

# St Dunstan's Review

August 1997





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Cover Picture:  
Captain Sir Ian Fraser  
enjoying a few moments  
listening to the wireless.

## From the Chairman



Welcome to Mrs Jacqueline Greer who, at the time of writing, will be joining us in mid-July to assume the duties of Head of Nursing and Residential Care at Ovingdean. She is a Registered General Nurse and has a number of years' experience as a Nursing Manager.

A warm 'thank you' to Sue Rowland at Ovingdean who stood in as temporary Head of Nursing and Residential Care from the early spring, during a rather difficult period, and who loyally disrupted her planned holiday in the cause of duty.

Welcome, too, to Mr Charles Claydon, ex-REME (25 years) who has recently been appointed Welfare Visitor for Scotland, thus completing our team of Welfare Visitors on whom so much depends.

In this connection, congratulations to Liz Hutchison who, after 20 years devoted service to St Dunstan's, has been appointed Office Manager to run the Welfare department's office at Headquarters - a crucial post.

By the time you read this I dare say many of you will be having a bit of a holiday break; I hope you have a very enjoyable one.



## NOTICE BOARD



### HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

On the occasion of Her Majesty The Queen's Official Birthday, our Chairman, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Leach, sent this message of congratulations:

"On behalf of St Dunstan's Council and our blinded ex-servicemen and women I would be grateful if you would kindly give Her Majesty The Queen our most loyal greetings on the celebration of her Official Birthday on Saturday.

We send Her Majesty all our good wishes."

Buckingham Palace replied on her behalf:

"The Queen was delighted to receive your kind message of birthday greetings.

Her Majesty has asked me to send you, St Dunstan's Council and your blinded ex-servicemen and women her thanks and warm good wishes."

### DISTRIBUTION OF FUND RAISING LEAFLETS

Until the end of November 1997 the Fund Raising department will be sending out a considerable number of fund raising leaflets to homes around Great Britain. When undertaking a distribution of this size it is inevitable that a leaflet might be delivered to the house of a St Dunstaner or St Dunstaner widow. This is because the leaflets are not individually addressed, but are distributed to all houses in a given postcode area.

Please be assured that if you receive a St Dunstan's leaflet we are not asking YOU for a donation.

Neil Swan

### DATES TO REMEMBER

1997

Archery Week September 7th - 14th  
Physiotherapists Get Together September 26th - 28th

1998

Masonic Weekend February 28th - March 1st  
Ex-Prisoners of War Reunion April 16th - 20th

### ST DUNSTAN'S COMPUTER MEETING OCTOBER 9th - 10th 1997

A reminder that the above takes place at Ovingdean. Please book your accommodation immediately if you have not already done so.

Sight & Sound will be demonstrating their latest wares, including reading aids, on Thursday. There will be a dinner in the evening.

Ray Hazan  
HQ

### CASSETTE LIBRARY

The soundtrack of the history of steam, titled *The Train Now Departing* is available from the Public Relations department at HQ. Please quote G62 when enclosing three blank C90 cassettes.

### HANG-GLIDING/MICROLIGHTING

The Leicester Microlighting Club would like to offer visually impaired people the opportunity to try hang-gliding/microlighting. For more details contact: Jan Edgcombe on 01530 510080.

### DERBY SWEEPSTAKE WINNERS 1997

We congratulate all of the following on their success on the Derby Sweepstake.

Mrs Leslie of Seaforth was a winner twice over, receiving £322.92. She drew the winning horse, Benny the Dip and also the 3rd prize for Romanov.

Mrs Mendham of Ilford won £107.64 coming in 2nd with Silver Patriarch.

The following all received a starters prize of £10.76:

Mrs M. Jerome of Cookham, Mr H. Frost of Moston, Mrs E. Reeves of Dresden, Mrs S. Ostle of Cockermouth, Mrs E. Gomez of Worthing, Mr J. Humphrey of Belfast, Mr J. Harris of Reading, Mrs R. Lee of London, Mr R. Page of Bournemouth and Mrs B. Tickner of Worthing.



## STORY COMPETITION RESULTS

St Dunstaners, wives and widows were under starters orders - the race was on! Winnings were 1st £60, 2nd £25 and runners up £5. Lester Piggott, the world famous jockey, and his wife were our scrutineers and they had the job of deciding the outcome. The results and comments are as follows:

1st. *AMBITION* by Ted Bunting of Scarborough. "It was a nice change to see things from the horse's point of view and we loved the last line."

2nd. *IT'S NOT HOW YOU START* by Edward Ryder of Stamford. "A colourful tale, with a lot of drama. In racing terms, probably a neck behind the winner."

3rd. *HAPPY BIRTHDAY* by Margaret Bingham of Ovingdean. "Plenty of colour and atmosphere in this one too. A neck behind the second."

4th. *ONE GOOD STEED DESERVES ANOTHER* by Vivien Jerome of Cookham, Berkshire. "A cautionary tale with a happy ending. Half a length away from the third."

5th. *HOPPY* by Doreen Thompson of Tenerife. "A bit behind the first four, not because of lack of quality or content, on the contrary it is a rousing tale. But strictly speaking, it is not so much about racing as about showing and gymkhanas."

We are indebted to Mr and Mrs Piggott for being our judges this year and our congratulations go to all who took part. Ted Bunting's winning tale is published on page 20.

## NEW TALKING CALENDAR ALARM CLOCK

by Ray Hazan

Cobolt Systems have recently launched a new battery operated table top talking Calendar Alarm Clock. The device measures 5 1/2 x 3 x 1 1/4 inches high. There is no visual display and the speech is a natural male voice (my ex-adjutant, as it happens!).

On the top are four buttons: the back left (square shaped) gives day, date and year while the right back talks the time.

The front buttons (diamond shaped) set the modes, which are numerous. Time and alarm settings, volume, as well as a choice of 11 alarm sounds from

electronic to a range of pets (rooster, dog, cat and cuckoo). The time may be spoken in figures, i.e. 2:05 pm or in words 'five past two'.

The clock will automatically compensate for Greenwich Mean Time or British Summer Time if desired. All button presses are spoken, which makes setting the clock relatively easy.

The clock costs £29.95 including a PP3 battery and postage. It may be obtained from:

Cobolt Systems Ltd,  
The Old Mill House,  
Mill Road,  
Reedham,  
Norwich, Norfolk, NR13 3TL.  
Tel: 01493 700172

## BLOCKBUSTER TO STOCK AUDIO-DESCRIBED VIDEOS

Blockbuster, the video rental chain, has introduced audio-described films in ten stores around the country. The videos contain additional narration that fills in visual aspects of the movie such as costumes, facial expressions and scenery.

The participating Blockbuster stores are:

Birmingham (Cape Hill), Croydon (George Street), Edinburgh (Corstorphine), Glasgow (Partick Shopping Centre), Leeds (Anchor Street), London (Edgware and Clapham Junction), Manchester (Fallowfield), Sunderland (Retail Park), and Taunton (Country Walk).

A selection of 28 titles from the RNIB's range of audio described videos will be available, including:

*Crimson Tide* - an action thriller starring Denzel Washington and Gene Hackman onboard an American nuclear submarine facing disaster.

Walt Disney's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* - animated version of Victor Hugo's tragic tale.

*Aladdin and the King of Thieves* - Disney sequel to the Arabian fairy tale, featuring the voice of Robin Williams as the Genie.

*Tall Tale* - starring Patrick Swayze as cowboy legend Pecos Bill who saves a family farm from a greedy land grabber.

## SHARE YOUR HOLIDAY EXPERIENCES WITH OTHERS

If you have stayed in a hotel or guesthouse in the last few years which you would be happy to recommend to other blind or partially sighted people, the Royal National Institute for the Blind want to hear from you!

RNIB's Holiday Service is collecting information to produce a unique hotel guidebook by visually impaired people, for visually impaired people. It will focus on UK accommodation and aims to explain why the featured hotels were particularly enjoyable.

Perhaps staff were friendly and accommodating without being intrusive, or the hotel had good access to public transport or guide dog facilities. Whatever the reason, by sharing your experiences you can help others have an enjoyable holiday.

Please send (by early October) the name and location of the hotel, together with a brief explanation of why you enjoyed your stay, to: Frank Dunne, RNIB Holiday Service, 224 Great Portland Street, London W1N 6AA or telephone 0171 388 1266 extn. 2319. Everyone who sends a recommendation will receive a free copy of the guidebook.

## NEW COIN

A new 50p coin will be introduced into circulation on September 1st. Like the current 50p, the new coin will have seven sides and carry images of the Queen and Britannia. However, it will be made of a copper and nickel alloy (like 5p and 10p coins).

## WHY YOU SHOULD MAKE YOUR WILL

There are many good reasons for making or updating a Will. This will give you peace of mind as you can make provision for your partner, family and friends, and be sure your wishes will be carried out.

It is sensible to consult a solicitor when you make a Will, as he/she will be able to give proper independent advice, if requested, whilst remaining neutral when taking your instructions.

A great deal of distress can be caused to those left behind, as perhaps the saddest part is that the valued possessions of a person who dies 'intestate' (not having made a Will) may not go to the person their owner would have wished.

It is sensible and practical to make a Will, and this

## 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: Bernard Blacker, Saltdean, East Sussex**  
I have just spent 2 weeks at Ovingdean. I want to congratulate and thank Paul James and all the PBK staff for the food they are serving up. There is a good variety, it is hot and delicious. Thank you very much and well done lads and lassies.

**From: Norman Hopkins, Heath, Cardiff**  
I feel I must take issue with Neil Swan's appeal in the June *Review* to St Dunstaners and St Dunstaners' widows to attend the Armistice Parade. I thought it was a most insensitive and thoughtless approach and lacked consideration of our feelings.

I have attended the ceremony for many years simply to pay respect and honour those comrades who have died. It is a most meaningful and moving experience and I would hate to think of it being treated simply as a television commercial!

We have always realised that the Cenotaph parade has been the prime PR exercise for St Dunstan's but let us accept this as a bonus and attend the parade for the right reasons.

will bring you peace of mind - YOU have decided what happens to everything that is yours.

It is desirable that you should put your affairs in order, whatever your age. Are you sure yours are?

Please do not forget St Dunstan's may help you with the costs of a new Will/Codicil by offering you a grant towards either the full cost or the maximum grant allowed. We are here to help you when needed, and your family when necessary, and will be more than willing to do so when the need arises.

If you would like any help, please write or telephone Mrs Eileen Mobsby, Wills & Trust Co-ordinator at Ovingdean on 01273 307811 extn:3211 who will be pleased to assist you.



# Life and Times of Ovingdean

by Margaret Bingham and Ron Cattell

After the glorious weather of early spring it changed for the worse at the beginning of May and came as a bitter shock to the system. One day in short sleeves, open-necked shirts and summer dresses, the next in coats and scarves. 'Fickle' aptly describes our weather doesn't it? Some 'WIT' is reported as having said that the great variation in our weather was a contributory factor in making we British into such placid people. He could be right!

## WINE TASTING

A visit to Croft Herb Garden in Kent was a very enjoyable day's outing as was the trip to the English Wine Centre in Alfreton. An introductory talk was given explaining the various kinds of wine and which vineyards they originated from. As we tasted each one we were asked to give our opinion and preference, it was very interesting and informative.

## GOOD SEATING

With regard to our article on Ovingdean in the June Review I wish to point out that a seat can be removed to make room for a wheelchair in the Chrysler Voyager. It is an extremely comfortable car as is the new coach. We had the opportunity to ride in it the other day when we were invited to the Princess Marina RAF convalescent home at Rustington for tea and entertainment. This is an annual event organised by the "Not Forgotten" Association and is a most enjoyable occasion.

The coach has good seating accommodation and the run was very smooth, as wheelchair users sitting at the rear could testify to. At the back of each seat is a sturdy handgrip, a small drop down table (with two round recesses for glasses and cups) and at the bottom is a net bag for sundries. The toilet area is constructed in such a way as to be usable by all.

Other facilities such as the tea and coffee dispensers were not in use at this time, but hopefully soon will be. The upholstery is a dappled grey with brightly patterned material on the seats and reflected elsewhere in the coach. The curtains and headrest covers are royal blue. We know the colour details are not much use to we St Dunstaners, but we think the knowledge that our surroundings are attractive is important to our well being.

## OFF TO THE RACES

The weather for the bank holiday at the end of May was still very sunny and some went to the races at Fontwell. Residents of Nursing Care 3 purchased their own food and picnicked in Hove Park where a carnival was in progress.

On a beautiful sunny day the 47th Regiment Royal Artillery invited us to an open day at Thorney Island. We also had a boat trip on the Chichester Canal, but the weather had changed and it rained hard. There were no problems getting into and out of the boat thanks to one or two members of the Chichester Canal Boat Society and our own staff. We found it a pleasant and relaxing experience.

A few of us went to a pub in Seaford for a quiet relaxing afternoon, just to sit in the warm sun and have a glass of what we fancied. Adjacent to the pub was a church and it had been noted there was a wedding going on. Suddenly the peace and tranquility was shattered by a peal of bells. This went on and on and ..... So much for a peaceful afternoon!

## WEDDING BELLS FOR DAWN

On May 3rd, Dawn Hurrell, a Senior Care Assistant at Ovingdean, married Quentin Thorp at Hove Registry Office. Several Care Assistants, Nursing Care staff and two St Dunstaners were present.

## Handy hints

### Sending a fax by the Internet

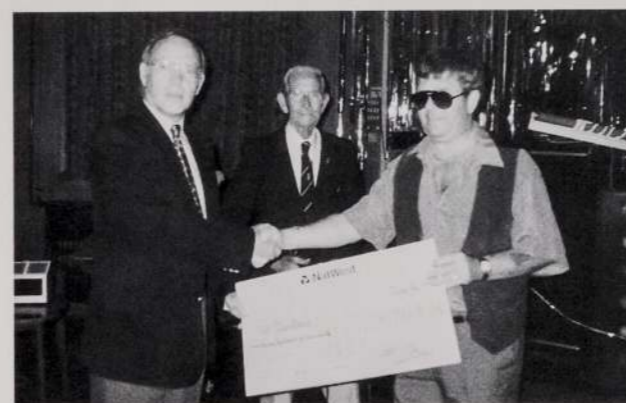
Your fax may be written as an E-mail letter, but with the following address, thus costing a local call charge:

Christian name (underline symbol)surname@(country code) (area code omitting the first 0) (fax number).idd.tpc.int

Example: ray\_hazan@44 171 2626199.iddd.tpc.int

This will result in a cover page printing with your E-mail address and advertising material about the Demon provider being included and your message on page two.

# Message from Head of Fund Raising



Don Planner presents a cheque to Major-General Keeling, Member of St Dunstan's Council.

On Saturday, May 17th, St Dunstaner Richard Bingley ran a coffee morning, which included a bring and buy and raffle in aid of St Dunstan's. This magnificent effort raised £820.17. The beginning of June saw a presentation of a cheque by St Dunstaner Don Planner, to Council Member Major-General Andrew Keeling, CB, CBE, as a result of Don's climb up Mont Blanc. In total, Don has now raised £7,107.33 as a result of the climb. Also in June, we received a cheque for £100 as a result of St Dunstaner Joe Humphrey's, fund raising efforts, which brings his running total to £8,290. Finally we continue to receive various donations and legacies from St Dunstaners and St Dunstaner Widows, for which we are most appreciative.

With regard to the Cenotaph weekend, I am pleased to report that there will be some 300 attending the weekend to pay respect to, and to honour their comrades who have died. This year the St Dunstan's contingent will include 50 of our widows representing their husbands.

April, May and June have seen the beginning of our distribution of fund raising packs to the general public. We have now recruited over 32,000 supporters and hope to triple this number by the end of the year. I cannot stress strongly enough the depth of feeling for St Dunstaners found amongst the general public, but as an example I include an extract from just one of the hundreds of letters we receive:

"Many appeals come through my letterbox - some I have to ignore, but not this one. I was just six years

old when the First World War started so I don't remember very much about it. But last November when I watched the Remembrance Day Parade on TV I was very moved to see men and women from St Dunstan's, some in wheelchairs, joining in the march past the Cenotaph to honour their comrades who died so many years ago. I felt very humble. So I am happy to send my small donation of £25 - I wish I could afford more - and I hope your appeal will be successful. You deserve the best."

Neil Swan



A little girl had fun with face painting and raised funds for St Dunstan's.

## PAINTING A SMILE FOR ST DUNSTAN'S

As a result of a fund raising letter sent by the Fund Raising department and signed by Sir Henry, a request for photos of St Dunstaners skiing, together with literature was made by Denise von Roretz of the Army Sport Board (Germany) to the Public Relations department.

The following letter has been received:

Please find cheque enclosed for £75, this being the amount raised by myself during the Rhine Army Summer Show.

During our BA(G) Sport Board Display I had a small corner advertising your work and made my monies face painting. I hope this small sum will go towards your skiing for the blind as being a skier myself I know what thrills it can bring.



# THE DROVERS WALK

by Colin Oakes



They said I was mad, they said a lot of other things and being totally deaf it was just as well I couldn't hear anyway. No I am not talking about the Stratford walking week. This time my insanity took me to Llanwrtyd Wells in mid-Wales for 25 miles of arduous, laborious and difficult hill walking.

The route this year was very different from the walk last year and so was the weather. Last year, as it was the first time on the walk, I felt I should only attempt 15 miles, however, as a veteran I decided to go for it and do the 25 mile route.

The first two hours into the walk was fairly easy. Roads and farm tracks over open hill-side, but it was very wet and windy not a bit like a June day at all. The second control point was the "Spite Inn" where one could get a pint, but as it was less than ten miles into the walk and more than fifteen still to do I decided to have only one before continuing.

We were following the "A" route which went along more roads and then across country. Down through steep woods which I completed on my back. The walking then varied between very narrow paths and very wide fire-breaks. At one point we were rock climbing, without the rocks, on a very steep slope. One slip would have sent me 500ft down to the river which was in full flood.

Back on the top of yet another mountain we came across an MOD Farm No 8. It had stopped raining for a moment and I looked at my boots to find they were foaming and steam was coming out of the lace holes. The footpath went straight through the camp and we cadged a drink of water from the Welsh Guards (TA). I did not know it at the time but was told later that there was a lot of small arms fire going on in the distance.

Several more miles of road walking and then 2-3 miles over very rough and wet ground - one would not have got much wetter if one had gone swimming! We missed the trail markers and came to a deep river. We turned left and walked up river along the bank till we came to a bridge which we crossed. We were back on route again.

After about a mile or so we came once more upon civilisation. While I went back to the control/starting

point, unknown to me, George, my escort, had stopped off at the supermarket and he found me having a well earned pint in the pub.

Our time was 9hrs 10mins at an average speed of 3.6 mph. A time I am sure we can improve on but we were NOT the last to finish. Training and preparation was the St Dunstan's walking holiday and then a two week stay at Ovingdean where I worked out in the gym for an hour a day.

The cost was £132 for the hotel and transport. The reward was a great sense of achievement, hot baths, several pints in the bar - with no last orders being called until the early hours of the morning. Also a certificate to prove that I did do the walk.

My thanks to everyone who helped at home and at St Dunstan's, even those who questioned my sanity.

## REUNION UPDATE

St Dunstaners, wives, husbands, widows and widowers have enjoyed meeting up with all their old friends once again. It has also given them the opportunity to meet with Members of St Dunstan's Council, Headquarters and area staff.

The following reunions have taken place:

Birmingham on May 14th. Mr Norman Hopkins presided, with 11 St Dunstaners and 8 widows attending.

London on May 31st. Presiding was Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Leach. Sixteen St Dunstaners and 18 widows attended.

Newcastle on June 3rd and Leeds on June 4th. Mr Colin Beaumont-Edmonds presided over both reunions. In total 9 St Dunstaners, 15 widows and one widower attended.

Nottingham on June 11th. John Loughran, Head of the Welfare department represented Headquarters staff. Four St Dunstaners and 8 widows attended.

Cardiff on June 18th. Mr Norman Hopkins presided, with 6 St Dunstaners and one widow attending.

# The Sir Arthur Pearson Association of the War Blinded 75th Anniversary, Toronto, Canada

by Ray Hazan

Sir Arthur Pearson, our Founder, has influenced all our lives and none more so than a Canadian St Dunstaner, the late Lieutenant Colonel Edwin Baker, CC, OBE, MC, Croix de Guerre, BSc, LLD, who lost his sight in Belgium in 1915. Colonel Baker returned to Canada during the First World War, and together with a fellow blinded veteran, Alexander Viets, founded the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) in 1918. The Sir Arthur Pearson Club of Blinded Soldiers and Sailors was formed in April, 1922 and renamed The Sir Arthur Pearson Association of the War Blinded (SAPA). Whilst the CNIB has continued to provide rehabilitation and training for Canadian ex-Service blind, SAPA in close cooperation with the Department of Veterans Affairs has cared for the family of the war blind.

Toronto in the province of Ontario, played host to the 28 veterans and 8 widows who attended their 75th anniversary celebrations from May 22nd- 25th. Their President, and only lady veteran, Anne Michielin welcomed the group who had travelled from far and wide. In some cases the distance travelled was greater than from London, for such is the vastness of the over 9 million square kilometres of Canada. The programme had been organised by John and Marjorie Chatwell, who had visited London in 1972 on the occasion of Lord Fraser's 50th year as Chairman of St Dunstan's.

SAPA is run by the members themselves with a part time office in Ottawa. Their Executive Director is Jim Sanders, recently promoted to Vice-President, Client Services and Technology at CNIB.

Most impressive was SAPA's help to other blind besides veterans. Each year they award some 50 scholarships to blind students and after the opening, members were updated on such matters.

During the second day, a visit was paid to the Parliament building in 'downtown' Toronto at the

kind invitation of the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. The Honourable Hilary Weston, who hails originally from Ireland, greeted everyone individually and a copy of *Blind Man's Vision* was presented to her on behalf of St Dunstan's.

On Saturday, beneath a smiling sun, we visited the town of Newmarket, some 50 miles NE of Toronto. Some of the 51,000 local community turned out for a Remembrance Service held at the War Memorial. SAPA members were extremely smartly turned out in blazers, flannels, maroon berets and medals. A guard was provided by Cadets, a bugler sounded the Last Post and a wreath was laid. The party was later entertained by the Newmarket Veteran's Association, which included a song by a 98 year old Newmarket First War veteran. A sea shanty of questionable virtue raised much laughter.

That evening saw the final banquet at which there were many old friends from the area, Verna (Johnny) Johnson Ritchie and others well remember their Church Stretton days.

On the final day, the group paid a visit to the Canadian Forces Base at Borden, one of the oldest training camps in Canada. Today, it is used for the training of Support services, such as Intelligence, Signals, Logistics, etc. We were served an excellent lunch in the Officers' Mess, followed by a tour around their military museum, which displayed many vehicles, including a British Matilda Bren carrier.

The anniversary celebrated 75 years of achievement. What stood out was the warm, friendly and extremely hospitable family atmosphere. Roberta and I were accepted as part of that family, despite our generation gap. Many told us how they enjoy reading the *Review* and keeping in touch with our affairs. Their cheerfulness and welcome demonstrate the affinity between our two countries. It was a privilege to have taken part in this historical event. May SAPA prosper for another 75 years!



# KOREA

by Richard Bingley

I have the unusual experience of being one of the few people mobilised for the second time as a Territorial Soldier. In 1939, I was a member of 1/8th Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment and on mobilisation my unit was one of the first Territorial units to join the British Expeditionary Force in France. In May 1940, I was wounded by mortar fire and evacuated to the United Kingdom. I then became, after I recovered from my injuries, a founder member of the 11th SAS which was quite exciting and satisfying. In 1942, I was commissioned into the Parachute Regiment. We parachuted into Sicily with the 1st Para Battalion and during the capture of a Pill-box I received a gunshot wound to my right hand. Then, in 1944, we parachuted into Arnhem where I received multiple wounds and was taken prisoner of war. Later I was to discover that my injuries would prevent me from being a father so marriage was out of the question as the girls all wanted to have children at some time in their married lives.

On demobilisation I studied economics, accountancy and commercial law and obtained well paid employment but I had no job-satisfaction and was extremely lonely as a single person. In 1949, I attended an Airborne Day display at Manchester Airport and met my old Colonel of the 11th SAS, he had been promoted to General. When he saw me he said "I am glad to see you Bingley, will you rejoin the Territorial Army and fill an appointment as one of my Brigade Intelligence Officers?" I explained that I was medically down-graded but he told me to forget about that so I was awarded a Territorial commission as a Captain in the South Staffordshire Regiment. Later I was to attend Staff College Camberley to be upgraded to Divisional Intelligence Officer and obtained a most satisfactory report whereupon a visiting General from the Ministry of Defence said "Well done Bingley, I want you to volunteer to serve in Korea, the British Commonwealth Division requires a Divisional Intelligence Officer." I said "Yes, certainly." and was mobilised 48 hours later. It was then that a muddle occurred, instead of the Royal Air Force transporting me to Korea by air I was, in error, instructed to sail from Southampton by troop ship. Five and a half weeks later I reported to



Ready for action! Captain Richard Bingley, 2 I/C B Coy 1st Bn The Welch Regiment on Hill 355 North Korea in 'F' Echlon Area, May 1952.

the British Commonwealth Division Headquarter in Korea to discover that I was no-longer required for Intelligence duties, but would I mind serving with the Infantry Battalion? I agreed and was posted as 2 I/C of B Company 1st Battalion of the Welch Regiment.

After two and a half years of war in Korea a strange peace had settled over the Valley of the Samichon for the forces facing each other had reached a stalemate. They had settled down to war of ambush and intermittent testing of each others strengths. Both sides were well dug in on the hills either side of the River Samichon some two miles apart. Two Chinese Mongolian Brigades faced the British 27th Brigade.

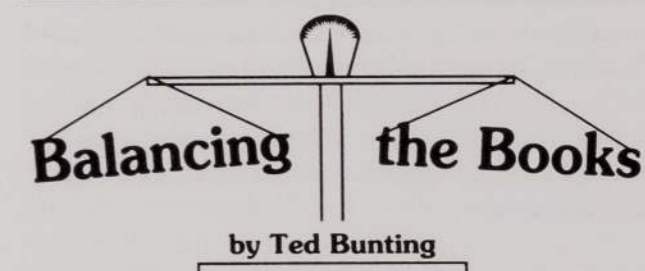
Within two weeks of joining 1 Welch the Battalion were posted to a part of Hill 355 known as 'Little Gibraltar' it was the main feature in the Dakota line on the River Samichon. Chinese patrolling was very brisk and on a great scale and for a month we were harassed in our forward positions, but the young

Welsh National Servicemen together with experienced NCO's proved to be excellent material and very brave lads, and in no uncertain terms more than a match for the Chinese, who were then forced over to the side of the river, on many occasions, and we had a considerable number of casualties, as the Chinese did too. In addition to my duties as 2 I/C of B Company I also had the task of occasionally escorting two South Korean agents over the River Samichon to proceed north to Pyongyang. So with the two agents and a third South Korean as an escort we would pursue to the river where there was a large tree on the bank. The escort would tie one end of a rope round the tree and the other end round my waist, and once I had entered the water to cross the other side he would unravel his rope so that I could make progress to the other side. On arriving at the far end I would undo the rope, explore the bank and when satisfied, the coast was clear, I would return to the rope, give two tugs and hold the rope taut so that the two agents could cross over and join me. They would then take off their wet shoes and socks, I would put them round my neck, they put dry shoes and socks on, and then we would proceed to a deep Chinese tank trap, which I had the task of exploring. When satisfied all was clear, I would take the South Korean agents round the tank trap and would whisper "Ki-o-tsukete" which means take care. I would shake hands with them and then send them on their way. I would then have the invidious task of making my own way back to the river. It was a nerve racking business being on ones own. You curse every twig that cracks, every movement that frightens birds, the noise of bull frogs, which make an infernal din, and also the wretched mosquitos, which would repeatedly bite you.

Fortunately each time prior to leaving the British Line I would have visited the 5th Inniskilling Dragoon Guards Officer at his tank, explain what I was going to do and he would promise to fire some shells over the enemy side and also fire heavy machine guns in order to keep Chinese or North Korean heads down, but the noise of the gun fire would help to drown any noise I would make on my return journey to the river. When I participated on the reconnaissance patrols I had the good fortune to have a most excellent Corporal who had volunteered to accompany me on the patrols. His sight and hearing was perfect and I found him a great asset and he also carried my radio. On our last patrol the task was to locate a Chinese observation post which was directing mortar fire onto our main supply route, rendering the post unusable by day and only usable

by night. By good fortune we investigated the sound of digging and heard the unintelligible language going on, and we found what we were looking for on Hill 227 'The Kipongle Spur'. B Company 1 Welch attacked the hill at 02.20 hours on Sunday, June 23rd 1952. Succeeding in capturing and holding the hill for about 4 hours and destroying the Observation Post and killing 14 of the Chinese soldiers. Then a mortar bombardment from the enemy surrounding the position occurred. So Battalion Headquarters ordered an evacuation. We had three killed plus our Forward Observation Post Officer and 26 wounded. I received multiple gunshot and shrapnel wounds, I was hit on the face and nose, lost my left eye and it was years later that my damaged right eye let me down.

Thankfully, St Dunstan's, with their splendid staff, came to my rescue for which I will always be most grateful.



## The Wench is Dead

Author: Colin Dexter  
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Duration: 5.75hrs  
Catalogue No: 8423

This is a detective story with a difference; an ageing Chief Inspector is receiving hospital treatment for a gastric ulcer and he reads an account of a court case in the 19th century in which the crew of a barge travelling from Liverpool to London were convicted of the murder of a young woman who was their passenger. But to the policeman, the facts so far as he could ascertain them, just didn't "feel right", and from his hospital bed he "re-opened the file" as it were, with some surprising results.

Who-dunnits of course, are not to everyone's taste but this one at least has two things to recommend it - it is very easy listening, which is always plus on the entertainment side, and it is a mystery which is not too difficult to solve. So not only will you enjoy listening to the story but you'll have the satisfaction of being faster than the great detective, Inspector Morse.



# TROOPING THE COLOUR

**Terry Walker surveys the pageantry at Horse Guards Parade during the Queen's Birthday celebrations**

It's a long time since I cherished a pair of 'bulled boots'. The hours of preparation, safeguard in use and pride of ownership, all came flooding back as I walked onto Horse Guards Parade last Saturday, June 14th.

The parade ground is used most of the year as a car park for people working in government offices and is notorious as a very uneven surface, making it quite difficult for the Guards to maintain straight lines when marching in extended columns. As if that was not enough for the Queen's men to contend with; this year someone who is either bearing a massive grudge against the Guards, or possesses no military knowledge, has seen fit in their infinite wisdom to cover the parade ground with a considerable layer of Pea Shingle (small pebbles). This I am sure is fine for the horses of The Household Cavalry and Boy Scouts with their marline-spikes for the removal of stones from the said hooves. But to march through a layer of pebbles!

Bending down to confirm my suspicions of Pea Shingle long before the start, I felt very sorry for the Queen's men and their boots. However, I believe the Guardsmen themselves may have a few choice words to say on this subject!

It was F Company of the Scots Guards who 'trooped' the Colour this year. The whole thing went like a dream. Pat and I were both enthralled by it all. People we spoke to remarked on the Queen's obvious enjoyment of this, her official birthday celebration. "During her inspection she seems to look at every man on parade," a remark I overheard afterwards. My enjoyment came from the comparison of the various Sergeant Majors' voices. Some were very clear, others sounded as though they were already overworked.

The forty-seven salvos from the Royal Horse Artillery's field guns in Green Park seemed interminable, what with that, the three wonderful Military bands and all the shouting of orders, I can tell you there was plenty of atmosphere.

Only a very small point, but I was a little

disappointed not to hear a full Pipe Band on parade. Pipes were there, but only a detachment with the Scots Guards. I really enjoy listening to Major Pipe Bands. When the Queen went off parade, with F Company and her Horse Guards, I was pleased to hear the Pipers of the Scots Guards band strike up with *Highland Laddie* as they entered The Mall. It was of course accompanied by loud cheering from the waiting crowds.

When the last soldiers had left we followed them back up to the Palace. Gradually the crowd became very dense, edging nearer we were pressed hard from beside and behind. Not wishing to transfer this to Pat, I stood firm, planting my feet squarely and resolutely on the ground. Well, this was alright for most of the time, but suddenly, a small woman edged her shoulder against my left arm and managed to press it between me and the next man.

Only slim, I felt her shoulder blade press against my arm. Moving over, only slightly, I provided a little space for her. The next move caught me completely off guard. It is difficult to perceive exactly what shape she was, but the next instant she turned smartly away from me and a whopping big backside swung round taking me completely off my feet. I tell you, this backside was well out of proportion with the height and the size of the delicate arm which slid through in the first instance. It was, to say the least, used to great effect though!

Police were standing keeping the road clear. Pat told me two road sweeper lorries were cleaning The Mall. Well you know what these horses are like - no respect for the road at all! I firmly believe they expect to find rose bushes growing everywhere.

After the two vehicles had left, the police walked slowly across the road, followed by the crowd, climbing through the railings we edged closer and closer to the front of Buckingham Palace where, from the middle of a dense crowd, we stood waving to Her Majesty who came out onto the balcony. Finally observing the Royal Air Force fly-past; a most exciting conclusion to our attendance at The Queen's Birthday celebrations.

# THE EYE IS NOT THE ONLY GATEWAY TO THE MIND

**Lord Fraser of Lonsdale, C.H., C.B.E.**

by Ray Hazan



*Young Fraser with his sister, Betty (better known to all as Elizabeth Dacre).*

On August 30th we commemorate the 100th anniversary of the birth of Lord Fraser of Lonsdale. Born in Eastbourne, Ian Fraser moved with his family to South Africa where his father and uncles had business interests.

Ian Fraser went from Marlborough College straight into the Army via Sandhurst. On the July 23rd 1916, a month before his 19th birthday, he was attempting to knock out an enemy machine gun position on the Somme. As he rose in his trench to throw a grenade, a bullet entered his head by the right eyebrow and exited through the left cheek, robbing him of his sight, but remarkably, causing little other damage.

His rehabilitation and training started at St Dunstan's soon after and he became Sir Arthur Pearson's right hand man, charged after the war with setting up St Dunstan's After Care services. On the death of Sir Arthur in 1921, Ian Fraser, at the age of 24, took over the Chairmanship of St Dunstan's, a post he held for just over 53 years until his death in 1974.

Ian Fraser has been described as a 'Legend in his Lifetime'. He strove tirelessly for his 'war blinded friends'. The benefits he was able to gain for them had repercussions for the blind as a whole.

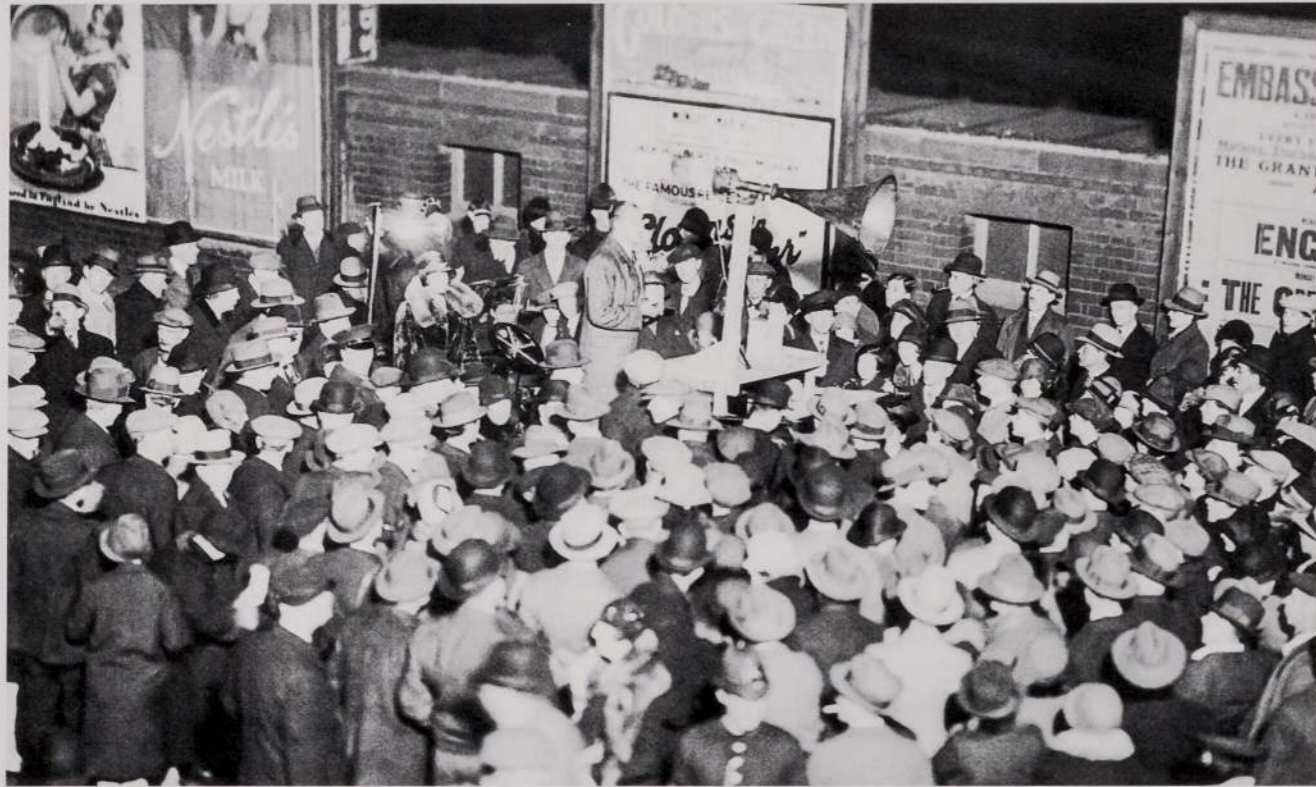
The following article is not intended as a history of his many achievements, but is rather more a study of the man himself, his feelings and philosophy on life.

"So I left South Africa in 1907 when I was 10 years old and came to England with my father. My father had a younger sister, Mrs Howard who was a widow and lived in Woking. She was not very well off and was very glad to have a nephew as a paying guest. She looked after me during my schoolboy time in England. She was a very stern and strict lady and I owe much to her for my upbringing.

I went to a preparatory school in Eastbourne called St Cyprians. I was there from 1907 to 1911 and when I was 14, I went to Marlborough College. It was a school with a very high reputation for scholarship and discipline. There was a lot of caning.

I did relatively well at Marlborough. My particular interest and the subject in which I was best was chemistry and physics. I wanted to become a scientist, and, as it happens, this knowledge and love of science stood me in good stead in later life. Otherwise I never attained the heights, never became a Prefect or a Captain, nor was I very good at games. I think I grew too fast. I was very tall and skinny (6ft 2in). On the whole I had an





Many of Ian Fraser's campaigns for public office involved speaking on the streets of London. These rallies could be quite rowdy. He is pictured talking to the electorate during a 1929 meeting.

undistinguished career at Marlborough College.

I look back on that period as a valuable one. It was a tough school and I think it is a good thing for young people to be brought up tough.

When war broke out in 1914, I was still at Marlborough. It so happened there were a few vacancies at the Royal Military college Sandhurst. Certain of the public schools were permitted to nominate boys for these places. It was not my intention to be a Regular Officer, but I became one by this accident. This had no great effect upon my life because I was soon out of the Army."

Some 6 weeks after arriving in France, Fraser was back in London.

"The hospital (No. 2 London General Hospital) was not used to dealing with blind people. Because blindness of both eyes was a very serious matter, the individual was, therefore, a very serious patient. The consequence of this was that kindly Sisters and nurses came and washed us in bed and orderlies brought us urine bottles, bedpans and came to shave us. But after a few days we discussed this and came to the conclusion that there was no reason in the world why we should not begin to do something

for ourselves. So we set about it and very soon we did do things for ourselves; the first lesson in independence.

Having doubted the validity of psychology here is a bit of personal philosophy: When I was eighteen years old in the trenches in France, I shaved with an open razor, commonly called a cut-throat. Often one had to shave without a mirror so that one learned to do it by feel. Partly out of habit and partly, I suspect, out of vanity to show the nurse in the hospital, where I lay, that I could use a cut-throat razor without being able to see and without cutting my throat. I shaved with it and I stuck to it for over fifty years. Over and over again I told people that it was superior to any other way of shaving, quicker and easier and I firmly believed this to be true. Only a month ago my cut-throat was not available so I borrowed a Gillette and I have used it ever since.

I have not the slightest doubt that the Gillette gives me a quicker and better shave. This is not because my hand is shaky or because I have lost my skill, but simply because it is a better invention and the modern blade is extraordinarily good.

This just goes to show that even an old Conservative can change his mind and his habits. Perhaps the truth

is that we should never get too old to change."

A year after his election to the Chairmanship of St Dunstan's, he tackled the political fence - into the London County Council at 25, and into the House of Commons at 27, with 28 years ahead of him as an MP and sixteen more in the House of Lords, fighting for ex-Servicemen and women whatever Government was in office.

He recalls canvassing: "Those were the days when outdoor meetings on street corners were much in vogue. I used to hold exceedingly rowdy meetings at street corners with a loudspeaker to help me. Hecklers generally come to the front of a meeting and shout at the speakers. The thing to remember is that the bulk of the audience is behind them and does not hear their heckling to the same extent.

On one occasion in St Pancras, I was talking from the back of a motor car with a loudspeaker. I had a crowd of 2 - 300 listening and interrupting. At the front of the meeting were some determined young men who tried to upset my vehicle and the loudspeaker by force. My chauffeur engaged them and beat them off with the help of a stranger who came to his aid. A Police Sergeant and Constable stood by and after the meeting was over, I went over to them and said, "Thank you very much for coming to the meeting. I quite understand that you did not intervene because the brawling had not developed into a riot. 'By the way,' I said, 'who was the chap that helped my chauffeur?' The Police Sergeant told me his name and that he was a burglar, who had been in prison once or twice, and was very well known to them. I asked why he had come to my aid. 'Well Sir,' replied the Sergeant, 'He is a tough chap who does not mind a fight and burglars is always Conservatives!'

I remember thinking there is a lot of sense in that. There would probably not be much to burgle if there were no Conservatives!"

Ian Fraser wrote of blindness:

"Blindness is regarded by the general public and by those who are newly blinded or by those who fear blindness as one of the worst possible afflictions. My own experience and that of many thousands of blinded soldiers, sailors and airmen, whom I know personally, leads me to think that it is nothing like as bad as many other disabilities. Although I agree with the general view that the thought of it and the fear of



Lord and Lady Fraser in Basutoland where his uncles founded the House of Fraser.

it is very grave. I would say that paraplegia, loss of hands, total deafness and, in quite a different field, loneliness and poverty are worse. I do not like the word 'affliction' although I have used it because it is a universal idea. I prefer to think of blindness as a handicap which, with training and the right spirit, can be overcome.

When first the doctors told me my eyes had both been destroyed, and that lifelong blindness was inevitable, I was surprised and shocked, but not immediately unhappy, probably because I did not know what it meant. As far as I can remember, I do not recall to mind ever having met a blind person - save for one old sea Captain - during the first 18 years of my life. Nor had I thought about the subject except to notice, with a feeling of pity, the blind beggar in the street; although I do not think I was greatly moved. Perhaps my principal reaction in those early days was one of curiosity because curiosity about any matter was, has always been and still is, one of my strongest impulses."

But his handicap had not always been plain sailing:

"About the end of August, I left hospital and went to spend a month's convalescence with a cousin of mine in Dorchester. I was very unhappy. I was rude to my friends and relations, short with people, disagreed with the food or said the food disagreed with me. Everything seemed wrong. But, of course, what was really wrong was that I was beginning to suffer the





Lord and Lady Fraser counting the nomination deposit of £150, ready for the General Election.

reaction of blindness; beginning to think consciously and subconsciously of what this was going to mean to me in the future; beginning to grieve about myself.

It is a common feature amongst those who have been recently blinded to find everything wrong and complain. Much patience is required amongst relations and nursing staff, who look after such people. It is not surprising that a man should be cross with life, cross with fate because almost everything irritates him.

He finds his way about, hesitantly at first, but with growing confidence. Then, he trips over something and bangs his face on a door. That makes him very irritable and cross. The awkward thing is that there is nothing that the people who are with him can do about it. They say they are sorry, but that does not make him feel any better. The trouble is that he is sorrier for himself and he has to get over it.

The best way to get over it is to be amongst other people who are also blind, many of whom have been blind for many months and have begun to whistle and be cheerful and happy. This is what you meet when you go to St Dunstan's."

Like many successful men, Ian Fraser owed much to the support of his wife Lady 'Chips' Fraser. She had been nurse, reader and guide to Sir Arthur Pearson. So it was Sir Arthur from whom Ian Fraser inherited her. He found the perfect guide. He fell in love, at the first sound of her (to use his own words), with the girl who wore the smoothest and most beautiful kid gloves that he had ever felt. She married him - he took her arm. For all his unquenchable instinct for leadership, he schooled himself to be always just a few inches behind. For all her infinite respect for him, she took each step a split second before he had to. The consequence was (to quote his words again): they lived happily ever after.

Though a legend, Ian Fraser suffered just as much from the everyday problems of blind people:

"The other day I was standing amongst a number of friends drinking a cocktail. Just as I finished my drink the party moved off into the lunch room. I did not have time to dispose of my glass nor did I know where to put it so I slipped it into my pocket. A journalist standing by commented on this and asked me jokingly if it were a habit of mine. I said that it was and that during my thirty years in Parliament there had been a number of occasions upon which this had occurred and that as a result I had quite a nice collection of crested House of Commons glasses on my mantelpiece at home. I added that this was one of the minor tragedies associated with blindness, another of which was what to do with a spent match.

I received a letter from a friend which reads as follows: 'It is the 'match problem' about which I write, and I think I can solve it for you. I never put spent matches back in the box, for as you know, this ruffles the temper. Nor do I throw them into the

The baby held by Ian Fraser, in this 1931 Regent's Park Sports Day picture, grew up to be Mrs Winifred Lloyd. Her father was St Dunstan's Evan Hughes.



hearth, for this calls forth a rebuke from my wife. I put them into the turn up of my trousers and empty them when I go to bed.'

As a rather public figure, Ian Fraser gave a dinner party most Thursday evenings. For many years he had a very distinctive bottle of real Napoleon brandy. Fraser did not drink brandy himself. One evening, a close and distinguished guest remarked that 'this is not Napoleon!' It turned out the cook thought the bottle so pretty, that she had been re-filling it with three star Hennessy! One wonders how many people over the years had been unintentionally misled?

"Staying in a friend's house the other day, I took a tube out of the cupboard above the basin, put some of the contents on my hand and rubbed it on my hair. The smell was unusual and, on asking my wife about it, I discovered it to be Colgate toothpaste instead of Truegel, my usual dressing. It did just as well and I am told looked all right. There is no moral to this story, unless it be that life is more complicated than it need be.

I myself shall stick to Truegel, because it is not only a very good hair dressing but, being a paraffin-based jelly, is most useful for greasing a fishing line and the ferrule of a fishing rod. It is much easier to rub one's fingers in one's own hair and then on to the line or rod than to carry a tube of expensive lubricant in the pocket."

Ian Fraser was a man of many parts. His interest in scientific and technical matters were directed to the benefit of all blind people. In addition, his leisure activities and interests were as widely varied as his interests at work.

Ian Fraser's flair for engineering and design inspired him, as long ago as 1919 to drive the gramophone companies for fifteen years until 'talking books' became available for the blind, and incidentally, the first long-play records for all of us.

He encouraged the introduction of Sonic spectacles into this country followed by the 'Optacon', a device that turns ordinary print into a form that can be read by touch.

He would love to canter across the veldt in the sunshine of South Africa. It was quite a responsibility for the escort for he was never on a leading rein. His grandson, Chris McDonald recalls, 'I once led him at a canter between a telegraph pole and its supporting



A fine day's fishing! This hebridian catch is proof of Ian Fraser's angling skills.

wire. A couple of feet to the left and he would have been swept off and broken up'.

He taught himself fly-fishing in his later years, and loved the sport. Norman French, St Dunstan's Research Engineer after the Second World War made an amplified 'drum head' for him to use as a target for his fly fishing practice. Thus Ian Fraser was able to 'hear' if his cast was accurate. One day Norman received a call for help, he was required to untangle a mass of fishing line which had caught up in the chimney stack. Norman was sworn to keep this a secret from Fraser's arch fishing rival - Colonel Mike Ansell, our late President and another fishing devotee St Dunstaner.

He enjoyed a game of bridge, provided no-one tried signalling under the table! "As a matter of historical interest, when I was first blinded I became Chairman of the Royal National Institute for the Blind's Inventions Committee and amongst other things, I discovered there were four or five different codes for marking braille cards, all being made by the Institute for individuals. I accordingly codified the various systems, produced the present standard system and then presses were made so that a whole pack of cards could be marked at one time instead of each card having to be marked separately by hand. Some players read the braille with a finger. I personally





*"My Basuto pony sees the way for me," said Lord Fraser while trekking in the Basutoland mountains.*

prefer to hold the cards in my right hand and feel the braille markings with my left thumb.

I remember years ago going for a pleasure trip in a private yacht in Vancouver. The fog came down and so we were marooned. Canadian St Dunstaner, Harris Turner, and his wife, were with us and we had no bridge cards. With great difficulty, I brailled an ordinary pack of cards, using a meat skewer and my thumb and, as bad as they were, we enjoyed a rubber or two."

Adversity brings out both the worst and best in mankind. At one end of the scale is the desire to reign over one's adversary, the need to expand one's territorial limits - frequently the causes of war. At the other end are the determination, courage and strength of the individual, maimed by war, to overcome his or her handicaps.

"The real handicap of blindness is in another direction - a purely physical one. Namely that it renders getting about difficult and reading aloud is slower than reading with the eyes. I overcome the former by having a car and organising my movements with precision and the latter by having read to me only what is necessary and making up time by dictating matter quickly. From my experience, and it is backed up by my blinded soldier friends, I can say that the blind man does not ordinarily live in a world of darkness. The totally blind of course, see nothing in a sense that there are no pictures of objects photographed on the retina and carried by the optic nerve to the sight centre of the brain for translation. But this does not mean that things always look black. My horizon, apart from any particular picture which I might conjure up in my mind's eye, is a pleasant and rosy one, rather like what I remember seeing in the

old days when I looked up at the sun with my eyelids closed. The phrase 'things look black' has its applications to the blind. I went through a state of depression, as no doubt, did most of my comrades, when soon after being wounded, we found ourselves with nothing to do and, so far as we knew, no hope for the future.

This was only a passing phase for most of us for we soon came under the influence of St Dunstan's and there learned that the 'eye is not the only gateway to the mind'. There was much interest left in the world if we had the will and acquired the knowledge to find it. But while it lasted, the darkness was very real indeed. The things then were not only black physically, but they looked black mentally and I can well remember imagining myself surrounded by this horrible, impenetrable darkness, which is so often supposed to envelope the world of the blind. Even in ordinary speech, the words 'look' and 'see' have both a physical and psychological meaning. 'Things look black' meaning the situation is difficult. 'I see' meaning 'I understand' illustrates the point.

Those of us who have seen the world, even though it may be as long as 12 or 15 years ago, have stored up visual impressions, which can be recalled at will and which apply with modifications to the scenes of today. To take a very simple illustration; during a recent cold spell, I recall walking from my office to my house in a slight snow storm. I immediately saw my house and garden covered with snow and the snow flakes falling. Maybe my picture was a lot more pleasant than the reality for where I imagined beautiful white snow, there was probably slush. That was not wholly a disadvantage. The telephone rings, I put out my hand to the table where I know the instrument is. I subconsciously form a picture in my mind of these objects. I am currently filling my pipe and I have a visual impression of the tobacco. As I put it in, I suspect my nail is dirty and I wonder if it is.

These are trivial things, but they indicate that whatever it is out of doors or indoors, wherever I am or whatever I am doing, my mind makes pictures out of the sensations brought to it, not by the eye, but by the other senses.

Many blind people do not sleep well and I share this experience particularly when I am overworked. This may be to a certain extent, a physical phenomenon. For though my daily round does not differ much from that of any other sedentary worker, I probably move

about less quickly and walk less far to and from the office than one who can see and is engaged in precisely the same activities. It is also, I am sure, partly a matter of the mind. There is something suggestive and restful of sleep about the act of closing the eyes and turning off the light. A stimulus for the mind is removed and partly by habit, partly by suggestion, the mind composes itself to sleep. The sighted are accustomed to living and thinking with their eyes open. The moment their eyes are shut or the light is put out, they lose their usual landmarks and cease to be interested in the world, which has disappeared. When, therefore, there is no unusual worry or cause for wakefulness, sleep comes easily and quickly. With a blind man this change is absent. There is no shutting off of the world outside to induce sleep. He has got to wait for his mind's eye to close up until it does so of its own accord. It cannot be encouraged. It is not open to persuasion.

I do not think blindness changes a man's character or outlook on life very much. It is sometimes supposed that the blind are suspicious because they never can be quite sure what is going on around them. Despite the fact that a good deal of help is afforded them in these days by comparison with a generation ago, they have to look out for themselves and worry and scheme. This may make them appear to call the world into question. But I think their misgivings are more because of their surroundings and their difficulties than because of their blindness.

On the whole, I should say that blindness in itself does not induce an abnormal outlook on life. A blind man sees what he wants to see. His outlook is happy if he is happy. The great thing to do is not to grieve too much about him, never to grieve to him, but to give him an opportunity of interesting himself in the things which interest everybody.

I am sometimes asked by a friend if I have many regrets. The true answer is 'no' because I very quickly learned to live with blindness, realised my limitations, and concentrate on the things I can do. I have had only one regret, and that is that my war service was so brief - only a few weeks."

Many St Dunstaners will have their own story to tell of Ian Fraser. In my case, he came to visit me in hospital some 3 weeks after I was blinded. I sat on the edge of my hospital bed facing him. At one point, he leant forward and tapped my knee to emphasise a point. I remember thinking 'how did he know where my knee was?' (how naive I was about blindness



*Ian Fraser and other MPs prepare for a boat race during a 1932 regatta.*

then!) It also appeared such a wonderfully normal gesture for a blind person to make. Thus was the light of recovery, kindled by one seemingly innocuous gesture.

At his Memorial Service in Westminster Abbey, Lord Redcliffe-Maud paid this tribute:

"The achievement of Ian Fraser's life can be summed up like this: he lifted up the loss of his eyes, in bounden duty and service, day by day for nearly 60 of his 77 years of life. That living sacrifice was accepted and made creative of great good. It has put new heart into tens of thousands of the sightless (and the sighted) who came within its influence, and nothing will stop the good work now.

The world will never be quite the same as if Ian Fraser had not lived and learnt the mystery of the road of suffering."

Lord Fraser's legacy lives on.

I am grateful to those who sent in reminiscences and photographs, especially to Lord Fraser's grandsons, Neil, a member of St Dunstan's Council, and Chris, currently farming in South Africa.



Congratulations once again to Ted Bunting whose winning story, which appears below was chosen by this year's adjudicators, Lester Piggott and his wife Susan. The competitors were required to compose a story around the theme of horse racing.

## Ambition

Today was my fifth visit to a racecourse, I'd always won before so I was really looking forward to it, the noise, the crowd, the brilliant colours, and the men on the boxes bawling "Six to one bar one," whatever that means. My chum Benny has been racing lots of times, of course, he's a lot older than me and he knows all about it. Oh, I'm Horus by the way, I'm three years old and I belong to Lord Dunstan; Benny is the old donkey who travels with us on race days, "To keep us calm," he says (he could talk the legs off a human) but I'm pleased he put my mind at rest after I'd heard the head lad say he was going to put a monkey on me today, apparently it will be a jockey just like before. In the box with us this morning were Smuggler's Gold running in the 2.30 and Springhill Lass, a two year old having her first race, and a bit nervous.

It was a perfect warm day and my coat was shining like polished copper as I trotted up the ramp. Benny, dusty as ever, began chatting the moment the horse-box left the yard, boasting mostly, about the companions he's had on these journeys and how famous some of them were; "Classic winners," he said, "aristocrats of the turf." Oh he does go on at times, so to bring him down to earth a bit I said, "Oh yes, like who for example?"

"Well like Shirley Heights the Derby winner," said Benny, "he was a real champion he was, and no mistake." I KNEW he was only boasting. "But Shirley's a lady's name," I said, but Benny refused to be beaten. "Maybe it is and maybe it isn't," he explained patiently, "but take my word for it, young Horus my lad, Shirley Heights had a wonderful career and then went to stud."

"What's stud?" asked Smuggler's Gold, so Benny explained all about it.

"Oh, I don't like the sound of that," exclaimed Springhill Lass; but it sounded pretty good to ME and from that moment on I was determined that I too would be champion, I was fit and strong and all I had to do was to win my races.

There were many gasps of admiration when we came out to be saddled, I'm sure most of them were for me, and I cantered down to the starting stalls feeling excited but on top of the world; Benny had been quite right about the monkey business and I no longer doubted what he'd said about Shirley Heights. There was the usual nonsense at the starting stalls, I walked straight in of course, but there was a skittish bay acting the fool and refusing to go in until he'd been blindfolded. "You always get one," snickered the runner on my right but I was busy listening for the sounds that meant the doors would soon be flung open, for I was determined to burst out like a bullet. And I did. We had a full mile to run but I wanted to be in the front all the way; I resented the idiot on my back trying to check the pace, why can't these fools leave racing to the experts? .... If my jockey had done so I'd have had such a lead the others couldn't have come near me. As it was, with his holding back and wanting to cross to the opposite rails I found myself matching strides with a big snorting grey by the time we'd reached half distance. By then however, we could hear the yelling of the spectators getting louder and nearer, another moment and I could see the raised whip hand of the jockey on the grey and I was aware of the forward surge as the cruel lash made contact. At least MY rider had the sense to relieve the pressure on my bit and he began to move in perfect rhythm with my flexing and stretching body; now we were flying, in unison my hind hooves kicked the ground from behind me and my forelegs flailed wildly in support, from the corner of my eye I could see the neck of my only serious opponent and with the roar of the crowd destroying all other sound I made yet another massive effort to leave him in my rear.

I was desperately close. But I knew I had won, my lungs burned and I could see my nostrils splayed like bell-ends, but I walked back to the winners enclosure knowing I had been victorious once again, I was on my way to being a champion like Shirley Heights. The public announcement confirmed it... "The winner is number six, Lord Dunstan's chestnut gelding, Horus." I was so proud as the people cheered; I wonder what 'gelding' means?

## OBSERVATION BY THE EDITOR

I recently spoke to two widows, whose stories are not untypical of St Dunstan's. But they show a degree of fortitude, which is an example and a source of encouragement to everyone. While both said "Life goes on, what else can we do?" nevertheless the task of filling the gap left behind is far from easy.

In both cases, their husbands had made remarkable achievements in their own fields despite their handicap. In one case, serious illness during the last few years of her husband's life, must have made his achievement all the more poignant.

Unhappy with the level of treatment in hospital, Mrs X was determined to look after her husband at home. This meant a 24 hour involvement both physically and mentally. Washing, feeding and dressing someone who is unable to help themselves is demanding, to put it mildly. "I would sit for hours just holding his hand. Even though he was unable to speak, I read for hours to him. Now when I come home from shopping, it is back to a very empty house and that takes a lot of getting used to. Despite the pressures however, I found my husband's patience and understanding throughout his long illness an inspiration to me and others who knew him. I do not consider myself a heroine, to me it was just a great privilege to have been able to care for him as he had done for me in the past.

There are so many reminders left behind. I am still sorting through papers and files and there is much of his equipment which I must think about. I am reluctant to part with them, but it has to be done." Although invited to visit relatives abroad, travelling to a foreign land on one's own is not easy. There are passports to be obtained, bookings to be made, all of which were previously done with the help of someone else. The first time away from home must be the equivalent of scaling a high mountain. Hopefully, it becomes easier after the first trip.

"I know my husband would wish me to 'pick up the threads' and start to enjoy the sort of life we shared together, of which I have many happy memories, and in time I am sure I shall do this."

Mrs S joined CRUSE, a support group for bereaved people. There she found great comfort in being able

to share her grief with those who had passed through the same experience. She has found companionship and others with whom she now goes on holiday. She continues to derive satisfaction from many phone calls made to her by people who were helped by her husband.

"I know my husband would have wanted me to carry on and do things with my life, rather than sit at home alone all day." This is surely a compliment to their husbands, an epitaph to the love of life, which they had previously shared. Is it not more positive that the memory of a loved one brings a smile to your lips rather than tears to your eyes?

There are many in the land who receive medals and honours for their work. There are far more who receive no recognition for their devotion above and beyond the call of duty, nor do they seek any such reward. There is no doubt who is the more deserving. Widows and widowers, we salute you!

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## FIFTY YEARS AGO

There was short shrift for a burglar who had raided St Dunstan's HQ. Around £500 (which would buy a house in 1947) was stolen and *The Daily Mirror* condemned the thief for his "very shabby trick."

Major D.R. Bridges was appointed Advisor on Blind Welfare to the Governments of the Malayan Union and Singapore. An officer of the 7th Gurkha Rifles, he had been blinded in action in Burma. He subsequently served on the staff of St Dunstan's Training Centre in India.

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## 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 Andrew Crowter** of Hove became a St Dunstaner on May 15th, aged 36. Mr Crowter joined the Coldstream Guards at the age of 18 in 1978, serving with the British Army on the Rhine and was discharged in October 1985 with Multiple



Sclerosis. He then obtained work with a security firm until his condition became worse with failing sight in December 1987. Now confined to a wheelchair he finds great satisfaction from his involvement with the local branch of his Regimental Association, and the Mormon Church. Mr Crowter and his wife, Beverley Ann, who is an Occupational Therapist, have a son, Daniel, who is nine years old.

**Mr Alan Evans** of Bordon, Hampshire became a St Dunstaner on May 22nd aged 74. He started his working life in Fleet Street. Mr Evans joined the Durham Light Infantry at the age of 19 and was posted into their 1st Battalion. He served with them until he received gunshot wounds to his head which caused the loss of his right eye in Holland in 1944. He stayed on in the Army until he was finally discharged in February 1945. Mr Evans then went to art school where he trained in interior design and on completion of his training got a job with Selfridges. His interests are steam trains and cricket. Mr Evans, a widower since 1969, has one married daughter who lives close to him in Bordon.

## CLUB NEWS

### JUNE ARCHERY WITH A TOUCH OF GOLF

by Bert Wood

On our first morning, before breakfast Susan Harrison, the General Manager at Ovingdean introduced herself to the archery party in the dining room. It is good once again having someone who tours the building, taking time to have a word with the punters. 'Long may she reign'.

A midweek rest from bow and arrows saw five archers being taught how to hit a golf ball with club. A frenzied scream came from the whirling clubs, clods flew and balls buzzed around like flies with blue posteriors. Our instructor called a halt and suggested we practised in his garden because the ground needed turning over.

Compared with the rest of the country our weather was excellent, it was a bright and breezy Brighton all the way.

The competitions and fun shoots were sprinkled liberally with the good humour that accompanies archery. The week rolled along at a steady pace and at the end produced the first triple champion since George Allen in '89. The new champ is lucky Ron Freer, the sit down archer.

## RESULTS

### *The Dacre Trophy*

1st Ron Freer  
2nd Bert Wood

### *Curly Wagstaff Trophy*

1st John Lilley  
2nd Tom Hart

### *Royal Insurance Pairs Shield*

Winners Ron Freer & Bert Wood

### *George Hudson Cup*

Winner Ron Freer

Two matches in one on Friday. St Dunstan's v Greenways Archers for the Greenways Shield and St Dunstan's v Cuckfield Archers.

The shoot ended and scores were sorted. The shield went to Greenways and the cup to St Dunstan's. So ended another good weeks archery.

On Friday evening it was get together time with our archery helpers. They give up so much of their time to help us out, 'thank you all so very much.'

Present were John Glazier, President, Laurie Austin, Vice-President, wife, Amy and many other friends of the club. Wine flowed, the buffet dwindled and the talking grew louder at this friendly family party. All we needed to round it off was a punch-up, begad. Still a great evening though.

## FAMILY NEWS

### BIRTHS

#### **Congratulations on the birth of:**

Emily May Powter-Robinson on April 27th. She is the granddaughter of Mrs May Powter-Robinson of Norwich, Norfolk, widow of *Claude Powter-Robinson*.

David William Mayes on May 3rd. He is the grandson of *Sydney and Margaret Scroggie* of Kirkton of Strathmartine.

Chloe Rose Dickerson on May 9th. She is the first great granddaughter of Mrs Rose Culshaw of Seaford, East Sussex, widow of *Joseph Culshaw*.

### WEDDING

#### **Congratulations to:**

Andrew and Jill Marian Burrows on June 21st. Jill Marian is the granddaughter of *Len Withington* of Billinge, Lancashire.

## RUBY ANNIVERSARIES

### **Congratulations to:**

*James and Gloria Conroy* of Marton, Middlesbrough on May 18th.

*Shirley and Dorothy Blackmore* of Stubbington, Hampshire on June 8th.

## GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

### **Congratulations to:**

*Albert and Eleanor Waddington* of Burnley, Lancashire on May 31st.

*Tommy and Audrey Gaygan* of North Harrow, Middlesex on July 9th.

## SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY

### **Congratulations to:**

*Sam and Grace Keating* of Exmouth, Devon who celebrated 61 years of marriage on June 6th.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

### **Congratulations to:**

*Trevor and Beryl Tatchell's* eldest grandson, David Sampson who has started a course in architecture at Port Elizabeth University, South Africa.

Sarah Jane King on obtaining her Masters Degree (M.Sc) in Pharmacy and is a Pharmacist at Kings College Hospital in London. She is the eldest granddaughter of Mrs Bertha King of Crowborough, East Sussex and the late *Harold King*.

## DEATHS

### **We regret to announce the death of:**

Mrs Marjorie Ellen Eager on June 30th. She was the wife of *Francis Gordon Eager* of Plymouth, Devon.

Mrs Mary Cooper of Worthing, East Sussex on April 25th. She was the widow of *Charles W. Cooper*.

Mrs Nora Robinson of Darlington, Durham on May 4th. She was the widow of *Henry Robinson*.

Mrs Marjorie Oakes of Clacton-on-Sea on June 6th. She was the widow of *Robert J. Oakes*.

Mrs Sheila Rutledge of Gilnahirk, Belfast on June 9th. She was the widow of *Andrew William Rutledge*.

Mrs Olive Vera Hopkins of Lee Moor, Nr Plymouth on June 10th. She was the widow of *William Daniel Hopkins*.

Mrs Hilda Green of Birmingham on July 9th. She was the widow of *Bill Green*.

Mr William Blacker on June 4th. He was the brother of *Bernard Blacker* of Saltdean.

**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.**

### **John Frearson**

*Royal Artillery*

John Edward (Ted) Norman Frearson of Hove died on May 15th, aged 79. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1968. Mr Frearson served as a Gunner with the Royal Artillery, having enlisted in 1939, just a month after the outbreak of the Second World War. He was discharged from the Army in 1946 following the deterioration of his sight whilst in Egypt in 1943. Following discharge Mr Frearson worked for an engineering firm, for some time, but had to give up this employment in 1967 after further loss of vision. He was a guide dog owner for a number of years and gave many talks on behalf of The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association. He and his wife, Mary, were married in 1946. Sadly she predeceased him in June 1996 after many years of ill-health. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

### **Edwin Flack**

*Royal Engineers*

Edwin Charles Flack of Watchet, Somerset died on June 5th, aged 76. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1992. Mr Flack, who was known to his family and friends as Ted, joined the Territorial Army in 1938, whilst an apprentice mechanic. His local TA unit was 250 Field Company Royal Engineers and although embodied on the outbreak of war in 1939 he was too young to be posted overseas with his own Squadron which was one of the first TA units to be sent to France. As a result he was cross-posted to 287 Field Company Royal Engineers and eventually posted with them to Singapore in early 1940. His Field Company was employed largely in defence works, although after the Japanese invasion of Malaya they reverted to the Infantry role. He was later captured at the fall of Singapore. Back in the United Kingdom, after the Japanese surrender and on his discharge from the Army in 1946, Mr Flack



returned, for a short time, to his old employer where he completed his apprenticeship. Whilst in both the TA and the Regular Army, Ted Flack had enjoyed playing rugby and had represented both his Companies in cross-country running. He also trained as a light heavy-weight boxer.

Mr Flack and his wife, Frances, were married in 1948 and made their home in the West Country where he was employed as a Workshop Manager to the transport company Reed & Smith for whom he worked until his retirement in 1980. Sadly Mr Flack's wife predeceased him in March 1996. Our sympathy goes to their two daughters and son and all members of the family.

### **Harry Davies**

#### *Royal Navy*

Harry Graham Davies of Llanelli, Dyfed died on June 15th, aged 76. He became a St Dunstaner in 1976 when his sight had failed completely, due to malnutrition, following his years as a prisoner of war. After leaving school Mr Davies worked in the local dockyard, until enlisting into the Royal Navy in 1940. In 1941 he was taken prisoner by the Japanese whilst in Hong Kong. He returned to the UK following the cessation of the war with Japan and was discharged from the Navy in 1946. He then worked for a local authority for many years. In 1981 Mr Davies, together with three other Welshmen went to Hong Kong to take part in celebrations and an Armistice Service. We send our sympathy to his wife, Margaret, whom he married at the beginning of 1939, his daughter, Angela and sons, Roger, Richard and Timothy and all members of the family.

### **George Jenrick**

#### *King's Royal Rifle Corps*

George Henry Jenrick of Wallington, Surrey on June 20th, aged 86. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1944. Mr Jenrick enlisted into the Army in 1928, two months after his 18th birthday.

During the Second World War he served with the 12th Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps with the rank of Regimental Sergeant Major. Mr Jenrick was injured in action in Holland in 1944 and became a St Dunstaner two months later. He worked in industry for a few years but retired from this in 1948. Mr Jenrick and his wife were married on the day war was declared with Germany, September 3rd 1939. We send our sympathy to his wife, Ethel, daughter, Jean and all members of the family.

### **Donald Winson**

#### *Royal Norfolk Regiment*

Donald Winson of Stalham Green, Norwich on June 21st, aged 78. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1985. Mr Winson enlisted into the Army in January 1939 and served as a Private with the 2nd Battalion Royal Norfolk Regiment. He went to France with the British Expeditionary Force and was evacuated from Dunkirk in 1940.

He was discharged in 1942 due to failing vision. In civilian life Mr Winson worked as a security officer with the Post Office but had to give this up in 1966 when there was a further deterioration of his sight. We send our sympathy to his wife, Eileen, whom he married in 1944, his daughter Valerie, sons Robert and Michael and all members of the family.

### **Herbert Ward**

#### *Royal Air Force*

Herbert (Bert) Ward of Leeds died on June 27th, aged 75. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1954. Mr Ward enlisted into the Royal Air Force in 1940 and served as a Leading Aircraftman until being discharged in 1944. He was wounded in Tunis in 1943 having been asked to deal with an unusual hand grenade. An explosion from this cost him his right eye and left hand and over the years his remaining sight gradually deteriorated. He trained as a telephonist and was employed by the Leeds Education Department. After 32 years of telephony he was asked to start an information centre there and until retiring was their Information Officer/ Receptionist. Bert Ward's hobbies included bridge and through tape recording music he built up a considerable library of classical music. He also very much enjoyed walking.

At one time he was Chairman of the Leeds Talking Magazine Programme for the Blind Association and the Leeds Cassette was his brain-child. He was also Secretary of the Spastics Swimming Club in Leeds and a School Governor as a Parent Teacher representative. At the age of 18 Bert Ward had signed professionally for Leeds Rugby League. The outbreak of the Second World War put a stop to this career. He had started by playing for the City boys team at the age of 13. Mr Ward and his wife married in 1943 and there were two sons of the marriage. Sadly their younger son, Christopher, died in 1992. We send our sympathy to his wife, Mavis, son, Stephen and all members of the family.