

# St Dunstan's Review

July 2000





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**Cover picture:** Officer  
Cadets from 9 Platoon,  
Inkerman Company at  
RMA Sandhurst painting  
one of the stairwells at  
Ovingdean with a nonslip  
covering.

Full details on page 6.

## From the Chairman



The reunion season gives us the opportunity to thank our Welfare Officers in public for what they do. But what we see at these gatherings is only the tip of the iceberg.

Although they are only expected to work a normal working week, Welfare Officers are available in an emergency to give advice and support almost all the time. They each cover thousands of miles a year in carrying out as many as 400 visits to St Dunstaners, widows and widowers. In turn, they are backed up by Peter Irven and his team at HQ. From celebrations to commiserations, sickness to success and grants to grievance, it's all in a day's work for the department! This year, in addition, they have had to cope with helping develop and transfer to a new computer system, and of course manage the large amount of work involved in the amalgamation.

Your welfare is the primary function of St Dunstan's. I pay tribute to all those who are involved, who give their time and of themselves in support of our St Dunstaners, their widows, widowers and families.

Will the summer ever come? As I write this the rain seems endless. There is always a good side however; the gardeners do not need their hosepipes...!

*Michael Gordon-Lennox*

Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN



## NOTICE BOARD



### MAKING A WILL

I make no apologies for taking this opportunity to write again about the subject of your Will but I thought you would want to know how we could assist you. Many people forget to make a Will or indeed amend their present one when it would be prudent to do so as things have changed. Many people think that making a Will is too expensive, this is not generally so. It is vitally important that your Will is exactly how you want it to be. Unless your Will is up to date your wishes might not be carried out exactly as you would want. If you need any assistance or help regarding the making of or amendment to your Will, do please contact me on 01273 307811 extension 3211.

If a St Dunstaner passes away at Ovingdean an inventory of his/her belongings needs to be made as soon as is practicable. Obviously, this is a very sad time and St Dunstan's would in no way wish to cause the family any further upset at this distressing time but I am sure you will appreciate that we want to do things properly. After due consideration and advice from St Dunstan's solicitors we now have a standard letter which, will be handed to the next of kin concerning their relative's belongings. We hope the text which follows is helpful in understanding very necessary legal procedures on these occasions:

"To whom it may concern

We are sure you will appreciate that we have no wish to cause you further upset at this very sad time but regretfully we are unable to let you have the item/s you have requested at present.

St Dunstan's is very conscious of the duty of care they have to all those concerned.

Usually a spouse or a child is the person who benefits under a Will or intestacy but this is not always so, and disputes can arise within families over

cash or personal belongings. Strictly speaking no payment or transfer should be made until a Grant of Probate or Letters of Administration has been obtained. However, when we have the full knowledge of the facts and have been able to consult with the executor/s we can sometimes release belongings sooner.

Thank you for your understanding and co-operation."

Eileen Mobsby, Wills & Trusts Co-ordinator

### BOWLING TOURNAMENT

Any St Dunstaner wishing to join the Bowling Club for the tournament for October 27th to November 10th, please contact Rita Pryor on 01273 582523 or Joan Osborne on 01273 302115 as soon as possible.

### DERBY SWEEPSTAKE WINNERS

The stakes were higher this year with a total of £437.70 in the pot. As it turned out, Lady Luck favoured a baker's dozen of St Dunstaners and widows.

Sinndar came in first, netting £218.85 for Mrs Anne Moore of Oxhey, Watford. Second prize went to Ernie Ford of Middlesborough, Cleveland who received £87.54, while Mrs Ivy Carr of High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire won the third prize of £43.77 and a share of the Starters' Prize.

The Starters' Prize was divided amongst:  
Mr W. Bramley of Blackpool, Lancashire;  
Mr D. Brown of Buckingham, Buckinghamshire;  
Mr H. Frost of Moston, Manchester; Mr J. Twells of Rugby, Warwickshire; Mrs M. Quinn of Ripon, North Yorkshire; Mr M. Ash of Sidmouth, Devon;  
Mr T. Lukes of Old Colwyn, North Wales;  
Mr C.T. Coston of Elm, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire;  
Mr W.G. Morris of Bournemouth, Dorset; and  
Mrs A. Robinson of Glenrothes, Scotland.

### DEADLINES FOR FUTURE ISSUES

The final date for submitting items for publication in the September *Review* is July 28th.

The final date for submitting items for publication in the October *Review* is August 29th.



## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE AT O Vingdean

In order to offer more nursing care facilities at Ovingdean for short (respite) and long care (permanent) stays, 10 beds on the 3rd floor North Wing are being re-registered by the Brighton & Hove Health Authority Registration Unit. We expect to have received approval by the end of June 2000.

To provide additional beds for "assisted" holidays (respite) existing beds are to be registered by the Brighton & Hove Council Residential Inspectorate. These will include the six beds currently used for trainees, as some trainees need an element of care.

Planning consent in principle has been received from the local council for the conversion of "mothballed" rooms on the 4th floor North Wing (old training area) and the flats in the Fuselage to be converted into single rooms with en suite facilities, to provide more holiday accommodation (excluding the training flat).

Whilst the conversion/refurbishment work is being carried out it may have an effect on the rooms on the floor below, so for a short period of time (yet to be specified) the beds on the 3rd floor North Wing and Fuselage may be out of service.

We hope that these improvements will continue to make Ovingdean a more comfortable environment for all, continuing our policy of quality and safety for St Dunstaners, widows and staff.

**Susan Harrison**  
General Manager (Ovingdean)

## CHANGES TO THE PREMISES AT ST DUNSTAN'S O Vingdean

by Michael Hordell

We have commenced work on the Ansell Wing Project, which involves replacing the existing flat roof with a more traditional pitched roof over the swimming pool and annex. We have also started on other works insisted upon by the Local Council now that St Dunstan's Ovingdean is a listed building.

If all goes according to plan, the swimming pool will be back in action by the end of this year.

As a consequence of the building project, the Gymnasium and Computer (IT) Equipment will need

to be moved temporarily at various stages. For this, we apologise in advance for the inconvenience this may cause.

In addition, visitors to Ovingdean will need to be aware of the scaffolding, which has been erected in the inner garden area, close to the Handicraft Room wall. The area has been roped off, but care will still need to be taken.

Following the successful installation of temperature controls in the bedrooms, we will shortly turn to technology to further reduce the temperatures in the remaining general areas at Ovingdean, which will include the Winter Garden.

Flexible showers have now been installed in those bedrooms, which hitherto had only rigid shower heads and we hope this flexibility will be beneficial to shower users.

## HANDLESS REUNION 2001

The Reunion of the Blind/Handless Group will be held May 9th to May 15th next year.

## PRIORITY TREATMENT FOR WAR PENSIONERS

This is to remind Health Authorities and NHS Trusts of the arrangements for the Priority Treatment of War Pensioners.

NHS Hospitals should ensure that they give priority to War Pensioners, both as in-patients and as out-patients for examination or treatment relating to the condition for which the patient receives a pension. Priority should not be given for unrelated conditions. Referrals for treatment should make it clear that the patient is a war pensioner and requires treatment for the condition for which the pension was given.

The guidance issued as HSG(97)31 still applies.

We therefore continue to recommend that War Pensioners should carry with them a copy of the circular which they can produce to those involved if priority treatment is being questioned.

This particular circular relates only to England and Wales with the Scottish Executive having published a similar document (NHS MEL(2000)3 dated the 28th January) which has already been circulated to Scottish Branches.

## LOCAL SAPPERS WANTED

The Membership Secretary of the Crawley branch of the Royal Engineers Association is requesting names of Sappers who live, primarily, in the Sussex/Surrey areas who may wish to join the Crawley Branch. Please contact Hon Treasurer/ Membership Secretary, Tony Muir, Dockray, 1 Perryfield Road, Southgate, Crawley, West Sussex RH11 8AA.

## A SHOPPER'S GUIDE

A cassette version of *A Shopper's Guide, the Office of Fair Trading's advice guide for the every-day shopper* is now available.

The Guide explains legal rights when buying goods and services, how to complain and where to get help. As well as buying from shops, issues covered include

## OBITUARIES:

### Katherine Garnett-Orme

Many St Dunstaners will be saddened by news of the death of Katherine Garnett-Orme on May 24th.

Her late husband Ion Garnett-Orme was Chairman of St Dunstan's from 1975 to 1983. A former Welsh Guardsman he served on St Dunstan's Council over a 25-year period, acting as Treasurer and Vice Chairman. With Mrs Garnett-Orme's help, he initiated the increase in help for St Dunstan's Widows and encouraged help for St Dunstan's families.

Their work on behalf of the organisation was feted by one St Dunstaner who said "The hallmark of Mr and Mrs Garnett-Orme's success is their modesty and their unfailing caring. They have adopted us as their family and they have extended the St Dunstan's spirit."

### Miss Joy Cooch

Miss Joy Cooch died on May 27th. She was a member of St Dunstan's staff for 42 years having joined the Appeals department in 1938. She later transferred to the recording studios of the British Talking Book Service for the Blind on "permanent loan", where she worked on the selection of books and schedules for recording.

### Mrs Ethel Pleat

Mrs Ethel Pleat who died on April 28th worked as a Lounge Sister at St Dunstan's Church Stretton from 1944 to 1947.

purchases by mail order, telephone sales, auctions, new and used cars, home improvements and holidays.

To obtain a copy of *A Shopper's Guide*, write to Master Transcriptions, PO Box 124, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 8YL.

## CANCER GUIDE

A leading health advice publication is now available in braille. Macmillan Cancer Relief's *The Cancer Guide* covers a wide range of information from diagnosis and treatment to long-term support. It explains medical terms and includes contacts for helpful organisations. To order a braille copy of *The Cancer Guide* contact Lucy Franklin, Communications Assistant on 020 7887 8221. E-mail: lfranklin@macmillan.org.uk.

## REUNION ROUND UP

Major General Andrew Keeling was the council member presiding at the Exeter Reunion on May 17th. As usual, there was a strong contingent of Royal Marines amongst the 23 St Dunstaners and 13 widows gathered at the Southgate Hotel, Southernhay.

The Nottingham Reunion on May 31st was more relaxed with six St Dunstaners and four widows. Mr Timothy Bacon was the Member of Council presiding at the Forte Posthouse, Nottingham.

At Cardiff on June 7th there were 14 St Dunstaners and three widows. Captain Ray Hazan presided at the Forte Posthouse Cardiff.

Ten St Dunstaners and seven widows gathered at the Royal Station Hotel, Newcastle on June 13th. David T. Knowles was the Member of Council presiding at the Newcastle Reunion.

Mr Knowles also presided at the Leeds Reunion on June 14th. Six St Dunstaners, eight widows and one widower gathered at the Forte Posthouse, Bramhope.

## REVIEW VARIATIONS

*St Dunstan's Review* is available in braille, tape, computer disk and large print. For any variation, please contact the Public Relations department at 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1A 4XB.



# Chalk it up to experience



*Around 40 tons of chalk was removed by the Sandhurst cadets.*



*Stan Grimsey breaks his stroll to chat with two cadets.*



*At work in the St Dunstan's chalk mine.*

On May 25th, Ovingdean was pleasurably 'invaded' by 60 Officer Cadets from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Their Commandant had decreed that all platoons must spend a day on community service and St Dunstan's was one of the first organisations that came to their mind.

Some 38 benches and tables were sanded down and re-oiled. The three emergency staircases were given a lick of nonslip paint. The greatest challenge of all was 160 cubic metres of chalk, which had remained, long buried, in a basement room since the building was first constructed. This is taking up valuable storage space and would have cost literally thousands of pounds to have cleared. The cadets made a valiant start and have removed about a third.

The cadets enjoyed a barbecue and a pint plus a chat with Residents and holidaymakers. A St Dunstan's plaque was presented to them in the lounge amidst loud applause. Hopefully, besides spreading the name of our organisation amongst a substantial cadre of future Officers, this assistance will take place again. St Dunstan's is very grateful for all the work rendered.



*Cadet Nicolas Aucott chats to Alf Waters. The future officer will be going out to Cassino where Alf was blinded during the war.*

# HOT SHOT EDDIE

Two St Dunstaners have been setting the pace in acoustic rifle shooting.

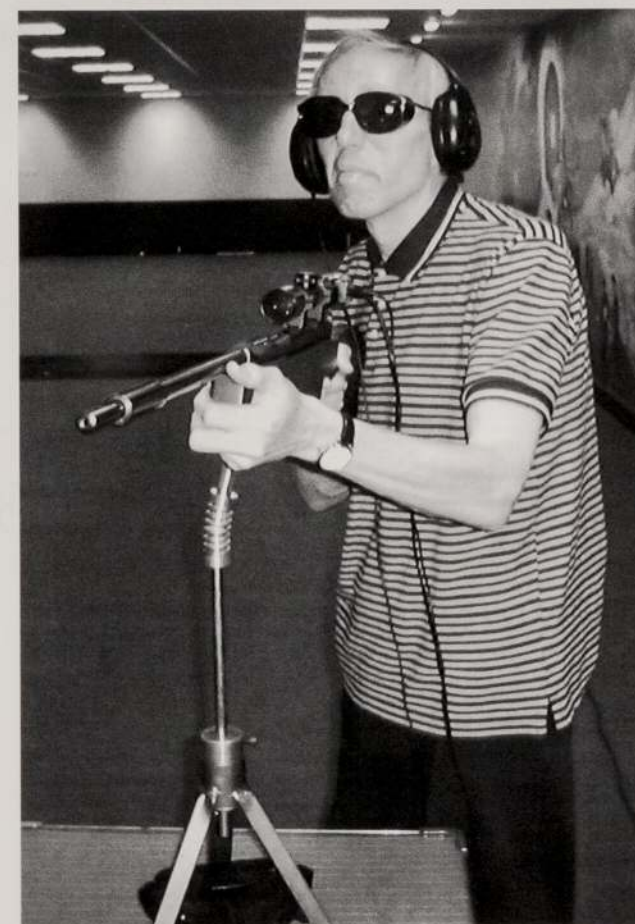
Ed Allchin of Rottingdean, who served in the Royal Army Medical Corps, won his Division in the National VI acoustic rifle shooting league. After ten rounds Ed only dropped four points to clinch the title.

Ed was using a LG Mod Fienwerkbau 300S calibre air rifle mounted on a stand. An acoustic "sight" allowed him to acquire the target before firing pellets from the lever action rifle.

Derry Laviolette won the silver in the British VI Rifle Championship in March. The champion won by a single point. After a demonstration of acoustic rifle shooting during the Duke of York's visit to St Dunstan's Ovingdean, Derry was moved to set up the Herefordshire Acoustic Target Shooting Club.

In May he travelled to Holland as part of the British Blind Shooting Team who won 11 medals in a disabled meet. Derry, who served in the Royal Navy, was surprised to find that the British team were the only ones using stands. It is now his ambition to adopt a free-standing approach to shooting.

If you would like to try acoustic rifle shooting please contact Dave Goldsmith, Sports and Recreation department at Ovingdean on 01273 307811 ext 3102.



*Aiming by ear! Ed Allchin waits for the sound that lets him know he has target acquisition before firing the air rifle.*

# ARCHERS IN ACTION

Six of St Dunstan's Archers were invited to shoot at Newhaven's County shoot held at Peacehaven football ground. The weather was not very kind to the sighted archers at the start of the shoot as we had a very heavy mist come down, but it cleared later in the day.

David Habgood, in-house coach and his team of coaches looked after us all day, one-to-one, which made the day very enjoyable for all our archers.

There were 90 archers there from all over the county. Newhaven Archery Club has made great steps in having VI archers at these big shoots. Ms Barbara Degenhardt, who is one of our coaches, received a county award for her work in archery with



*Barbara coaching Tom Hart during a St Dunstan's archery shoot last year.*

us and her own club. Well done Barbara from all the archers at St Dunstan's.

Three St Dunstaners came away with medals and Norman Perry scooped four raffle prizes.



# MERRY DAY IN WINDSOR

Ted Miller reports on The Handless Reunion - May 10th-16th

On Wednesday afternoon we arrived in Ovingdean for our reunion. We had travelled down with Bill and Alice Griffiths so we had plenty to talk about, and Michael, our driver, is always entertaining. After a short meeting with Gwen Obern and her escort Ann, Wally and Pam Lethbridge, Bill and Alice and Winnie Edwards when we discussed our plans for the weekend, we made our way to the Winter Garden and were joined by Jackie Greer (who was looking after Winnie), Adrian, John and Steven Loska, the sons of our late friend Josef (Gwen later paid a tribute to Josef). As usual we had a lovely supper laid on for us by Paul and Trevor, and after a very enjoyable evening with plenty to talk about, we were ready for bed.

We had to be up early on Thursday, as we were due to leave Ovingdean at 10.00am for Oakley Lodge Hotel, Windsor where we were to stay for two nights. It was a lovely hotel, on the banks of the river Thames, about ten miles from Windsor Castle, and the staff were very nice. After lunch, David drove us to the Castle and we were very impressed with the restoration work, which has been done to it since the disastrous fire in 1992. We had been there before and you would never have known there had been such a terrible fire. It destroyed 105 rooms, almost one fifth of the Castle. The staff were very helpful and informative. I am sure we all enjoyed it, and after a visit to the gift shop we made our way back.

We were joined for dinner in the evening by Mr Delmar-Morgan, who is Vice-Chairman of St Dunstan's, and his wife. He was very entertaining and he read us a letter he had received from Her Majesty The Queen wishing us all a happy reunion. We had a very pleasant evening remembering old times. I'm afraid after this very pleasant evening, Gwen's day was badly spoilt by news that Ernie, her husband, was very poorly again. She felt she had to go home after we got back to Ovingdean on Saturday morning.

As we had a free morning on Friday, we decided to look at the shopping centre in Windsor but we had to get back early as we were due to leave the Oakley Lodge Hotel at 5.00pm for David to get us to Westminster Pier by 7.00pm to board the 'Show Boat' for our trip down the Thames to Greenwich.

Here we met Marion Lurot from HQ as she was coming on the boat trip with us. Dinner was to be served on board at around 8.00pm. It was good the way they collected the hot food from another boat that was moored further down the river. We were given a good talk, describing all the landmarks we were passing. We saw the *Cutty Sark*, the Thames Barrier, the Greenwich Observatory, the Dome and much more. On our way back to Westminster we discovered that our tour guide had other talents, she put on a concert for us. She had a lovely voice and we all joined in singing. We eventually reached Westminster Pier and on our way back to our hotel we saw the Millennium Wheel lit up on the skyline. We got back to our hotel about 11.30pm, after having a lovely day.

After breakfast on Saturday morning we boarded the coach and arrived back at Ovingdean in time for lunch. David, our driver, was taking Gwen and Ann back home to Wales so he was having a very busy day, but I think Gwen was relieved to be going home. We ended our day having supper in the Winter Garden, another beautifully prepared cold buffet. Thank you again, Paul and Trevor.

On Sunday we left Ovingdean for a buffet lunch with Mr and Mrs Roddy Petley at their home at Heathfield. It was such a lovely day that Mrs Petley had prepared our lunch in their beautiful garden. The azaleas were really lovely and the air was filled with scent. We met some of the family, James her son and Ann her daughter, Lord and Lady Lloyd who we have met before at their farmhouse and Ian and Mary Gow to name just a few. It was a lovely afternoon, and even the guinea fowl came out to meet us. Winnie gave our hostess a little stool made at St Dunstan's from us all, and Bill gave a vote of thanks and a few clean jokes. Thank you all for a lovely day. In the evening Susan had arranged entertainment in the lounge where we had a singsong and a few drinks at the bar.

On Monday morning we had a meeting of our Group in the Stables where we were joined by Sir John and Lady Gingell (Sir John is our president). In the afternoon The Handless Group met Mr Gerard Frost and Mr Peter Irven in the conference room to discuss a few private matters.

In the evening we all met in the Winter Garden for the final dinner. Our guests included Sir John and Lady Gingell and Mr and Mrs Roddy Petley. From HQ came Mr and Mrs Gerard Frost, Jeremy Hinton, Peter Irven, Carol Maloney, Carole Woodgate, Marion Lurot, Neil Swan and Tim Osborne. From the house, we were joined by Susan Harrison, Jackie Greer, David Vinall, Patsy Wardill and Ken Warner, a voluntary orderly, who had been very helpful.

After the dinner I rose to give the Loyal Toast. Sir John then gave us an amusing talk followed by our Bill, acting for Gwen, who gave us an excellent speech. Then the lady guests were presented with flowers.

Our thanks to our drivers, David, Michael and Stan and to all the staff in the house and a special thank you for all our lovely meals.

We missed Gwennie and Ann and do hope we shall hear some better news soon. If I have missed anyone out please forgive me.

PS We all missed seeing Audrey Gaygan who was not well enough to make the journey to Brighton and we all send her our love.

■ Next year the Handless reunion will be held from May 9th to 15th.

## IRON MEN PROVE THEIR METTLE



WOII Wheller presents St Dunstan's with an impressive sum raised by the Ironman team.

A group of sappers from RAF Brize Norton pushed themselves to the limit to aid the work of St Dunstan's. The CRE (Airfields) team, 17 in all, who provide support for the RAF base, took part in a unique triathlon event which they dubbed "Exercise Ironman 2000" on June 7th.

They started with a 2.5 mile swim, saddled up for a 150 mile cycle ride and then broke into a 32 mile run to St Dunstan's Ovingdean. The stalwart sappers were joined at Hove by a team of St Dunstaners for the last five miles along the coast.

St Dunstaners Iain Millard, Billy Orr, Dave Powell, Matthew Rhodes and trainee Billy Baxter were supported by an extended variation of the Rehab Reprobates including computer wizards Janis Sharp and Paul Roden. The combined team used a mixture of leg-power, tandem, tricycle and bicycle along the



Almost there! The Ironmen reach the end of their run at St Dunstan's Ovingdean.



Bill Orr and Mike Godden give a rather unique tandem a field run.

last stretch. Passers-by responded to this effort by donating almost £70 in loose change. The event raised £2,275 which will be used for sports equipment at St Dunstan's Ovingdean.



# Life and Times of Ovingdean

by Lyn Neville

As usual we have all been very busy at Ovingdean. At the beginning of May, gardening projects were started on the second floor balcony and the inner garden. Stan Grimsey replanted the second floor balcony and it is now most attractive for those people who want to sit out enjoying the sunshine and lovely scent from the flowers.

The inner garden was an even bigger project with six large terracotta tubs, six big hanging baskets and numerous other containers needing to be planted up. Stan and Bill Orr headed the workforce with assistance from visiting St Dunstaners and staff. The end result has been quite spectacular.



Dig those honky-tonk tunes! Norman Perry relaxes with the pianola in the Green Lounge.



**Main:** The majestic stealth bomber swoops through the air. **Above:** Arthur Lowe discusses changes in the RAF with Lt. Nick Newton.

Although there have been many trips out lately, the most interesting was our visit to RAF Mildenhall Air Fete 2000 on May 27th. We set off at 7.30am for the air show at the American air base in Suffolk. When we arrived there the long journey was well and truly worth it. The Red Arrows were in the sky demonstrating their mastery of formation flying.

There were planes flying all day long except for a couple of enforced breaks due to stormy weather!! There was an incredible variety of aeroplanes. These ranged from the raw power of B52s, the amazing acrobatics of a Harrier jump jet (which flew backwards) and the nostalgic grace of a Spitfire, which was teamed with a Hurricane and Lancaster bomber.

We even saw the new American plane "THE STEALTH" which cost £2billion!!! Not surprisingly there are only 20 of them. It looked like something out of the film *Star Wars*, like a stingray in the sky.

Regardless of what the weather did, we all agreed that we had a wonderful day.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the Editor are always welcome.

Send a letter, tape or disk to 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1A 4XB. Fax: 020 7224 9616.

E-mail: ray.hazan@st-dunstans.co.uk

**From: William Griffiths, MBE, Blackpool, Lancashire**

Regarding Bill Shea's letter in the June *St Dunstan's Review*. I agree that the St Dunstan's slogan should be "Caring For War Blinded and Blind Ex-Service Men and Women."

**From: Norman Hopkins, Heath, Cardiff**

I must confess that I felt the same concerns re the EGM expressed in Bill Shea's letter to the Editor in last month's *Review* and the Chief Executive's response was not all that reassuring.

Let us be clear about the situation. It seems to me that it's all about the "numbers" game and trying to achieve the right balance, so as to comply with the Charity Commissioners ruling.

Therefore, however one views it, the Powers that be have established a new category of St Dunstaner and this is a contentious issue in itself when one thinks of the original intention of the donors to St Dunstan's.

I feel that if we have to accept this scenario, let us get the wording of the slogan right and I can think of no better compromise than that suggested by Bill, ie "caring for war-blinded and blind ex-service men and women."

**Reply from the Chief Executive**

Let me reassure you all that the changes to the Constitution are aimed at enabling St Dunstan's to provide for the long-term care of all St Dunstaners, dependants, widows and widowers.

In order to comply with the original intentions of the donors to St Dunstan's, and also the requirements of the Charity Commission, the funds of St Dunstan's, as at the date of the EGM (March 2nd 2000), have been ring-fenced for the benefit of St Dunstaners blinded as a result of war or warlike conflict.

Since the change in the Constitution, we have run a major Fund Raising Campaign, highlighting the changes and I am pleased to report that it has been very successful and that we have received many letters of support from our donors.

**From: Tom Page, Morecombe, Lancashire**

I would like to thank the nurses and doctors at St Dunstan's Ovingdean for all their help during my recent stay at the house. In particular, I would like to thank Dr Janvrin for his advice. Also thanks to the driver who took us there and back.



**The Other Side of The Street**

Author: Jean Alexander.

Reader: Jean Alexander.

Catalogue number: 8463

Duration: 6 Hours 15 minutes

Hilda Ogden does not exist! She never did exist! She is not a real person but the figment of a writer's imagination! It's true I tell you; the fact that millions of *Coronation Street* addicts have believed the contrary is due, almost entirely, to the convincing performances of a talented actress whose book this is. And a most interesting book it is too. Far removed from the run-of-the-mill thespians' efforts which seem to do little but list the names of the rich and the famous, this one tells of the struggle to survive in a difficult profession where stardom comes, if it comes at all, through sheer hard work and not by being accidentally "discovered" overnight. Listening to this book, which is made doubly enjoyable by being read by Miss Alexander herself, a special kind of grim humour comes through, which undoubtedly made her a natural as a character actress in a comedy role. Without such a sense of humour or something akin to an iron will, I should think life in provincial "rep" might be almost impossible. Performing one play, rehearsing another and learning the lines of a third obviously called for ability, great stamina and above all for dedication. Many who have mistakenly been drawn to the theatre in pursuit of a glamorous career, have not possessed all three attributes in sufficient quantity and have gone off to find "a proper job". Millions I think, are pleased Jean Alexander was not one of these.



# Circles In The River Of Life

by Alan Brown

When I had to retire from work as a travel clerk with British Rail because of failing eyesight it was as though someone had picked me up from the shore of a very large lake and thrown me into the water from whence the circle of waves spread.

Leaving the Telephone Enquiry Bureau I realised it was not the end but the beginning of a wonderful new experience for me. I knew instinctively what life had planned for me as I made my way to the Resource Centre at Bristol Royal Society for the Blind (BRSB).

I had some training as a Counsellor and so I became a volunteer with BRSB serving with a team of Advisors in the Listening Ear Service which involved hearing people talking about their visual problems and helping them find a way to lead an independent life in their own home.

As a uniformed Salvationist with Bristol (Bedminster) Corps, I wanted to take on more responsibility at the Citadel. The result is that I am now the Over 60's Club Secretary, a Local Officer serving on the Pastoral Care Service and the Corps Council and also a School Governor at a local primary school. I live for music and operate the Music Appreciation Group at BRSB. This is quite unique as far as local

charities are concerned in England. I believe we are one of just two in the country. It is my privilege and pleasure to visit groups and schools in the Bristol area giving talks about the way my life has changed since losing much of my vision, and I also take many of my gadgets with me.

Life is hectic, so my diary is constantly reviewed as I check on dates to find where I am each day. It is a case of 'have computer, will travel' and it all comes from the wonderful help, guidance and patience I received when attending a computer course last July at St Dunstan's. I now have my own talking computer on which I write letters, plan programmes for the Over 60's Club and keep tabs on the Music Group.

My life is not always rosy, but then whose is? We each have crosses to bear, but our burdens can be shared with someone who is prepared to listen. Life isn't that bad is it? If at times you don't feel that life is worth living, try thinking of someone who may rely on you being there, wherever you are and whoever you are. Let yourself be picked up, dropped into that lake, and see how the ripples spread. I'll see you in the water and together we can make those waves radiate jointly. I always look for more ways to make waves by keeping myself in the flow of life.

# Anticlockwise around the Moat

by Woody "Everest Windows" Oakes

After his heroic conquest of Glastonbury Tor, the intrepid adventurer, Woody "Everest Windows" Oakes, not one to rest on his laurels, because they are not very comfortable, looked for other challenges.

His thoughts, few as they are, turned to the Captain Matthew Webb, the first man to swim the English Channel in 1876. But that has been done many times since and besides he could use the Channel Tunnel and not get his feet wet. No, something that had not been done before and a bit closer to home was called for!

A high dive into forty-five gallons of Butcombe Bitter? Feasible if the locals didn't drink it while he climbed to a high place before the dive! Swim the moat of the Bishop of Bath and Wells' Palace? No chance of him drinking undiluted water!

On a bitterly cold day in early spring, Woody "Everest Windows" Oakes dressed in a one piece Victorian swimming costume and covered from head to toe with goose grease to protect him from the icy waters of the moat. Starting from the drawbridge and swimming anticlockwise an exhausted Woody "Everest Windows" Oakes completed his epic swim.

After a couple of pints of Butcombe Bitter in the Britannia Inn, Woody "Everest Windows" Oakes revealed exclusively to the St Dunstan's Review that he had trouble with the undercurrent by the outflow, the waterfall and the ducks. "They were at me even before I was in the water. I reckon it was the goose grease. I should have waited until after the mating season. They probably thought I was akin to them and were trying to mate with me."

# Eva still remembers

by Neil Swan

One of our oldest supporters is Mrs Eva Sanderson. She was 100 years old in March this year. Her brother Cuthbert (Bert) was blinded while serving with the Royal Field Artillery during the 1914-1918 war. On her 100th birthday she raised a total of £700 for St Dunstan's.

She was born in Wigan and at the age of 15 obtained a job with a colliery agent in her home town. While she was working she looked after Bert when he had been blinded and St Dunstan's resultantly holds a special place in her heart for the manner in which she says it gave life and hope back to so many people during the Great War.

Eva's interests are many. She still bakes her own bread, tends her own garden, types and makes patchwork cushions. Until she was in her 90s twenty-mile hikes were a passion and it was while on a walking holiday in Wales that she met her late husband Barry.

## A PRESENT FROM KOSOVO



Lt Patrick Bond of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards presented Ray Hazan with a cheque for £245.08p. Lt Bond and members of his squadron raised the money for St Dunstan's while on active service in Kosovo via sponsored forfeits. For Patrick this meant having his hair dyed red until his CO insisted he change it back.



Bert Molloy (at the top) with some fellow St Dunstaners during a day out at Brighton in 1917.

Another noteworthy fund raiser is Mr Toseland. On May 20th he took part in the Waendal walk which attracts people from many countries. At the age of 81 he raised £150 in sponsorship money by walking nine miles for St Dunstan's. In his letter he said "The man who inspired me to do this walk for St Dunstan's was Bill Griffiths, author of the book *Blind to Misfortune*. I, like Bill was a Far East Prisoner of War and would like him to know that he is still helping St Dunstan's by his example."

In the previous *Review* we mentioned the great work of Mary Saunders in the Isle of Wight. However we failed to correctly state the amount she had actually raised as being £5,500.01 and not £5,000.01 as printed in the article. We apologise for this error and are glad to report that Mary's fund raising activities at Osborne House continue apace, weather permitting.

The Ken Moss Draw has now taken place and the declared winner of the MGF sports car is Mr Spencer Stevenson of Thetford, Norfolk. The car will be officially handed over to him soon.



# WELCOME TO ST DUNSTAN'S

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

**Mr John Ayre** of Rosliston, Swadlincote, Derbyshire joined St Dunstan's on May 9th. Now aged 79, he served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1941 to 1946. After basic training in Leicester, he sailed to Singapore where the Japanese took him prisoner. He was moved through Malaya to Thailand and forced to work on the Railway. After the war he joined the coal board in Derby. Mr Ayre and his wife Marjorie have two daughters.

**Mr Francis Bowers** of Malvern, Worcestershire served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1940 to 1946. He was deployed with 173 Field Ambulance in Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Tobruk. Later he served with the 77 Indian Infantry Brigade in Mytkina, Burma in support of the Chindits. Returning to the UK in 1944, he served at Exeter City Hospital where they treated FEPOW casualties. After the war he returned to Malvern where he worked on the railways. A member of St John's Ambulance, Mr Bowers is a keen gardener.

**Mr Arthur Bultler** of Firthmoor, Darlington served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1941 to 1946. After training he joined 25 ASD in Wales where he was responsible for maintaining ammunition stores. Having left the service he worked in the electroplating industry and later managed a petrol station.

**Mr John Lappin** of Outwood, Wakefield, West Yorkshire served in the Royal Engineers from 1947 to 1950. Awarded a Royal Engineer Cadetship, he attended Technical College for two years and gained a War Office Engineering Diploma. He then served at Chatham before being posted to Colombo. He later joined John Laing Engineering working on major projects including nuclear power stations, the M6 motorway, and offshore oil development. He set up his own company in 1978, working on various contracts in the North Sea and Middle East before retiring in 1993. His interests included photography, DIY, badminton and water sports. He and his wife Marcia have three children.

**Mr Kenneth Leckie** of Stretford, Manchester joined St Dunstan's on May 18th. Now aged 74, he was a member of the Air Cadets at the beginning of the war and became a reserve Pilot/Navigator before being transferred to the Army in 1944. After training he was posted to the 15th Parachute Battalion, 2nd Indian Airborne Division. After the Japanese surrender he transferred to the Royal Leicestershire Regiment before being discharged in 1948. He returned to his apprenticeship in the printing trade. A keen sportsman, he played for Manchester United Colts and A team before the war and attended football, rugby league and cricket matches. Mr Leckie is married to Lillian.

**Mr Lawrence Cook** of Garstang, nr Preston joined St Dunstan's on June 2nd. Now aged 77, he served as a bandsman in the King's Own Royal Regiment from 1940 to 1948. He had originally joined the Boys' service in 1938. He played the saxon clarinet, serving in London and Gibraltar. In civilian life he worked as a textile printer, setting up a leather printing facility for ICI. Later on, he bought a café which he converted into a bakers and confectioners. Mr Cook and his wife have a son and two daughters.

**Mr Henry Derrett** of Norwich, Norfolk served in the Rifle Brigade from 1924 to 1931. He was stationed on the Northwest Frontier in Ladi Kota, Khyber Pass, Jullunder and Dalhouse. After returning to the UK, he worked as a theatre assistant at Whitechapel Hospital. Mr Derrett rejoined the Rifle Brigade in 1939 serving in the UK, Egypt, Algiers, Belgium and Germany. He was a Sergeant Major when discharged in 1945. Mr Derrett worked as an accountant in civilian life.

**Mr Thomas Gardner** of Norwich, Norfolk served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946. Now aged 82, he originally worked as a long distance lorry driver. Posted to Singapore with 266 HQ Wing, he was diverted to Sumatra when Singapore fell. Mr Gardner was taken prisoner in Java and moved to Changi before being moved to the Nagasaki shipyards, followed by the foundry at Yawata. After leaving the service he worked as a mechanic. Mr Gardner has a son and daughter.

**Mr Arthur Thomson** of Berwick Hills, Middlesborough served as a Sergeant in the Royal Artillery from 1940 to 1946. He was en route to Singapore when it fell and all other ships in the convoy were lost to submarine action. He was then stationed in Freetown, Durban, Bombay and Ceylon before returning to India and deploying into Burma as far as Rangoon. After the war, he joined the Post Office as a supervisor of telephonists. Mr Thomson and his wife Isabella have a son, daughter, six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

**Miss Dorothy Wright** of Pershore, Worcestershire served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1946. Now aged 87, she originally worked in the civil service but volunteered for the Air Force and was selected as a Sergeant. Posted as a watch keeper to 1 Group Bomber Command, she was then selected for a commission and moved to 26 Group (Radar and Signals). Miss Wright then became PA to Air Vice Marshal Addison in command of 90 Group. After the war, she returned to the civil service but left in 1947 to assist the Senior Medical Officer to establish the new National Health Service in Wales. She remained with the NHS until her retirement.

## POET'S CORNER

### A SMILE

Smiling is infectious,  
You catch it like the flu.  
When someone smiled at me today  
I started smiling too.

I passed around the corner  
And someone saw my grin.  
When he smiled I realised,  
I'd passed it on to him.

I thought about the smile  
And then realised its worth.  
A single smile like mine  
Could travel round the earth.

If you feel a smile begin  
Don't leave it undetected.  
Let's start an epidemic quick  
And get the world infected.

ANON

## FIFTY YEARS AGO

A group of St Dunstaners were entertained at RAF Shrewsbury who organised a camp which took in a day trip to Church Stretton and impromptu lessons in radar and air traffic control.

St Dunstan's Darts team lost by a narrow margin when they played the champions of the Wimbledon Darts League.

### 75 YEARS AGO

St Dunstaners had organised their own football league with eleven matches being played in a six week period. One team, the Welkies managed a ten goal win.

## FAMILY NEWS

### BIRTHS

#### Congratulations on the birth of:

Ethan Welche on April 4th and Megan Hughes on May 12th. Both are the great-grandchildren of *Bob Ashmore* of Ovingdean.

Bobby in April. He is the great-grandson of Mrs May Rogers of Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, widow of *Clarence Rogers*.

Samuel James on May 7th. He is the great-grandson of Mrs Violet Jarman of Wellington, Somerset, widow of *Malcolm Jarman*.

Sebastian Levy on June 8th. Before the night was out, Sebastian gained a couple of cousins, Natalya and Sophie Moorhouse. In order, they are the 6th, 7th and 8th great-grandchildren of *Bryan and Margaret Abbott* of Brighton, East Sussex.

### RUBY ANNIVERSARY

#### Congratulations to:

*David and Anne Clark* of Sevenoaks, Kent on June 4th.

### GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

#### Congratulations to:

*Rupert and Joan (Chas and Jane) Williamson* of Warrington, Cheshire on June 3rd.

*Eric and Peggy Foster* of Barnsley, South Yorkshire on June 10th.



## SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES

### Congratulations to:

*Bryan and Margaret Abbott* of Brighton who celebrated 64 years of marriage on May 25th.

*Samuel and Grace Keating* of Exmouth, Devon who celebrated 64 years of marriage on June 6th.

*Ernest and Gwendoline Hannant* of Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire who celebrated 61 years of marriage on June 10th.

## DEATHS

### We regret to announce the death of:

Mrs Ruby Garner on June 10th. She was the wife of *Vincent Garner* of Wallington, Surrey.

Mrs Hilda Blacklock of Lancaster, Lancashire on May 16th. She was the widow of *Norman Blacklock*.

Mrs Joan Killingbeck of Ashton, Bristol on May 20th. She was the widow of *George Killingbeck*.

Mrs Dorothy McCarthy of Little Billing, Northampton on June 8th. She was the widow of *David McCarthy*.

Mrs Muriel Womack of Leicester, Leicestershire on June 15th. She was the widow of *Cyril Womack*.

Mr Roy Thomas on June 12th. He was the brother of *David Thomas* of Haywards Heath, East Sussex.

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

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## APOLOGY

We would like to apologise for an incorrect entry in last month's Family News section. Once again, we send our condolences to Mrs Kath Harding of Blackpool, Lancashire after her stepson Rodney died in a tragic accident.

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# 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.**

### Joseph Bane

#### *Royal Electrical & Mechanical Engineers*

Joseph Patrick Bane of Morden, Surrey died on May 27th, aged 86. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1981. He enlisted with the Royal Electrical & Mechanical Engineers in 1940. He was wounded in Italy in 1945 when a mine exploded under a Bren Gun Carrier. As a result of the blast he lost both legs. After his discharge in 1948, Mr Bane worked in engineering until he retired. Our sympathy goes to his widow Ellen, daughters Ursula and Maura, son Kevin and all other members of the family.

### Melville Clements

#### *45th Regiment, Reconnaissance Corps*

Melville Roy Clements of Ovingdean died on June 1st, aged 82. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1944. Having enlisted in 1930 he served with 45th Regiment, Reconnaissance Corps and had reached the rank of Sergeant when injured in action in Burma. After training at St Dunstan's Clem, as he was

known, worked in industry. His interests included bridge and racing. Our sympathy goes to his nephew Clive and all other members of the family.

### Mr Philip Browning

#### *Royal Artillery*

Mr Philip Browning of Southwick, Sussex, died on June 1st, aged 71. He served in the Royal Artillery from 1947 to 1949 at Dover and Canterbury. He later became a printer, qualifying as a master printer before his retirement. His interests included golf, sailing and boxing. Our sympathy goes to all his family.

### Thomas Fairbairn

#### *Royal Northumberland Fusiliers*

Thomas Fairbairn of Tweedmouth, Berwick upon Tweed died on June 10th, aged 88. Having enlisted in 1938 he served in the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers and was commissioned as Captain in 1939. He saw action at Dunkirk, India, and Singapore. Taken prisoner by the Japanese he was forced to work on the Burma Railway. Captain Fairbairn was discharged in 1946 but remained on the Army Reserve of Officers until 1958. Our sympathy goes to his son John and all other members of the family.