

# St Dunstan's Review

April 1996

No. 863



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**BI-MONTHLY**  
*Free to St Dunstaners*

**APRIL 1996**

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**Cover picture:** Master of the mainframe. This massive man-sized computer is used to run whole firms and Tony Haskey has to know how it operates - inside and out. The troubleshooting computer analyst has to offer advice to tormented technophobes.

## From the Chairman

I am glad to tell you that the new arrangements at Ovingdean have shaken down well and we are therefore now able to open it up a bit more for holiday and club activity purposes. As from May 1st the following general rules for this extra usage will apply.

The Nursing floors will not be available unless one complete wing of one floor is empty (currently not the case) and then subject to approval by the Local Registration Authorities.

Empty Residential rooms will be available subject to booking at least one week, and not more than two months, in advance.

The charge for Visitors will be the same as the current full Residential rate, currently £126 per person per week.

Double rooms may be shared by wives or nominated accompanying escorts. Staff will not be available to act as escorts for Visitors in single rooms (but see next paragraph).

No extra staff will be taken on to assist with Visitors but it may be possible to recruit temporary local Volunteers on a daily basis. Staff will NOT be available as escorts for Visitors.

St Dunstan's transport will only be available to Visi-



tors if there is spare capacity when it will be charged at the going rate.

Priority must first be given to St Dunstaners in need of Nursing, Residential or Respite care. Should a requirement for one of these categories arise unexpectedly and at short notice it may be necessary to postpone or cancel certain Visitors' applications, starting with those most recently received.

Until we see how things go, the maximum length of stay for any Visitor will be 14 days per six month period. In order to separate Christmas and New Year the six month periods will be:

December 29th - June 29th  
July 1st - December 28th

Within these broad limits I hope you will use Ovingdean as much as you wish.

*Henry Leach*

My name is Kendrick Morris and I have worked as a Senior Rehabilitation Officer for people with visual impairment for the last five years, both for Social Services and the voluntary sector, and I am now Head of Rehabilitation and Training at Ovingdean. I have good experience of liaising and co-ordinating support agencies and understand the needs of blind people in their own homes. May I warmly welcome Trainees to the courses.

This Department offers four main courses:

### The Rehabilitation Course

This is a twelve-week full rehabilitation course aimed at the recently blinded.

It offers communication skills including Braille, Moon and touch-typing, mobility skills and independent living skills, such as cooking, dressing and labelling. This course is free to St Dunstaners and those sponsored by Gubbay Trust funding.

These courses are aimed at assisting people back into the community. We are sensitive to individual needs and will adapt our training accordingly.

### Retraining Due to Change in Circumstances

If a person's job or lifestyle changes, for example, on the death of a spouse, and some further independent living skills are needed, then a training course will be offered. These courses will be free to St Dunstaners.

### Technical Training

This includes the learning of computer and other skills

# Rehabilitation and Training Courses at St Dunstan's Ovingdean, Brighton

needed for employment purposes. These one to three week courses will be free to St Dunstaners.

Training is available to those eligible under the Gubbay Trust but, in this case, there will be a charge of £126 per week, which will include full board.

### Hobby Training

These courses for leisure purposes will cover the learning of new skills and the refreshing of old techniques, for example, picture-framing and woodturning.

These courses may last from a few days for up to three weeks. These are co-ordinated by Lenie Hinton, the Craft Supervisor, and cost £126 per week for full board for all Trainees.

### Transport - St Dunstaners

Transport for all courses will be free for St Dunstaners. However, where possible, public transport should be used or assistance obtained from the Red Cross. The provision of

door-to-door transport *must*, in all cases, be approved in *advance* by the Welfare Superintendent, if reimbursement is to be granted.

### Transport - Gubbay Beneficiaries

Transport for the Rehabilitation Course will be free to Gubbay Trust beneficiaries. However, where possible, public transport should be used or assistance obtained from the Red Cross. The provision of door-to-door transport *must*, in all cases, be approved in advance by the Pensions and Admissions Officer, if reimbursement is to be granted.

Transport costs for courses other than the Rehabilitation Course will be at the Gubbay Trainee's own expense.

### Applications

Applications for all the above courses should be made to me, Kendrick Morris, at Ovingdean.

With Spring so close and the weather warming we look forward to hearing from friends old and new.



# NOTICE BOARD



## A HEATED EXCHANGE...

It has come to our attention that some of our beneficiaries are using bottled gas and paraffin heaters to boost the fixed central heating systems in their homes. We find this practice extremely worrying for several reasons...

- Safety. Controlling these heaters is not easy.
- Condensation. The burning of paraffin or propane produces very large amounts of water vapour. This condenses on the walls and damages not only decorations but can, over a long period, also damage plastered surfaces. In fact, when the gas heater is at its highest setting it produces a pint of water every one and a half hours.
- Operating. Monitoring and checking procedures on such heaters are at best, primitive. The few there are were not designed for those with impaired vision. The danger to you increases, therefore, the longer the heaters are used.
- Ventilation. Essential for good health and comfortable living conditions. Most of our properties are double-glazed and permanent central heating systems are regularly checked for adequate ventilation. The continued use of bottled gas heaters depletes the air supply and can diminish air quality to a serious degree.

All new tenancy agreements forbid the use of such heaters. Although older tenancy agreements do not contain this clause, common sense dictates that you should not use them. If you find that your central heating is inadequate, you should discuss the matter with your Surveyor as soon as possible.

## GARDENING DATES CONFIRMED

Arrangements are in hand for a meeting of the Gardening Club at Ilfracombe, Devon from September 5th-12th. If any members, new or old, would like to come, please contact Mr R.J. Alty, 3 Victoria Grove, Widnes, Cheshire WA8 7TL, (tel: 0151 424 5085) as soon as possible.

## MORE HAM

A further gathering of St Dunstan's Amateur Radio Society has been announced. They will be meeting on October 12th-13th. For details, contact Ted John, 52 Broadway Avenue, Wallasey, Wirral, Cheshire L45 6TD. Telephone 0151 6385514.

## PUZZLE INSTRUCTIONS WANTED

The RNIB have recently added a new plastic crossword kit to their catalogue.

Ray Sheriff wonders if anyone has got a set of braille or print instructions and easy puzzle crossword book that were supplied with the previously discontinued wooden crossword kits.

If anyone can help, please send the instructions to Miss Angela Higson, Supplies Officer, St Dunstan's Headquarters.

## NEW SPORTS CLASSIFICATION

British Blind Sport have updated their sight classification form for visually impaired athletes. They recommend that any stock of the previous form be destroyed.

Copies of the new form can be obtained from British Blind Sport on 01788 536142.

## TANDEM TEAMS WANTED

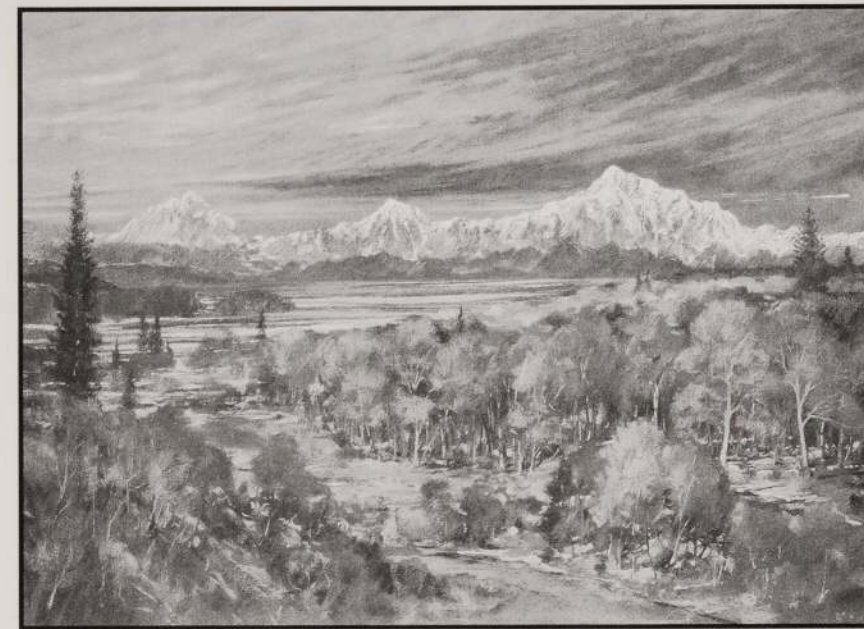
The 4th Annual Coventry Tandem Team Marathon will start within the cathedral ruins on July 7th. St Dunstaners interested in taking part should contact Grant Cooper at St Dunstan's Ovingdean on 01273 307811 ex 3264.

## TROOPING THE COLOUR

Some tickets have been issued for Trooping the Colour on Saturday, June 15th and we may be allocated some tickets for the Royal Tournament in July. Any St Dunstaner who would like to apply should contact Carole Woodgate, Welfare Department at Headquarters by May 17th. Final allocations will be drawn from a hat. Any St Dunstaner wishing to attend these events must pay their own travelling and accommodation expenses.

## ISLE INTRODUCTION

An audio cassette tape, *Discover the Isle of Man*, has been produced for visually impaired people. For details contact the Isle of Man Department of Tourism, Marketing Department on 01624 686846.



## MCKINLEY PRINTS FOR SALE

Fellow St Dunstaners, Widows and Friends,

As you are aware, the recent Unseen Steps Expedition on Mount McKinley was designed to not only raise awareness of St Dunstan's, but also to raise £100,000. We took with us the famous MoD artist Lincoln Rowe, whose paintings and prints are much sought after. I've done the hard bit, now I need you to help me finish the task by doing your bit. What I need you to do is to try to sell one of the 1,000 limited edition colour prints (17x21 1/2"). Each print costs £25 plus £2 p&p.

If you can do this then we will reach our objective. Thank you for your help.

**Reg Perrin**

Cheques should be made payable to the Mt. McKinley Charities Fund and should be sent to: Unseen Steps, 15 Fitz-George Avenue, London W14 0SY

## REMINDER FOR STORY CONTEST

We wish to remind readers that entries must be in by April 28th. For details please contact the Public Relations Department.

## DERBY SWEEPSTAKE

St Dunstaners and widows can still apply for tickets in this year's *Review Derby Sweepstake*. Tickets are 30p each and issued consecutively to a maximum of 25 (costing £7.50). Applications should be made as soon as possible. Closing date is Friday, May 31st. Each applicant should send their name and address, the number of tickets required, together with a stamped addressed envelope, to The Editor, DSS Department, *St Dunstan's Review*, PO 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.

Full rules appeared in the February *Review*. The draw will take place in London on June 3rd. The race is being run on June 8th.

## MUSEUM PASSES

St Dunstan's holds four tickets for free entrance to the Imperial War Museum and Duxford Airfield Museum. Anyone interested in borrowing the tickets should apply to the Secretary's office at HQ. The Imperial War Museum now holds *St Dunstan's Book of Remembrance*. Full details are on page 11.

## VAT on computers and printers

Several St Dunstaners recently received a letter from Dolphin Systems for People with Disabilities. The letter told customers that HM Customs and Excise were reinforcing the fact that VAT is chargeable on computers and printers purchased by handicapped people through Dolphin or indeed, through any other outlet. As Dolphin had not been applying this rule, the tax could be backdated on computers and printers purchased since 1986. It is stressed that this charge does not apply to specially adapted equipment such as voice synthesisers, screen enhancement programmes and scanners. Dolphin urged their customers to write to their local Members of Parliament.

The position at the time of going to press is as follows. Dolphin have issued a statement that they will bear the cost of any such backdated charge. Negotiations are currently at a 'delicate stage' with regard to the future of this tax.

The Chairman has written to the Chancellor of the Exchequer objecting to any such extra burden which might be imposed on equipment used by St Dunstaners or any handicapped people.

A reply has since been received from the Chancellor's office indicating that relief already exists on specialised equipment and software, which give the blind access to computers. As these latter are not adapted in any way, it seems unlikely that they would be made exempt from VAT.

# '...and then there were four'

THE ABOVE title does not refer to an Agatha Christie murder mystery, but to the St Dunstan's Ski Trip to Bavaria. Originally there were seven St Dunstaners in the group, but due to commitments at home, three people had to 'drop out'. The remaining four were as follows: Gerry Jones (the organiser), Charlie Daly, Peter Walker and Tom Roddy.

The trip to Kranzegg, Bavaria was from January 20th-27th.

When he was organising the holiday, Gerry had arranged for ski guides from 5 Heavy Regiment, RA, based at Marne Barracks, Catterick, North Yorkshire. They were: Major Tony Field, WO1 Bill McDougal, S/Sgt Mick Shepley, Sgt 'Eddie' Edwards and Gunner 'Sin' Sinclair. In addition to this group there were some 'old friends' of St Dunstan's who wanted to help with the skiing, namely Joe Elward (Germany) and Peter and Maja Zamudio (Switzerland).

Accommodation was in a very large farmhouse, perched on a hill, on the outskirts of Kranzegg. It was reached by a steep incline, which could only be attempted by a four wheel drive vehicle due to the icy road conditions. This restricted our nights out in Kranzegg because a vehicle wasn't always available, but the amenities (a bar) in the farmhouse more than made up for this.

It had been planned to ski on slopes 50 metres from the farmhouse. Unfortunately, the snow conditions were not good enough to allow this. A compromise was reached and it was decided to travel the short distance to Austria and to ski at the small resort of Jungholz. This turned out to be a 'wise' decision because the resort was just 'perfect' for our needs. It had a variety of slopes of varying difficulty and it wasn't too busy.

Each day ski guides and St Dunstaners would be 'paired off' and then the skiing would begin in earnest! The guides would give complete instructions to their 'charges' before

starting down the slopes. The information given was very comprehensive and thorough, leading to complete confidence in your guide!

For my part, the skiing was hard and tiring (lack of fitness and preparation) but wonderful at the same time. To know what I am talking about you must have tried skiing yourself! The other St Dunstaners seemed to be enjoying themselves even more than I was, especially Peter Walker whose skiing was improving by 'leaps and bounds.' We all had our mishaps and falls but we carried on regardless.

Full marks must be given to Gerry Jones for his determination. He literally 'skied to the edge' twice and landed in a deep ravine on both occasions, but came out smiling each time! Well done!

If the days were busy, so were the nights! Our group made its presence felt in the bar, not only by staying late but by instigating the 'Stavely' award! It consisted of a hat in the shape of an elephant's head, complete with large ears and a trunk. The person gaining the award had also to consume a small drink, on receipt of said hat! The award was made to the person who, it was deemed, had made the 'daftest', 'silliest' or 'stupidest' mistake that day and was to be worn for 24 hours at all times. Names for the award were given to a small committee who decided who should receive the 'Stavely' hat. The award aroused interest from the other people staying at the farmhouse. Each evening the bar would be full of people waiting to see who had 'won'. You can say our group 'livened up' the bar that week!

We managed to go swimming twice and also arranged a night out in Kranzegg for a meal and a game of 'nine pin' bowling. So you can see we had a busy time in Bavaria.

All too soon it was time to return home. A good time had been enjoyed by everyone. We are all looking forward to the next year's skiing trip! If you are interested and would like to join us next year, please get in touch with Gerry Jones, through St Dunstan's.

## MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF FUND RAISING

Fund raising has begun in earnest and, as a result, funds are now starting to come in. Already some of these funds have been used to provide urgently needed pieces of equipment in some St Dunstaners' homes.

In addition, several St Dunstaners are participating in various events whilst at the same time helping to raise funds for St Dunstan's by sponsorship. Stephen Pendleton, escorted by Grant Cooper, Reg Perrin and his escort and Dr Sosabowski's grandson will take part in the London Marathon in April. Don Planner will make an attempt on Mont Blanc in June - it's good to see

such spirit.

Anybody interested in sponsoring any of the above, should please contact the Fund Raising Department at HQ.

We are always very grateful for the hard work of the speakers who, when using the new fund raising leaflets and freepost envelopes, have been able to increase the amount of money being donated to St Dunstan's by their audiences.

We hope to be able to report further good news later in the year; however, for the time being we are grateful for your patience and co-operation.

Neil Swan

## THE STAR AND GARTER HOME

by Colin Beaumont-Edmonds

On entering the light and beautifully decorated hall on the first floor of the Mansion House, Joyce and I were received by General Sir John Stibbon KCB, OBE, President of the Star and Garter Home, and Lady Stibbon; they knew of the changes we had made in Brighton, and it was pleasing to be able to tell them how successfully and happily everyone had now settled in at Ovingdean.

The large gathering was made up of representatives of ex-Service organisations, representatives of charitable groups and businesses, who had contributed to the home, and a few of the 170 residents who are currently with them at Richmond.

In thanking Princess Alexandra for the support she had always given the home, Sir John explained how, 80 years ago, a group of men had gathered at the local pub, *The Star and Garter* on Richmond Hill, and founded the charity to care for

the very seriously wounded young men returning from France. The pub had been demolished, and in 1924 the present home had been built on the site; they were now involved in further modernisation of the home, converting the accommodation into single and double rooms.

During the two hours that we were there, Joyce and I spoke to so many people, members of various City Livery Companies, Rotary Clubs, business, such as Marks and Spencer, and a prison governor whose inmates regularly worked at the Star and Garter Home as part of their rehabilitation training. One wife told Joyce that just after the war her husband had visited St Dunstan's at Ovingdean as part of a *Pathe Gazette* Film Unit. Most of those we met knew of St Dunstan's, but we were surprised how few were aware that we only helped those blinded in the Services.

## 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: Geoff Levett**

My grateful thanks to all St Dunstaners who contributed so generously to my retirement collection. My thanks also go to all who made my years at Ian Fraser House so happy and fruitful. It has been a unique experience from a nursing point of view. Those who came to us for treatment we would get to know very well, in many cases the family as well. I shall remember all my friends at St Dunstan's past and present with great affection always.

**From: Mrs Eileen Homewood, Stanton, Bury St Edmonds, Suffolk**

My family and I would like to thank St Dunstan's Chairman, Members of Council and Miss Mosley for the beautiful wreath and letters of sympathy following the loss of my dear husband, Ron. I also wish to thank all members of staff at Headquarters.

**THANK YOU**

Mrs Angela Prendergast would like to thank the staff of St Dunstan's, particularly the nursing staff, for their kindness and help during Joe's stay at Ovingdean.

He always enjoyed his breaks in Brighton and gained much pleasure from his involvement with the fishing, bowling and archery groups.

In spite of his disabilities, Joe enjoyed life to the full and Angela would like to express her appreciation to St Dunstan's for giving him these opportunities.

*Hi-tech timber firms turn to a St Dunstaner to cut out computer agony*

# HASKEY FILES COMPUTER SALVATION

*Simon Rogers logs on where the microchip gets woodmen out of lumber*

Being more familiar with buzz saws than floppy disks, it is not surprising that some computer problems will drive timber merchants up the wall. What might surprise them, however, is that the reassuring voice offering solutions at the end of the telephone belongs to a blind man.

St Dunstaner Tony Haskey is a Systems Analyst with Ten-25 Software in Dorset. They specialise in developing business software for builders, timber merchants and timber mills. If something goes wrong, Tony has to present a way of putting it right. 'Our system lets you run the business,' said Tony. 'You can use it for production control, everything through to the ledgers. In many in-

stances, we have installed the hardware as well as the software.'

Although Tony is not the only blind man to be involved in software development, most of his contemporaries are occupied with systems dedicated for other blind users. Few have entered a strictly commercial environment that makes little allowance for any kind of disability.

Methodical determination has allowed Tony to overcome his blindness and his colleagues say they frequently forget his condition.

'Tony was the best of the people we interviewed,' said Baird Oldrey, Managing Director of Ten-25. 'But when you take on a person with a disability, you are never quite sure if it

is because you feel sorry for them or because they are suitable for the job.

'That is all very well but you could end up with a load of lame ducks and quickly go bankrupt together.'

An academic worry where Tony is concerned. 'He has grabbed the bullet very well,' added Baird. 'He has got a good rapport with the customers. I do not know if it was our caution or his own, but it was some months before he went out on site. Having been out there he has done some good.

'The rest of us do not tend to notice anything different about Tony apart from the odd occasion when you suddenly walk straight into him - and there is a lot of Tony to walk into - or the fact that he requires special equipment. He has shown he is determined and has done his fair share of shifting cabinets when necessary.

'He has fulfilled his role very well.'

Modesty tempers Tony's perception of his progress within the business but he acknowledges that hard graft and preparation were necessary to compensate for his blindness. Apart from a magnifying device attached to his PC, (allowing him to take advantage of some minor sight remaining in his left eye) Tony makes little use of specialised aids. However, he has invested many hours of study to prepare himself for the task at hand.

'Most problems are easily

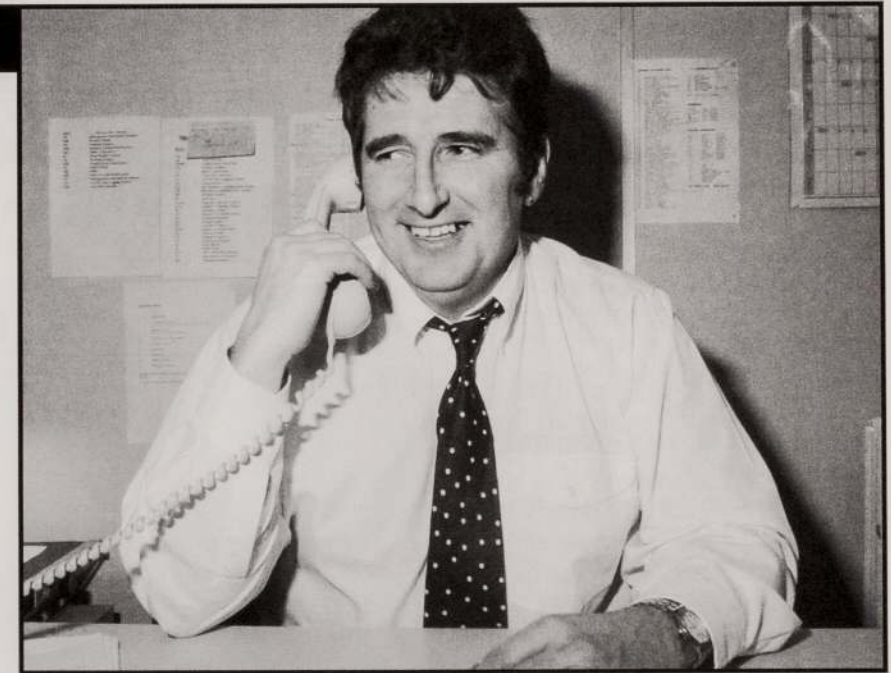
dealt with,' said Tony. 'It is really a question of using my nut. I know the system, I have read the manuals. The first six months I was here, I took the manuals home each night and my wife, Linda, read them to me, up to 12 midnight.

'I am lucky to be working for a company that understands. Recently, I started training - teaching the customer how the system works - which means going out on site two or four days a month. If access looks like being a problem the firm has sent the kit down by courier.'

Are his clients so enlightened though? His answer outlines potential problems and offers solutions. 'Most people are pretty understanding,' said Tony. 'But it can be embarrassing when I walk into something. You can get off to a wrong foot if someone is holding their hand out and you fail to shake it. If they don't know I'm blind, they can think I'm ignoring them. At an introduction I normally stick my hand out straight away which puts the ball in their court.

'Some days what tunnel vision I have is pretty hazy but I still have to go out on site. I can't let the team down.

'You are in a vulnerable position, you don't want a customer thinking "what's wrong with him?" When I go out on site, I need to get a good idea of the layout to avoid falling over. It is inevitable that it is



*Dialing Tony! All systems are brought back on-line as he speaks.*

going to happen at some stage but you have a laugh and get on with things.

Tony joined the Royal Marines in 1975 after leaving school, serving around the world and spending two years as part of the Unarmed Combat Display Team. However, his military career was cut short when he was diagnosed as suffering from a condition affecting his sight. He was discharged in 1986 as vision in his right eye blacked out.

Set adrift in civvy street, fate took a hand. A local social worker introduced Tony to St Dunstaner Don Planner who put him in touch with Harcourt Street. Under the auspices of the Gubbay Trust, Tony trained at St Dunstan's Ovingdean. 'They were the ones that gave me the push. They got me interested in computers and I have not been off them since.'

In 1993, Tony's condition was recognised as being affected by his Service and he became a St Dunstaner. In the intervening years he had studied COBOL at Hereford and taken an HMD in Business Information Technology at Bournemouth University. At

the latter he came seventh out of a class of 45. Faced with the choice of carrying on at University or trying to find a job, he opted for the learning experience of the workplace.

There is one person who, Tony readily admits, gets a rough deal out of all this - his wife, Linda. 'I live 20 miles away from the office. She drives me here and back home, so she is making an 80 mile trip each day.'

The history of St Dunstan's is full of pioneering events in the employment of blind people. During and after the First World War, St Dunstaners returned home from Regent's Park to pursue jobs hitherto unpractised by the blind. They were an inspiration to many sighted and other civilian blind. Similarly during the Second World War, with a shortage of labour back in England, St Dunstaners demonstrated their capacity to fill the gap. Today, amongst others, Tony carries on this tradition and reflects the changing nature of the work place due to modern technology. It is good that, thanks to the determination of individuals, St Dunstan's is still 'keeping in touch.'

*Tony and colleagues discuss the problems of a customer.*



## OBITUARIES

**Mr Alexander Cross, MA, MD, FRCS**

We regret to announce the death of Alexander Galbraith Cross, MA, MD, FRCS who died on February 4th.

St Dunstaners will remember him for the many years of service he gave as St Dunstan's Ophthalmic Surgeon from 1946-1984.

He was made a Governor of St Dunstan's in 1948. Our sympathy goes to his wife, Eileen, and family.

**Miss Yvonne Guilbert**

We are sad to announce the death of Miss Yvonne Guilbert on February 27th. Yvonne was a member of staff at St Dunstan's, Brighton from October 1945 until her retirement in July 1981.

For most of her 36 years there, she was Secretary to Commandant Laurie Fawcett, but later assumed the post of Training Officer. She was known for her inspiration and tremendous enthusiasm for anything which might interest or help St Dunstaners, including the organising of the sports days, gardening and tape recording weeks and many more events.

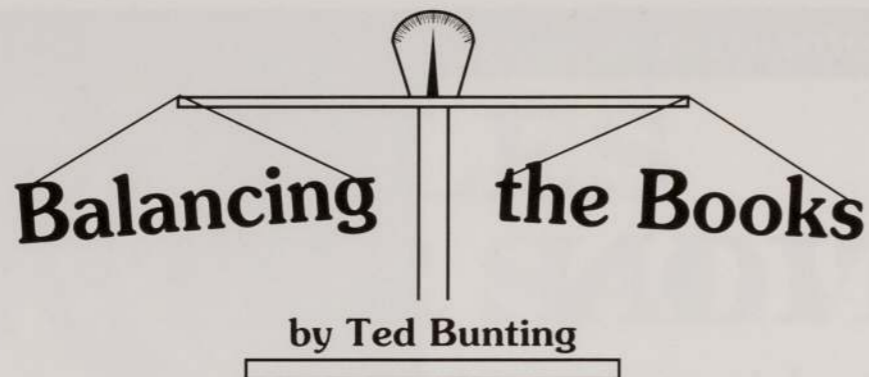
Our sympathy goes to St Dunstaner Miss Dorothy Phillippo, on the loss of a very dear friend and companion.

## OUR CONDOLENCES

We would like to express our sincere sympathy to our Welfare Visitor, Mrs Vivien Jackson and her husband, Michael, on the sad loss of their daughter, Kim Elizabeth, on January 29th.

Kim had suffered from multiple sclerosis for many years and was 32 years of age.

We send our condolences to all members of the family, especially Kim's husband, Pat Reaney.



### Our Story

*Authors: Ron and Reg Kray*  
*Readers: Peter Wickham and Gene Foud*  
*Duration: 6.5 hours*  
*Catalogue number: 7570*

How odd, how very odd that over the years I have meekly assumed that the Kray twins, Ronnie and Reggie, were vicious gangsters who terrorised London in the sixties. It shows the great power of the media I suppose... But how wrong I must have been to accept all that awful propaganda, for *Our Story*, the true account written by the brothers themselves, shows that they were locked up for doing absolutely NOTHING. Well, hardly anything really; there was a bit of extortion perhaps, a protection racket or two, a touch of grievous bodily harm here and there, but nothing you could describe as very serious... Except for the murders that is; yes, there WERE the murders, but as Reggie makes very clear, that was just business... And we should never forget that the people they found it necessary to kill WERE nasty people. Take the example of the man Ronnie shot in the *Blind Beggar* public house; now not only was HE a really nasty person but he had also called Ronnie some very nasty names. So there you are, he'd no alternative had he? It was a simple matter of respect and it is a well known fact that no criminal worth his salt can get by without being respected

by his companions.

So I strongly advise you to ask for this book and hear the real facts about these warm-hearted fellows whose careers were so unkindly cut short. Ronnie, as you probably know, has passed on now; I hope he's happy in that big Broadmoor in the sky, but Reggie is still serving his 30 years; I'll bet the young criminals have bags of respect for HIM... I mean to say, he's achieved so much hasn't he?

### Tell Me Another

*Author: Jack Aspinall MP*  
*Reader: Robert Ashby*  
*Duration: 2.75 hours*  
*Catalogue number: 7188*

If you chance to be an after-dinner speaker looking for a few funny stories to enliven your speeches, hard luck, for I'm afraid it's no good searching through this: Mr Aspinall's gleanings from his fellow MPs! And why? Because the anecdotes contained in *Tell Me Another* are, in my opinion, as humorous as a foggy morning. I was most disappointed to discover this, for I imagined that MPs, travelling the whole country as they do, and saying all those silly things in the House of Commons, would have been a never ending source of mirth. But not so! It's not that they have nothing to say of course, they *are* politicians after all, but it seemed to me that I had heard all their 'amusing' stories years ago and I don't think I actually fell over laughing then.

## David Castleton records the completion of a mammoth project

# REMEMBERING 5,437 ST DUNSTANERS



The Director of the Museum, Mr Robert Crawford, accepts the Book of Remembrance from our Chairman.

On February 27th, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Leach visited the Imperial War Museum where he made a presentation of four volumes of *St Dunstan's Book of Remembrance*. Handsomely bound in maroon buckram with gold blocked wording and St Dunstan's badge on the cover, they include Australian, British, New Zealand and South African St Dunstaners who died before June 30th 1995.

The occasion was the culmination of years of painstaking research to ensure that no St Dunstaner was overlooked and that the entries, which give rank, branch of Service and date of death, were accurately recorded. The intention is to maintain this work for later volumes as a lasting memorial to all St Dunstaners.

Some idea of the task can be gained from these statistics: The British volume contains 552 A3 pages with 4,410 names,

the Australian volume contains 84 pages with 668 names, New Zealand, 31 pages with 243 names, and South Africa, 15 pages with 116 names. It was not possible to compile a volume for Canada as the Sir Arthur Pearson Association for the War-Blinded have problems accessing their records. It is hoped, when these are overcome, that a Canadian volume can be prepared.

The project was the suggestion of a St Dunstaner, the late Peter Matthews, who made a donation towards the cost of preparing a comprehensive record of St Dunstaners in 1986. No-one could have foreseen the amount of research that would be necessary to make the work worthy of the blinded servicemen and women it listed. Early records were often incomplete and their accuracy questionable. A great debt is owed to Susan Sweeting, Trust &

Legacy Officer, and to her assistant, Denise Driver, for their work in collating lists and checking records here and in correspondence with our overseas organisations. The entries are in chronological order of dates of death so to assist the tracing of an individual, Susan Sweeting is preparing alphabetical indexes for each volume.

Denise Driver worked long hours at St Catherine's House, where records of births, marriages and deaths are kept, and at the Public Record Office. She delayed her planned return to her native New Zealand to complete the project and had the satisfaction of showing the New Zealand volume at the St Dunstan's Reunion there.

In addition to the copies presented to the Imperial War Museum others will be lodged with the Museums of the three Services, St Dunstan's organisations in the Commonwealth, Brighton Cemetery, the Chapel at Ovingdean, and Headquarters.

Sadly Peter Matthews did not live to see the completion of the project he inspired. He died in 1990 and has his own place in the Roll of Honour. A specially bound volume comprising the title page, foreword and the page containing the entry for her husband was presented to Mrs Matthews at a personal ceremony at HQ last month.

Anyone who would be interested in receiving a copy of the page in *The Book of Remembrance* containing the entry for a particular St Dunstaner, together with the title page and foreword, all in a presentation cover, should contact Susan Sweeting, Trust and Legacy Officer at Headquarters for further information.

# MONT BLANC HERE I COME!

## Marathon Don aims for the top

The highest mountain in Western Europe has been targeted for an assault by St Dunstan's Don Planner of Poole. He has announced his intention to scale all 15,771ft of Mont Blanc and to raise £50,000 for St Dunstan's in the process.

The 48 year old father of three is well known for his rugged determination in running marathons in major cities around the world. Those efforts have raised thousands of pounds for the Royal School for the Blind, Leatherhead, Surrey. But that was before he underwent a heart bypass operation two years ago. 'I have always been one for a bit of a challenge,' he said.

It was 1975, as North Sea Oil flowed ashore, as British membership of the European Community was confirmed, and the Sex Discrimination

High speed pursuit! Don skies carefree down a mountain trail.

Don during his REME days

Act was passed that Don Planner's world turned dark. A Sergeant in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, he was welding a lorry's broken fuel tank when it exploded in his face.

'The tank hadn't been cleaned out properly and the whole thing went up,' he said. 'I was very bitter to begin with because I was in the Services for a profession and my life was totally ruined.

'But I wouldn't sit down and take "no" for an answer. There's no such word as "can't".'

This violent episode was

his introduction to St Dunstan's. After training, he secured a position as telephonist for the local Natational Westminster Bank.

Don has set up a gym at home and can be found working out every night as he prepares for his attempt on Mont Blanc. Already Brittany Ferries have offered Don and his team free passage to France, and the Bournemouth and District Federation of Conservative Clubs, David Lloyd Sports Centre, National Westminster Bank, and Lymington Plating of Poole have all contributed funds for the expedition.

Don hopes to raise £4,000 for the actual trip which includes

a six day programme of acclimatisation and practice

with ice axe and crampons before the assault begins in earnest. The second day

serves as an exercise in glacier travel since one route is via the Grand Mulets Glacier - a good opportunity for Don to indulge in his passion for skiing.

Snowbound! Don on a previous ski trip.



Pumping iron! Don's home gym provides a nightly work out.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### SIR HENRY ON TAPE

The autobiography of St Dunstan's Chairman, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Leach, is now available on Talking Book. *Endure no makeshifts: some Naval recollections* is read by Robert Gladwell and lasts 17 hours 27 minutes. The catalogue number is 10435.

### MARY RETIRES

Mary Frith, Senior Care Assistant at Ovingdean will be retiring on May 23rd, after almost 20 years of service. St Dunstaners wishing to contribute towards a leaving present should send a cheque (made payable to St Dunstan's) to Mrs Clare Woods, St Dunstan's Ovingdean, Greenways, Ovingdean, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 7BS.

### HAPPY 100 FOR EDITH

Our heartiest congratulations go to Mrs Edith McKinlay of Heston who celebrated her 100th birthday on February 10th. She is the widow of James McKinlay who served in 8th Middlesex Regiment.

### CONGRATULATIONS

We congratulate Sue Cameron, Personnel Manager, located at Ovingdean on obtaining a Master's degree in Employment Relations and Law from Kingston University. This involved five years of study in her own time whilst coping with the reorganisation at Brighton.

### Miss Evelyn Laye, CBE

Actress and singer Elsie Evelyn Laye died on February 17th, aged 95. A popular figure on the London stage during the twenties, Miss Laye was a very public supporter of the Arthur Pearson Memorial Fund for St Dunstan's. Her career spanned nearly 80 years as she worked on stage and in film with the likes of Coward, Ziegfeld, and Mayer.

On February 6th, Thomas Roddy was formally admitted to St Dunstan's by Mr Gerard Frost, Secretary of St Dunstan's. The ceremony was to have been performed by Air Chief Marshal Sir John Gingell, G.B.E., K.C.B., K.C.V.O., RAF (Retd.), a former Black Rod (1985-1992) and Member of St Dunstan's Council. 'Sir John has been snowed in, so you'll have to make do with "frost"!' Tom has been undergoing rehabilitation at Ovingdean since October last year. 'I spent two years sitting at home feeling pretty useless. St Dunstan's has made me realise that there is still a lot I can achieve. It has given me faith in my own capabilities.'

Tom, aged 56, of Laburnum Road, Darlington, County Durham was called up for National Service in the Royal Air Force in 1958 and subse-

## Tom Joins the Elite



quently enlisted as a Regular. He left the RAF in 1980. He served as an Assistant Air Traffic Controller. He was a keen sportsman and specialised in swimming representing the

RAF in the modern pentathlon. His blindness was due to diabetic retinopathy contracted whilst in the Services. He is a Licentiate Member of the Institute of Personnel and Development.

## Welcome to St Dunstan's

We welcome the following new St Dunstaners and hope they will settle down happily as members of our family.

**Mr Abraham Adler** of Brackley, Northants joined St Dunstan's on January 23rd. At the age of 12, he spent a year with relatives in Dresden learning the German language. On his return to the UK, he was a scholarship boy at his local grammar school in Aberystwyth and went on to University to read Modern Languages. He then trained as a teacher.

He was enlisted into the Intelligence Corps in 1944 and, because of his knowledge of the German language, the people and their culture, was involved in the interrogation of captured German prisoners. During that year, Mr Adler received gunshot wounds to his head that caused the loss of his left eye. After hospital treatment, he was transferred to the Control Commission Germany, with whom he worked for the next two and a half years and was involved in acting as the Defence interpreter for those accused of war crimes in Belsen and Auschwitz - it was at Auschwitz that his Dresden relatives probably died. After leaving the Control Commission Germany, Mr Adler returned to his profession as a teacher. He and his wife eventually purchased a private

school which they ran successfully until retirement age. His own teaching specialities were Modern Languages and Physical Education. The sight in Mr Adler's right eye has deteriorated over the years and, four months ago, a haemorrhage in that eye destroyed the retina. Mr Adler is married with three adult children.

Also on January 23rd, we welcomed **Mr Roy Brook** of Wilmington, nr Dartford, Kent. He joined the Royal Marines in 1941 and, having trained as an Assault Engineer, was posted to the 7th Battalion of the Royal Marines, which was guarding naval establishments in South Africa. Having moved up to North Africa, he took part in the Sicily landings and was then transferred into the 1st Royal Marine Engineering Commando, in which he served for part of the Italian Campaign. Subsequently attached to 48 Commando, he took part in the Normandy Landings and remained with this unit as they fought their way through North West Europe. It was in January 1945, whilst clearing a passage through a minefield, that he received severe wounds to his eyes, lost his left hand and two fingers of the right hand. This resulted in a period in the St Dunstan's wing of Stoke Mandeville Hospital where one of our surgeons was able

to save some of his sight.

The following year, he returned to work as a Planning Engineer, where he remained until 1981 when the sight in his right eye deteriorated severely.

Mr Brook has always had an interest in sailing, walking and gardening and had been a keen rugby player. He now greatly enjoys music. He married in 1944 and he and his wife, Doris, have a married daughter living in Norfolk.

## CLUB NEWS

### BRIDGE

The 1996 season commenced on January 28th. There were five tables. A pleasant afternoon was spent by all under the direction of Fay Andrews, who acted as tournament director. With her help, I hope to be running a monthly match (pairs) on the last Sunday of every month with the hope of getting more matches in between.

The result of the first match was as follows:

- 1st Wally & Pam Lethbridge
- 2nd Mary Steyning & T. Rowbottom
- 3rd Bill & Nancy Phillips

All St Dunstaners wishing to participate in any of the matches, please contact Reg Goding on 01273 308467.

## FAMILY NEWS

### BIRTHS

**Congratulations on the birth of:** Victoria in October 1995. She is the great-granddaughter of Mrs Jenny Hodgson of Ferryhill, Co. Durham, widow of *David Hodgson*.

Bethany Jane Aperios in Australia, last November. She is the great-granddaughter of *Ted and Dorothy Cooper* of Rhuddlan, Clwyd.

Lucy Ann Bentley on December 15th. Her parents, Colin and Angela Bentley, are well known by St Dunstaners, as are grandparents *Fred and Betty Bentley* of Saltdean.

Thomas Lang on New Year's Day. He is the grandson of *Brian and Margaret Lang* of Liverpool.

Lee Tomas Kennedy on January 6th. He is the grandson of *Bill and Carole Kennedy* of Walton, Peterborough.

*Mr and Mrs Logan* of Midsomer Norton are proud to announce the arrival of their second and third great-grandsons: Ryan John Churcher on October 17th 1995, and Damion Brian on April 11th 1995.

### WEDDINGS

**Congratulations to:** Timothy and Christine Ayles on February 24th. Timothy is the grandson of Mrs Mary McCarthy of Godalming, Surrey. She was the widow of *Alfred McCarthy*.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

**Congratulations to:** *Stephen Blake* of Chertsey who has received another award from Runnymede Borough Council for his work in helping disabled and handicapped people.

Hayley on passing her Victorian Certificate of Education with a 93 per cent score. She was Dux (leader) of Year 12 at Alexandra College and has been accepted at Melbourne University to study science and arts. She is the granddaughter of *Jack and Betty Boote* of Alexandra, Australia. Jack is Vice-President of the Victorian Blinded Soldiers Association.

Michelle Bruce, granddaughter of Mrs May Morrish and the late *James Morrish*, graduated, with distinction and honours, from Purdue University, Indiana, USA in May 1995, with a Bachelor's of Science Major Degree in Industrial Management and a Minor Degree in Science. She now works for Crowe Chizek, a CPA/Consulting company in the United States, as a Manufacturing & Systems Consultant.

### SILVER ANNIVERSARY

**Congratulations to:** *Kenneth and Joan Hedges* of Bexley, Kent on February 6th.

### RUBY ANNIVERSARY

**Congratulations to:** *Melville 'Clem' and Lily Clements* of Rottingdean on February 25th.

### GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

**Congratulations to:** *David and Ann Brown* of Worcester on February 2nd.

*Bill and Mary Claydon* of Weybridge on February 27th.

*Guy and Sally Bilcliff* of Lichfield, Staffordshire on March 6th.

*Jim and Frances Marsland* of Altrincham, Cheshire on March 9th.

### SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY

**Congratulations to:** *Joe and Nellie Bane* of Morden, Surrey who celebrated 61 years of marriage on February 5th.

### DEATHS

**We regret to announce the death of:** Mrs Florence Rose of Coulby Newham, Middlesbrough on January 9th. She was the widow of *Arthur Rose*.

Mrs Doris Asnby of Coventry on January 11th. She was the widow of *Eric Ashby*.

Mrs Dorothy Lewis of Wickersley, Rotherham on January 11th. She was the widow of *Arthur Lewis*.

Mrs Muriel Green of Chichester on January 12th. She was the widow of *Samuel Green*.

Mrs Eileen Williamson of Audenshaw, Manchester on January 14th. She was the widow of *Harold Williamson*.

Mrs Dorothy Fleisig on January 16th. She was the wife of *Dennis Fleisig* of Sevenoaks, Kent.

Mr Gerald Habberfield on January 20th. Aged 48, he was the son of *Herbert J. Habberfield* of Neath, West Glamorgan.

Mrs Olive Hargreaves of Chester on January 26th, just a few days before her 93rd birthday. She was the widow of *William Hargreaves*.

Mrs Violet Watson on February 6th. She was the wife of *Sam Watson* of Aldridge, Walsall.

Mrs Evelyn Sarjeant of Brighton on February 9th. She was the widow of *William Sarjeant*.

Mrs Miriam Wolsey of Whiteabbey, Belfast on February 10th. She was the widow of *Joseph Wolsey*.

Mrs Elsie Lamb of Waltham Abbey, Essex on February 12th. She was the wife of *Ronald Lamb*.

Mrs Mary Nabney of Carryduff, Belfast on February 13th. She was the widow of *Hugh Nabney*.

Mrs Elizabeth (Betty) Christal of Castletown, Isle of Man on February 17th. She was the widow of *Norton Christal*.

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

## 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.

### Miss Cynthia Rouse,

*Women's Royal Naval Service*

Miss Cynthia Osyth Rouse of Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich died on January 17th, aged 78. She joined the Women's Royal Naval Service in November 1941, trained as an armourer and served at the Newcastle-under-Lyme and Arbroath Naval Air Stations until the loss of sight in one eye led to her being invalided out in 1943. She then made a career in domestic work until reaching retirement age, by which time her remaining sight had started to fail. She became a St Dunstaner in 1992. Her hobbies included knitting and handicrafts and she was an active member of various local clubs. Our sympathy goes to her brother, Eric, and his wife, and all the family.

### James Bumby,

*Royal Army Service Corps*

James Bumby of Rochdale, Lancashire died on January 23rd, aged 76. He served in the Royal Army Service Corps from September 1939 to October 1943. He was wounded by a landmine in the Middle East in November 1942, suffering not only damage to his eyes but injuries to one hand as well. After his discharge, he worked as a clerk with a firm in Manchester until 1980 and it was during that year that he became a St Dunstaner. Our sympathy goes to his widow, Edna, their two daughters and all the family.

### Joseph Prendergast,

*Royal Air Force*

Joseph Anthony Prendergast of Leyland, Lancashire died on January 24th, aged 56. He served in the Royal Air Force from April 1959 to January



1960. His loss of sight resulted from an accident which happened within months of his enlistment but nevertheless he was able to work in industry until 1979 when the onset of a heart condition forced early retirement. He joined our borderline category in 1978 and then became a full St Dunstaner in 1980. Mr Prendergast had many interests. He served on the Committee of his local branch of The Royal British Legion, he did wrought-iron work and picture-framing and enjoyed bowling, but his greatest pleasure came from archery in which he participated with considerable success. He served in various capacities on the Committee of the St Dunstan's Archery Club.

Our sympathy goes to his wife, Angela, his daughters, Jaqueline and Julie, and all members of the family.

#### **George Eaton,**

##### *King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry*

George James Eaton of Ovingdean died on February 6th, aged 82. He served as a Rifleman in the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry from June 1940. Upon joining his battalion in Egypt, he volunteered for the Long Range Desert Group (under Colonel David Stirling) with whom he remained until an accident in 1944. He was driver to the Adjutant, Major Cranfield HAC and fought throughout the North African and Sicily Campaigns and was involved in the Taranto and Anzio landings in Italy.

It was after the Anzio landing that Mr Eaton was hit on the head by an anchor cable during a demonstration amphibious landing in 1944 which resulted in an injury to his eyes. His discharge from the Army came in November 1945.

Back in civilian life, he returned to his previous employers, the British Railway Workshops in Crewe. He became a St Dunstaner in 1990.

Our sympathy goes to his niece, Joan Tucker, nephew, John Heath, and all members of the family.

#### **Ronald Homewood,**

##### *6th Royal Norfolks*

Ronald George Homewood of Stanton, Bury St Edmunds died on February 7th, aged 75. He served with the 6th Royal Norfolks from August 1939 and his loss of sight resulted from the privations he suffered while a prisoner of war between 1942 and 1945. His discharge came in 1946 and he became a St Dunstaner the following year. After training, he became a shopkeeper in south east London but then moved to Manchester to take up industrial employment until health problems meant he had to terminate this career. In the belief that an open-air life would be better for him, Mr

Homewood and his family moved to Norfolk where he was successful in poultry-keeping between 1954 and 1962. Having retrained for joinery, he did excellent work for St Dunstan's Stores Department, combining this with work in his garden and greenhouse. In due course, however, he had to give up his joinery for health reasons. Our sympathy goes to his wife, Eileen, their son and four daughters, and all members of the family.

#### **Frederick Dixon,**

##### *Pioneer Corps (Army Fire Service)*

Frederick Horace Dixon of Marske-by-the-Sea, Cleveland died on February 8th, aged 78. He served in the Royal Army Service Corps, the National Fire Service and then the Pioneer Corps (Army Fire Service) between 1940 and 1945. During that latter year, he suffered the onset of a problem which was eventually to cause his loss of sight. However, he was able to follow employment as a process worker with ICI, Wilton until 1973. It was not until 1988 that he became a St Dunstaner, by which time his mobility was much restricted except within his home and garden. He enjoyed being taken to a local club once or twice a week to meet old friends. Our sympathy goes to his wife, Jessie, their son and daughter, and all the family.

#### **Joseph (Ossie) Gannon,**

##### *Royal Air Force*

Joseph Oswald (Ossie) Gannon of Wigan died on February 14th, aged 79. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1939 to 1947. He was taken prisoner of war in March 1942 after being evacuated from Singapore to Java and was blinded by a grenade explosion when, with others, he had been ordered to clear a ditch. He spent three-and-a-half years in captivity in the same PoW Camp as our handless St Dunstaner Bill Griffiths, who in his book *Blind to Misfortune* made several references to the way Mr Gannon helped him. As a single man, Mr Gannon shared his home with his mother, choosing basket-making as a career. He became very skilled in this craft. After the death of his mother, he adapted very well to managing on his own but he was fortunate in having any help he needed from members of the family and friends nearby. He gave up his basket-making to concentrate on his home and garden and lived his life in his own quiet, contented way. He was an active member of his church and very generous to charitable causes, both at home and overseas. Our sympathy goes to his sister, Mary, niece, Pat, and all members of the family.

#### **Stanley Moseley,**

##### *Royal Artillery*

Stanley Cecil Moseley of Poulton-le-Fylde, Lancashire died on February 14th, aged 84. He served in the Royal Artillery from April 1939 to January 1947. Taken prisoner of war by the Japanese in Kuala Lumpur, the privation inflicted by captivity led to his loss of sight and had a marked effect on his general health. However, back in civilian life, Mr Moseley worked as a bakery manager until retiring on medical grounds in 1974, the year he became a St Dunstaner. In retirement, he enjoyed gardening and was interested in archaeology and music. His wife, Kitty, became a registered blind person herself in 1979, but they made light of their combined problems. Sadness came upon them when their son, Brian, died in 1986, but they rallied until Kitty became seriously ill and died in 1989. Stan was able to remain at home with support from their other son, John, and his wife, Gladys, until just last May he went to live with them to be cared for. Our sympathy goes to John and Gladys, and also to Kitty's son, Ken, and his wife, Diane.

#### **Stanley Coe,**

##### *Royal Navy*

Stanley Coe of Ruslip, Middlesex died on February 26th, aged 73. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1966. Enlisting with the Royal Navy in 1946, he served as a Petty Officer until his discharge in 1947, due to illness which affected his sight. He had worked as an engineer, but retired early on health grounds. Following his admission to St Dunstan's, he took basket-work classes and gave talks to schoolchildren. He also enjoyed travelling and spent many holidays abroad, particularly in various parts of Switzerland. In later years, Mr Coe became involved in Spiritualism, which he found absorbing. Our sympathy goes to his wife, Muriel, and their son, Barry, and all other members of the family.

#### **Bertram Fry,**

##### *Royal Army Service Corps*

Bertram Lawrence Fry of Ovingdean died on February 29th, aged 84. He lost his sight while serving in the Royal Army Service Corps from March 1942 to July 1946 and became a St Dunstaner in November 1961. He hoped that his training, which included typing and handicrafts, would enable him to take up industrial work but unfortunately there proved to be few opportunities in the Pontypridd area. When his wife suffered a serious accident, Mr Fry became a permanent resident at Brighton. Our sympathy goes to his wife, Jane, daughters, Elizabeth and June, and all the family.