

St Dunstan's Review

February 1997



**St Dunstan's
Review** No. 868

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BI-MONTHLY
Free to St Dunstaners

FEBRUARY 1997

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Cover Picture:

St Dunstaner Sid Doy and The Chairman present a prize for the best decorated area at Ovingdean to Maureen Mann. Her Christmas craftwork added cheer to the Lounge.

From the Chairman



It is hoped that, later in the year, progress will be made towards the refurbishment of the First Floor Fuselage at Ovingdean and that improvements will be carried out to the Training Wing. Consultants are already visiting the building, taking various measurements and making drawings for these purposes.

Consideration will also be given to the replacement of those vehicles at Ovingdean which are near to the end of their working lives.

It has become possible to consider these plans as a result of public donations specifically pledged towards these projects.

I wish you all a very happy 1997.



NOTICE BOARD



THANK YOU FOR CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Members of staff throughout the country, both serving and retired, wish to thank all St Dunstaners, widows and their families for their cards and kind wishes received over the Christmas period. They reiterate their wishes for a healthy and happy 1997.

REUNION CHANGE

The Salisbury Reunion has been relocated to Shaftesbury. The date, March 26th, remains the same. All other dates and venues are as previously announced.

WALKING HOLIDAY REMINDER

This holiday is based at the *Stratford-upon-Avon Moat House Hotel* from Friday, April 25th to May 1st. The Stratford Ramblers will be organising five daily walks of around eight miles each.

A double room shared costs £27 per person, per night and a single room £37 per night. Both prices include half board.

Anyone interested and who has not already done so, should please contact the PR Department as soon as possible.

ARMY AIR CORPS CELEBRATES 40th ANNIVERSARY

A weekend of parades, concerts and sporting events will celebrate four decades of the Army Air Corps on July 26/27th. For full details contact Ray Hazan at HQ.

TICKETS FOR THE CUP

The FA Cup Final will take place at Wembley on May 17th. It is possible that St Dunstan's will be allocated tickets. Any St Dunstaner wishing to go should send their details to the Welfare Department at HQ. A draw will be held if we receive tickets.

BRUTAL RECOLLECTIONS

The harrowing wartime experiences of Jack Saunders are told in *It Seems Like Yesterday*. Like many St Dunstaners, he was a PoW in Java and Sumatra. A tape recording of this biography is available from the PR Department at HQ (Ref: SD60), just send six C90 cassettes.

A list of other cassettes in the Tape Library is available on request.

RIDERS WANTED

Volunteers are required to form a St Dunstan's team for the London to Brighton Bike Ride in June 1997. We are looking for two more people who are willing to ride the tandems, and anyone who would like to take their own bikes. If you are interested, or if you have any questions, please phone Wendy on 01273 307811 extension 3224/3219.

MOOR STEAM PLEASE

A compilation recording of steam trains on the North York Moors Railway, *Steam on the Moors*, has been released. Covering various locations between Grosmont and Pickering, it is especially aimed at visually impaired people, as well as the steam railway enthusiast. The recording is available from The Purple Dawn Recording Company, 10 Parkway, Guidepost, Choppington, Northumberland NE62 5EA. Tel: 01670 829227. It costs £19.98 for a double CD or £11.98 for twin cassettes.

BIG NEWS, BIG PRINT

News, sport, features, competitions, and a comprehensive radio and TV guide are covered in *Big Print*, a weekly publication that utilises type that is more than twice the size of other newspapers. For more information or a free sample copy call Freephone 0800 124007.

WE KNOW A BETTER HOLE

The St Dunstan's Golf Club is still up and running, it needs your continued support and as many new members as possible.

As accommodation is once again available at Ovingdean (at a cost of £18.00 per person per night full board), we are hoping to have more support for the various events over the year. Please contact Clare at Ovingdean on ext 3220 as soon as possible for your golf accommodation. Please inform one of the committee members if you are able to attend any or all weekends.

We have built up a good relationship with Pease Pottage Golf Club and Driving Range and appreciate their continued support.

The following fixtures for 1997 have been arranged:

April 5th/6th - AGM to select a new committee will be held this weekend.
May 17th/18th
June 28th/29th
August 15th/16th (including the main St D's vs Pease Pottage Players).
September 21st/22nd

The annual cup for players and guides will be the best three cards taken over the five weekends, that way not all the weekends need be attended for a chance of winning.

The totally blind start on a double handicap of 56 shots and partially sighted on a 36 handicap. We have good guides to help and they will also be able to help any friends or family that may wish to become guides.

If you are interested in becoming a member (an application form will be sent to you on request, membership is £15 per year) or require any additional information please contact one of the following:

Des Chandler 01273 472193
Iain Millard 01603 861296
Dave Goldsmith 01273 307811

So please come and have fun with us.

Des Chandler

DERBY SWEEPSTAKE 1997

St Dunstaners and widows can now apply for tickets in this year's *Review* Derby Sweepstake. This year, the race is being run on June 7th. 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 30th.

Each applicant should send their name and address, the number of tickets required, and an SAE, to The Editor, DSS Department, *St Dunstan's Review*, 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. All applications must be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

Of the total money received distribution will be as follows:

50 per cent to the holder of the ticket drawing the winning horse.
20 per cent to the holder of the ticket drawing the second horse.
10 per cent to the holder of the ticket drawing the third horse.
20 per cent to be divided equally among those drawing a horse which actually starts the race.

No prize won in the sweepstake will be paid to any person other than the person to whom the winning ticket was sold. The draw will take place at St Dunstan's Headquarters on June 2nd.

MONTY STATUE APPEAL

An appeal to raise funds for a statue of Field Marshal Montgomery has been launched by Portsmouth City Council. Their plan is to erect a larger than life size tribute to the "soldiers' General".

Any St Dunstaner who wishes to make a donation or assist in fund raising should contact The "Monty" Statue Appeal, Colonel W.H.F. (Bill) Stevens, OBE, Chief Administrative Officer, Civic Offices, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth PO1 2AL. Tel: 01705 834462.

PLACES TO STAY IN PARIS

Holiday-makers set on the capital of France may wish to consider two organisations for visually impaired people offering good quality accommodation, with trained staff, at competitive prices.

Union des Aveugles de Guerre, 49 rue Blanche, 75009 Paris, France telephone 0033-1-48 74 85 83; fax 0033-1-48 74 57 65

The hotel of the French Union of War Blinded People is attractively located in the vicinity of Place Pigalle, at the foot of Montmartre. The location is quiet. It takes around ten minutes by tube to visit the heart of Paris. Nearest tube stations are Blanche and Trinité.

Individuals and groups are welcome. It is recommended that group bookings be made two months in advance. The hotel cannot provide escorts during the day. Single rooms: 165 French francs (approximately £20), double rooms: FF 330 (£40), breakfast is included.

Centre Résidentiel Valentin Haily, 64 rue Petit, 75019 Paris, France telephone 0033-1-42 08 61 61; fax 0033-1-42 08 41 15

The Centre Résidentiel Valentin Haily is a ten-minute walk away from two of Paris's newest museums, the Cité des Sciences (the Science Museum), which has a range of access services, and the Cité de la Musique (musical instruments). The nearest tube station is Ourque, 30-35 minutes from the heart of Paris. For most central destinations you need to change tube at Gare du Nord.

Residents of this short-to-medium term residential centre not only come from France, but also from European and overseas countries. There are frequently a few rooms available for tourists on short stays. Half board for longer term stays: FF 3500 (£425) per month. Short term stays: single rooms at FF 165 (£20) plus FF 13 (£1.60) breakfast (optional).

* Figures are based on an exchange rate of FF 8.24 to £1.

VENGEFUL VIDEO NIGHTMARES DESCRIBED

The RNIB have just released seven more audio described videos for a variety of tastes. They are available for sale or rent.

Bruce Willis reprises his role as a maverick detective confronting terrorist Jeremy Irons in *Die Hard with a Vengeance* (AV025, Cert 15, £14.99).

The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill But Came Down a Mountain (AV027, Cert PG, £12.99) stars Divine Brown's favourite, Hugh Grant, as the surveyor who inadvertently stirs up Welsh townfolk. The film also stars a clothed Tara Fitzgerald and *Star Trek's* Colm Meaney.

While You Were Sleeping (AV026, Cert PG, £12.99), a delightful romantic comedy with Sandra Bullock and Bill Pullman.

Tim Burton's macabre puppet animation fairy tale, *The Nightmare Before Christmas*. (AV031, Cert PG, £9.99).

Funny Bones, (AV032, Cert 15, £12.99) the tale of a struggling comedian, starring rubber-faced Lee Evans and Jerry Lewis.

Pocahontas, (AV030, Cert U, £16.99) Disney cartoon version of Gravesend's favourite Red Indian lass.

BBC TV's BAFTA award winning dramatisation of Jane Austen's *Persuasion* (AV024, Cert U, £10.99) provides some gravitas to the list.

The RNIB have also added two documentary titles with ongoing narration: *The Train Now Departing*, a double video charting the history of steam trains (AV028, Cert E, £16.99).

VE50: The Nation Celebrates, highlights of the VE Day celebrations (AV029, Cert E, £12.99). Some branches of W.H. Smith's may have remainder copies of this item on sale for £5 or less.

To buy or rent, contact RNIB Customer Services on 0345 023153.

REQUESTING A STABLE FABLE

For better odds than the nag in the 2.30 at Epsom, try this year's story contest. We are asking for a tale that revels in the excitement of the racetrack. An independent judge will assess the entries and award a first prize of £60, a second prize of £25 and three runners-up prizes of £5 each. The first and second prize winners will have their tale 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 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 1997, at Story Writing Competition 1997, *St Dunstan's Review*, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1A 4XB. Get writing!

NATTER ON THE CHATTERBOX

Documentaries, dramas, music and a world of sounds are on offer from the Chatterbox Recording Club. The Club - no relation of the Ovingdean tape magazine - was founded by amateur radio enthusiasts who decided to use tape recorders instead of radio sets to contact others. Now a worldwide society, members 'tapespond', communicate by cassette. They also operate sections for specific interests, such as music. CRC has two publications. *Chatterer's World*, for club news and information, and *The Sound Magazine*, a round-robin compilation of members' recordings. It also operates a Sound Library from which copies may be taken for a small fee and a blank tape.

Subscription details can be obtained from Mr R. Armstrong, CRC Secretary, "Welland" Stafford Street, St George's, Telford, Shropshire.

STAR BIRTHDAY

Doris Burden celebrated 100 years with her very own Christmas star on Boxing Day - a star in the constellation of Cassiopeia has been named after her.

Mrs Burden of Saltdean was thrilled by the notion that she will look down from the heavens and keep an eye on all her family. Her granddaughter had the usual serial number exchanged at the International Registry of Stars.

Mrs Burden is the widow of William Burden, a First World War St Dunstaner who served with The Buffs. His eyes were damaged by a mustard gas attack.

GOODBYE TO TERRY WALKER

by Kendrick Morris,
Head of Rehabilitation & Training
Terry Walker will be retiring on February 5th 1997. He started with St Dunstan's as a Workshop Assistant in September 1986. He later went on to work on our telephone systems and then as our braille teacher. In January 1996, Terry became our Communications Instructor.

He is a dedicated and resourceful advocate for blind people and will be missed by all at Ovingdean. Terry plans to continue his support for St Dunstan's by offering talks about our organisation to interested groups. We wish him well in his retirement.

In January's *New Beacon*, we advertised for the position of Rehabilitation Officer for the Visually Impaired (ROVI). This person will be supervising the Information Technology and Daily Living Skills Instructor as well as offering full social rehabilitation training. That is braille, mobility and independent living skills.

The ROVI post will be replacing the role of Communications Instructor. We now look forward to the new ROVI to further build upon Terry's vision for the future.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the Editor are always welcome.

Drop us a line, tape or disc at 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1A 4XB.

From: Penny Lord, London.

I wish to thank you all most sincerely for all the cards and letters sent to me on my retirement. I would also like to express my heartfelt thanks to St Dunstaners, wives, widows and widowers for the extremely generous gifts which I have received; I was quite overwhelmed. I am planning to put this money towards an electric wheelchair, so that I can be more independent. Naturally, I will miss you all very much, but I know that the Welfare Department will let me have news from time to time. Thank you also for your many Christmas cards and New Year greetings, and my best wishes to you all.

From: Carol Cotton, Products Manager, RNIB, Peterborough

Dear Reader,
You may already know that St Dunstan's and RNIB have, for a long time, enjoyed close association. One of the areas in which St Dunstan's is particularly active is the supply of equipment and games - indeed they are one of RNIB's best customers.

We are both keen to improve the ways in which you can keep up-to-date with products and services from RNIB. Incidentally, if you read *St Dunstan's Review* then watch out for regular articles in future editions.

To help get us all off to a good start, I am writing to you, with the help of St Dunstan's, to let you know about a brand new catalogue, called *Staying Independent*. This catalogue concentrates on practical solutions to everyday problems for those people who may be encountering some sight deterioration for the first time, with sections on getting out and about, telling the time and in the kitchen, to name but a few. *Staying Independent* is available in large print and on cassette and is free of charge. We would be delighted to arrange for you to have a copy, and supplies are already with St Dunstan's, with Angela Higson at HQ waiting for your request.

If you have any queries about this new catalogue, or any of the products and services available from RNIB, please contact St Dunstan's.

If you prefer you can, of course, contact RNIB's Customer Services team direct at RNIB, PO Box 173, Peterborough PE2 6WS, telephone 0345 023153.

Obituaries: MONICA ROBINSON

Monica Robinson, wife of Bill Robinson of Davenham, near Northwich, Cheshire, was tragically killed in a car accident on December 4th. She was a passenger in the vehicle, as was Bill who escaped serious injury. Monica, whose maiden name was Sey, will be remembered as one of the first VAD's from the Canadian Red Cross who came to Church Stretton and she was based at Longmynd. She and Bill, who was himself Canadian and had been wounded by a booby-trap explosion, were married in Church Stretton in September 1945. They split their time between homes in Davenham and Ontario.

Monica was very much involved in local activities. She was a Commissioner in the Girl Guide Movement and latterly a President. She served as a Magistrate and in 1993 was made a Deputy Lieutenant of Cheshire. Our sympathy goes to Bill, their sons and daughters, Judith, Ian, Carol and Giles, and all the family.

SISTER STACEY

Grace Jeanette Hollins, née Stacey died on October 21st, aged 96. Known to First War St Dunstaners as Sister Stacey, she taught braille at Regent's Park. Later, she became the Sports Sister, organising rowing, goal shooting and walking races. Our sympathy goes to her family.

News from Ovingdean

by Terry Walker

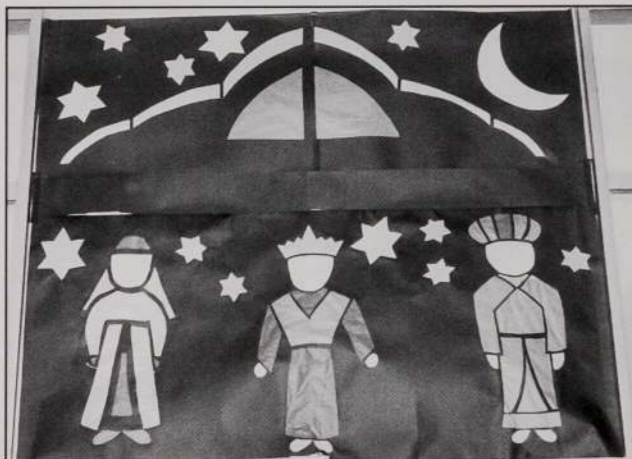


Did shepherds wash these socks at night?

Happy New Year To You All! A wish which is currently on everyone's mind. Just before you all move into the 'Looking Forward' mode, perhaps I may be allowed to report on events at Ovingdean over the Christmas and New Year.

Following the announcement of a competition for the best decorated area, there was much enthusiasm, innovation and hard work put into the Christmas decorations here at Ovingdean. Sir Henry came to our open day and his job of deciding which was the best area cannot have been easy. The final decision went to the Main Lounge. Everyone will tell you of their particular favourite, but the use of tactile displays made an impact on my memory of their efforts.

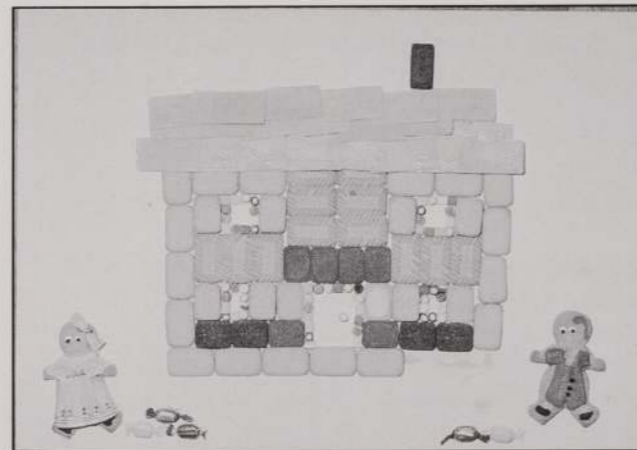
Star followers! Sounds like Mike Varney.



The prize for this competition - an Eagle, wings outspread landing on the crest of a rock, into which is inset a quartz clock, all supported by an ash plinth. A brass plate containing the words 'The Sid Doy Christmas Decorations Trophy 1996' makes an impressive addition to our sizeable array of trophies. Thanks must go to Sid.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

Residents were given the opportunity of making their own Christmas cards. An afternoon in the Lounge with Mary Scourfield and her team, this event proved successful and quite a number of cards were manufactured. It certainly made a good start on the run up towards Christmas. Who said something about idle hands!



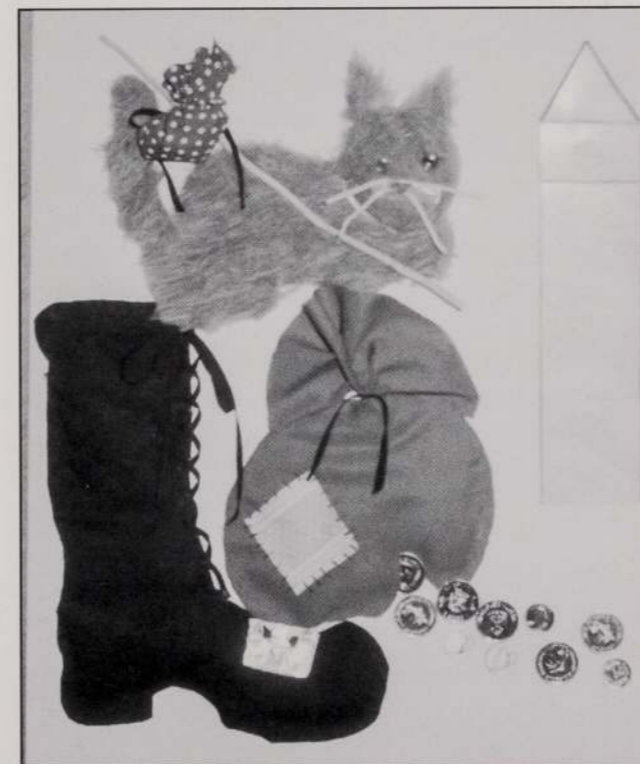
The house on Bourbon Street.

THE OPEN DAY

Giving new members of staff the chance to show their families exactly what goes on here, the open day was very popular. There were tombolas, raffles and a chance to win all kinds of goodies. A Coffee Shop, served teas and coffees from early morning until late evening. Our guests enjoyed the day and it set the scene for the remainder of the Christmas. A carol service on Friday 20th took place in the Lounge and this event was well attended.

Throughout the holiday period we were all battling against colds, flu and the usual wintertime epidemics. Staff were badly hit and it is a great credit to all concerned that almost all of the planned entertainments went ahead.

Ever popular, the Concert was much enjoyed. We have a new crop of entertainers, which combined with the St Dunstaners obvious talents to produce a show as good as any. Someone told me he saw an old Beatles renegade on stage! Whilst we all now have inside information on taking tea with an Admiral!



Puss gets the boot.

OUR FANCY DRESS PARTY

Monday 23rd was exceptionally well attended. The Reverend Gentleman from Rottingdean did a marvellous job in judging the competition. Gilbert's 'Chest of Drawers' has been mentioned to me on more than one occasion, though I am sure there were others equally worthy. The winners were Jed Sellwood as Henry VIII and Winnie Edwards as the Fairy on the Christmas tree. Not to mention most of the

Second Floor nursing staff who attended as street people from *Oliver*. One nurse attended as St Dunstaner Stan Grimsey. Almost as convincing as our real Stan! This was a very well supported event.

CHRISTMAS DAY

Chocolates, crackers, nuts, and fresh fruit adorned the tables laid up in the main dining hall. As many people as possible were brought down for the festive lunch. This year it was Carver served. All staff combined to assist the chefs who carved the traditional turkeys.

A pre-dinner sherry, prawn cocktails, full Christmas fare of turkey, stuffing, chipolatas, bacon rolls, roast potatoes and two veg. Christmas pudding (made by St Dunstaners) went down well. Wine was served throughout the meal, ending up by

Sanity Clause? Sanity Clause? Everybody knows there ain't no Sanity Clause.



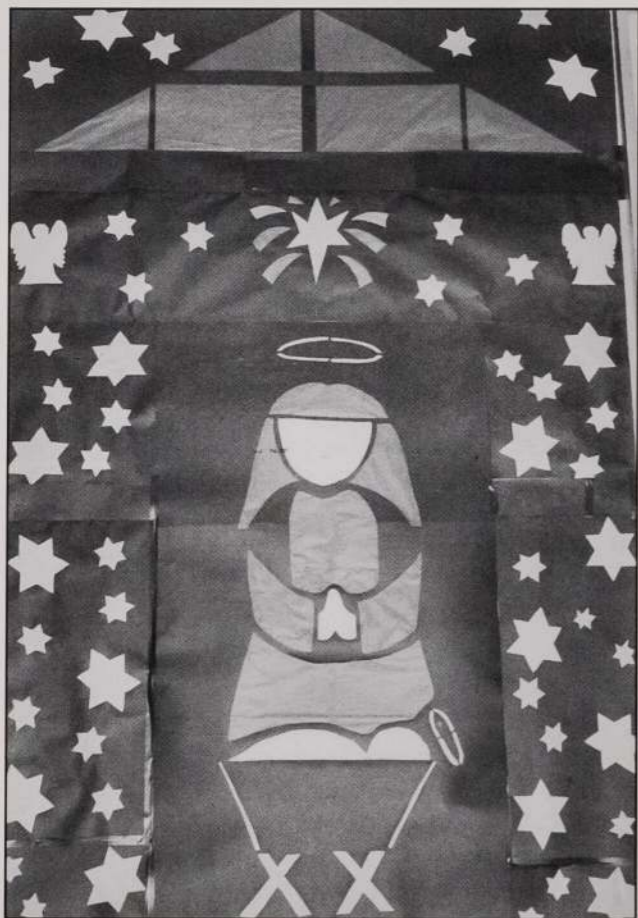


Olive and the laundry girls waylay Matthew Rhodes after the Decoration Competition.

toasting Her Majesty The Queen with a fine old Port. They then retired to the Lounge where coffee was served.

Speaking to Paul he tells me they have received comments, all good, and some who told him it has been the best Christmas ever.

Madonna and child.



We had our own Father Christmas, a young Brian Gould, eagerly waited for by some elderly gentlemen. "Where's he got to?" and "He is not here yet, where is he?" The item proved quite funny to onlookers seeing Father Christmas arrive to distribute his presents. Once the people concerned had their present in the hand, they took off rapidly for the safety of their room.

BOXING DAY

Jon Ridge organised a mystery tour. Based upon the Ouse Valley and Villages, Jon stopped the coach in selected areas to talk on the age of the Downs, the rock formation and local history. The early rates (Tithe) paid to the Lords of Southeast consisted of 38,000 herrings and four tons of porpoise. This event proved so popular it was repeated the following day. Well done Jon.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

A Dance in the Lounge. With half the floor cleared, dancing in front of the stage drew many back to the well remembered Waltzes and Quicksteps in front of Ernie Took and his merry men. There were spot prizes and gifts, smiling faces and shifts!

NEW YEAR'S DAY

Again there was a big raffle, so more prizes for the unwary.

Yes, this has been a most successful season and our guests all enjoyed their stay with us. Now there is another year to look forward to.

PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN BLIND UNION

Congratulations to John Wall, CBE, MA (Oxon), Chairman of the RNIB and member of St Dunstan's Council, who was elected President of the European Blind Union at their General Assembly in Sicily in November last year.

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF FUND RAISING



On December 18th, Council Member Air Chief Marshal Sir John Gingell, GBE, KCB, KCVO and I accompanied Don and Sharon Planner to The National Westminster Bank's 1996 Group Chief Executive's Awards Ceremony. The awards were in recognition of National Westminster Bank's staff members' efforts working for their community. Against stiff opposition, Don had reached the final as a result of his sponsored climb up Mont Blanc last year to raise funds for St Dunstan's. As a finalist he was guaranteed to pick up a cheque of £1,000 for St Dunstan's. What we did not know was that Don had, in fact, won first prize. It was an immensely proud moment watching Don, accompanied by his wife and Sir John, receive a cheque for £2,000 on behalf of St Dunstan's. Congratulations!

As mentioned in the August *Review*, we undertook a distribution of over half-a-million fund raising packs to members of the public between September and November 1996. To date we have received 6,750 donations, with a value to St Dunstan's, including covenants, of over £130,000. Following the Cenotaph parade we received a number of letters and donations from members of the public who watched the St Dunstan's contingent on television. One member of the public was so inspired that he donated £1,300.

The moving poem on this page was written by one of our donors, Mrs Margaret Carter.

Neil Swan

My Mother sold poppies ...

With empty eyes you marched past poppies red
Remembering a world or war, the dead.
Limbs and arms were given in the fight
Each petal, sacrifice ... you gave your sight.

In 1996 we all live free
So easy to forget the history
Of soldiers who gave their tomorrow
And families in turmoil, broken, sorrow.

In November in late autumn rain
The Cenotaph brings back the awful pain
The pain that many live with who returned
Wounded by the guns, in aircraft burned.

Thank you for the years that we have known
From childhood after war to adults grown
A gratitude owed by so many to the few
God's blessing on St Dunstan's, and on you.

Margaret Carter



Karen Morane, Care Manager at Ovingdean receives a cheque of £2,486.04 from (CRE) Airfields which was raised in sponsorship by a team of 27 men running the Peddar's Way and Norfolk Coast Path (95 miles) in a time of 13 hours 22 minutes.

Pictured left to right, WO1 Steve Wyan, Corporal Frank Wingfield (who collected £673.54), Karen Morane, Corporal John Baldwin, WO2 Steve Hone and Lieutenant Colonel Roland Crosskey (Commander Royal Engineers).

A day in the life of a BBC assistant actor

St Dunstaner John Bullock tells how he found himself ensnared by the smell of the greasepaint and the roar of the crowd

This all started when my wife, Diane, decided she wanted to become a film star. Not really, but her nephew had taken part in one or two episodes of *Lovejoy*, the series about an antiques dealer who was a bit dubious in his dealings.

She obtained the name and address of her nephew's agent and sent off details of herself and - unknown to me - details of me.

This was five or six years ago, nothing was heard from them until August. They telephoned, asking if I was available to be an extra in the making of a film in Norwich. They wanted to make sure that I still had my hair long, according to the photograph, because it was a Victorian thing. Luckily enough I hadn't had a hair cut for a long time, so I was OK.

Of course, what wasn't disclosed was my eyesight disability, so I was a bit worried about that. Anyway, after I got over the shock, I thought I'd have a go. Di was very disappointed that she wasn't wanted but the agents compensated by giving her a part in a prison drama series called *The Insiders* that comes out soon. She had to walk her dogs on Sutton Heath.

My part was in the latest film adaptation of Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone* which was shown on BBC2 over Christmas.

I was instructed to turn up at seven o'clock at a mansion about 30 miles south of Norwich. So we rose early that morning, which isn't my happiest time of the day. However, we set off just after 5am, because it was a 50 mile drive, arriving earlier than we were needed, of course. We parked the car on a patch of grass and ate our breakfast of sandwiches and coffee.

We came back to the entrance of the mansion house and were admitted by a

chap who looked like a gamekeeper. He said "Are you the actors?". So we said "Yes". The mansion was an old Georgian-type big house and was unoccupied. However, the BBC were there with all their vans and wires and god-knows-what and loos and mobile canteens. We had another breakfast, a cooked this time, which was quite nice.

The hall was called Elveden Hall. It was quite empty, no furniture at all, except for that which the filmmakers used - and then took away. I was told it belongs to an Arab gentleman, but god knows what they're going to do with it, probably nothing at all, which is a shame because it's a lovely looking old building.

EXTRA, EXTRA

Pretty soon after breakfast, I was called to the Make-up Department where there were about a dozen or so people doing the same sort of work as myself, extras. I learnt during the day that we were called assistant actors, which I thought was rather amusing.

We were sent to a room where all the costumes were hung up and I was dressed in the costume of a Victorian gentleman - drainpipe trousers, fancy waistcoat, coat, cravat and top hat, which was difficult because I've got a big head, but eventually they found one to fit me.

This is when I really began to worry because the state of my eyesight had not been disclosed. I think I would have been rejected straight away if they had known about it. However, everything passed off without a problem. I managed to cope with what I was expected to do.

There were many long waits for us 'assistant actors' between each burst of filming activity, but there was always refreshment available.

Unfortunately, there was nothing to sit on, so it all became rather tiring.

The first bit of activity, so far as I was concerned, was when I had to escort a lady in front of the mansion entrance - which became the entrance to a bank in the film. A horse and carriage was drawn up, then several of us pretended to be passers by. A camera on a sort of small rail, on a trolley, was used. They pushed it back and forwards while this scene was being taken.

Like everything that happened that day, there were several takes and several changes of idea and so forth, but eventually that one was completed to their satisfaction.

After another long wait, we were called into the entrance of the hall which had been converted, most effectively, into a Victorian bank, polished counters and what might have been mock candlelights - it was extremely well done.

Firstly, I was expected to walk backwards and forwards with others, pretending to be a customer. It was a little worrying as I thought I would charge into something and knock it down or fall over, but no, everything worked perfectly. Although like all the scenes, there were changes of mind by those in charge. Eventually, they got it as they wanted it.

THE WRITE STUFF

We stood around while, lighting, cameras, situations and furniture were changed around. Eventually, we were called in for the next sequence - the final one, thank goodness, because I was getting very tired by then. I was placed, standing at a desk holding the newspaper, *The Times*, in one hand, while pretending to write on a small cash book on the desk with a quill pen.

This provides an example of how exact they had to be with regards to showing every piece of furniture and costume according to the period when the action of the story took place, *The Times* I was carrying was dated 1800-and-something.

Anyway, I was placed in various positions in front of this desk and during one of the rest periods, a girl who seemed to be in charge came and told me that when I was pretending to write in the book, I should write on a page where there was some writing already. This surprised me, but she said the camera might pick it up.

So the next time the action took place, I used the quill pen where the writing was already on the page.

THAT'S A WRAP!

After, as usual, many takes, it was finished to everybody's satisfaction and that was the end of my days work. We were all told 'thank you very much, you may now go'. The make-up lady came up to me and pulled my false sideburns off. She said she had to keep these as they were rather expensive. Costumes were taken off and we all trooped back to the real world.

Time was about half past four and it had been a long, rather tiring day. Although it was something to participate in one of these things, I don't think I want to do it again. I'm getting a bit too old and it's all a bit worrying. However, it was an occasion and eventually the cheque came through, less this, that and the other - the Agent's Commission, of course, and there were no travelling expenses. Anyway, it was something for the kitty.

And that's the history of my one and only days work for the BBC.

The world at our fingertips

by Ray Hazan

When braille was first introduced in the 1820's, blind people no doubt felt there was a world of information at their fingertips. Braille opened up the fields of education, communication, literature and music. This seemingly simple medium of six raised dots is relatively cheap but is effective and powerful in its effect. It is unlikely to be superseded in the foreseeable future. It does, however, have a modern day equivalent in terms of gathering knowledge - the modem.

A modem is a small box of tricks which connects your computer to a telephone line enabling information to be passed from one machine to another. These 'boxes' cost between £70 to £160. The higher the cost, the faster the modem can transfer signals and therefore the less time spent on the telephone. This article aims to demonstrate the type of information available through this medium.

The World-wide Internet

This service was briefly outlined in the last edition of the *Review*. One DOS shareware programme available to access the net is Net-Tamer (registration \$35). It has been written with speech synthesisers in mind. It gives access to three principal areas; electronic mail (E-mail), FTP (file transfer protocol), i.e. the ability to download computer files and programmes and access to the 'web'. This last compares to those of you who have televisions with teletext and can access screens of information. For instance, type in the location of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind's site and back, in seconds, will come a menu via your speech synthesiser with choices to read more information about their services, their annual report, technical devices, personnel, etc. During the past few weeks, I have downloaded some share and freeware items including a screen reader programme

and other DOS utilities. Most took less than ten minutes to 'capture'. Thanks to E-mail, I am in relatively instant and cheap contact with family in America.

Bulletin Boards

As the name implies, these are boards hung with notices, products and information, which you can either read or take away with you. In reality, it is a dedicated computer with files which your computer can read or download.

Talking Newspaper Association of the UK

For an annual fee of £17.50 you can have access during the evenings and weekends to a substantial list of daily, weekly and monthly newspapers and magazines (*Investor's Chronicle, Which, Reader's Digest, etc*). There is a very simple menu from which to make choices. The *Radio Times*, with complete listings of radio, TV and satellite channels or *The Daily Telegraph* take two minutes to download. A cleverly designed index system allows you to quickly access articles using the search facilities in 'Readit' or your word processor. You can have the above sent to you via E-mail or as ASCII files on disk.

Dolphin Systems for the Disabled have a BB, containing news items, product lists, environment and atlas files for their speech synthesisers. Their utilities area includes a copy of 'Commo' (registration \$42) which is one of the many communication programmes used to access these BB's.

Banking

The Bank of Scotland offers HOBS (home and office banking scheme at £4 a month). Whilst other banks and building societies

provide telephone banking, which blind people find useful, the HOBS is via computer thus giving you recorded copies of your transactions on disk. Your transactions can be pre-programmed with your word processor offline and then 'squirted' down the telephone line in 40 seconds, the time it also takes to get a bank statement. You can arrange transactions for up to 30 days in advance thereby covering any period you may be away on holiday.

Access to the Internet and HOBS is generally via a local (0345) telephone number. BB's are via direct line to wherever they are located. The more distant numbers can be put on BT's *Family and Friends* scheme (0800-055555) which gives a ten per cent discount on any five numbers you give them.

The above list is by no means exhaustive. There are two cautions worth bearing in mind; an anti-virus guard when downloading external material is wise; do not send your credit card account numbers via the Internet. Though you may see an increase in your telephone bill, this is surely offset by the mass of independently accessed information available through our fingertips on the keyboard. The *Review* is always interested to hear of your experiences in this field!

Some useful numbers:

BB's are generally accessed at 8 data, N parity, 1 stop bit and 'Z' modem protocol.

For Dolphin BB details call: 01905-754577

For TNAUK information, ask for Martin Lawrence on: 01435-866102

For any further enquiries please call Ray Hazan at HQ.

Handy Programme

If anyone wants to partition their hard disk, i.e. break it down into two or more hard drives, then please read on. I have a freeware programme which allows you to do this without losing any of the data currently on your root drive. Please contact me for a copy of FIPS.EXE.



Mansfield Park

Author: Jane Austen

Reader: Robin Holmes

Duration: 18.25hrs

Catalogue No: 1652

In a world which sees so many changes in a single generation it may seem almost miraculous that *Mansfield Park*, which was completed a full year before the battle of Waterloo, should be so 'up to date'. The secret lies in the main subject; no, not life in a stately home or the vogue for 'improving' one's estate, but in the study of human nature and how this is affected by money. Why should the presence or absence of wealth affect one's social standing? Perhaps it shouldn't, for some pathetic examples of mankind have been wealthy whilst some splendid specimens have been poor, but it does, and it also did in Jane Austen's 19th century as she was clearly aware. In the world she created for *Mansfield Park*, three sisters married, one a baronet, one a clergyman and the third, a lieutenant of Marines. In so doing, their social equality was replaced by a greater and a lesser degree of inferiority. Consequently, when the Marine's daughter enters the baronet's home to live there and to be educated alongside her cousins, she is accompanied by the stigma of inferiority; it signifies nothing that she is intelligently bright and possesses a noble character, she is 'the poor relation' and is constantly made aware of it. The sister who married the clergyman is particularly unpleasant in this respect, jealous of another's greater fortune, she constantly tries to dominate someone less fortunate than herself. It would be pointless here to attempt a synopsis of the novel, but this is a compelling book from beginning to end - full of truth, expressed with Jane Austen's special brand of gentle humour and I thoroughly enjoyed it.

HEAD FOR THE MED

Margaret Bingham finds her place in the sun



Coasting along with Margaret in the Med.

It had long been my hope that some day, I would take a cruise to some exciting part of the world on a luxury ship. The opportunity came in the shape of *Jewels of the Med* - a 14 day cruise. It seemed ideal, so with two friends, I boarded the *Oriana* at Southampton. We felt quite microscopic against the gleaming white vessel towering above us. The spaciousness and freshness of the interior were most refreshing.

Our cabin steward, Orlando, met us as we neared our cabins. He assured us of his help if needed. With his happy friendly disposition we took to him immediately.

We spent our first day on board finding our way around - lifts, shopping area, swimming pools, theatre and bars. The ship was like a small town with every commodity catered for. Sport with deck tennis and quoits, reading in a well stocked library, dancing classes, including latin American. Two experts had been brought over from America solely to give tuition and displays. What beautiful dancers they were.

The Captain's Welcome Aboard Dinner was given that evening (the one and only time we met Captain Bright) and my mouth still waters at the remembrance of those succulent dishes. Baked fillet of turbot with white wine, butter and creamed mushrooms or fillet of scotch beef with four peppercorn sauce and so on and so on. A meal to remember! Each lady was presented with a carnation and we found a chocolate on our pillows when we retired to our cabins.

Our first port of call was Tangier but the town was unsuitable for wheelchairs, so we had to be content with looking around the stalls on the dock side. I enjoyed bartering with the stall holders and one young man in particular. He knelt down by my chair and described some of his wares to me. Naturally I brought a few bits and pieces from him (a real sucker for a glib tongue, aren't I?).

One innovation for people who could not manage the gangway was 'the crawler': a large wheelchair but with four extra wheels

underneath which controlled a caterpillar track and it bumped very, very slowly, up and down the steps.

The small island of La Magdelana was our next port but passengers went ashore by tender. In 1804, Admiral Lord Nelson cruised around these islands waiting to pounce on the French fleet if it dared to leave Toulon, so it has a little slice in the history books. After visiting these ports we usually had a menu familiar to that country. There was plenty to do on board for those unable to go ashore, but lying round the pools on deck chairs was the favourite occupation. We were trying to get a tan, though the sun hadn't been much in evidence so far!

When the ship was at sea there was much going on, such as chatting to a member of staff whilst strolling round the deck, or instruction on making Toby jugs (the end result of some were terrifying!), bingo, whist and bridge drives, to name but a few.

In the late evenings, we could go to the *Theatre Royal*, attend a classical concert or dance the night away in the *Harlequins*. In the beauty salon we could have a hair do, massage, facial and makeover, etc., but none of this was cheap. It was lovely to be pampered though and I was happy to sample some of these luxuries. The shops were well stocked but generally very, very expensive. We had a noisy welcome when we approached the harbour of Naples, boats milled around the *Oriana* blowing their hooters and sending jets of water which, with the reflection of the hot sun, made a beautiful rainbow. A helicopter hovered over the ship. The city itself was noisy with hooting cars and 'souped-up' motor bikes. The streets were thronged with shoppers. We found pavement kerbs high and it was difficult to manoeuvre the chair over the rounded edges. There were many small shops and an interesting piazza with a beautiful mosaic tiled floor. It all looked very old.

Only one other item worth a mention and that was how smartly dressed the men were. Hardly a pair of jeans seen at all!

Looking back later from the ship, Vesuvius stood out clearly, the top, the base and cloud like a belt round the middle.

There were special nights, such as the Black and White night, when we wore dresses and suits to conform to the occasion and on Tropicana night a lei (garland of flowers) was hung round our necks. The food complemented these occasions and these variations helped to make a happy ship. Elba looked so beautiful with its small sandy beaches and white buildings, but unfortunately, once more, passengers were taken ashore by tender. This also happened in Cannes and Tarragona although some decided to have a look at Cannes alone.

Our happiest day was spent in Lisbon, our last port of call. We had a guided tour of the city in a Mercedes stretched limo. The driver was such an interesting man, explaining why some of the streets had bunting across them (a few saints days prior to our visit) pointing out beauty spots to my sighted companions. Finally, we visited a small lace shop and the extremely pleasant assistants brought to the car a number of home embroidered goods for me to feel. A memorable finale!

On the whole we enjoyed the cruise, the good food, pleasant company, helpful staff (especially Goanese waiters who always had a very pleasant disposition) and the thrill of sailing on a brand new ship!

Smiling service. Margaret buys some beads.



A SHORT HISTORY OF THE VICTORIA CROSS

Sent in by Mike Tetley
Reprinted from the Kenya Regimental Newsletter

The Victoria Cross was founded by Royal Warrant on January 29th, 1856, and was originally intended to be awarded solely to members of the Royal Navy and British Army who, serving in the presence of the enemy, should have performed some signal act of valour or devotion to their country.

As Queen Victoria herself pointed out, it was not an Order, such as the Garter or the Bath. It offered no knighthood or Companionship, bore no religious significance and contained no ranks within itself. It was intended solely as a decoration "to be highly prized and eagerly sought after by the officers and men of Our naval and military services".

UTTERLY BEYOND REPROACH

In due course, further Royal Warrants enlarged the scope of the award to admit other categories but the over-riding requirement for winning it remained conspicuous bravery. It could not be earned in any other way, whether by influence or privilege. It was to be conferred by the Sovereign alone, upon advice, and was to be utterly beyond reproach.

An important clause laid down that "neither rank, nor long service, nor wounds, nor any other circumstance or condition whatsoever, save the merit of conspicuous bravery" should establish a sufficient claim to the honour, thereby placing "all persons on a perfectly equal footing in relation to eligibility for the decoration". The VC therefore became the most democratic honour in the annals of military and naval history.

This aspect was confirmed by the elective procedure laid down in those cases where a

number of "equally brave and distinguished persons" had been thought worthy of the honour. The names submitted to the Sovereign were to be chosen by their fellow men taking part in the action concerned.

Pensions were granted to all holders of the Victoria Cross below commissioned rank, and an expulsion clause allowed for a recipient's name to be erased from the official Register in certain wholly discreditable circumstances, and his pension cancelled.

Although there are eight recorded cases of forfeiture, in accordance with the terms of the original Warrant, all eight men are still included in the main total and no mention of the forfeiture is made except as a note at the bottom of the War Office List, which covers the period 1856 to August 1914.

King George V felt very strongly that the decoration should never be forfeited. In a letter written by his Private Secretary, Lord Stamfordham, on 26th July, 1920, his views are forcibly expressed: "The King feels so strongly that, no matter the crime committed by anyone on whom the VC has been conferred, the decoration should not be forfeited. Even were a VC to be sentenced to be hanged for murder, he should be allowed to wear his VC on the scaffold".

Since the original Warrant, others have been issued modifying or extending its provisions - in 1858 Queen Victoria decreed that the Cross could be won by those who "may perform acts of conspicuous courage and bravery ... in circumstances of extreme danger, such as the occurrence of a fire on board ship, or of the floundering of a vessel at sea, or under any other circumstances in which ... life or public property may be saved".

This Warrant was only called into use twice and then, in 1881, a new VC Warrant was signed which stated "Our Will and Pleasure

is that the qualification (for the award of the Victoria Cross) shall be "conspicuous bravery or devotion to the country in the presence of the enemy". But for this stipulation there would have been no need for the institution of the George Cross.

In 1902 King Edward VII approved the important principle of awarding it posthumously. In 1911 King George V admitted native officers and men of the Indian Army to eligibility and, in 1920, it was further extended to include the RAF, and "matrons, sisters, nurses ... serving regularly or temporarily under the orders, direction or supervision" of the military authorities ... emphasising, however, that the VC "shall only be awarded for most conspicuous bravery or some daring pre-eminent act of valour or self-sacrifice or extreme devotion to duty in the presence of the enemy".

DESIGN FOR VALOUR

Queen Victoria chose the design for the new decoration herself. It is in the form of a Maltese Cross ensigned with the Royal Crest and a scroll inscribed simply "For Valour". It is connected by a V-shaped link to a bar engraved on the face with laurel leaves, and having a space on the reverse for the recipient's name. The date of the deed for which the honour is bestowed is engraved on the back of the Cross itself. It is worn on the left breast suspended from a 1-inch wide red ribbon ... originally the VC ribbon was blue for the Navy, dark red for the Army, but since 1920 it has been the same crimson shade for all services.

The actual Cross itself is made of bronze and still cast from metal melted down from the cannons captured at Sevastopol in the Crimean War.

Although the Royal Warrant instituting the Victoria Cross was not issued until January 1856, the earliest deed of valour to win the award was performed 19 months earlier, on June 21st, 1854, by a 20-year-old Irishman, Charles Davis Lucas, Mate of HMS *Hecla* which was attacking the fortress of Bomarsund in the Baltic. At a range of

only 500 yards a live shell with fuse still hissing landed on the deck of the *Hecla* from a Russian battery. Lucas picked it up with his bare hands and threw it overboard ... it exploded as it entered the sea, but the ship and crew were saved from certain destruction. Lucas was promoted to Lieutenant on the spot by his commanding officer and eventually rose to the rank of Rear-Admiral.

Some 62 VCs who had been "gazetted" - i.e. their names and deeds were cited in the *London Gazette* - were present at Hyde Park, London, on the morning of June 26th, 1857, when Queen Victoria held her first Investiture ceremony for the newly-instituted decoration that bore her name. In keeping with the democratic spirit of the award all recipients stood shoulder to shoulder, regardless of rank.

Since then, a total of 1,348 men or, in the case of posthumous awards, their widows or representatives, have been decorated with the VC. The last deed for which it was awarded took place on May 24th, 1969, in Vietnam. The winner was Warrant Officer Keith Payne of Australia.

WANTED

August this year witnesses the 100th anniversary of the birth of Ian Fraser. He was blinded by a sniper's bullet on the Somme in 1916. At the age of 24, he took over the Chairmanship of St Dunstan's on the tragic death of Sir Arthur Pearson. Ian Fraser also became an MP and was later elevated to the House of Lords. Lord Fraser of Lonsdale, supported by Lady Fraser, steered St Dunstan's for 53 years.

Many of our readers knew Lord and Lady Fraser personally. If you have any reminiscences, photographs, pictures, mementos or articles, which you are prepared to lend or donate, would you please send them to the Editor. We are interested for both archive and *Review* purposes.

OVINGDEAN

by the late St Dunstaner
Tommy McKay



Reprinted from Morning Dip by kind permission of his widow, Phyllis.

Standing high on the edge of the Downs,
Gleaming white in the bright sunlight,
Stately, and imposing, looking down
On rolling seas and cliffs so white,
Known to all as Ovingdean.

No trees to rustle in the breeze
Nor shade us from the midday sun,
Only a lark sings high o'er the Downs
To mingle with the murmur of the seas
beneath,
As out to sea stately ships can be seen
From the high windows of Ovingdean.

Made beauteous by summer's sunny light
And bleak by wintry winds,
Surrounded by the rolling downs
And looking out to sea.
Stately and tall may it always be,
Our Ovingdean.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

In early 1947, around 800 Talking Book machines were earmarked for use by St Dunstaners. The use of two valves and a sapphire needle promised new clarity and greater amplification. Another innovation was a lifting device to avoid scratching records. Plans were also made to convert pre-war Talking Book machines into ordinary gramophones.

Bill Griffiths was granted a road haulage licence and a 12-ton lorry and trailer to set up his own business in Preston. A presentation was made by the Mayor.

St Dunstaner Henry Rolt of Dunstable found himself baby-sitting something with fearful symmetry during a trip to Whipsnade Zoo. Having been asked to hold out his arms, he knew he was holding a furry animal. A gentle growl gave the game away - it was a tiger cub.

Radio quiz master Wilfred Pickles descended on Ovingdean to record an episode of *Have a Go*. It was broadcast on the Light Programme, a radio station which we know these days as ...?



NEW WELFARE DEPARTMENT STAFF MEMBERS

Pictured left to right: Vanessa Cahill, Welfare Visitor for Kent & Sussex, John Loughran, Head of Welfare, and Pamela Wait, Welfare Visitor for Greater London joined the Welfare Department in the closing months of 1996.

MY ANSWER TO CHRISTMAS

On the first day of Christmas, the postman brought to me, a partridge in a pear tree - which I thought was rather nice, so I planted it in my garden and ate the bird.

On the second day of Christmas, the postman brought to me, a partridge in a pear tree and two calling birds. I did not appreciate this as the only birds who call always try to sell me double-glazing. However, I also planted this tree in my garden. Quite nice, although the partridge made a great deal of noise and the calling birds kept calling. But worse was to come!

On the third day of Christmas, he brought the same again, together with three French hens. On the fourth day he did it yet again, but with four turtle doves. I was a member of the RSPB and thought they would not take kindly to me keeping partridges, calling birds, French hens and turtle doves in my porch which is only four by two. So I decided to cancel my membership.

On the fifth day, this proliferation of gifts was just too much, so I refused to open the door. Then they played a dirty trick. Postman Pat said that he had a registered packet for me. While I was signing the form, he shoved the packet on the mat. It contained five, supposedly golden, rings which turned out to be curtain rings, which I hung up for the calling birds who were on the phone all day. Also by now, the French hens were dancing the can-can on my carpets, the turtle doves were cooing all over the place and the partridges were still very noisy. I cut off my phone and put notices on my door saying "Gone away, not known at this address" and "Do not disturb". But it was no good. Even worse was to come.

The blighter came back next day with a further lot and six swans swimming in a bath. A similar consignment arrived the next day with seven geese which kept laying eggs. I was in a right tizz. I would not have minded so much had all the eggs been golden. Meals on Wheels no longer come near and the milkman said he would

not call again while there was a herd of cows keeping several milkmaids busy. When the lords arrived on the twelfth, I hoped they'd shoot the birds, but no such luck. They just kept leaping over everything in sight. The milkmaids began to look quite worried.

The air was rent with the din of a regiment of pipers piping, numerous drummers drumming, cows mooing and a variety of birdsong and cackling. I went to bed with cotton wool in my ears. I couldn't even make a cup of tea because the drummers had moved into the kitchen and were trying to drum up business for the calling birds. Then the swans began to have matrimonial problems and got into a flap, on top of which the cows went down with mad cow disease. The place was also getting very smelly.

The neighbours were very angry and the council, BT, the vet and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food were all going to sue me. If the bailiff could have got through, the mat would have been piled high with summonses and by now the men in white coats might have taken me away.

But I have left by the back door for the Canaries with one of the milkmaids...

Ernest H. Bowditch

A friend and benefactor of St Dunstan's

CLUB NEWS

BRIDGE

On November 23rd, St Dunstan's Bridge Club set off to the Russell Hotel at Bognor for a challenging weekend organised by Action for the Blind. We were all made welcome by the management who could not do enough for us. After dinner, we played our first game which was won by Nora Tebbit and Peter Surridge.

Next day, we were all very pleased to be indoors as it was a very wet afternoon - just the time to play. We had a drive, and

another the following afternoon. When the two scores were totalled, Reg Goding and Fay Andrews were the winners with Audrey Clements and her partner, Vera, coming second. The prizes, which had been donated by the hotel, were presented by the Manager, Mr Ron Hough, in the conservatory. The biggest thanks must go to Reg and Fay, for without their help and organisation, none of it would have been possible. So please, bridge players, come and join us on our next trip in March.

Following that weekend, we had a return visit from the Horsham Bridge Club, with six tables, 12 a side. A very pleasant afternoon. Bridge was followed by a buffet tea supplied by the club. This is an annual event which includes a return visit to Horsham.

Results

October Pairs

- 1st Wally & Pam Lethbridge
2nd Reg Goding & Fay Andrews

This competition is for the year.
Results of the whole year, best five games.

- 1st Maurice & Jean Douse
2nd Reg Goding & Fay Andrews
3rd Wally & Pam Lethbridge.

There will be two matches per month on the second Sunday and last Sunday. We are also thinking of having a mini-congress later in 1997. All enquiries to Reg Goding on 01273 308467.

FAMILY NEWS

BIRTHS

Congratulations on the birth of:

Emily Terry on July 27th. She is the great granddaughter of Mrs Isobel Embleton of Durham, widow of *John Embleton*.

Kane Andriounas on September 10th. He is the grandson of *Fred Field* of Chapel St Leonards, Lincolnshire.

Georgina Taylor on November 5th. She is the granddaughter of *Cliff and Phyllis Fisher of Ower*, nr Romsey, Hampshire.

WEDDINGS

Congratulations to:

Mary and David Wozniak on September 24th. Mary is the daughter of *Tom and Audrey Gaygan* of North Harrow, Middlesex.

Penny and David Johnson on October 4th. Penny is the granddaughter of *Fred and Elsie Galway* of Sandbach, Cheshire.

SILVER ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations to:

Jock and Betty Forbes-Stewart of Sprowston, Norwich on December 3rd.

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Norman and Eileen Killick of Weybridge, Surrey on November 23rd.

Bill and Joan Shea of Brampton, Huntingdon on December 28th.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to:

Louise, aged 23, on being crowned this year's Miss Brighton and Hove. She is the granddaughter of *Bob and Grace Forshaw* of Bognor Regis, East Sussex.

Tim Chapman who captained the Bedfordshire Schools Representative XI team in Calcutta in January. He is the grandson of *Gerry Brereton* of Croydon, Surrey.

Mrs Mary Marsh, wife of St Dunstaner *Bill Marsh* of Hartlepool, Cleveland, on winning second prize in a poetry competition. It was held by *The Northern Cross* - a Catholic newspaper for the diocese of Hexham & Newcastle. Her entry was titled *Christmas thoughts of long ago*.

ERRATUM

In the last issue we reported that the late William Kirsop was 92 years old when he died. This should have read 79 years old. We apologise for any confusion.

DEATHS

We regret to announce the death of:

Mrs Marie Yale on November 9th. She was the wife of *George Yale* of Dudley.

Mrs Mabel Aylott on December 12th. She was the wife of *Jack Aylott* of Yarm, Cleveland.

Mrs Helena Sosabowski on December 20th. She was the wife of *Dr Stanley J. Sosabowski* of Wimborne, Dorset.

Mrs Mary Worthington on January 4th. She was the wife of *Sam Worthington* of Preston, Lancashire.

Mrs Sylvia Nauman of Boscombe, Bournemouth on June 19th. She was the widow of *Anthony Nauman*.

Mrs Frances Pike of Castle Cary, Somerset on September 19th. She was the widow of *Harold Pike*.

Mrs Esther Knappe Horsham, West Sussex on November 3rd. She was the widow of *Herbert Knappe*.

Mrs Lily Thornley of Billinge, near Wigan on November 6th. She was the widow of *Thomas Thornley*.

Mrs Nancy Dodd of Coventry on November 15th. She was the widow of *Sidney Dodd*.

Mrs Jane Fry of Treforest, Pontypridd on November 15th. She was the widow of *Bert Fry*.

Mrs Mary Jones of Northfield, Birmingham on December 12th. She was the widow of *Frederick L. Jones*.

Mrs Catherine Searles of Maghull, Liverpool on December 12th. She was the widow of *Joseph Searles*.

Mrs Mary Robinson of Cookstown, Co. Tyrone on December 17th. She was the widow of *Robert Robinson*.

Mrs Jessie Dixon of Saltburn, Cleveland on December 24th. She was the widow of *Frederick Dixon*.

Mrs Barbara Cook of Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey on December 28th. She was the widow of *Norman Cook*.

Mrs Mary Duxbury of Buxton, Derbyshire on January 5th. She was the widow of *Herbert Duxbury*.

Mrs Dorothy Timiney of Sheffield on January 6th. She was the widow of *Patrick Timiney*.

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.

Wilfred Evans,

North Staffordshire Regiment

Wilfred George Evans of Hardwicke, Gloucester died on November 1st, aged 75. He served as a Corporal in the North Staffordshire Regiment from April 1939 and lost his sight as the result of an explosion in May 1944. He became a St Dunstaner in June that year and was discharged in September. Mr Evans worked in industry before retraining for telephony. His first post was in Tunbridge Wells, Kent in 1950. After three years, he moved to Derby to work with the Ministry of Labour where he trained many other telephonists. In 1966 he moved to Gloucester to join Shell-Mex & BP Ltd. He retired in 1981. Our sympathy goes to his widow, May, daughter, Sandra, and all of the family.

Levi (Joe) Kibbler,

Royal Artillery

Levi Kibbler of Oldbury, West Midlands died on November 18th, aged 74. Known as Joe, he enlisted as a Gunner with the Royal Artillery in March 1942. By the Normandy Invasion, he was in the 4th Air Landing Anti-Tank Battery and was wounded by the explosion of a mortar shell. The following October he was discharged and became a St Dunstaner. Mr Kibbler had previously worked as a capstan lathe operator and returned to his old employers, staying with them until 1983. He was a regular visitor to Ovingdean, particularly for the Sussex Racing Fortnight. Our sympathy goes to his son, Robert, daughter, Janet, and all other members of the family.

Herbert Eric Rowe,

Middlesex Regiment

Herbert Eric Rowe of Minehead died on November 27th, aged 75. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1946. On leaving school,

Mr Rowe, known as Eric, enlisted with the Middlesex Regiment, serving as a regular soldier from 1937. In 1942, he was taken prisoner of war by the Japanese. He then spent the remainder of the war in captivity. On his release, Mr Rowe was found to be suffering from malnutrition and retrobulbar neuritis which had caused the deterioration of his eyesight. Returning to the UK, he went to Ovingdean and was discharged in April 1946. After rehabilitation training, he undertook a higher education course in order to train as a physiotherapist. He obtained a post at a local hospital and ultimately became head of their physiotherapy department. He retired from this position in 1979 but continued in private practice for a number of years. He was a keen radio ham, attending many Radio Society meetings, and was a regular contributor to the St Dunstan's daily radio net. His interests included toy making and picture framing. As recently as the summer of this year, he was still involved with the local Stroke Club and was very much appreciated by the members. Our sympathy goes to his wife, Katherine, sons and daughters, Jane, Suzanna, Judy, Martin, Stephen, David and Mark and all members of the family.

John Palmer,

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve

John Fletcher Palmer of Throwleigh, Devon died on December 21st, aged 90. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1978. Before the Second World War, Mr Palmer learnt to manage 3000 head of sheep on a hill farm in Cumberland. He managed the farm for 18 years before the outbreak of war in 1939 when, at the age of 33, he joined the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. He held the rank of Flight-Lieutenant and his training, as a tail gunner, lasted just two weeks. His first leave was likewise brief - he was recalled after only two days to join 52 Squadron in France. Shortly, the expeditionary force was withdrawing to the northern French coast and Mr Palmer returned to Dover on a paddle steamer. There followed a tour in Iceland on anti-submarine patrols in Fairey Battle bombers

and finally a posting to 99 Squadron flying Wellington's from Newmarket. Whilst returning from an early bombing raid on some marshalling yards in Berlin, one of the Wellington's engines was hit. The plane crash-landed in a field in north Germany and there followed four years as a prisoner. Mr Palmer attempted to escape on three occasions. His second attempt was with the late Douglas Bader. But after a train ride and a strenuous walk, Bader realised his disappearance would soon be noticed. Rather than allow their fellow prisoners to suffer punishment, they gave themselves up. The camp guards suddenly disappeared when the war appeared to be over and the inmates headed west. Mr Palmer eventually reached Holland and from there flew back to the UK by Lancaster. In later years, he bought a croft in Sutherland, continuing his great interest in wildlife. He maintained this interest after he and his wife moved south to Devon in the early 1980's. Our sympathy goes to his wife, Susan, his stepdaughter, and all of the family.

Mary Farrant,

Royal Ordnance Factory

Mary Jane Farrant of Maesteg, Mid Glamorgan died on December 28th, aged 82. She had been a St Dunstaner since November 1944. While working on munitions at the Royal Ordnance Factory, Bridgend, she was wounded by an explosion in December 1940. After training at Church Stretton, she took a post on the domestic staff at the Royal United Hospital in Bath. In 1948, she married Eddie Farrant and, upon his discharge from the Royal Navy, they went back to Wales to make their first home in Maesteg, later moving to Bridgend where Mr Farrant worked for the local railway company. When Mrs Farrant began suffering health problems, they moved to Weston Coney, Staffordshire to be near her family. Mr Farrant retired in 1980, and a few years later, they moved to live with her sister in Torquay. Mr Farrant died suddenly in 1992. In 1994, she returned to Maesteg, making her home with her brother. Our sympathy goes to her brother, William, and all of the family.