streets, either for pedestrians or wheelchairs. In fact, a wheel was wrenched off Sid's chair. The little shops were fascinating and we rummaged through the bric-a-brac in this shop and handled quaint effects in that shop. The sweet shop was most interesting with humbugs etc. My escort, Kelly, filled a bag with a variety of sweets. Unfortunately, as I took the bag from her to taste a couple, I dropped it and all the sweeties spilled out and hit the stone floor. They made a lovely rat-a-tat sound. The serving ladies wore long white aprons with a frill round the armholes, very 1920ish.

On Monday morning we had a guided tour of York. Our guide, Mrs Joy Exley, described the buildings and their history. Many of the street names end in 'gate' such as Kirkgate, Callygate. In medieval times the word 'gate' meant 'road'. With all



its twists and turns Bob, our driver, had a very difficult job manoeuvring our large coach around The Shambles. It seems The Shambles was made in such a higgledy-piggledy fashion so that people with evil intentions i.e. footpads, would be utterly confused. Outside the massive city walls, we went to the famous Ebor race course. We thanked our guide for such an interesting tour.

The triple towered, honey coloured mass of York Minster, must surely be one of the most awe-inspiring buildings in the Western world. The interior of the building is equally wondrous. Voices and footsteps were muted as though in deference to all the beauty and majesty which surrounded us. Parties of blind people are allocated guides on a one-to-one basis on Mondays. Christine (our guide) said building had begun in 1070 and it took 250 years to complete. The cathedral holds the finest collection of medieval stained glass in Europe. There are magnificent carvings and statues. The Chapter House was so called because a chapter of the Bible was read to the clergy daily. There have been three major fires in the Minster and there is still restoration work going on. Our thanks to Mrs Kath Jackson and the guides for enabling us to have such a wonderful 'insight' of York Minster.

On Tuesday we visited Newby Hall, not far from Boroughbridge, one of Yorkshire's renowned Adam houses. It is owned by Mr and Mrs Compton and houses superb contents collected by an ancestor of the Compton family. There is a magnificent tapestry room where beautiful pictures and hangings were displayed. The Queen Anne chairs and foot stools were embroidered in tapestry work, creating an elegant feel to the room. Chippendale furniture was to

be found elsewhere in the house and a gallery of classical statuary. There are 25 acres of award winning gardens, full of rare and beautiful plants.

Other attractions are a miniature railway, children's adventure garden, licensed restaurant, shop and plant stall. In the shop were to be found old-fashioned goodies such as Pontefract cakes, uncured or green bacon, home-made produce, wines and beers. One beer is called 'Old Fart Beer' - very strong! The name caused considerable amusement. We had been fortunate with the weather and the sun still shone brightly for our day in Harrogate on Wednesday where we visited the Royal Horticultural Society gardens at Harlow Carr. From where we sat, on a large patio adjacent the restaurant, a large expanse of garden fell away in front of us. At the lower end was a large wooden structure which contained books (probably gardening ones). There was a miniature railway nearby on which some of our members had a ride (numb bums). Many of the flowers were past their prime, but the fruit trees had a good crop. The ground was still rather hard due to the drought conditions. Some of the late summer flowers were interesting, including an almost black hollyhock. There are a good many shops in this spa town and we would have liked to have stayed longer but it was time to return to Boroughbridge. Thursday dawned wet and windy so it was a case of macs and brolies for our trip to the market and cathedral at Ripon. Near the cathedral is the Police and Prison Museum which houses documents, prints and artefacts depicting the history of law and order for over 1100 years. The market was on the small side but there were many bargains especially in the clothes line. At 11 o'clock,

the town crier appeared, in rust coloured traditional garb, ringing his handbell and shouting the time in a very stentorian voice in the four corners of the square as tradition dictates. A thousand years of ceremony 'Setting the Watch' takes place nightly with the crier blowing his horn. The cathedral crypt (AD672) is said to be the oldest complete Saxon crypt in England and is the only part of the original church built by St Winifred. The building was eventually restored to become one of the most historic cathedrals in the country. In the choir stalls (c1500) are delicately carved canopies, the work of distinguished Ripon craftsmen. Lewis Carroll's father was a member of the church. Underneath his pew there is a carving showing the White Rabbit disappearing down the rabbit hole being chased by a griffon. In other parts of the church are figures depicting other characters from *Alice in Wonderland*. After a short rest at the hotel we gathered for our 'wind up' meeting. All agreed it had been an exceptionally good week, not too tiring. Thanks to Tom and Phil for making up such a good programme: to Bob for his expert handling of the coach. Gratuities were given and I had the honour of presenting our retiring Chairman with a beautiful cut-glass decanter and glasses for all the work he has put in over the years for the Gardening Club.

It was decided our gardening week next year would be in Somerset. Following the confusion at Ripon it was agreed that there would be a head count before moving off and we would not deviate from the programme, except in emergency. Another point is that when wheelchairs are clamped the driver ascertains that the waist belt is fastened round the occupant.



## Balancing the Books

by Ted Bunting

### Family Sayings

Author: Natalia Ginzburg  
Reader: Patricia Hughes  
Duration: 7.25 hours  
Catalogue number: 5425

Happily it is a rare occurrence, but just once in a while as I listen to a book it gradually dawns on me that I haven't a clue what it's supposed to be about!

In this particular case I was bemused from the first few paragraphs. Oh, I realised easily enough that I was being told about the members of an odd Italian family which seemed to share no interests in common except for shouting and complaining, but WHY I was being told remained a mystery to the very end.

It is my opinion, in short, that *Family Sayings* is utterly devoid of either point or purpose; there are, I must concede, occasional pieces of social history which temporarily relieve the tedium of listening; such as how easy it was to be taken into police custody when Mussolini was in power, and how the natural anxieties of the Italian Jews were heightened when the German alliance ended and the German occupation began.

However, these brief snatches are little compensation for the other seven hours of meaningless tittle-tattle.

A decent book, surely, should either inform, entertain or both... This one, I regret, does neither.

### Upwardly Mobile

Author: Norman Tebbit  
Reader: Robert Ashby  
Duration 13.45 hours  
Catalogue number: 7544

There is much to be recommended Norman Tebbit, even his enemies would have to concede that, for although he came of humble stock and did not have the benefit of a university education, he qualified as an airline pilot through sheer hard work and determination and rose eventually to become a Minister of the Crown.

But, perhaps strangely, now that I've read this book of his, I like the man less than I did before I began it. It's not that I imagined he had scrambled to the top without stepping on a finger or two, but I was surprised to find him proud of the underhand methods he'd employed to achieve his success. Maybe I'm just old-fashioned in my desire to admire our country's prominent people, but Norman Tebbit became less of a hero to me the more I learned about him.

Yet his book is interesting, nonetheless, and well worth the time it takes to listen to it. Though his words of wisdom are often clogged by ridiculous claptrap and he seems to be under the illusion that he has a monopoly on patriotism, it is fascinating to trace his path from childhood to a seat

in the House of Lords. Whether politicians can ever really become truly 'noble', however, is quite another matter.

### Daddy's Girl

Author: Clifford Irving  
Reader: Robert Gladwell  
Duration: 28 hours  
Catalogue number: 7507

People with an interest in crime and hour after hour to spare will find this book ideal, I'm sure. Not only does it describe a brutal double murder which actually took place in Texas but it does so in such a way that I could swear there is no muck unraked, no morsel of gossip unchewed nor any detail left unexamined.

But personally I was more disturbed by it than entertained. I can't even claim to have learned much from it either; certainly nothing to change my conviction that it would be easier for an innocent person to be convicted in America than in Britain. The differences in our respective legal systems are manifold, and go much deeper than the use of wigs and gowns in the courtrooms. *Daddy's Girl* demonstrates so many of the others as it follows the case through all its stages; perhaps justice was served at the end, but I can't avoid the feeling that the result would have been different in Britain.

### The Traveller's Tool

Author: Sir Les Patterson  
Reader: Nigel Graham  
Duration: 4 hours  
Catalogue number: 7359

Sir Les Patterson is the creation of Mr Barry (Dame Edna Everage) Humphries, a second-rate Australian comedian, in my view, but to describe this book as second-rate would be to credit it with merit it does not deserve.

Now I like a good laugh; I enjoy honest vulgarity too, (in its place) and I believe my friends would call me as broad minded as it is possible to be, but for me, *The Traveller's Tool* is not only utterly devoid of interest, humour or entertainment value, its contents are also quite disgusting!!

And to make matters even worse, it is extremely badly written. The author has such a paucity of ideas, other than his coarse filth and sexual innuendo, that he pads out the text by repeating over and over again the inane phrases, 'Are you with me?', 'No worries' and 'It's funny ain't it?' (which it certainly is not).

The result consequently, is a book which can offer no benefit to the reader whatsoever. I am extremely sorry to have wasted my time on it and I urge others not to make the same mistake.

### The Last Days of the Raj

Author: Trevor Royle  
Reader: Garard Green  
Duration 12.5 hours  
Catalogue number: 7702

I did not select this book in a quest for simple amusement; which is just as well for I rate its entertainment value at zero. Unfortunately it is sadly lacking as a serious history too; the higgledy-piggledy bundle of anecdotes, which the author sets before his reader, are of little value to anyone seeking a real understanding of the difficulties of returning independence to the peoples of the Indian sub-continent. Search as I might, I could find no examination of the global power politics which led to the end of the British Empire, nor any study of the appalling blunders which triggered such terrible loss of life when British India was sub-divided. Such individuals moreover, who are mentioned, Gandhi, say, or Mountbatten or Nehru, are not scrutinised in any critical way. Indeed, Mr Royle's obvious admiration for the same makes an objective judgement from him impossible.

There are in this book many lesser mortals though, whose stories are quite interesting; decisions made by Britain to quit India were not all made

lightly and their return to the land of their birth was often less than a homecoming.

But these small windows of enlightenment cannot compensate for what is basically a rather dull book, to find the truth about the last days of the Raj I shall have to look elsewhere.

## Welcome to St Dunstan's

On behalf of St Dunstan's we welcome St Dunstaners recently admitted to membership and the Review hopes they will settle down happily as members of our family.

**Mr Noel Fitzgerald** was admitted to St Dunstan's on October 17th. He joined the Royal Artillery at the age of 17 and served as a Regular for 23 years, reaching the rank of Lance Bombardier. He saw action in Korea and Malaya and also served in BAOR and Hong Kong.

He and his wife have five children.

**Mr Ken Leslie** of Langley, Slough, Berkshire joined St Dunstan's on November 1st. An apprentice electrician, he enlisted with the Burmese Auxiliary Forces before transferring to the Royal Artillery. With the rest of 46 Indian Infantry Brigade, he was caught during the retreat to Sittang in February 1942. For the remainder of the war, he was a prisoner of the Japanese. Discharged in 1946, Mr Leslie opted to stay in the UK. He then worked as a warehouseman until retiring 11 years ago. He and his wife, Barbara, have a son, Wayne.

On November 8th we welcomed two new St Dunstaners. The first was **Mr John Bolton** of Allerton, Liverpool who trained to be a Merchant Navy radio operator but became a telegraphist in the Royal Air Force instead. Posted to Renfrew Airfield, Glasgow, he lost the sight of his right eye in a bombing raid in 1941. He remained with the RAF as part of a mobile unit following our Forces through Europe. Demobbed in 1946, Mr Bolton joined a firm of Shipping Agents in Liverpool, eventually becoming their chief clerk. His wife, Doris, was an instructor for Plessey's.

Secondly, **Mr Charles Coston** enlisted into the Royal Norfolk Regiment in March 1940. He arrived in Singapore as it was taken by the Japanese

and spent the rest of the war in captivity. Discharged in 1946, he returned to his trade as a plasterer but was forced to turn to general labouring by the deterioration of his sight. Mr Coston and his wife, Agnes, who worked in the Women's Land army have a son and daughter.

## CLUB NEWS

### ARCHERY

#### A Devon Delight!

Laden to the gunnels the two cars crawled slowly out of the Brighton morning rush hour. Once on the open road, Jenny Low's foot hit the floorboards, her passengers, Alan the butterfly man and once RAF flier took on the role of pathfinder. We fluttered here and there, played ring-a-roses with a roundabout while Tom Hart put his hands together and prayed.

Ernie Elliot followed on at a safe distance, while I, as his sleeping partner, did just that.

Some hours later after stops for food, coffee, and comforts, the wagons rolled through the open gates of former railway station Dunsland Cross, Holsworthy, Devon, known as Lyneakres, Archery Holiday Centre. Sue Lilley drove into the yard with husband John and Norman Perry aboard. To complete the set Enid Andrews arrived with Eric and Gwen Bradshaw having picked them up in Exeter, a paramount bunch these lady drivers.

Warmly greeted by proprietors Dave and Sally Moss, they showed us to our rooms and we prepared for dinner. The food we were told was good. This was an understatement, it was excellent. Dave being a trained chef provided us with lipsmacking meals throughout the week.

Imagine this scene. Where once ran rail track, there now exists a lane of green some 40ft wide and over 100yds long, banked and lined with trees. Targets stand ready. From a clear blue sky the sun blazed down on this medieval scene.

Three outstanding trophies of the year were shot in the next four days.

#### The Spurway Handicap Adjusted

1st	Tom Hart
2nd	Bert Wood
3rd	Norman Perry

#### The George Allan Memorial Trophy

1st	Tom Hart
2nd	Bert Wood
3rd	Norman Perry

#### The Royal Insurance

1st	Tom Hart
2nd	Bert Wood
3rd	Eric Bradshaw

We tried out the indoor range on our last day, this was a match against Greenways', this was a Double Stafford round, 12 dozen arrows at 30 metres, a demanding task that we overcame. The hardware went to Tom Hart, Norman Perry and Eric Bradshaw.

That evening, we celebrated the week, wine with the meal and other drinks later, Sally was made Lady Paramount and presented the trophies and medals. So ended a wonderful week of orgies, food, weather, archery and laughter. That's all I can think of, except somebody was asking for vaseline. I would now like to take this opportunity to wish all members of the club and all our special friends, a very Happy Christmas and may the New Year be kind to you all.

Bert Wood

## FAMILY NEWS

### BIRTHS

**Congratulations on the birth of:** Bethen Wrigley on October 15th. She is the great-granddaughter of Mrs Barbara Wrigley of Droylsden, Manchester, widow of William Wrigley.

Toby Brown on October 12th. He is the 6th great-grandchild of Bill and Nancy Phillips of Saltdean.

Brendon Kruger on October 15th. He is the grandson of John and Carol Gasston of Findon, West Sussex.

### POSTHUMOUS AWARD

Norman Follis of Pentrych, Cardiff was awarded the Master of the University degree by the Open University of Wales. Sadly, he died before the presentation and his widow, Joan, and son, Gareth, received the award at a ceremony in Cardiff on September 21st.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

**Congratulations to:** Bill Griffiths, MBE of Blackpool is to be presented with a Civic Medal. The honour from Blackburn Council pays tribute to his bravery and contribution to public life.

Major Ronald Moody of 101 (London) Engineer Regiment (EOD) (V) has received the British Safety Council Diploma in Safety Management. The award was made at a ceremony lauded by Prime Minister John Major. Ron is the son of Doug Moody of Goring-by-Sea, Worthing.

Kevin Mills, grandson of Fred and Gwen Mills of Tavistock, was awarded his Higher National Certificate from Plymouth University in Electrical Electronic Engineering in June 1995.

## WEDDINGS

**Congratulations to:** Peter Surridge of Peacehaven on his marriage to Elizabeth Greenwood on October 21st.

## RUBY ANNIVERSARIES

**Congratulations to:** Johnny and Beryl Whitcombe of Eastbourne on September 24th.

Arthur and Evelyn Lay of Stamford, Lincolnshire on October 8th.

## GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

**Congratulations to:** Bill and Monica Robinson of Davenham, Northwich on September 15th.

Fred and Elsie Galway of Sandbach, Cheshire on September 22nd.

## SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES

**Congratulations to:** Jack and Doris Price of Hathern, Loughborough on 62 years of marriage celebrated on September 23rd.

Leslie and Rose Tanner of Morden, Surrey who celebrated 63 years of marriage on October 15th.

## DEATHS

**We regret to announce the death of:** Captain Edith Oxborough of Lytham St Annes on September 3rd, aged 97. The widow of Sidney Oxborough, Captain Oxborough served in the QAIMNS in both World Wars before joining St Dunstan's staff at West House.

Eric Luxton on September 14th. He was the nephew of Archie Luxton of Black Torrington, North Devon.

Mrs Lena Pownall of Sutton, Surrey on October 1st. She was the widow of Herbert Pownall.

Mrs Rosemary Watson-Brown of Battle, East Sussex on October 1st. She was the widow of Matthew Watson-Brown.

Mrs Ivy Clark of Winwick, Warrington on October 8th. She was the widow of Thomas Clark.

Mrs Mary Warren of Porthcawl, Mid Glamorgan on October 31st. She was the widow of Edward G. Warren.

Mrs Dorothy Newton of Southport, Merseyside on November 1st. She was the widow of Jack Newton.

Mrs Helena Lucas of Aldershot, Hampshire on November 3rd. She was the widow of Robert Lucas.

**Our sympathy goes to their families and friends.**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS IN MEMORY

St Dunstan's is more than grateful to all those who have contributed towards gifts in memory of the following St Dunstaners and widow:

Philip Day James Hancock  
David Phillips Fred Sunderland  
Mrs Elsie Butler

Generous donations have also been received in memory of Eddie Garner, a long-standing Member of St Dunstan's.

We have received many donations in memory of friends and relatives who have sadly died and who kindly requested that St Dunstan's should benefit 'in lieu of flowers'.

# IN MEMORY

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

## **Philip Day,** *Royal Artillery*

Philip Arthur Day of Stonnall, West Midlands died on September 3rd, aged 83. A Bombardier in the Royal Artillery from May 1940 to January 1945, he served in North Africa and Italy. It was during this time that he contracted diabetes which caused his loss of sight. In civilian life he was an accountant. Our sympathy goes to his wife, Edith, sons, Clifford and Geoffrey, and all the family.

## **William Webb,** *Royal Artillery*

William Charles Webb of Sheldon, Birmingham died on September 16th, aged 79. He enlisted in 1934 with the Ox & Bucks Light Infantry but transferred to the Royal Artillery in 1940, serving with them in North Africa. He was wounded at Tobruk and while receiving treatment for his eye injuries was taken prisoner by the German forces, being held, first in Italy and then Stalag VIII B in Lamsdorf, Germany. He was discharged from the Army in 1946 and worked as a machinist until reaching retirement age. Our sympathy goes to his daughter, Shirley, and all the family.

## **Bert Green,** *Middlesex Regiment*

Bert Green of Ovingdean died on September 25th, aged 80. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1944. Enlisting in May 1940 as a Private with the Middlesex Regiment, he was wounded in France four years later. As a result, he suffered a brain injury and his sight was affected.

After training at Church Stretton, he worked as an upholsterer before moving into industry, retiring in 1972. In his leisure time, he was a keen gardener and enjoyed classical music. Our sympathy goes to his daughter, Diana, and all members of the family.

## **Thomas Mugan,** *Royal Pioneer Corps*

Thomas Mugan of Steyning died on September 25th, aged 81. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1964.

From October 1940, Mr Mugan served with the Royal Pioneer Corps during which time he suffered retinal detachment. After training at St Dunstan's, he worked as a lathe operator for Messrs. Glover, Iris Mill, Oldham, retiring in 1971. He took up

handicrafts and became skilled at making bags. Our sympathy goes to his wife, Teresa, sons, Anthony, John and Michael, daughter, Shelagh, and all other members of the family.

## **Major Basil Chambers,** *Sherwood Foresters*

Major Basil Harold Angelo Chambers of Fairwarp, East Sussex died on September 30th, aged 75. Formerly an officer with the City of London Police, Major Chambers enlisted with the Sherwood Foresters in 1940. He was commissioned into the Cheshire Regiment in 1941 and then seconded to the Indian Army as an instructor on the North-West Frontier. Appointed Company Commander of the 4th Battalion Rajputana Rifles in 1942, he fought with them in the Tunisia Campaign. Later, during the Battle of Monte Cassino, he lost an eye and was mentioned in dispatches.

Having recovered, he transferred back to the Sherwood Foresters and became an instructor at the School of Infantry. He was promoted to Major and appointed to the Mons Officer Cadet School, Aldershot where he wrote the service pamphlet *The Basic Officer Cadet Training Unit*.

Major Chambers was discharged in September 1946 and trained as a commercial artist. Our sympathy goes to his wife, Anne Owena, daughter, Carolyn, and all the family.

## **Frederick Sunderland,** *Royal Artillery*

Frederick Sunderland of Ruislip, Middlesex died on October 2nd, aged 77. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1956. A wages clerk before the war, Mr Sunderland enlisted with the Royal Artillery in February 1940 but bilateral retinal detachment led to his discharge in November 1944.

He spent the next 18 years with British Light Steel Pressings and then, after training at St Dunstan's, became a skilled audio-typist working for London Telecommunication in South Harrow. Our sympathy goes to his wife, Pat, and all the family.

## **Edward Boyce,**

### *Royal Army Medical Corps*

Edward Charles Boyce of Robertsbridge, East Sussex died on October 8th, aged 78. Joining the army at 18, he signed on for a seven year period with the Colours and five years with the Reserve. He became a Private in the Royal Army Medical Corps and trained as a medical assistant. On completion of his training, he was posted to the Far East and served mainly in China and Hong Kong, where he was captured by the Japanese when it fell at Christmas 1941. Mr Boyce spent the rest of the war as

a FEPOW, suffering great hardship, privation and illness and his sight began to fail. On his release from captivity, he returned to the UK and was discharged from the army in September 1946. On his return to civilian life, he worked as a State Enrolled Nurse until 1957 when he retired on health grounds. Our sympathy goes to his wife, Patricia, daughters, Patricia and Theresa, sons, Christopher and Philip and all other members of the family.

## **Robert Bailey,** *Royal Army Service Corps*

Robert Lancelot Henry Bailey of Bitterne, Southampton died on October 21st, aged 81. Known as Bob, he had been a St Dunstaner since 1980. Enlisting in October 1940, Mr Bailey served as a driver with the Royal Army Service Corps and was discharged in 1942 when his sight began to fail. After going to Church Stretton, he was able to resume work as a window cleaner. Our sympathy goes to his wife, Gladys, daughter, Jean, sons, Robert and John, and all the family.

## **Victor Foster,** *Royal Artillery*

Victor Foster of Poulton-le-Fylde, Lancashire died on October 29th, aged 78. He served in the Royal Artillery from March 1940 and had reached the rank of Captain when he was discharged in April 1945.

He received severe head wounds at Salerno in November 1944 and the horror of the losses his Regiment suffered during that campaign were to remain with him for the rest of his life. Nevertheless he was able to resume his profession as a surveyor and worked in local government until retirement age. He enjoyed music and was a skilled woodworker.

Our sympathy goes to his wife, Florence, daughter, Lynne, son, Alan, and all the family.

## **Alys Briggs,**

### *Auxiliary Territorial Service*

Alys Briggs of Huddersfield, West Yorkshire died on November 7th, aged 74. She became a St Dunstaner in 1990. Enlisting in June 1941, she served as a Lance Corporal in the ATS. She completed her service with the 210(M) HAA Regiment, the Royal Regiment of Artillery but was discharged with corneal ulcers in both eyes. In civilian life, Mrs Briggs was a housewife for over 50 years, and raised three children. More recently, she learnt computer skills at Ovingdean in preparation for writing a book, inspiring her husband to take up the computer as well.

Our sympathy goes to her husband, Walter, daughter, Jennifer, sons, Paul and David, and all the family.