

St Dunstan's Review

October 1998



CONTENTS

FORM FILLERS
3

LOW BLOW FROM
BURGLARS
5

TRIBUTE TO BERYL
6

NEW DOT
7

WINDMILL WALK
8

OVINGDEAN
BULLETIN
10

TOURNAMENT NEWS
14

PEACE DECLARED
20

SULTAN REPORT
26

Cover picture: Admiral of
the Fleet Sir Henry Leach,
Chairman of St Dunstan's.

From the Chairman



This is my last *Review*.

Having been your Chairman for 15 years and being about to hit 75 it is time for a change, time for new blood at the top, time to go.

My successor, Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox Royal Navy, takes over immediately following the Council Meeting on October 29th. I have known him for more than 25 years and he has been a member of the Finance & General Purposes Committee and of the Council for the last three. He also has a most able and charming wife which sadly I no longer have. He is a fine man and I am totally confident that he is the right person to lead St Dunstan's into the 21st Century.

I shall be very sorry to leave you all but the time has come. I hand over a ship in good shape on a seamanlike and steady course through waters which, as seen today, seem likely to be fairly untroubled for the immediate future. I have much enjoyed the privilege of serving you in good times and in bad.

Good-bye and good luck.



NOTICE BOARD



BATTLING THE 'PAPER TIGERS' ...

We have many and varied talents here in the Estate department at Headquarters. One of the strangest is that of reading, understanding and completing both local authority and government forms.

This talent can be put to good use for the benefit of any St Dunstaner or widow faced with such a form, especially when making a claim for Housing or Council Tax Benefit.

Unfortunately, no two Housing Benefit forms are alike. *Some* local authorities pride themselves on the simplicity of their forms but they are few and far between. The majority, we are convinced, have an on-going competition to see who can make the forms the most difficult and the rules governing benefit the most complex.

Which is where our strange talents come in.

We are always available to help complete housing related forms with which you are faced and will do all we can to help. Often, we have the information you need at our fingertips and can usually return the (completed) form to you the same day.

Please bear this in mind the next time one of these "paper tigers" drops through your letter box.

A NAME CARVED IN HISTORY

The work of the sculptor chosen by Sir Christopher Wren to enhance the interior of St Paul's Cathedral will be examined at the V&A in November.

The talk *Grinling Gibbons and the art of carving* will include some opportunity to touch objects. Sighted escorts and guide dogs are welcome.

Call Imogen Stewart on 0171 938 8638 for details. The talk will be on November 25th at 6pm and November 30th at 10.30am at the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, London SW7 2RL.



NEW CHRISTMAS CARD

A new St Dunstan's Christmas card is now available, sporting the familiar torch-badge in a frame with curved corners. Measuring 100x140mm it has a foil finish and comes in assorted red, green and blue. Inside it bears the legend "With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year." The cards (with envelope) cost 25p each and can be ordered from the Public Relations department at Headquarters.

SWEATSHIRTS

St Dunstan's sweatshirts are available from the Public Relations department for £8.50. Blue with a left-handed yellow chest logo, they come in medium, large and XL. Please add £2 to your order for postage and packing.

TIES FOR SALE

For those occasions when a St Dunstan's casual shirt won't do, St Dunstan's tie is still available. French Navy in colour, the ties are made of polyester for easy washing and cost £5. Orders should be sent to the Public Relations department at Headquarters.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

The final date for submitting items for publication in the December *Review* is October 23rd.

WARMINSTER CAMP 1999

The 1999 Warminster Camp will be held over the weekend July 9th, 10th, 11th. We shall be the guests of Warminster Rotary and the School of Infantry. They can take up to 24 St Dunstaners. Here is a wonderful opportunity for you to join with your friends in a free reunion. Activities are varied and definitely not hectic, being designed for leisurely pursuits.

The camp has been run for many years so it would be a pity to lose this valuable slot due to lack of support. Anyone interested in attending the 1999 weekend camp at Warminster should please apply to:

Reg Goding, 2 Chailey Avenue, Rottingdean, East Sussex BN2 7GH. Tel: 01273 308467.

COMPUTER WEEKEND

The Computer Weekend at Ovingdean takes place on October 8th-9th. To book a place contact your Area Welfare Officer.

HAM MEETING

St Dunstan's Amateur Radio Society will meet at Ovingdean on October 9th-11th. To book a place contact your local Area Welfare Officer.

CALIBRE CASSETTE LIBRARY

St Dunstaners may be interested in Calibre Cassette Library. Calibre offers a choice of over 5,000 books on tape, with titles ranging from new best sellers to major classics. The books are sent and returned through the post, and can be played on any ordinary cassette player, even a Walkman. The service is available to anyone living in the UK and Ireland. It is free to individuals, although there is a small charge for the catalogue. Library users may choose their own books from the catalogue, or if they prefer, Calibre staff will select books on the basis of individual interest. To join or get further information, just phone Calibre on 01296 432339.

CAR FACTS

A series of fact sheets about the motor industry, in particular Vauxhall Motors, has been produced in braille. Copies can be obtained by calling Stephen Beharrell on 0345 125879.

BENEATH THE SURFACE OF DESCRIPTION

Cult thriller *ShallowGrave* leads the latest quartet of audio described videos from the RNIB. Making the murderous comedy available to blind viewers was a family affair since the description was written by Carol McGregor, mother of the film's star Ewan McGregor. His uncle Denis (*Local Hero, Dead Head, Star Wars*) Lawson then read the description to fill in details such as facial expression, scenery and actions.

The true life relationship of Queen Victoria and servant John Brown comes under scrutiny in *Her Majesty Mrs Brown*. Starring Judi Dench and Billy Connolly it earned widespread critical acclaim when released in cinemas.

Finally two Disney animated fantasy features, *The Black Cauldron* and the classic fairytale *Cinderella* fill out this batch of releases. Anyone renting these should return them before midnight.

These films and others are available to buy for £10 or rent for £2.50 (one week) from RNIB Customer Services on 0345 023153.

TALKING CLOCK

A new talking clock has been launched by the RNIB. It has an English male voice and colour contrasted tactile buttons with easy setting. Until January 1st 1999, it will be available for £19.95 (normal price £23). It can be ordered from RNIB Customer Services on 0345 023153.

BLOOMING MARVELLOUS

The best looking garden in Ferndown belongs to Mrs Louisa Bice, widow of St Dunstaner Tommy Bice - and that's official. She won three top prizes in this year's Ferndown in Bloom competition.

Her front garden in West Moors, Dorset was deemed to be overall winner of the private section, winning the first prize - The Haskins Trophy. It also won first prize as the Best Post Office Nomination - The Postal Delivery Rose Bowl - and came second in the Best Front Garden under 220 square yards.

The awards were presented to her on August 19th at the local community centre.

The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment come to the rescue

When Reg and Eileen Goding recently returned from a visit to the North-east, it was to find that their house in Rottingdean had been ransacked. It was the postman who noticed the smashed glass and told a neighbour. He in turn had the windows boarded up and passed on the sour news to Reg at the end of their holiday.

Many items were stolen but most upsetting to Reg was the theft of his medals - eight in all. *The Brighton Argus* reported the story on its front page and what Reg would like to have done to the thieves!

Lieutenant Colonel Rory Steevenson, Commanding Officer of the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment in Horsham read the story and obtained a replacement set in double quick time. Reg was invited to Battalion headquarters on September 9th, when the Colonel presented him with the replacement set.

"It was a smashing evening and I am very grateful to all concerned," said Reg.

BILL OPENS NEW HOSPITAL UNIT



St Dunstaner Bill Griffiths officially opened a new unit for disabled people at Clifton Hospital in Lytham St Anne's, Lancashire on July 7th.



Fully decorated, Reg thanks Lt Col Steevenson, RSM Mike McDonald and Capt James Coote.

BENCHMARK ACHIEVEMENT

St Dunstaner is selected to become a magistrate

Congratulations to St Dunstaner Peter Carr of Wootton Bassett. In July this year he was one of four visually impaired people to be made a magistrate. He will attend his first case in January next year.

The four appointments raised some eyebrows when they were announced. How could they read their papers or cope with the complexities? However, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine was most supportive considering they would listen to the facts more attentively than some.

Peter, who is a full time computer programmer and systems analyst, will be accompanied by two other magistrates when in court. In September he embarked upon a three year magistrates training course.

St Dunstan's is proud that it continues to be represented in the forefront of blind related matters and appreciation should be expressed to our member of Council, Lieutenant-General Sir Maurice Johnston, KCB, OBE, HM Lord Lieutenant for Wiltshire, who recommended Peter.

Tribute to Beryl Sleigh



Beryl Sleigh, June Sylvaine and Gwen Obern.

'Nobby' Clarke

Sadly, Raymond F Clarke died on August 23rd at Stoke Mandeville Hospital at the age of 78.

Nobby, as he was known by all who knew him, joined the staff of St Dunstan's in May 1946 working under Peter Matthews as the Area Surveyor for North and West London and East Anglia. He had served with the Royal Air Force as a Squadron Leader in the war and in 1964 was awarded the MBE in the Birthday Honours.

On March 31st 1991 he finally severed his connection with the Estate department, by retiring from the part-time work he had been undertaking since he gave up full time employment at the end of April 1985. He had completed nearly 45 years of continuous service, not only as an advisor but also as a firm friend to many.

Staff from Headquarters attended his funeral service at Chinnor, Oxfordshire on September 1st. We send our sympathy to his daughter Lynda and all members of the family.

It was with the deepest regret that I received the phone call from Beryl's home to say that she had passed away on Saturday, August 8th. The cremation took place at Golder's Green on Monday, August 17th and being at the service brought back for me many beautiful memories of our 55 year friendship.

She was a wonderful friend and companion and one who I shall miss greatly.

We toured the country singing together for St Dunstan's from 1948 until about the middle 60's. I will always cherish the recordings I have of our many duets. Every year, for many years, I had the privilege of travelling abroad with her, most notable were the journeys to South Africa.

Beryl had a caring and compassionate nature and it was always a joy to be in her company. Despite her great handicaps her indomitable spirit impressed everyone. As her condition worsened the times we spent together at Ovingdean unfortunately stopped.

Like myself she was totally committed to the worth of the organisation and I feel that her passing has left St Dunstan's with a great void.

Words cannot really express my love and admiration for her but I hope that something of her true friendship and natural generosity has been captured in this tribute.

Gwen Obern

50 YEARS AGO

Two St Dunstaners, J.Banks and E.R. Jensen were lauded by Hoover for suggesting adaptations to plant tools that increased production.

Howard Simcocks, just qualified as a solicitor, won his first case in court on the Isle of Man.

Talking Books were in short supply and it was decided that no more new readers could be admitted until further notice. The problem was exaggerated by a musician's strike and a change of manufacturing process at Decca Records.

BRAILLE NEWS

A NEW SIGN - dot 4e - for the Euro

by Terry Walker

In July at the Annual General meeting of the Braille Authority of the United Kingdom, a proposal to adopt the above sign to represent the Euro was passed by an overwhelming vote.

Keeping up with the times, Mr Kevin Carey of the Association of Blind and Partially Sighted Computer Users won a hard fought battle to gain the acceptance of the AGM to open discussion on the use of the Unified Braille Code (UBC) for direct transmission by computers. This item may not be of interest to the majority of braille readers, however, information technology has gained impetus around the world. Braille comes well within all this and Kevin brought to our attention an item which is causing him concern. Some Americans are pressing for the adoption of a system which uses lower signs solely for numbers. Their argument being its simplicity in use and the obvious advantage of discarding the numeral sign from the braille system. This feature does not bode well for many braille readers, since the lower signs play a broad and

valuable part in our current grade 2 braille reading. Until now the international transmission of braille has not been examined, and Kevin put a strong case to the meeting in order to bring this matter, at least into the area of investigation by The Braille Authority. After heated argument and extensive comment from all sides, his proposal was accepted on a vote of 15 to five. Yet another step in the direction of keeping what we feel as sacred - easy reading of our braille as it takes its place in the technology of computers.

The Braille Authority has a thankless job, progress is ponderous and extremely slow. During the time I have served there, many so called 'whizz-kids' have been in with numerous suggestions to improve the Braille Code. Thankfully most have been resisted. This proposal to investigate the UBC for computer use provided for me, one of the most entertaining Annual General Meetings of BAUK I have attended. Meanwhile, Kevin and his computer buddies have a major job to do over the coming months!

SKYWALKER GERRY TAKES OFF

St Dunstaner Gerry Jones took to the sky to promote his local blind association in July - as a wing-walker standing on the top wing of a biplane that was accelerating for aerial acrobatics.

Gerry of Cornwall joined the display team of the Crunchie Flying Circus, sponsored by chocolate maker Cadbury, for this daredevil feat at an air show at RNAS Culdrose. He took up the position usually occupied by a fearless stunt person.

"It was very exhilarating but also very lonely," he said. "You are totally cut off. The chap below said 'If you don't like it, give me a thumbs down.' I was thinking 'I hope he can see me'."

A practice run for the stunt proved a little uncomfortable. "They have two young girls doing

this normally who are about 5ft 10, so the harness was a bit small for me. The first time was amazing but I was standing as if I was going skiing which was a bit painful."

When it came to the show, Gerry was able to stand straight for his daring eight minute flight. The harness is fixed to a spur at the back of the wing and normally it can rotate to allow its occupant to indulge in a series of stunts. However, it was fixed for this attempt. "I was quite grateful for that," said Gerry.

Despite the tempestuous nature of this form of travel, Gerry adds that he would like the chance to do it again. "You know you are in the air! It's not smooth, the wind is beating on your face, you are whipped around and there are tight turns."

From Windmill Walk to Royal Ramble

*Maeve Dillon treads lightly
in Stan Grimsey's footsteps*



Rough weather proved no deterrent to Stan.

During the month of July, I had the pleasure of accompanying Mr Stanley Grimsey of St Dunstan's Ovingdean on two very different occasions. Both equally enjoyable, I might add. I refer of course to Stan's annual participation in the Windmill Walk on July 12th and his attendance, later in the month, at the 'Not Forgotten' Association's garden party in the grounds of Buckingham Palace.

Jim Johnson, a keen walker himself declares this year's walk day to have been the wettest since the event began back in 1984. To say the weather was inclement would be something of an understatement for the rain fell in torrents and the gales blew fiercely. All day long, undeterred, Stan and his party braved the elements and fought their way around the planned 24km. Stan true to form, at 80 years of age and group leader, would not hear of shortening the route on the day. We 'youngsters' in the party were obliged to tow the line. With sinking hearts, heads bent against the driving winds and rain we marched off into the misty morn. I remember thinking how I would much rather have been at home, seated by the fireside, watching *The Waltons!*

To cut a very, very long 'walk' short we did complete the course in approximately 7hrs, elated if bedraggled. Stan had achieved his goal, his sponsorship monies topping last year's sum by almost £100. Stan has raised £445 to go towards the purchase of a scanner with speech output for St Dunstan's social lounge.

Well done Stan, I am full of admiration not least for the modesty shown following such a truly remarkable feat of endurance.

Our royal ramble about the grounds of Buckingham Palace could not have been more different. The rain kept off for one, and we traded our walkers attire for a style more suited to the occasion. I will admit to taking off my high heels though, whilst in hot pursuit of the royal corgies, for the 'exclusive' printed herein.

Alas no royal personage put in an appearance so we were both delighted with our find. You could tell that they were no strangers to the flash of a camera. Neither is Stan come to think of it, and his exploits past and present have attracted many a curious reporter.

Long may they continue.



Stan with a trio of pedigree chums!

An invitation to win

*Simon Rogers joins St Dunstan's
Golfers out on the green*

After several weeks of intense sunshine, rain clouds were gathering on the horizon as St Dunstan's Golf Club limbered up to play for the first St Dunstan's Invitation Shield. The odds favoured rain but in the event the sun came burning back into the sky.

The invitation shield attracted four teams to Pease Pottage Golf Club in August. St Dunstan's regular players, Des Chandler, Arthur Carter, Iain Millard and Stephen Pendleton were joined by Don Planner and Phil Dobson while challengers included a team from RAF Coltishall, St Dunstaners guides and a guest team.

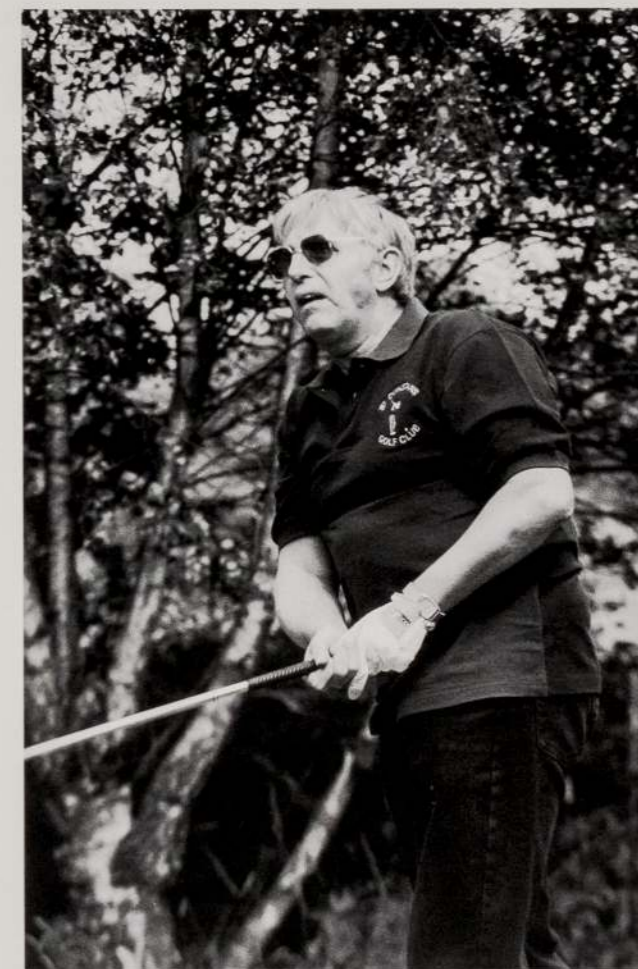
One of the guests was Mike Sowerby, Captain of Bawburgh Golf Club, who had organised May's charity match in Norfolk.

One of the guest players, Jill Thornhill of Rusper Golf Club managed score a hole in one on the sixth. When her group came round a second time, she did the hole in two. One of her team-mates, Mary Post, emerged as the lady closest to the pin.

Final scores put RAF Coltishall well in the lead, prompting Des to repeat his threat of a nocturnal



Winners all! The team from RAF Coltishall.



Sharp as a pin. Phil Dobson swings high.

match. Paul Humphries accepted the shield from Ovingdean's General Manager Susan Harrison.

Don Planner who only recently resumed the game emerged as the Best Blind Player. Following close behind were Des Chandler and Arthur Carter.

The Best Sighted Player proved to be Derek Price from RAF Coltishall, who was also the sighted player closest to the pin.

Phil Dobson was the Blind Player closest to the pin. Best of the guests was 14 year old Ben Palmer from Rusper Golf Club.

The next day was given over to a friendly match with RAF Coltishall at Rusper. Needless to say a good time was had by all. Des Chandler beat Chris Falcon on stroke play after nine holes. He birdied on par 4 and scored 59 to Chris's 60.

Life and Times of Ovingdean

by Lynne Thomas

One of the wettest summers in recent years, coupled with the early departure of England and Scotland from the World Cup, didn't dampen people's spirits too much. Some of the outdoor activities were rained off, but there was still a lot going on at Ovingdean.

LLAMA DRAMA

A previous visit to Ashdown Llama Farm had to be cancelled due to the weather, but we went in July. The farm, in the middle of the Ashdown forest, has a large collection of llamas and angora and cashmere goats. The group had a guided tour, and the visit was very much enlivened by the antics of two amorous llamas, which tested the descriptive powers of the escorts to the maximum!

DING-DONG

The St Dunstan's Handbell Ringing team is doing well, and meets every Wednesday night in the new annexe. There are eight regular members in the team, who are usually joined by a few holiday-makers and staff members. We have a set of beautiful old bells, made in 1897, and hope to play a couple of tunes in the Christmas concert. After that who knows?

WONDERFUL MUSIC

Ovingdean Hall, a school for children who are deaf is very close to St Dunstan's, in fact we are using their swimming pool while ours is closed. The school's orchestra was preparing for a trip to Holland and Belgium and we attended a warm-up concert before they left. The fact that these youngsters could make such lovely music by carefully watching the conductor and each other was very impressive and moving.

MAJOR VISITS

There is a new regular visitor to St Dunstan's these days - Major, a golden retriever from the PAT Dog Society. He is a beautiful boy, very friendly, and he's getting to know the residents. His owner, Jackie, says she doesn't mind being known as 'Major's Mum' and is happy to take a back seat during their visits!



All the way! When it comes to covering distance the Sappers have the logistics sorted.

MULTI-MARATHON

Thirty-five Royal Engineers completed a 90 mile run from RAF Benson to Ovingdean to raise money for St Dunstan's for the second year running. They arrived hot, tired and ready for a beer. We were all surprised to see Peter Walker amongst them, who had been here a couple of months before for training. PBK cooked a wonderful barbecue for the runners and many St Dunstaners and staff were there to express their gratitude. Ken Revis, Frank Tinsley and Des Chandler, who were Royal Engineers themselves, accepted the cheque for £2,015.20 - the proceeds from last year's run - from Lt Col Crosskey. Des Chandler then presented him with a St Dunstan's shield.



Lt Col Crosskey presents a handsome sum to Ken Revis, Des Chandler and Frank Tinsley.

A HEALTHY PERFORMANCE

Age Exchange Theatre Trust is the foremost reminiscence theatre group in the country and we were lucky that they came to Ovingdean with

their latest musical show, *Can We Afford the Doctor?* Age Exchange write their own plays based on recollections of older people that they interview and try to make the dialogue and situations as realistic as possible. This show was about family medicine before the creation of the National Health Service and featured a lot of the weird and wonderful homemade remedies and concoctions. People who could remember life before the NHS recognised bits of their own history, younger people couldn't believe how hard life had been in the 'good old days'. There was a lot of animated discussion after the show.

21-SHIELD SALUTE



Regimental pride! Reg accepts the shields.

Three Sergeants from the Army Training Centre at Warminster came to Ovingdean on August 3rd to present a display of 21 regimental shields. St Dunstan's Reg Goding, a regular at the Warminster Camp, accepted the gift on behalf of St Dunstan's and presented Provost Sgt Hendry, MBE, GSM Haxby and Sgt Marshall with a reciprocal shield.

CHAPEL ROOF

The Chapel at Ovingdean looks as if it has been wrapped in plastic. The top was completely encapsulated by scaffolding and plastic sheets as work commenced on constructing a new more efficient pitched roof.

ROTARY VISIT

The Rotary Club of Hove paid a visit to Ovingdean on August 26th. After a tour of the house Ray Hazan told them a little about the work of St Dunstan's.



St Dunstaners Fred Morton and Joe Foster surrounded by Beverly Sisters.

NEVER FORGOTTEN

One of the biggest social events takes place every July with The 'Not Forgotten' Association Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. Fortunately, the rain held off and the sun just about managed to shine all day, which is a good thing or a lot of fancy hats would have been ruined. Thirty-five people went this year, and all had a wonderful time.



What a carry on! The gang's all here with Bernard Cribbins ready to fill in any holes.



Winnie Edwards with some Chelsea Pensioners.

A most welcome fete

by Lynne Thomas



Above: The Band of the Life Guards on the march.
Below: Patsy gives us a spin on the tombola.

Without a doubt, the biggest event of 1998 at Ovingdean was the Summer Fete on August 8th. It was a great success, due to the efforts of a lot of people, primarily Jackie Greer and the Fete Committee, but also other staff, St Dunstaners, wives and widows and volunteers.

The opening was conducted by Southern FM presenter Dougie Mack. There were many different stalls, including handicrafts, plants, bric-a-brac and haberdashery. There were games for the children and the entertainment was top-class, with the Wendy Mann Dancers, the Dave Masters Big Band and the fabulous Band of the Lifeguards, whose spectacular bright red jackets and gold helmets must have looked a lot better than they felt in the sweltering heat.

St Dunstaners Ron Cattell, Margaret Bingham and Sid Doy demonstrated their archery skills to a fledgling team from local radio station Southern FM. Guess who was making the hits?

Hopefully, many more local people will now be aware of St Dunstan's and the work we do here.



Any bestsellers?



Mingling with the crowd.



All you need in life is a bouncy castle.

Thank you all

As I am sure you are all aware on Saturday, August 8th, Ovingdean held a garden fete and family fun day. The object of this day was to raise some funds for St Dunstan's and as a PR exercise to raise awareness amongst the local community. The day was a great success and the weather was absolutely beautiful. I wish to convey my sincere thanks to everybody who assisted in making it a successful day. To all of the widows, wives and St Dunstaners who spent time raising funds, selling raffle tickets, knitting and sending gifts etc to be sold at the fete on the day, many thanks to you all. We hope to repeat the exercise again next year when hopefully we will be able to see some of you there.

**Jacqueline Greer,
Head of Care**



Is Jackie ready to rock? Dougie Mack opens the fete.



Cuddly toy anyone?



Richard Bingley and Ray Hazan play it cool.



Raymond Hazan picks up more than a few coppers at the Tournament, courtesy of the officers of the Metropolitan Police Service.

THE ROYAL TOURNAMENT 1998

July 21st – August 2nd

by Ray Hazan

It was not an auspicious start to the Tournament. One of our staff got locked in the Loo! Then on the first day of 'sales' a young American girl, aged about eight, refused to buy a sailor doll – "I'm not sleeping with a man," she asserted quite emphatically! Our subsequent days went more smoothly.

St Dunstan's stand at the Royal Tournament is as the result of a large team effort. The build-up had begun at the beginning of the year when many St Dunstaners, wives, widows and friends have started knitting, crocheting, sewing, sawing, sandpapering, gluing and generously donating items for sale.

Then comes the day when we are allowed access to Earls Court. Neville Rose delivered a mini-bus full of equipment from HQ and St Dunstan's Ovingdean including Jim Faithfull. The cavernous exhibition hall echoes to the sound of heavy trucks manoeuvring themselves into the building to deliver aircraft and assorted military vehicles; hammering and sawing as stands are erected and

all the while in the background, the rehearsals are going on in the arena. In the blink of an eye, Jim has the backdrop (large panels describing the work of St Dunstan's) erected and the spotlights shining.

For the next 12 days, the stand was manned virtually from 9.15am to 9.15pm – though we did have a half-day off on a Monday! For this we are indebted to the Public Relations staff aided and abetted by several other volunteers from HQ, who gave up evenings and weekends to help out. They sold, they distributed literature and stickers, and above all, they 'initiated' those who had not heard of St Dunstan's and reassured those who had.

Some £2,777 of items and many first day covers (from 1995) were sold. Some 60 hours of keyboarding on the 'talking computer' attracted quite a few onlookers. St Dunstaners Ted John and his wife Beryl, Stewart Harris and Norman and Eileen Killick kindly spent several hours with collecting tins and were responsible for raising £1,884 – a commendable sum. Once again, the Metropolitan Police unit from the local

Kensington Police station donated a gift of £500 from their swear and misdemeanour box!

On the whole, a happy and generous atmosphere exists at the Tournament. Stand holders greet each other from previous years. Ex-Service charities exchange information and views. At the stand, regulars to the Tournament, St Dunstaners relatives and former members of staff catch up with news of friends, and there is always a word, if not a pint, from the ex-members of the Fleet Air Arm field gun crew. We were pleased to see some of the residents from Ovingdean and a visit 'en masse' from the campers from HMS *Sultan* on the final Sunday.

One daily bonus was walking up through the temporary stables of The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery. Close to, their mounts are massive and sturdy beasts, but their mouths are so soft as they took the sugar lumps from our outstretched hands. 'Badger' would put on his party tricks for more – pawing at the ground and taking the brush off his stable girl and pretending to groom her! The Cossack horses were a very different animal, built for speed and manoeuvrability.

The RAF on the occasion of their 80th anniversary hosted the show. There were the usual musical extravaganzas, pitched battles with lots of noise and explosions, dog races, rally driving and mounted displays. A Harrier and a Spitfire descended from the roof during the finale to a musical backdrop from Gustav Holst's *Planet Suite* played commendably by the Massed Bands of the RAF and pipers from the Royal Air Force.

During this last scene, a rocket was seen on a large video screen taking off to the future. But the future of the Tournament is less certain. Next year will be its last as we know it. Manpower, costs and the accountants have combined to bring this 118 years of tradition possibly to an end. It is hard to believe the Royal Navy will allow their field gun race to come to a grinding halt?

On behalf of St Dunstan's, I thank 'the team' for having made our presence possible. Please bear us in mind for next year!

Top Right: Stewart Harris says thank you to a young donor who added a St Dunstan's sticker to an already impressive selection on his t-shirt.

Middle right: Ted John rattles that tin!



HELP FROM A DANGEROUS MAN

When the author Charles Whiting read that St Dunstan's had been turned down by the National Lotteries Charities Board for funding he decided to help. At the Royal Tournament on July 31st Charles Whiting presented Stewart Harris and Ray Hazan with a cheque for £1,725.08, being the proceeds from the royalties of his book *Skorzeny - The Most Dangerous Man In Europe*. It tells of the real life exploits of Hitler's right hand man involving kidnaps, rescues, affairs and blackmail. Mr Whiting has sold in excess of four million copies of his books worldwide.



Sir Henry Leach, GCB, DL retires



Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Leach retires at the end of the month after 15 years as Chairman of St Dunstan's. His first encounter with St Dunstan's was during the war when the then recently completed building at Ovingdean was used by the Royal Navy as a dormitory and he worked at Roedean.

The son of the distinguished naval Captain John Leach, RN, Sir Henry went to the Royal Naval College at Dartmouth in 1937 at the age of 13. However, the advent of war meant his training had to be completed at sea.

In 1941 Sir Henry was a Midshipman on HMS *Mauritius*. A design fault kept the ship in dock for refitting preventing him joining the *Prince of Wales* accompanied by *Repulse* when they set out on their final voyage to meet the Japanese fleet. Over 100 enemy aircraft heavily attacked both ships. His father who was commanding the battleship *Prince of Wales* was lost with his ship.

Sir Henry spent most of the war at sea. He specialised in Gunnery and went on to command a Destroyer, a Squadron of Frigates and a Commando Carrier before being promoted to Flag Rank.

Sir Henry held several key posts at the Ministry of Defence becoming Chief of the Naval Staff and First Sea Lord in 1979. Much has been made of his "dash" to the House of Commons on March 31st 1982 to convince the Prime Minister that it was possible to retake The Falklands. *The Independent* described it as a "unique personal intervention."

Sir Henry joined St Dunstan's Council in October 1982, and became Chairman in 1983 on the retirement of Mr Ion Garnett-Orme. He has steered the charity through a period of great change.

One of his first acts as Chairman was to ask St Dunstaners their opinions about the modernisation and future of the then Ian Fraser House. Following a vote, 85 per cent of those St Dunstaners who responded were in favour of admitting wives to the house. He subsequently saw the conversion of the building from an establishment catering for St Dunstaners only to the home we know now with its high standard of accommodation and facilities admitting St Dunstaners, their wives or escorts, widows, Gubbays and trainees. The new South Wing was



officially opened by our Patron, Her Majesty the Queen in 1985.

In 1987 a reunion was held at Church Stretton where a Service of Dedication took place at the Church of St Laurence. Here a tablet was unveiled in gratitude from St Dunstan's to the people of Church Stretton for the warm friendship they gave to the war-blinded men and women who lived there between 1940 to 1946. Our Chairman gave the address in which he reiterated the debt owed to Church Stretton.

Sir Henry led the financial reorganisation in the early 90's. In January 1993 he obtained the

Charity Commission's agreement for St Dunstan's to return to fund raising. Less happily the re-structuring involved the sale of Pearson House. It was a case of hard pruning to ensure strong growth in the future.

Less contentious were the 75th anniversary celebrations in August 1990. A garden party was held at Buckingham Palace in the presence of HRH Princess Alexandra and Sir Angus Ogilvy. In the evening, 750 people, attended a celebration dinner at the *Hilton*. In 1995 St Dunstan's not only commemorated the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, but also celebrated the 80th anniversary of our foundation. Sir Henry together with The Ambassador of the United States of America hosted an anniversary reception at Winfield House, Regent's Park the site of St Dunstan's first training centre. In the following

year a similar reception took place attended by HRH the Princess Alexandra.

Lady Mary Leach was a great support to him. Sir Henry was, and still is deeply affected by her loss. The great esteem with which she was held by all who knew her was demonstrated by the overwhelming attendance at her memorial service in 1991.

Sir Henry never failed to command from the front as personified by his leading the St Dunstan's contingent at the Cenotaph, a parade he never failed to miss in all his years as Chairman. It is unlikely he will stop long enough to allow any barnacles to grow! Hopefully, he will have more time to attend to his hobbies, those of gardening, fishing and antique furniture restoring. We wish him a long, happy and healthy retirement.



MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF FUND RAISING

Thank you for our freedom

As mentioned in the *August Review*, we are continuing our distribution of fund raising packs to members of the public throughout the autumn. As I write, there are over 3 million fund raising packs being delivered and between now and the end of the year we will be delivering a further 12 million packs. Writing letters directly to members of the public has proved to be very successful, both in fund raising terms and publicity, judging by the number of letters we have received from members of the public in support of the work of St Dunstan's. I would especially like to thank all those associated with St Dunstan's who continue to support the ongoing fund raising campaign with kind letters of appreciation or donations.

I will, of course, keep you up to date with the progress of this distribution to the general public. In the meantime I have reproduced a letter received yesterday together with a donation.

"To St Dunstan's - I do not usually respond to postal appeals as so many charitable organisations send them out. I usually give locally as and when I choose to. However, I am making an exception in the case of St Dunstan's, not only because of the Charity Commissioners advice over thirty

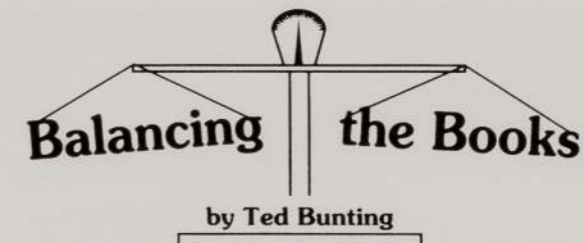
years ago or because of the unsuccessful Lottery Appeal but most of all because I am grateful for the freedom that they fought for."

I cannot stress strongly enough the depth of feeling for St Dunstaners found amongst the general public. This is demonstrated further by the following note just received with a donation:

"I am a pensioner with just the basic state pension but please accept my donation (one pound). I am sorry that I cannot afford more but I will try and send another donation next month."

Despite receiving a number of substantial donations for 100's of pounds, most donations are in the £1 - £5 range and it is clear that in most cases these amounts are more than the donor can really afford.

As mentioned above, we have just recommenced the distribution of fund raising packs which will now continue until the end of the year. As always, I would like to remind you that they are distributed to all addresses in certain postcode areas. If you happen to live in one of those areas, please be assured that we are not asking you for a donation!



The Disaster Area

Author: J. G. Ballard

Reader: Arthur Blake

Duration: 6.5 hours

Catalogue Number: 7728

What a wonderful thing is the human imagination! Someone can say, for example, "Picture a twelve foot high purple donkey with two tails," and there it is in an instant, prancing happily before my mind's eye. Nothing, it seems, no creature, no sight, sound, nor situation is beyond the brain's capacity to conjure it up without effort; which is why, I believe, fiction writers have always been able to make a living.

But even writers of science-fiction are restricted in at least one respect; they cannot prevent a human being being human, with the same hopes and aspirations, the same faults and foibles as the rest of us. In other words, a man retains his essential human characteristics no matter what alien world you might place him in. It's a fact well borne out by each of the short stories in *The Disaster Area*; it's a central thread which connects an impressive collection of otherwise independent tales. As for the stories themselves, I will not single any particular one out for special praise because the same high quality is maintained throughout and each could stand alone for its originality and ingenuity. All in all I can hardly commend the book too highly; and I would urge usual non-readers of science fiction not to be deterred, I was never too impressed myself, until now.

Ruth Ellis

Author: Robert Hancock

Reader: Syd Ralph

Duration: 6.75 hours

Catalogue Number: 5701

When capital punishment was still on the statute book, a judge and jury thought it appropriate to send Mrs Ruth Ellis to the scaffold. She was the last woman in Britain to be hanged, and the public indignation, which followed the case was instrumental in changing the law.

This, of course, is general knowledge, but without reading this excellent book, I doubt if more than a tiny fraction of the population has any inkling of the true facts connected to the crime. This, primarily, was the fault of the press; sensation sells newspapers, and because the murder of a dashing young racing driver by a glamorous society hostess was just about as sensational as possible, that is the way the events were reported.

The reality, however, was quite otherwise; the "beautiful hostess" was a bottle-blond with social pretensions who worked in a drinking club and augmented her wages by prostitution, and the "handsome motor-racer" was an alcoholic seller of second-hand cars who was dissipating his inheritance on "drinks all round" and a half-baked scheme to build and market a new sports car.

The relationship between them was complex, bizarre and far too involved for me to even outline here, but Robert Hancock describes and explains it in an interesting and no-nonsense manner which I found very refreshing indeed. As a study of human nature and as a sharp reminder that what is not said is often more important than what is, his *Ruth Ellis* takes a lot of beating.

TORMENTING ANSWERS

The solutions to our short August quiz.

- 1) *Where is Beorthelmes?* This strange sounding land is none other than Brighton. By some riotous coincidence, Brixton also once had the same name.
- 2) *What is Inspector Morse's Christian name?* Being of good Quaker stock, the detective's parents named him Endeavour.
- 3) *Who is buried in Grant's Tomb?* Grant of course, but this late US President rests in peace alongside his wife.
- 4) *Who was the first King of England to speak English as a mother tongue?* Henry IV in 1399.
- 5) *If you were Robespierre, how many months would you expect to find in a year?* Twelve but they all had 30 days. The Revolutionary Calendar was punctuated by 12 public holidays.



November 11th this year, we commemorate the 80th anniversary of the end of the First World War. Besides the war, 1914-1918 were not just the founding years of St Dunstan's, but the commencement of an example to be followed throughout the country, if not the world, on the rehabilitation of blind people. They were to be integrated back into society as 'normal' people within their own rights and not as subjects of pity or charity. As a tribute, we reproduce extracts from that period:

ARMISTICE DAY 1918

"I should like to express my gratitude for the congratulations sent by you, both on your own part and on behalf of the men of St Dunstan's. Among the causes for rejoicing in victory, there is none greater than the knowledge that those who have made immeasurable sacrifices for their country will have the permanent happiness of knowing that their sacrifice has not been in vain."

Douglas Haig

Sir Arthur Pearson, founder of St Dunstan's, wrote: "Though the actual details of peace will not be completed for some time to come, the signing of the Armistice and the cessation of hostilities mean the end of a terrific struggle in which you men of St Dunstan's played so prominent a part. I know the tremendous enthusiasm which filled the

heart of every one of you when the great news came along, and I think that I have entered sufficiently intimately into your lives and feelings to be able to really appreciate the extent of your triumphant joy.

Just as when you were in the war you fought gallantly until you could fight no more, so I am sure you will as gallantly continue the fight which you have begun against the new enemy who has assailed you. Blindness must be conquered by the St Dunstaner just as thoroughly and completely as he and his comrades conquered the Germans.

To the men who have left St Dunstan's; the men who are still here; and the men who are yet to come, I say: -
 'Remember that we St Dunstaners are setting a

great example to the whole world of the blind. Carry our banner high and show the people who can see that, much as many of them seem to doubt the fact, a blind man can be a normal citizen in practically every sense of the term'."

ENTHUSIASM

The *Review* provided a digest of reactions to the breaking news: "Nowhere, we feel sure, was the news of the signing of the armistice greeted with more enthusiasm than at St Dunstan's. The intelligence reached us over the telephone and was quickly communicated to classrooms, lecture rooms and workshops. Sir Arthur gave instructions that work was to cease for the day and men began to pour out of the training rooms shouting, cheering, and whistling.

Soon after 11 o'clock on Monday, when the maroons were heard to go off, the St Dunstan's band gathered themselves together and made a tour of the West End, adding much noise and happiness to the already deafening din and overwhelming joy of the streets. A number of British and Colonial blinded men found their way to Buckingham Palace and were admitted through the dense crowds to the courtyard, where they were able to take a conspicuous part in the acclamations which were accorded their Majesties the King and Queen, who appeared on the balcony of the Palace.

At St Dunstan's itself the pent-up enthusiasm of four years of waiting was let loose and happiness and excitement were the order of the day!

In the evening Sir Arthur gave a dinner at 21 Portland Place, at which were present a number of officers and others.

On Tuesday a congregation of close on a thousand people was assembled in the outer Lounge when a short Thanksgiving Service was most ably conducted by the Rev E.N. Sharp, Honorary Chaplain to St Dunstan's. General enthusiasm had abated a little by this time, but excitement was still in everybody's blood. The band again made its presence known, not, we believe, because its members are the most demonstrative of St Dunstaners, but chiefly because they were possessed of instruments which enabled them the better - or, perhaps we should say the louder - to express their joy.

ST DUNSTAN'S VICTORY BALL

On Friday, November 15th, a Victory Ball was held at the Bungalow annexe to celebrate the signing of the Armistice.

The lounge and the dining room were both cleared for dancing, making room for some five hundred couples, the White Coon Sextet providing the music, and each man was asked to invite a lady. The rooms were cheerfully decorated with flags and lanterns, while coloured lights lit up the approach to the Bungalow.

The dancing, which lasted from about 8.30 to 12.30, went with a swing, everybody enjoying themselves thoroughly. The refreshments that were provided were, everyone declared, on a pre-war scale, there being such a liberal profusion of cakes, jellies, etc.

At the same time as the ball was being held at the Bungalow, there was an excellent concert given in the Inner Lounge of the House for those who did not dance. The Inner Lounge was crowded and every item of a splendid programme was thoroughly enjoyed.

THEY DO SAY THE WAR IS OVER

The late Rev Andrew Nugee, a St Dunstaner, recalled that he and his fiancée had been recovering from flu near Skegness. Saturday's paper indicated that the war was reaching a climax but no further news was heard.

"Monday was a lovely day, clear and still with a touch of frost in the air and hardly a cloud in the sky, a perfect English Autumn day, but no paper. In the afternoon my fiancée's mother suggested a drive round the countryside in the pony trap, and so we harnessed up and set out. Still no news. But as we drove along, we heard the church bells begin to ring in all the towers of the countryside.

Then we came to a couple of old men thatching a rick. We stopped and asked them why the bells were ringing. One of them hardly turning his head from his work said, 'They do say the war be over,' and having said that went on with the job.

In London the crowds were out singing and dancing. In Lincolnshire the bells were ringing and old men were getting on with their jobs."

SILVER BADGES

Four hundred St Dunstaners took part in "The Silver Badge Procession" on November 23rd. This was a march from Chelsea Barracks to Hyde Park where the King reviewed them. The Silver Badge was given to men who had returned home after being wounded at the Front, the idea being to distinguish them from conscientious objectors.

A list of statistics of injuries claimed 11,347 eyesight cases - around 1,100 of those had been deprived of useful sight and were being cared for by St Dunstan's.

NEVER THE END

Lord Fraser reflected on the new peace thus: "By the end of 1918 we had over 1500 names on our books. Of these over 600 had been trained and had gone back to the world but nearly 200 were still in hospital. Although the War was over, we knew there was more war-blindness to come. Already we were taking in men whose sight had been damaged in the early days of the War, who had left hospital then with an adequate amount of vision, and whose sight had since deteriorated to the point of blindness. Obviously there were going to be more of these. We had no idea then that post-war attributable blindness would eventually nearly double our numbers."

"We will remember them".

Happy Birthday, Daisy



Our best wishes go to Mrs Daisy Kenward on her 104th birthday. Many happy returns. Daisy, born on August 28th, 1894, is the widow of First World War St Dunstaner Edward Kenward.

The Blinded Soldier's 'If' (A Parody)

By Major Hastings Brooke
(one of the very first soldiers to lose his sight in the war)

If you should lose your sight while all about you
Are keeping theirs, as soldiers often do;
If you're alive when Huns have tried to rout you,
And do not grumble when all's lost to view;
If just at first you find the darkness baulking,
And do not think you're in the great Unknown;
If when you hear the nice girls round you talking,
You think the place is yours, and yours alone;
If you can walk on pavements without tripping,
And mounting kerbstones, fall not on your nose
If you can keep your calm when something's
dripping,
Although you're wondering if it rains or snows;
If sometimes when you're dressing you are hurried,
And beat all previous records with your swears;
If you can hunt about and not get flurried
For twenty minutes while you find the stairs;
If you can work at dots, and not go dotty,
And soon become an expert with your Braille-
And if the war reports get very knotty,
Your fingers read them in the *Daily Mail*;
If you can type in type not too confusing,
(Of course, you can't correct the stuff yourself);
If with the nails and hammer you are using
You make what may be taken for a shelf;
If you can keep some hens, and never scare them,
Of eggs you'll find you need not fear a dearth;
If you can mend old boots, and people wear them,
You'll feel you've made your mark upon this earth.
If you get lost, make casts like any huntsman's;
If you feel hopeless in the dark, don't mind,
For when you've been a few days at St Dunstan's
You'll be a man, old chap, although you're blind.

COUP DE GRASS!

by Terry Walker

Surveying the lawn from the safety of my position on the concrete path, it was easy to imagine myself gaily trotting back and forth with the mower in my determined grip. Then after a moments purposeful reflection I would switch on, step determinedly out on to the grass and proceed to get on with it ... How foolish can one get? Within two or three runs across the lawn we would be hopelessly lost. Flowers and shrubs alike soon came to a sad end. Trampled, hewn and sprinkled over the surrounding area like pieces of confetti at a Christian's wedding. It might just as well have been the Roman amphitheatre containing Christians and lions. Yes, it has to be said, I was hopelessly lost. A beloved voice, calling from next door brought the machine to a standstill. "What are you doing over there?" I asked, only to be told that Pat, in fact, stood in the kitchen door. Once again, my loss of direction had been revealed.

Flower borders, beds and even the heather were never very safe once the front end of my lawnmower was set free. We would polish across open spaces and even though I was certain of my whereabouts, the inevitable shout came hurrying over the airwaves. Sometimes, with very special care the lawn was covered entirely. I would presume a good job had been done only to find that it took someone with a good pair of eyes just as long to cut down the sentinel patches of lawn remaining.

Let's face it, I was a hopeless case when it came to cutting the grass.

Something had to be done. The problem grew and grew in my mind, there had to be a way of doing the job properly.

These hover mowers are beautifully light and easy to handle, even though they require a firm hand on the tiller to keep them in a straight line. With my mower set alone in the middle of the lawn, its handle left in the upright position, I next tied up the on/off switch and nipping into the garage switched on the power. On returning it was easy to locate the mower, I just followed the wire and the noise. These machines are quite capable of supporting the full weight of handle

and wire on a bed of air and very little pressure is required to move the mower. So now my brain began to tick over in a different manner.

My plan started with a large plastic hook stuck on the front of the mower, another on the rear. Next a pulley block at each end of the lawn, my last piece of equipment being a long length of thin rope. Eyes spliced, stopper knots tied and just like the front room curtains, I was soon able to draw the mower backwards and forwards across the lawn. A little more play and a movable anchorage at each end of the lawn soon emerged. Adjustments made to the fixings and the setting of the electric cable, this time through a running noose atop my long cane placed in the middle of the run. Bingo, here was a system which pulled the mower backwards and forwards across the lawn! The only thing left to do was move the anchors each time, grasp the rope tightly in my left hand and walk back to the other side of the lawn, passing the hardworking mower travelling in the opposite direction.

Today, I pull the mower backwards all round the edges first, cutting away that area which my feet clearly identify. Feeling more like a dormouse at a party than anything else. After which it is only a matter of setting up the pulley system to clear the middle area. Yes, you are right, the coup de grâce (grass), has been delivered to my lawn. Once again the flowers can stand tall and with a bit of luck, the borders will be safe from unlawful attack by the marauding Brit!

A bonus; think of the exercise!

THEY LIVED NEAR ST DUNSTAN'S HQ

Can you name this fictional trio, all three frequented the area round Harcourt Street?

- 1) Sounds like an estate agent, his flat became the base of Abbey National.
- 2) His halo slipped but like the Ovingdean drivers this knight errant was known to drive a Volvo.
- 3) Dirk Bogarde killed this cheery chap on his first outing but he still wished us well for years.

The second prize in our story competition was won by Phyllis Nesbitt of Teignmouth, Devon using the pen name of Florentine. Unfortunately she passed away on August 27th, almost three months after her husband Alex. This is her winning entry.

The Gift

by Florentine

The white man, his tall, muscular body tanned by the tropical sun and the sea breezes, lay beside the brown girl at the edge of the water. Lacy foam curled round their toes, reaching his before hers, and he gave a sigh of complete contentment.

They were quite alone: not a footstep other than theirs had disturbed the silver grains and the only sound was the ripple of the waves and the keening of the sea-birds.

The man turned his head, eyes lingering on the girl's coffee-cream, smooth skin and gently he stroked her bare shoulder, warm and satiny to his fingers. They were thigh to thigh.

Her hair, long and straight and black, blew in strands across his face, he captured a wisp when it touched his lips and held it between strong white teeth: pretending to be in pain, the girl gave a little whimper.

"You hurt me, Johnnie," she said, pouting, "you bad man!"

She rolled away from him, but reaching out, he captured her with a muscly arm, then attempted to wind the piece round her small dusky nose. Their faces, their bodies, were very close.

She laughed, and the strand blew free, but grey eyes looked deep into brown, and the laughter died.

Their breath came faster, he felt her breasts soft against his powerful chest and he caught her even closer as if he would have her part of him, then, with a cry that seemed part of the seagull's keening, the whole world for them, was ecstasy...

Johnnie left the next day: his short stay on the island had been an oasis of tranquillity in a world at war.

Laharna met him in the early morning, burying her face in his shoulder, he tipped her tear-stained face and kissed her.

"Don't honey," he soothed her, "I'll be back - we'll be married." He tried to smile, "I'll write every week: address it to the Mission, Father Riley will read it to you and I'll be sending you the nicest, finest present ever - just you wait and see."

He looked over her shoulder, into the distance, stroking her hair and dreaming.

"I'll take you home to ma - she'll love you." He could see them in his mind's eye: his mother and this slim island girl at his gate, arms intertwined, waiting each evening for him to come home, laughing with each other laughing, and loving him.

He looked at his wristwatch, then kissed her feverishly again and again, as if to compensate for all the long days that lay ahead without her, then he left her. Soon afterwards he boarded the boat that took him to the awesome battleship that lay in the lee of the island.

Laharna stood apart from the gathering of islanders as the soldiers departed: their love had been a secret thing: she did not want her sadness to be seen.

"Johnnie - Johnnie," she whispered, the wind whipped her words away, but one uniformed figure, indistinguishable among the crowd of similarly clothed men, turned his head, as if the yearning cry had reached him.

Johnnie never returned. Within a week he was part of the ocean, part of the little waves that tumbled on the sand.

Laharna's family said she should marry. Sirritiko had asked for her hand many times - why did she insist on waiting? She was 19, did she want embarrassment for her parents, loneliness for herself?

She went to the Mission every day, but there was no letter from Johnnie. The priest regarded her sadly when he had to tell her there was no mail,

when he watched the forlorn figure, shoulders drooping, depart. Once, when he had been visiting a sick parishioner on the other side of the island, he had seen her with the tall young soldier. Like many another, she had taken the affair too seriously.

Two months after Johnnie sailed she was married. Her young husband was rough and insensitive in his lovemaking. She thought of Johnnie, of his laughing grey eyes: his soft touch, and tears hung in her lashes, but she was island-born, she drew a curtain against her unhappiness, but she did not forget.

Seven months after the marriage her son was born, her family said what a fine child she had, for one that came into the world before his time.

She looked at him with excitement when he was put into her arms. He was coffee-brown as his mother, but his hair, though black, curled in ringlets about his tiny ears and wrinkled forehead.

She called him Aloysius after her father. He grew up a handsome boy, the tallest for his age in the village and the only one of her sons to have curly hair. Laharna was sorry, when, on a fishing trip to another island, he met a girl there, and marriage had followed.

Laharna had not liked the girl, she was proud and disrespectful; she treated Aloysius as if she did him an honour by marrying him - worse still, he seemed to think that she did.

Laharna's husband died. She was lonely now, her children scattered, her parents also dead, and most of her remaining kinsfolk gone to the mainland for work. Her hair was greying and she felt old, although she was not yet 43.

One afternoon, as she sat in the shade of a palm, threading delicate shells into necklaces that would be sold in distant cities she would never see, a tall figure, curly hair tousled in the breeze, came into view. She recognised Aloysius.

Standing up, she waited for him to come to her, then, cupping his face in her hands, she welcomed him. It was then she saw the woman coming, walking slowly behind, a baby in her arms. "Sit mother, we have come for your help - we are not happy," Aloysius said, and silently Laharna sat, waiting for her son's trouble.

"You knew we had this child?" he asked her. She nodded. She knew, but she had not seen them since their wedding.

"This child is strange to us, Tiaka cannot love him," her son said simply, "it is causing much trouble between us." There was a long silence and neither raised their eyes.

"You are alone now - will you take him? Another will come soon: a child that may make us happy again; one Tiaka can love."

The woman stood behind them, her features set in hard, resentful lines as she looked down on her mother-in-law. She made a sudden movement forward, holding out the child.

"You take - you love, I cannot."

Laharna looked up, the baby was asleep, damp curls shone on its forehead. Stooping, its mother laid it between Laharna's knees and the latter gathered it up gently, recognising her son's embarrassment, feeling sadness for him.

"I will take the child," she said. "I am lonely, it will make comfort for me."

The couple did not stay, the purpose for their visit had been accomplished without discord, and Tiaka, in her pregnancy, was tired, eager to be gone.

Laharna studied her grandson, he had skin paler than either of its parents. He stirred in his sleep, and, in the manner of very young children, opened his eyes wide, quite suddenly awake.

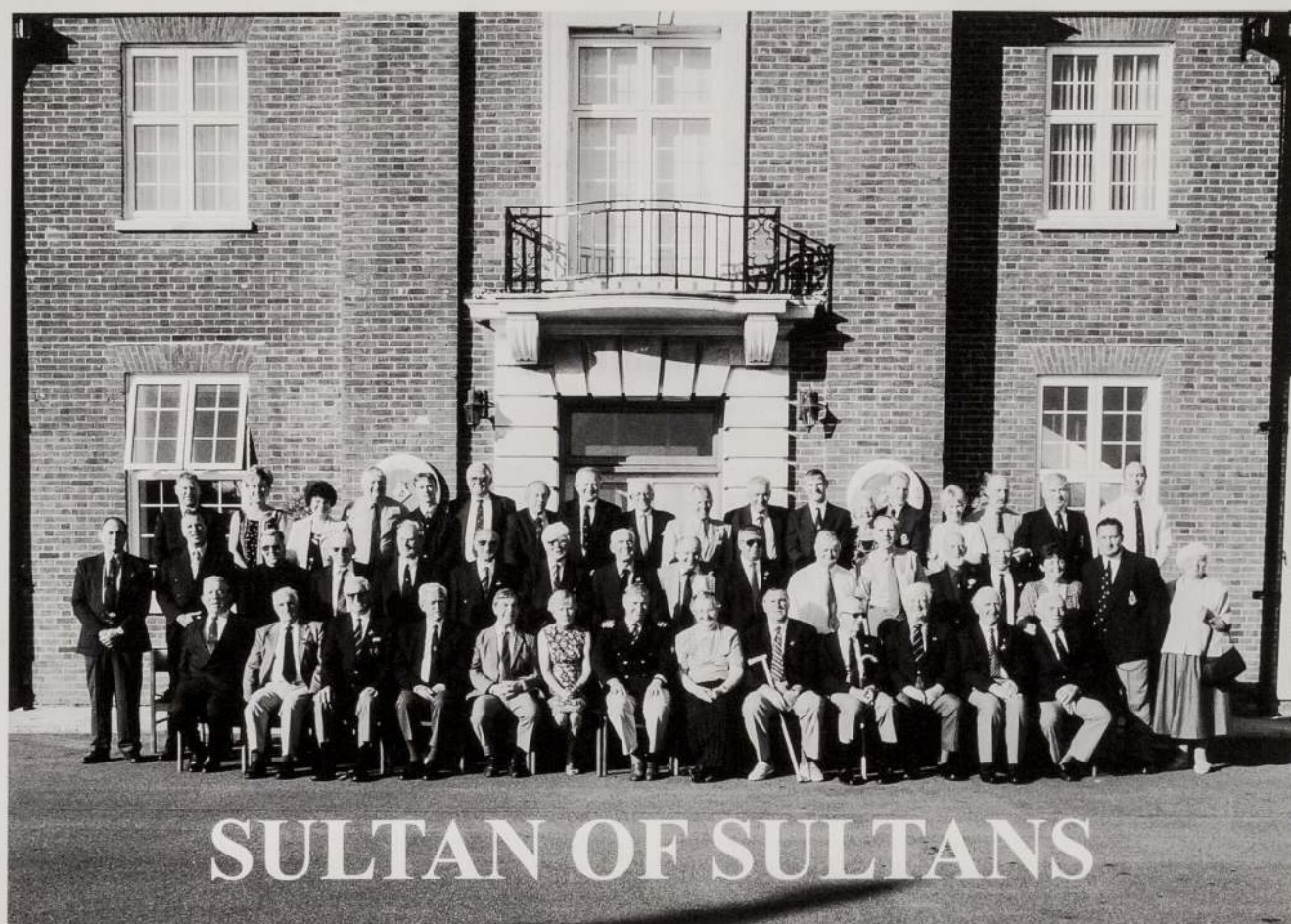
Laharna caught her breath, she gave a soft cry and tears stung. The eyes that looked up, shining and innocent into her own - were grey!

Holding the boy close to her breast, she kissed the chubby fingers now grasping a wisp of her hair.

"Johnnie," she whispered, her eyes now on the far horizon. "Johnnie! I have your present after all these years ..."

SUGGESTIONS WELCOME

News, views, comments and suggestions for the Review are always welcome. Write to The Editor, *St Dunstan's Review*, St Dunstan's, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1A 4XB.



CAMP AT HMS SULTAN 1998 by A.N. Other

July 31st and the last day of a wet and windy month - how will we fare at Gosport? Not that the weather matters overmuch we will be seeing all our old friends and meeting new ones and recounting to each other tales of the past year and generally enjoying ourselves.

The coaches from Brighton and London pulled in through the gates of HMS *Sultan* almost simultaneously and disgorged campers anticipating a week of activities and fun. What is in store for us I wonder? Soon into our cabins after a refreshing cuppa and a lot of chat then over to the Junior Rates Mess for supper and afterwards a very warm welcome from Dave Burrows, the President of the WO & SR Mess, who was looking very smart and ready for the Summer Ball which was being held that evening. Then a briefing by Elspeth in which she warmly welcomed our Chairman, Sir Henry Leach who had come on a farewell visit before his

retirement; she also welcomed our newest camper Des Chandler. Sadly she gave us news of the recent death of one of our popular helpers of some nine years, Valerie Webster, following a stroke and reminded us that we had lost another popular camper in Jim O'Donnell who had died early in the year.

When we had heard the programme of the delights in store for us we settled down to a pleasant evening chatting and reminiscing with Sir Henry about past camps while he got to know our helpers and 'dogs'. It was a pleasure to have him with us the last time he had been at camp was for our 50th anniversary at HMS *Daedalus*. Oh happy memory!

Saturday dawned gloriously - a perfect day for sailing on the Solent with the Gosport Sailing Club and an early start to catch the tide. As usual we were looked after wonderfully well and while some spent the whole day at sea others returned to the Club House for lunch and then back to *Sultan* for an afternoon of archery; the skilled

archers having a serious competition amongst themselves while the remaining campers shot for fun and really enjoyed themselves with the help of the Havant Archers.

Later, after all the sea air and sunshine, we spent a quiet evening back again in WO & SR Mess before our long day on Sunday when we were to be the guests of the Fleet Air Arm Field Gun Crew on the last day of the Royal Tournament. Because camp clashed with the last week of the Tournament we were unable to have any of the current crew to act as our 'dogs' but the Crew were determined that they would see us and had, therefore, invited us to Earls Court. Following lunch and the spectacular (and very noisy) show and the final run by the Crew, which sadly they did not win, we joined them in their Mess to commiserate and felt all the better for seeing them all again and cementing our old friendships.

Our coach driver made good time back to *Sultan* where Dave had organised a late meal for us and then tired after a long day but happy so to bed.

Monday was sports day and it was a murky morning but as the sports were to be held in the splendid gym we did not worry and Martyn Webb had organised a gruelling number of events in which we were to take part in teams. Beforehand, however, we were welcomed to *Sultan* by the Commodore, Commodore John Clayden who was accompanied by the First Lieutenant, Lt Cdr Paul Cass. To Elspeth's and our astonishment the Commodore then presented Elspeth with a vast cheque for the camp funds. This was enormously appreciated and generous and Elspeth was quite overcome by this unexpected gift. Following this wonderful surprise the sports went with a terrific swing and records were broken all round. The *Sultan* PTI looked rather alarmed by the force with which the shot was put making large dents in his precious and splendid floor!

Then out to the sports field for a walk in the rain that deterred no one and Gary Lomas came in first in fine style. A quick lunch but taken leisurely. The afternoon had been planned for a visit to the Gosport & Fareham Inshore Rescue Service, affectionately known as Gafirs, but alas there was such a storm on the Solent that all their lifeboats were out gathering yachtsmen from the foaming deep, so though we were unable to enjoy exciting rides in their boats at sea we were able to visit

them and watch what they were up to, enjoy their hospitality and gossip with our old friends.

The evening was spent with an exciting games night in the WO & SR Mess organised by Stan Bowes as his last official act as Social Secretary in the Mess and to whom we were most grateful. In the innovative games teams of Mess members were blindfolded and took on teams of St Dunstaners - who won hands down - amongst much banter and cheering on the respective teams egging them to greater efforts. A most enjoyable evening when we made more new friends among the Mess members and their families as well as seeing old friends who had come in to join us.

After the storms of Monday we were apprehensive about our trip to Cowes the following day but it was brilliant, no wind and sunny blue skies. We set off eagerly to the ferry where we boarded the *Solent Enterprise* where we felt quite at home after so many years on her. It was a wonderful sail over the Solent and we basked in the sun and quaffed our customary 'tots' generously provided by the Field Gun Crew at Earls Court and they were toasted in their absence in the hope that they would be with us next year.

Cowes was looking wonderful; a myriad of yachts from tiny to enormous with their spinnakers full in the wind in a rainbow of colours and cannons from the Squadron booming out at the start of the races. We had to weave our way very gently among the hundreds of tiny craft to reach our berth. The town was, of course, packed and we seemed to hear every language under the sun being spoken as we wandered around.



Des Chandler with his Victor Ludorum Trophy, 'dog' Fezz Parker and Commander Govan.



Walking winners! Commander Govan presented prizes to St Dunstaners Gary Lomas, Don Planner, Des Chandler and 'dog' Fezz Parker.

Sadly our long term host at The Royal British Legion, Jimmy Higgins, had died early in the year but the Chairman Ken Sinnick welcomed us warmly and later we were delighted to see Bonny Higgins looking well and who had come down the hill specially to see us. After a lovely day we sailed back to Gosport tired but happy and prepared ourselves for our next engagement - dinner in the Ward Room.

This was a great occasion, first of all we sat outside in the sun saying 'cheese' to Artie Shaw for our group photograph then into the Ward Room for pre-dinner drinks and to meet many members of the Ward Room, a number of whom we remembered from last year, as well as a great number of new young officers who were all most friendly. Into the magnificent dining room for a delicious dinner followed by coffee and then we all divided into numerous teams of officers and St Dunstaners for a brain exercising quiz organised by Lt Cdr Clive Peggdon. It was most exciting as well as taxing and the three different rounds were finally won by Dave Burrow's team for which they received bottles of champagne which further enlivened the evening! An early start next morning as we had been invited to visit HMS *Victory* by her Commander, Frank Nowoseilski, who had been the First Lieutenant at *Sultan* for the past two years so was an old friend. We arrived early so that we could have the ship to ourselves before the general public were admitted on board. It was a fascinating visit and we were divided into small groups with a guide who told us exciting and grim tales of life on

board in the 18th century. We learnt the meaning of "four square meals" and "room to swing a cat" and one or two had a gentle feel of the 'cat', a nine thonged whip with which defaulters were lashed sometimes for very minor infringements of naval law. We shivered at the thought. Before leaving we were cheered with a 'tot' before crossing the dockyard to visit HMS *Warrior* a very different ship but equally fascinating.

Our host at *Warrior* was Captain David Newberry our last Captain at HMS *Daedalus* and we were delighted to see his wife Gill as well. Again another wonderful tour round the ship although we could have spent twice as long there - another time perhaps?

Off to lunch at the Home Club, a new venue for us, then back to the coach for a dash to the airfield for helicopter trips with the air-sea rescue service over the Solent and a sight of all the yachts, from above this time, while the crews explained everything to us. This was not the end of the day as in the evening we were off to the Senior Rates Mess at Haslar for an evening of dancing and chatter hosted by the Mess President WO Ian Brown and many nurses from the hospital as dancing partners. It was a late night but luckily the following morning could be a lazy one before our trip to Lee-on-Solent for lunch at the Conservative Club where we were warmly welcomed by the Chairman Ken Martin and his wife. We enjoyed lunch in the sunshine in their beautiful and colourful garden with the scent of all the flowers strong and delicious. This was a gentle day after yesterday's rushing around and

we appreciated it before the evenings celebrations of Prize Giving, the prizes to be awarded by the Commander, Richard Govan. There was a marvellous display of medals and trophies and we waited in great anticipation to hear the results which were wittily announced by Martyn Webb as compere and then presented by the Commander to the successful contestants.

Afterwards came the speeches and Tom Hart gave a gracious thanks to the Commodore, the Commander and Members of the Ship's Company, Don Planner to the Mess President and his staff and all the 'dogs' while Trevor Tatchell thanked the Ward Room and its members for their hospitality.

The Commander then replied and said how glad he was, to have met us all and hoped that we had enjoyed our stay and hoped also that we would all be there again. It had been such a pleasure for him to be able to join in with our activities and present the prizes.

The Commander was followed by Elspeth who said she wanted to make some personal thanks to those who had helped her so much over the years and especially to Dave Burrows for his enormous help and support over the last two years which had been difficult ones for her owing to her sister's illness, to the Camp Committee and for all they and each helper did to help make the camp a success, for their moral support to her over the years and to our permanent 'dogs' who have been so loyal and faithful over so many years and above all to everyone for coming to camp and for their friendship and love - which was something very special and precious. On Friday morning - our last day - there was a short

meeting of St Dunstaners so that they could express their views on camp and a few suggestions were made and noted. The Commodore then arrived to say au revoir to us all and to apologise for not being able to be at Prize Giving the previous evening but he had been in Cowes and told us that Princess Anne had sent us her greetings. He too said how much he had enjoyed meeting us all and hoped that we had enjoyed our stay and that he was looking forward to seeing us all again.

An innovation later that morning was that a party of golfers took off for Lee-on-Solent golf course where they had a good but very hot and rather exhausting day while the rest of us went to renew our friendships with those at The Royal British Legion in Lee.

Sadly our last evening had to come and our farewell dance in the Mess was a cheerful evening to which many old friends came to join us.

Early the following morning the coaches arrived, we said our goodbyes and boarded to set out on the journey home. We took with us many memories of another classical camp, thinking of the fellowship and fun we had experienced, that there were only another twelve months until we would see *Sultan* again.

Since getting home Elspeth has had a letter from Diana Hoare's sister telling her that she had been to visit Diana in Winchester and that she was in good heart and well though she had been suffering from a gastric ulcer earlier in the year but this seems to have cleared up. Elspeth has spoken to Judy and sent our good wishes to Diana.



Best bows take a bow! Phil Skinner, Dave Burrows, Arthur Carter, Norman Killick, Billy Miller, Commander Govan and Kevin Rixon were all on target.

SPORTS RESULTS AT HMS SULTAN

ARCHERY

Totally Blind

2nd	84 points & 3 golds	Tom Whitley
1st	118 points & 5 golds	Trevor Tatchell

Partially Sighted

3rd	119 points	Billy Miller
2nd	150 points & 2 golds	Norman Killick
1st	163 points & 4 golds	Arthur Carter

Novice

46 points & 1 gold	Des Chandler
--------------------	--------------

Doubly Disabled

82 points & 2 golds	Steve Nixon
---------------------	-------------

Skilled Archers

3rd	100 points	Norman Perry
2nd	127	Eric Bradshaw
1st	204	Bert Wood

The Walk *time*

3rd	Bronze Medal	4.45m	Des Chandler
2nd	Silver Medal	4.25m	Don Planner
1st	Gold Medal	4.08m	Gary Lomas

Denny Deacon Veteran's Cup

Arthur Carter

Charles Stafford Cup for Best Beginner

Des Chandler

Penalty Goals

Totally Blind

4 goals in 7.87secs.	Trevor Tatchell
----------------------	-----------------

Partially Sighted

5 goals in 5.59secs	Gary Lomas
---------------------	------------

Sheila McLeod Cup for Best Beginner

Des Chandler

Victor Ludorum

Totally Blind

Des Chandler

Partially Sighted

Gary Lomas

TEAM RESULT

3rd	247 points	<i>Bradshaw's Bandits</i>
2nd	196 points	<i>The Planners</i>
1st	166 points	<i>The Woodsmen</i>

Bert Wood (Capt.), Gary Lomas, Tom Whitley, Arthur Carter, Trevor Tatchell, Paul Walker

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 John Connor of London became a St Dunstaner on August 10th. Now aged 73 he enlisted in the Royal Engineers in June 1943 and served in France, Holland and Germany. In 1945 he developed problems with his sight which led to his right eye being removed in 1946 and his discharge in 1948. On leaving the Army in March 1948 he worked as a carpenter in the construction industry until his sight worsened at the age of 50. Mr Connor lives with his wife and son. He also has four daughters.

Mr Cyril Barnden of Chatham, Kent became a St Dunstaner on August 27th. Now aged 67 he served in the Royal Engineers from 1950 to 1952 when he transferred to the TA. He was discharged with diabetes in 1956. After leaving the Army he worked as a fitter in Chatham Dockyard until 1983 when his sight failed. A keen supporter of Gillingham Football Club, he has two sons.

FAMILY NEWS

BIRTHS

Congratulations on the birth of:

Thomas Christopher on August 20th. He is the great-grandson of *Tom and Nancy Taylor* of Leyland, Lancashire.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to:

Zoë Ward on graduating with a BA Hons in French and Italian at New College, Oxford. Her twin sister Frances is studying her final year in medicine at the University of Birmingham. They are the granddaughters of *Mavis* and the late *Bert Ward* of Leeds.

SILVER ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Walter and Pamela Lethbridge of Saltdean on August 3rd.

Christopher and Winifred Jordan of Washington, Tyne & Wear on August 11th.

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations to:

Roland and Joyce Tingay of Peacchaven, Sussex on September 4th.

DIAMOND ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Geoffrey and Gladys Cock of Leeds on September 3rd.

Stanley and Esther Fletcher of Tooting, London on September 4th.

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Joseph and Amy Harris of Tavistock, Devon who celebrated 61 years of marriage on September 4th.

Sydney and Ethel Whiting who celebrated 67 years of marriage on September 12th.

DEATHS

We regret to announce the death of:

Mrs Eileen Casson on July 8th. She was the wife of *Robert Casson* of Noctorum, Birkenhead.

Mrs Ellen Orr on July 15th. She was the wife of *William Orr* of Lisburn, Co Antrim.

Mrs May Proctor on August 10th. She was the wife of *John Proctor* of Ovingdean.

Mrs Betty Tibbit on August 22nd. She was the wife of *Charles (Ted) Tibbit* of Capel-le-Ferne, Kent.

Mrs Winifred Hunka of Birmingham on June 26th. She was the widow of *Michael Hunka*.

Mrs Mary Rushton of Denton, Manchester on August 5th. She was the widow of *Alfred Rushton*.

Mrs Charlotte Foyle of Tile Hill, Coventry on August 19th. She was the widow of *Stanley Foyle*.

Mrs Joyce Stark of Weston-super-Mare, Somerset on August 22nd. She was the widow of *Samuel Stark*.

Mrs Phyllis Nesbitt of Teignmouth, Devon on August 27th. She was the widow of *Alex Nesbitt*.

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.

Thomas Raybone,

Royal Hampshires

Thomas John Raybone of Ovingdean died on July 22nd, aged 75. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1949. Originally a driver in Cullybackay, Co. Antrim he enlisted in the Army in June 1941 and served as a Private with the Royal Hampshires. He was discharged in October 1947. Our sympathy goes to his daughter Rosaline and all members of the family.

Captain Frederick Woodcock,

Royal Hamilton Light Infantry

Captain Frederick James Leonard Woodcock of Grimsby, Ontario, Canada died on July 31st, aged 93. He had been a St Dunstaner since November 1943. While serving as Lieutenant in the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry, Canadian Army he received gunshot wounds to the face at Dieppe. He was held prisoner by the Germans at Haina Kloster Stalag IX where Lord Normanby had managed to establish a braille school. In October 1943 Lt Woodcock was repatriated to England, one of the first POWs to be released. He came to St Dunstan's where he trained until February 1944. Before his return to Canada, Lord Fraser was able to advise him that the Canadian authorities would post him with the rank of Captain. The care of veterans, particularly those who had been blinded, figured large in his subsequent career. He was the Canadian Institute for the Blind's Aftercare Officer for the War Blinded for 26 years. He was also Executive Secretary of the Sir Arthur Pearson Association of the War Blinded and their President for four years, service they recognised by naming their scholarship fund after him. Captain Woodcock was also Honorary Chairman of the National Council of Veteran Associations in Canada. He was made a Member of the Order of Canada in 1985. He returned to the UK in 1953 when he represented Canadian Veterans at the Coronation. As a memento of the occasion, he was presented with the chairs he and his wife sat in at Westminster Abbey. Our sympathy goes to his wife of 72 years Elizabeth, son John and all of the family.

Douglas Field,
Royal Air Force

Douglas Gladwin Field of Horsham, West Sussex died on August 5th. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1984. He enlisted in the Royal Air Force in 1938 and attained the rank of Flight Sergeant flying hurricanes. He was wounded in France in 1940. His vision began deteriorating in 1942 and he was discharged in February 1945. After the war he joined his father's nursery garden business. He 'borrowed' a greenhouse to start growing mushrooms, a lucrative post war commodity. He moved to Cornwall in 1969 to work in the building trade until 1977 when he was forced to leave due to illness and deteriorating sight.

Besides his interests in gardening and music, Doug was an enthusiastic member of the Amateur Radio, Walking and Computer Clubs. He took up computing in his 70's and claimed it kept him occupied and his mind alert. He was also a part-time speaker for St Dunstan's. Doug was inseparable from his guide dog Bruno, son of BBC TV's *Blue Peter's* Goldie. In 1993 he became President of his local GDBA branch and was responsible for raising many thousands of pounds for the Guide Dog Association. Our sympathy goes to his wife Pauline, son Patrick, daughter Diane and all of the family.

Beryl Sleigh,
Auxiliary Territorial Service

Miss Kathleen Beryl Sleigh of Hampstead, London died on August 8th, aged 93. She had been a St Dunstaner since June 1941. Miss Sleigh trained as a singer at the Royal College of Music and had appeared in several West End shows. The young contralto was on the verge of accepting a place at Sadlers Wells when war broke out and this led to her enlisting in the Auxiliary Territorial Service in May 1940, serving initially with the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry at Aldershot. In September 1940 she was drafted to the 1st London Motor Company as a driver.

Tragedy seemed to haunt her family, her uncle Herbert Lightoller was Second Officer on the *Titanic*. In later years she recalled the anguish experienced by her mother when she heard news that the 'unsinkable' ship had gone down. Eventually news came that her uncle survived

this experience, his actions praised during the subsequent inquiry. On April 16th 1941 Beryl faced her own personal disaster, a landmine fell opposite her billet. The explosion blew in the window and she received facial injuries and was deafened. She came to St Dunstan's two months later, the first girl of the Second World War to train there. At Church Stretton she quickly became an advanced brailist and also excelled at typing. She resumed her studies at the Royal College of Music, studying with Oda Slobodskaya and Sir George Bliss. Beryl subsequently sang on a number of BBC broadcasts and received several standing ovations during a tour of South Africa. She also doubled up with St Dunstaner Gwen Obern to perform *In Town Tonight*. She travelled extensively through Europe and Africa and regularly attended the Ladies' Reunions. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

Alfred Turner,
Royal Engineers

Alfred James Turner of Shepperton, Middlesex died on August 26th, aged 81. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1967. Enlisting in the Royal Engineers in 1936, he served four years with the Colours and eight years in the Reserve. Mr Turner was injured by an explosion whilst assisting in blasting operations in Palestine in August 1939. He received wounds to the head and right hand and was subsequently discharged in June 1940. He worked as a storeman for British Petroleum until retiring in 1966. Our sympathy goes to his stepson Doug and all of the family.

Geoffrey Bunting,
Royal Air Force

Geoffrey William Bunting of Sprowston, Norwich, Norfolk died on September 8th, aged 69. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1979. As an 18 year old he enlisted with the Royal Air Force and served as a Leading Aircraftman. While stationed in Sudan he received injuries that would eventually deprive him of his sight and confine him to a wheelchair. After his discharge in 1951 Mr Bunting worked in the building trade. At St Dunstan's he developed an interest in bowling, winning several trophies, handicrafts and computing. Our sympathy goes to his son Tony, daughter Angela and all of the family.