

St Dunstan's Review

April 2001



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Cover picture:

His Royal Highness The
Prince of Wales chatted to
St Dunstaner Bill Griffiths
after the first Sir Laurens
Van der Post Memorial
Lecture.

Details on page 6.

From the Chairman



As I write this, the rain is lashing at the window, the foot-and-mouth epidemic is raging and there has been a terrible rail crash in Yorkshire. But if this was not enough, then add the snow, ice, gales, rain and floods, with which we have all had to contend. It cannot be easy for some of you, being confined indoors with its implications on shopping or visiting, which that entails. Please keep your spirits up and the weather can only improve – can't it?

April 1st is the start of St Dunstan's financial year. It provides me with an opportunity to mention a band of people who work for St Dunstan's – our accounts staff both in London and Brighton.

In many people's eyes, it is not a glamorous job working away at figures all day, nor do they reach the limelight very often. If they do, then they have possibly committed a misdemeanour! St Dunstan's has been fortunate to have had no need for such headlines for very many years.

I want to pay tribute to all those who manage and keep eyes on our financial affairs. In addition to their normal tasks, they have the responsibility of accounting for publicly donated funds. On behalf of everyone, I thank them for their hard work and dedication carried on with quiet efficiency.

Jenny and I wish you all a happy Easter.

Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN



NOTICE BOARD



ATTENTION FEPOWS

We have been requested to bring to your notice the following extract from a letter sent in by the National Federation of Far East POW Clubs and Associations (NFFCA).

“The NFFCA has received many complaints from members of clubs and associations about demands from the Chairman of the Japanese Labour Camp Survivors Association (JLCSA) for £50 to join the JLCSA and for the request made in January 2001 issue of Fulcrum for £500 in respect of an alleged legal fee to Leigh, Day & Company, solicitors acting for JLCSA in respect of the ex gratia payments (previously called a special gratuity) of £10,000 each paid by the War Pensions Agency.”

If you have paid the £50 or the £500 in response to a letter you received from JLCSA please contact Lt Colonel Jeremy Hinton at St Dunstan's Headquarters on 020 7723 5021.

CAMP AT HMS SULTAN

The camp at HMS *Sultan* will take place from Friday, July 27th until the morning of Saturday, August 4th. Those wishing to book should contact Elspeth Grant no later than May 9th. Write to her at High Acre, Catmere End, Saffron Walden CB11 4XG or telephone 01799 522874.

TELEPHONE WARNING

We have heard that phone hoaxers are ringing people up posing as AT&T employees and asking people to enter a certain sequence of codes on their telephone which result in calls costs being attributed to your phone bill.

Whilst we have been unable to confirm the accuracy of this story we feel that by making people aware of a potential problem steps can be taken to avoid any potential consequences.

TWO-FOR-ONE EXTENSION

This scheme which enables St Dunstaners to spend two weeks at Ovingdean for the price of one week has been extended for another year, commencing April 1st 2001. Bookings should be placed with Jackie Castle at St Dunstan's Ovingdean on 01273 307811.

SKIING 2002

Any St Dunstaner interested in taking part in next year's skiing trip please contact Ray Hazan at St Dunstan's Headquarters on 020 7723 5021 who will put you in touch with Gerry Jones. A £100 deposit will be required by June 1st for those wishing to attend.

CHURCH STRETTON REUNION

The Church Stretton Reunion will be held at St Dunstan's Ovingdean on May 19th-20th. St Dunstaners who trained at Church Stretton should place their booking with Jackie Castle at Ovingdean (but please also contact Bill Shea via the PR department at Headquarters so that he can confirm catering arrangements). Accommodation will be charged at the usual rates and a reunion dinner will be held on the Saturday evening.

HIGH FLYING CD

St Dunstaner Mark Brook has spent a year producing an audio CD of songs. *Higher than an Eagle* features 13 tracks, many of which Mark has written or arranged. He plays keyboard on a mixture of folk and country and western. The first song is a moving stand against MS from which Mark suffers.

Mark has generously offered half the proceeds to St Dunstan's. To obtain a copy, please send a cheque or postal order, payable to 'St Dunstan's', for £9.99 to the Public Relations Department, St Dunstan's, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD.

DEADLINES FOR FUTURE ISSUES

The final date for submitting items for publication in the June *Review* is April 30th.

The final date for submitting items for publication in the July *Review* is May 31st.

BRILLE LITERATURE WANTED

Jacky Taylor, granddaughter of Isobel and the late Geoff Preston is travelling to Malawi in July. Amongst her travels, she will be visiting Chilanga, a school for blind children.

She would very much like to take some braille reading material. If anyone has any books or magazines they no longer require, would they please send them in to the Public Relations department at HQ. Remember the material may be sent post free under an 'Articles for the Blind' label. Thank you in anticipation.

DERBY SWEEPSTAKE 2001

Anyone with a taste for the sport of kings, in particular the Epsom Derby, might like to try their hand at *St Dunstan's Review* Derby Sweepstake. The draw is open to St Dunstaners, beneficiaries of the Diana Gubbay Trust, widows and widowers.

This year the race is being run on June 9th. Tickets are 30p each and issued consecutively to a maximum of 25 (costing £7.50). Cheques should be made payable to St Dunstan's and crossed. Loose money should not be sent unless it is registered. The closing date is June 4th.

Each applicant should send their name and address, the number of tickets required, together with a **stamped addressed envelope**, to The Editor, DSS Department, *St Dunstan's Review*, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD.

Of the total money received, distribution amongst the winners will be as follows:

50 per cent to the holder of the ticket drawing the winning horse.

20 per cent to the holder of the ticket drawing the second horse.

10 per cent to the holder of the ticket drawing the third horse.

20 per cent to be divided equally among those drawing a horse which actually starts the race.

No prize won in the sweepstake will be paid to any person other than the person to whom the winning ticket was sold.

The draw will take place in London on June 5th.

URGENT HELP REQUIRED

We will be taking part in the International Festival of the Sea, which is being held in Portsmouth on August 24th-27th. Now, we urgently need some products to sell. These must be of a maritime or marine connection such as sea creatures, pirates, boats/ships, Naval personnel (knitted preferably) and anything you can think of which would enhance the St Dunstan's stand. If you can manage to send something we would be very grateful. We need to have all items in by the end of July. Please send them to Robbie Hazan, Public Relations Department, St Dunstan's, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London, W1H 4HD. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me on 020 7723 5021.

TOM TAYLOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Last issue we inadvertently published a fax number for credit or debit card orders for Tom Taylor's biography *Through the Hole in My Head*. The telephone number to use is 01733 332202.

A REQUEST TO FEPOWS

We have been asked if any FEPOWs would be willing to contribute stories for a book being prepared initially for an MA Degree. The book is to cover the lighter and more amusing incidents which occurred during internment. The author stresses that in no way is it the intention of the book to belittle or make light of the hardships and brutalities suffered. That has been well documented elsewhere. Submissions may be in any convenient format i.e. print, tape or by telephone. Would anyone interested in contributing please initially contact Ray Hazan at HQ.

ASHTRAYS WANT A HOME

A St Dunstan's ashtray, (pictured) made by the Goldsmiths & Silversmiths Co Ltd, can be obtained from the Public Relations department. The regent plate ashtray is emblazoned with St Dunstan's familiar torch badge. The item is old stock and slightly tarnished but can easily be restored with some silver polish. Any St Dunstaner who would like one of the ashtrays should contact Robbie Hazan at St Dunstan's, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD or by telephone on 020 7723 5021. Supplies are limited.



FANTASTIC FOUR STAY ON TARGET

St Dunstan's Archery quartet sweep BBS championship

by Barbara Degenhardt

St Dunstan's Archery Club's February Week again hosted the British Blind Sports Indoor Archery Championships. Despite illness striking some of our shooters, St Dunstan's won four of the five categories in which they competed as well as adding three seconds and a third. Lord Patron and Lady Paramount, Eric and Gwen Bradshaw presented the Trophies to the winners.

The chairman John Lilley received a message of appreciation from one of the competing clubs thanking St Dunstan's for their hospitality and the care of and assistance to the visitors who came from all parts of England and Wales.

The week continued with a shoot for the Laurie Austin Trophy which was won by Cliff Ford. We were honoured by the presence of Mrs Amy Austin, Laurie's widow, who presented the Trophy. Laurie

was instrumental in setting the Club on its way some years ago, and indeed was responsible for teaching the present Club coaches.

Our thanks to Lady Paramount Susan Harrison who presented the Longhill Trophy to Sid Doy. St Dunstan's kept up their triumphs by beating Greenways, the staff club by 4 points, but duly received their come-uppance on Saturday by losing to Cuckfield Bowmen by 145 points.

The seriousness of the week was leavened by a fun shoot on Friday. It's anyone's guess as to who won that as the rules are interpreted according to the phases of the moon!

One of the best weeks ever! Everyone in the club is looking forward to the National Championships in June at Lilleshall.

| | Champions | 2nd | 3rd | 4th |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| B1 Novices | <i>Dennis Crouch</i> | <i>Leslie George</i> | <i>Sid Doy</i> | Keith Lauder |
| B2 Novices | <i>David Poyner</i> | <i>Terry Ottewell</i> | Ian White | <i>Cliff Ford</i> |
| B2 Ladies | Audrey Tonge | Joan Tomen | Sheila Brennan | Edith Wilkins |
| B1 Compound | Roger Rees-Evans | <i>Tony Parkinson</i> | | |
| B1 Recurve | Howard Burgess | Don Finley | Martin Tonge | |
| B2 Recurve | <i>John Lilley</i> | George Richardson | Chris Peasley | |
| B4 Non-tactile | <i>Steve Moseley</i> | | | |

St Dunstaners names are italicised. The B4 Non-tactile range covers partially-sighted archers, such as those with tunnel vision, who do not make use of a tactile sight to achieve a targeting solution.

Liz Hutchison

I know that many of you will be very sorry to hear that Liz Hutchison has decided to retire at the end of April. She has been a familiar voice and friend to many of you over the past 23 years and I know that she will be sorely missed. Liz has always been so ready to help and advise anyone who phoned the Welfare department at Harcourt Street and her retirement will leave a gap that will be hard to fill. As Secretary to Dr. Janvrin, nothing was ever too much of a problem for her. Liz provided a most understanding, confidential and helpful link. She leaves us with our best wishes for a long, happy and enjoyable retirement, which I am sure many of you will echo.

Peter Irven, Head of Welfare

Margaret Orr Deas

Margaret Orr Deas retired at the end of March. She joined the Headquarters staff in April 1993 as Secretary to the Chairman, at that time, Sir Henry Leach. She was a fount of knowledge in matters relating to protocol, forms of address or simply writing a coherent letter and a very important link to me! Her advice was sound and much appreciated. In recent years she also dealt with all the correspondence relating to Legacy matters. Margaret was an active member of staff, taking part in the Christmas plays and gave up much of her spare time to help out on many occasions, including the Royal Tournament and at the International War Blind Congress. We send her every best wish for a healthy and happy retirement.

Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN,
Chairman, St Dunstan's

Message from the Head of Fund Raising

Our Autumn 2000 campaign was very successful and we have also received an excellent response to our Christmas mailing to existing supporters. The Spring Campaign for 2001 commenced at the end of February and will, as usual, consist of fund raising packs which are sent to all houses in any one road. Do remember that, if one should come through your door, it is not aimed at St Dunstaners so, as on previous occasions, please ignore it.

SPREADING THE WORD

Our spokesman, Terry Bullingham, performed an enormous number of speaking engagements last year, and many of those who listened to him wrote to say that he is a very compelling speaker. Terry travelled many miles in furtherance of his mission and his wife, Maria, drove him to nearly all his venues although, just occasionally, he had to chance the train service. We are very grateful to Terry who raises a large sum of money each year and helps to raise the profile of St Dunstan's.

BLINDFOLD BOUNTY

We are especially indebted to Councillor David Newell of Sedgefield Borough for obtaining £1,834 in sponsorship money. He presented a cheque to St Dunstaner Jimmy Higginbottom. To raise the funds for St Dunstan's, but also to experience first hand some of the problems with which blind and partially-sighted people have to contend, Councillor Newell spent one week completely blindfolded. The Prime Minister is one of his constituents and personally tied on the blindfold for Councillor Newell.



Having removed his blindfold, Councillor David Newell presented a cheque for St Dunstan's to Jimmy and Theresa Higginbottom.

The new St Dunstan's video *Night or Day...?* was well received by the Commanding Officers of all three Services, many of whom wrote to say how glad they were to be reminded of St Dunstan's and the help it might be able to offer if anyone under their command should lose his/her sight.

Finally, we now have a miniature St Dunstan's pin which will be used as a method of advertising the Charity. This is unlike any other St Dunstan's badge but is nevertheless quite attractive. Those who raise funds for St Dunstan's are given a pin as part of their fund raising pack but, if anyone else would like one, it can be obtained by sending a donation of £1 to the Fund Raising department.

Pat Moore-Searson

Memorial lecture for Sir Laurens Van der Post

Bill and Alice Griffiths were invited along with 100 distinguished guests to St James's Palace State Apartments by HRH Prince Charles for a lecture to perpetuate the memory of the late Sir Laurens Van der Post by Mr David Rattray, who had flown specially from South Africa.

The lecture, which took place on February 13th, was based upon the many interests of Sir Laurens. Mr Rattray spoke of life and conditions in South Africa and surrounding territories.

Prince Charles gave an amusing vote of thanks with many anecdotes. After the lecture the Prince circulated, staying for two hours.

Bill talked to Prince Charles who remembered meeting him at Highgrove on a previous occasion. Bill was a prisoner of the Japanese with Sir Laurens, they both maintained their friendship for over 50 years.

Sir Laurens was a mentor to Prince Charles and godfather to Prince William.

Life and Times of Ovingdean

by Lyn Neville

This month has brought very cold weather to us here in Ovingdean, including some snow which caught us all rather by surprise. For one South African visitor it was their first experience of snow.

As a result of this chill, a good deal of our activities have been centred around the house. A St Valentine's Day dance on February 16th was well attended by people in house and visitors from outside. PBK did us proud with a lovely buffet and we had lively music from a popular duet called Park Lane.

CHEERS!

We were also invited this month to the annual Beer and Cider festival at Hove Town Hall. This event is held for three days each year and one is able to sample a selection of British produced wines and ciders. There are well over 100 different real ales to choose from. Everybody had a good time and we all came home with our souvenir beer glasses to prove we had been there!

GOODBYE NEIL

On February 21st we said goodbye and good luck to Neil Swan as he leaves us to take up his new position. He came down for a goodbye tea party and many St Dunstaners from both in and outside the house, along with many members of staff, came to wish him well.

JINXED

Just to let you know about our proposed visit to Fontwell Race Course. We didn't make it third time lucky, this time it was cancelled due to the foot-and-mouth outbreak! Do you think we are jinxed! I think we will try again in the Summer.

ON THE RUN

St Dunstan's Marathon team were pounding roads closer to home when they took part in the Sussex Beacon Half Marathon on February 25th. Temperatures had dipped overnight and the day started with St Dunstan's Ovingdean surrounded by an ominous layer of snow.

A mix of ailments meant that the team was pared



St Dunstan's Ovingdean with that frosty coating.

down to St Dunstaners Billy Baxter and Iain Millard who were escorted by Grant Cooper and Ian Hebborn. A chill wind followed the team from Brighton Marina through Duke's Mound, but they received a warm hand from other runners and spectators when they arrived at the start.

At starter's orders almost 1,500 runners shot off towards Hove, passing both Palace and West Piers before turning back along the seafront. The early chill gave way to the sun and the weather moved from one extreme to the other.

Coming back past the starting point, they ran up to Brighton Marina, crossed over to Roedean and continued past St Dunstan's on their way to Rottingdean. The final leg turned towards Brighton once more though this proved to be the awkward bit.

On the final stretch past St Dunstan's the cliff-top had all the hallmarks of one of Grant's Wet'n'Wild obstacle courses. Having been trampled by over a thousand people, the undulating grass track was wet, muddy and peppered with rabbit holes.

Perseverance paid off though. Iain Millard, in the lead by a second, and Grant crossed the line in 2 hours 14 minutes, while Billy and Ian tied on 2 hours and 39 minutes. Around 150 people did not complete the course.

The marathon team were due to run again at Reading on March 11th, but the event was called off because of the foot-and-mouth disease outbreak.

TEE OFF ON THE PLAINS OF SPAIN

St Dunstan's Golf Club visits Villamartin, Spain
February 10th-17th 2001

On Friday, February 9th, five St Dunstan's golfers, together with their guides, congregated at Ovingdean before their embarkation the following morning to the Costa Blanca in Spain to play golf. The gathering received the excellent services of St Dunstan's with old and new friends enjoying the evening with our new Club Chairman, David Morris, Secretary Mike Tumilson and his assistant Graeme Wilson.

The journey, courtesy of St Dunstan's Transport department, to Gatwick was uneventful but enjoyable. Our new Assistant Secretary, Graeme took charge of all the tickets and passports, seeing us safely through the melee. Two hours later we arrived to the warmth of the Spanish evening and were met at Alicante Airport by a tall bearded Dane, Per Zabec, who with two of his ex-pat colleagues, David Steenhoff and Jim Gray, drove us to Villamartin.

Villamartin is a high quality complex of self-catering apartments with an adjoining golf course and it was our home for the next seven days. Once safely ensconced in our quarters we all met at the Winchester, a restaurant/bar. It is named after the bar in the television show *Minder* and pictures of our beloved 'Spiv of St Trinians', Arthur Daley, alias George Cole, adorned the walls.

The evening was rounded off with an excellent supper at Caddies (most of the restaurants in the complex were named after golfing terms).

Sunday greeted us with a nice bright and warm morning. After a full English breakfast at the Winchester, we walked the hundred metres to the Villamartin Golf course to loosen up and practice. It was very pleasant to be able to take off those heavy jumpers and return to shirtsleeve order. Following 18 enjoyable holes and a very pleasant morning, refreshments at the 19th hole were most welcome. In this case, it was the Winchester where all the ifs and buts were fully discussed and dissected.

On Monday the competition started in earnest with the eager golfers teeing off at eight-minute intervals. Villamartin Golf course was challenging for both the experienced and relative newcomers to the game.

Nevertheless the full 18 holes were completed in good time. In the evening we were entertained by Angela and Graeme in their apartment when all the sob stories were recanted.

Following the two days of golf, Tuesday was a welcome day of rest and recovery. In the afternoon Per the Dane drove us to Torreveija. This is a local seaside resort, where a leisurely seafood lunch was followed by a walk beside the Mediterranean Sea with the sun dancing off the waves. It was a beautiful experience. Then a tour of the shops, with Angela recording the scenes for posterity, was enjoyed by all.

The second full day of competition started on Wednesday morning at the Las Ramblas Ravines Golf Course with its many ravines, woods, sand traps and very narrow fairways. This golf course more than tested all of us, it was not a case of what each player scored, but how many balls they lost. Twelve of the 18 holes had a carry of 100 metres or more across either a ravine or trees. Mike managed to score a net "hole-in-one" and carried out the necessary tradition to everyone's delight. All the courageous players agreed that whilst the course was challenging, it was very enjoyable and that any future competition in Spain should include the Las Ramblas Ravines Golf Course. Valentine's Day began with some of the guides (wives and partners) receiving cards, orchids and roses and ended with the customary romantic dinner.

Thursday morning we returned to Las Ramblas Ravines and their fabulous facilities as this was the venue for the Golf Skills competition. It involved hitting a golf ball with a five iron on the driving range, chipping towards a hole on the practice green, hitting a ball out of a bunker to a target and putting to a hole once again on the practice green. This competition was designed so that each player was able to show off their golf skills by having three attempts at each discipline with the total distance of each shot added together and divided by three to get the average score for each event. Every player and guide was successful at each discipline and it resulted in a very close competition. In the afternoon we were driven by Per to the local hypermarket to buy local goodies to take home.

Friday saw the competition return again to Villamartin with every player having had a big confidence boost from their exploits at Las Ramblas Ravines. This resulted in everyone enjoying their day because they had all improved their golf skills. John and Charmaine delighted in a particularly good round having been in seven bunkers, they came out first attempt each time with the ball ending up on the green. But the icing on the cake came on the 15th when, from 40 meters away, they chipped into the hole. The course marshal spoke to us at the end and said he was very impressed with both the standard of golf and excellent behaviour on the course. He went on to say St Dunstan's golfers would be welcome to visit the course at any time in the future.

In the evening Angela and Graeme hosted the presentation of the results of the week's competition. Players, Guides and invited guests enjoyed a first class buffet that had been arranged and made by both of them. Our genial host Graeme was in good form from his repertoire of mainly true funny stories.

The Guides' View

by Graeme Wilson & Angela Templeman

We were privileged to be asked to join a party of St Dunstan's golfers on their trip to Spain where we would not only act as guides but would have an opportunity to play some golf ourselves. Our journey to Spain went smoothly and we were soon installed in our apartment in Villamartin. Saturday night was spent on a group bonding exercise before we ventured onto the course on Sunday morning for a loosening-up session.

We won't comment on the rest of the week's golfing exploits, which are well documented elsewhere in this article. However, it is worth noting the following:

1. The top sighted player finished only 3rd overall!
2. We managed to get round 18 holes in under 4.5 hours - in fact on one day the course marshal came out onto the course to tell us to slow down.

When we weren't playing golf, we managed to visit the local town and the hypermarket. All in all, we had a wonderful time and we're looking forward to guiding again on next year's trip.

Highlights of our week included:

In a very close competition David beat Mike by just one shot with all players finishing close. David, guided by Linda, also won the golf skills competition. Player of the Year went to Craig Neller in a very close play off against Phil Dobson.

We explained to the local non-golfers of Villamartin, who we were able to befriend, what St Dunstan's represents. They were impressed with both our behaviour and our ability to overcome disability. As a result we were invited to a return next year and a competition is now being organised by Mike. Once again next year's competition will be held during February and will be by invitation and available to members of the St Dunstan's Golf Club.

Saturday was a sad time for all concerned being the end of our pleasant stay. Instead of enjoying the sunshine, time had to be spent packing, travelling, and finally arriving back to a warm welcome at Ovingdean in the late evening. It was agreed by all concerned that the week had been an unqualified success.

- Listening to a group of St Dunstaners haggling the price of a carpet UP! (A good case for a Negotiation Skills course at Ovingdean).
- John Stevens' wife falling out of the buggy whilst driving and John not even realising it.
- Craig Neller turning 40.

Finally, many thanks to all the golfers who put up with us losing so many balls for them!

The Chairman and members of St Dunstan's golf club would like to thank:

Susan Harrison and all her staff at St Dunstan's Ovingdean for looking after us all; David Vinall, Head of Transport for getting us safely to and from Gatwick; our guides and caddies, Angela, Charmaine, Linda, Bill and Graeme, for without their help, support and encouragement, we would not be able to pursue our chosen sport; and the locals of Villamartin for their very warm welcome. Finally, we thank our new Secretary, Mike Tumilson, for his organisational skills and sponsorship. Without him the competition would not have taken place.

Postscript

Members of the St Dunstan's golf club travelled to Spain as a set of people with a common interest, who, whilst knowing of each other, did not know each other. A group of people who started the week as individuals were by the end of the week moving as one.

They shared working, living, success and failure together. They returned as a team, more to the point,

a team of real people. This success was built on a fellowship, a fellowship of respect and mutual understanding of one another's needs.

Who won? It did not really matter who or what was won; the real winner was what was built, built together by everyone who was there. It was not about individual winners or performers but it is how the unique experience was enjoyed by everyone.

Welcome to St Dunstan's

February 13th

Thomas Baldwin of Luton, Bedfordshire served in the Royal Engineers from 1939 to 1946. He served in France prior to being evacuated from Dunkirk. His unit returned on D-Day and fought through to Germany. He was then deployed to Palestine until being demobbed. After the war he joined a small engineering firm in Luton and after 15 years became a director of the company. He used to enjoy golf and has been President and Master of his Masonic Lodge. He and his wife Hilda have two sons and a daughter.

Thomas Frankland of Chelmsford, Essex served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946. He trained as a wireless technician and served in the UK before moving to France after D-Day. He then joined a refuelling and rearming unit that deployed forward in support of the Land Army. Returning to London, he worked in the television service repair industry for HMV. He then joined the civil service as a wireless technician, later moving in support of the police network in Chelmsford. An amateur radio enthusiast, his call sign is G4INM. He has a son, daughter, two grandsons and two great-grandchildren.

Victor Hamling of Herne Bay, Kent served in the Royal Navy from 1934 to 1947. After training, he joined HMS *London* in Alexandria where they assisted refugees from the Spanish Civil War. Later he spent some time in New Zealand on exchange duties. He returned to the UK in 1938 and was serving on HMS *Cumberland* in the Atlantic when war broke out. Soon after he was posted to as Coxswain to Mortar Torpedo Boats. He was Mentioned in Despatches twice and was a Chief Petty Officer when he left the Service. He and his wife ran a pub in Woolwich for five years before joining his father in his butchery

business. He later turned to woodworking and cabinet making. He and his wife Betty have two daughters and four grandchildren.

Clive Jones of Aldershot, Hampshire is serving with the 1st Battalion Welsh Guards. He enlisted in 1991 serving in Northern Ireland, Shropshire and USA. Before his injury he enjoyed drawing, football, rugby and was keen on running. He and his wife Stephanie have two daughters.

John Peckham of Mayfield, East Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1949 to 1951. He trained as an aircraft engine mechanic at St Athan, South Wales and was also a member of the Mountain Rescue team. Leaving the service, he worked in farming for 10 years and then switched to selling farm equipment. In 1973 he and his wife started a special paints and coatings business. A car enthusiast, Mr Peckham used to build cars for competition. He is chairman of his local bowling club. Mr Peckham and his wife Janet have two daughters and three grandchildren.

Edna Rogers of Cirencester, Gloucestershire served in the ATS from 1944 to 1947. She worked as a cook in Aborfield, Woking and Aldershot and was promoted to Corporal before her discharge. Apart from cooking, she used to enjoy a variety of needlework. She has a son and daughter, two grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Barbara Walker of Birstall, Leicester served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1942. She trained as a Radar Operator, serving at Harrogate, Yatesbury, Isle of Man and Catterick. After losing her sight in

1954, she took a course as a home teacher for the blind at Westminster and worked for the Industrial Society for the Blind before Social Services took over responsibility. She continued to work as a social worker until her retirement. Mrs Walker has two daughters and three grandchildren.

February 28th

Charles Game of Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire joined the Army as an apprentice at Aborfield in 1942. Completing his training in 1946, he joined the Band of the Queen's Royal Regiment as cornet player. In 1948 he joined the Middlesex Regiment in Hong Kong for deployment in Korea. In civilian life he worked as an aircraft fitter. He used to enjoy running and cycling and is a member of the British Legion. Mr Game's father was a First War St Dunstaner having lost his sight in the Somme. Mr Game has a son, daughter and six grandchildren.

George Jackson of Bedhampton, Hampshire served in the Royal Marines from 1936 to 1963. Having served in Palestine and Alexandria, he was involved in sinking the *Bismark*. He landed with the Armoured Support Group on D-Day. After the war he was deployed to trouble spots around the world including Aden. He retired as a Colour Sergeant. In civilian life he worked as Chief Technician for Highbury College of Technology. He used to enjoy hockey and golf.

HYMN OF HOPE SHINES IN DARKEST HOUR

It has been said that St Dunstan's founder Sir Arthur Pearson would find something positive in the most adverse conditions. This may well have been a family trait as evidenced by the work of his great-grandfather, the Rev Henry Francis Lyte.

Rev Lyte was vicar of Lower Brixham, a fishing village on the shores of Torbay. However, his commitment to the local community had an adverse effect on his health. Having been told he was dying of consumption, he preached his final sermon in Lower Brixham Church and then walked slowly to his home at Berry Had.

The path home was marked by a glorious sunset, a blaze of glory against which the purple hills of Dartmoor stood out against a flaming sky. In the foreground Brixham harbour resembled a pool of molten gold.

Hugh Lock of Norwich, Norfolk served in the Royal Engineers from 1939 to 1946. He was deployed to Tunisia and then Italy as part of the 5th US Army. He was commissioned in 1941 and retired with the rank of Captain. Wounded on three separate occasions, he had just been offered a regular commission when he lost his left leg in an explosion. Fitted with an artificial leg, he returned to duty as a MT Officer at the Royal Engineers Driver Training School, Aldershot. In civilian life he has worked as a car salesman and garage owner.

Walter Scott of Hartlepool, Cleveland served in the Royal Signals from 1945 to 1948. After training he was posted as a wireless operator in Northern Italy. His unit moved to Venice and then Budapest. In civilian life he worked in the retail clothing industry, later working for ICI, British Steel and Community Services. He enjoyed gardening, reading and DIY. Mr Scott and his wife Thelma have two daughters, a son and three grandsons.

Arnold Stratton of Northfield, Birmingham served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946. He trained as an aircraft fitter and maintained Spitfires for units along the north-east coastline. Leaving the service with the rank of Corporal, he returned to the building trade. Mr Stratton used to enjoy DIY, decorating and gardening. He is married to Edna.

Pearson's relative William Maxwell-Lyte concluded "He had just said goodbye for the last time to his parishioners and knew that he had only a few weeks to live. The setting day reminded him insistently of his life, which was drawing swiftly to its close."

During this walk Lyte prayed that before he died he might be allowed to write one message of consolation to humanity which would endure forever. On arriving home he went to his study and wrote a hymn representing the triumph of faith and hope over despair - *Abide With Me*.

The final verse reads:
"Hold Thou Thy Cross before my closing eyes,
Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies,
Heaven's morning breaks and earth's vain shadows flee
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me."

A JOURNEY TO FRANCE

The first visit for my family to the grave of my great-uncle took place in October 1996 on the 80th Anniversary of his death. I had been aware of trips arranged by various organisations but as they were concerned with the main War Grave sites it would be impossible to visit Bapaume and spend time there. Being an inveterate traveller I resolved to do it by public transport!

Contact with Eurostar provided my wife and I with a most enjoyable and comfortable journey to Lille through the Tunnel. I had previously booked into a hotel in the centre of Lille for three nights and obtained all the brochures about this city. It turned out to be a lovely place with good shops

and eating places as well as the historic buildings. It is also very compact and easy to walk around once you had got your bearings. Our first day was spent sightseeing and making arrangements for our journey to Bapaume the following day. I had previously found out that the only train left at 7am in the morning to a station named Agent le Grand with two options for returning later in the afternoon.

Arriving at Lille Flanders Station I bought the tickets for the journey. Asking which platform the train was to leave from the following morning I was told that there would be no trains running because of a one-day national strike! I could however go the following day but there was no guarantee that the timetable would be fully operational as trains may not be in the right position. Subsequent enquiries indicated that it was impossible to travel by bus and get back in one day. A taxi operator said he could take us and despite the cost we resolved that this might be the only option left. We decided that if all else failed and having got so far this is what we would do.

Rising very early the following morning it was damp, foggy and extremely cold. The train was in at Lille Flanders Station and was packed. Condensation ran down all the windows and it was a somewhat crowded train till Arras when most of the passengers alighted. We had worked out how many stops there would be after Arras till we arrived at Agent le Grand. A ticket collector confirmed this as he passed through the train. As the train slowed down we got up to get off but could not find the button to open the door. The train continued on its journey with us still

The Revd David Youngson recalls a pilgrimage to the final resting place of a relative who fought in the Great War

on board! Realising our predicament a sympathetic traveller indicated that the next station was not very far so we stood at the door and when the train stopped we got out at a place called Albert.

BANCOURT BRITISH CEMETERY

It was hardly daylight very cold and foggy. We made our way from the station towards civilisation and more than one cock crowed and several dogs barked as we did so. No one seemed to be about at this time in the morning. Turning a corner we found an old man with a collarless granddad shirt and flat cap holding a rat trap and speaking to a lady who had a bicycle. We were very carefully observed as we approached and politely said good morning. I asked in pidgin French if there was such a thing as a taxi. Further explanation about Bapaume and War cemeteries created a conversation between them in French, which I could not understand. The lady went off on her bike; the man went into the farmyard to put down the rat trap and then beckoned us to follow him.

No conversation occurred as we followed at a discreet distance behind. We approached the church and my reaction was that we were being taken to the Priest for assistance. Not so. We passed the church and soon found ourselves in a café where the man explained something of what we were about and left. The best way to describe the café is that everything was there except Lt Gruber and his little tank! In other words a set from *Allo Allo!* The chairs were on the tables and a woman (Madam Edith!) was mopping the floor. The Patron, who was clearly still in bed, was summoned and somehow we explained what we

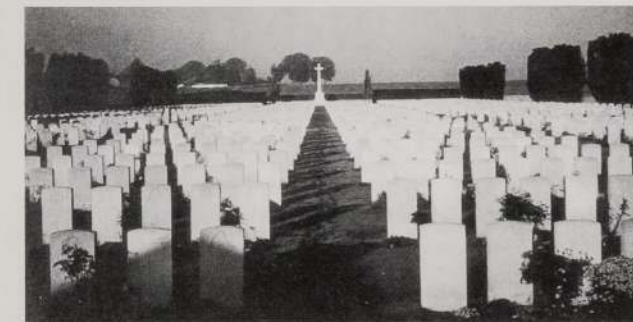
wanted. Opening my rucksack to get out a map he noticed a poppy spray and his whole attitude changed. He pointed to his watch, indicated 9am and left.

Chairs were provided for us to sit down and coffee was served. People came and went buying cigarettes, having a beer or cognac and looking through the paper on the bar and so on, quite an insight into life in rural France. Meanwhile the Patron could be heard behind the curtain having a good old hack and spit and a bath. Promptly at 9am a car drew up outside the cafe with the Patron very smartly dressed and ready to take us on our journey. It was still very foggy as we travelled and soon we were passing through Bapaume. The Patron indicated where we could get a taxi back to our departure station Agent le Grand.

The Bancourt British Cemetery is about three kilometres outside Bapaume situated along a country road. We turned left into a cart track with ditches alongside. I reckon we travelled at least three field lengths and then the car stopped. The Patron indicated that we were at our destination and said he would return at an agreed time. He drove off reversing down the cart track into the fog.

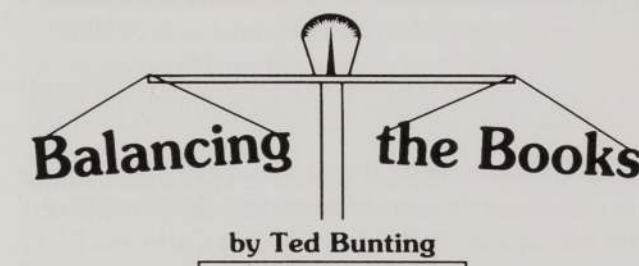
Through the fog we saw the white walls of the cemetery and an entrance. To get to it we had to walk over a plank across the ditch. Once through the entrance we saw the graves beautifully set out with the Cross of Sacrifice at the far end. The fog was lifting but the grass white with dew left our footprints on the ground as we made our way. The grave was situated on the last row with a beautiful holly hedge behind it. Situated between an Australian Rifleman and a King's Own Scottish Borderer lay George Youngson of the 1st Battalion, The Essex Regiment. I removed the poppy spray from my rucksack and laid it on the grave noticing that his mother had added an inscription on the stone. By this time the sun had burned off the fog and the countryside was very flat with no hedges or trees other than the Yew trees and holly hedge in the cemetery. There were no birds to disturb the peace and tranquillity of the place where the fallen rested. We had time to look around at several other graves noting the large number with the inscription "A soldier of the Great War".

We heard the sound of a car approaching and as we made our way back to the entrance I shouted out "What a bloody waste!" I simply could not help myself from saying this. The visitor's book indicated that no one had been to that place since May some



Bancourt British Cemetery near Bapaume, France.

five months before. The journey back to Bapaume was silent as we all had our own thoughts. We spent some time there before our return journey to Lille but the experience we had had tended to overshadow everything else.



The Tree of Hands

Author: Ruth Rendall

Reader: Pauline Munro

Catalogue number: 5599

Duration: 8 Hours 50 minutes

Take heart those who have tried to make sense of TV productions featuring Ruth Rendall's bumbling snorting detective Reg Wexford, because *The Tree of Hands* is a much more rewarding proposition. The female narrator is a successful novelist with a mentally deranged mother; provided one accepts the plausibility of that the rest is plain sailing. It is most enjoyable too, for just as mad mother's actions and moods are unpredictable, so are the twists in the ingenious plot. As for the other characters in the tale, well, with the possible exception of the policemen and the little children they are all dishonest in one way or other, and following their several routes to winning or losing is central to the pleasure of listening. There are blemishes, of course, just as there are faults in the finest jewels. From very early in the story you will be thinking, "Yes, but what about X or Y?" And for some of your questions there are no answers provided. But there is robbery, cruelty, kidnapping, violence and illicit sex; what do you want from a work of light fiction?

THE ROAD TO MONTE CARLO



On the right, "Dai" Jones rallies forth.

For St Dunstaner David "Dai" Jones who passed away recently the words Monte Carlo or Bust were more than just a clichéd phrase. He experienced the trials and tribulations of the famed rally first hand.

An invitation to take part in a motor rally as a navigator was the start of an interest that would see him take up the challenges of Monte Carlo, the RAC Rally and the London to Sydney, amongst others.

"In those days the rally was a test of endurance for the team and the machine," said David. "You had to carry everything you might need, outside help was

not allowed. We used to carry four spare tyres because you could wear out a set of tyres in a day. One time at Monte Carlo we were 24 miles from the finish and we got a puncture. We had to drive with a flat tyre. When we got to Monte we were 30 minutes late, outside the time."

The rougher the road the better according to David. It was an equalising factor for many of the competitors. "We were racing against pretty sophisticated machines, Ferraris and Porches. I remember one time driving along, I was doing about 100mph and there was no one around. Suddenly I could see headlights in the rear view mirror. I looked at the dial, I was still doing 100 and wrrrrm, it went past. When we were driving on rough ground it was pretty much even."

David recalled a few scrapes along the way, such as the time the suspension went in the Sahara and a hairpin bend when the car shot over the edge, landing on some trees below.

The highlight of David's rallying career came when his team was named Best British entry in Monte Carlo. "There was another British driver, Clarkson, who was the best British driver there but he had entered as a company team, so he was down as a German entry. We didn't object when they offered it to us."

50 YEARS AGO

A film, *Bright Victory*, was released in UK cinemas under the title *Light's Out!* It was a love story set against the environment of Valley Forge, Pennsylvania which was set up to train blinded American ex-Servicemen.

This prompted St Dunstan's Chairman Sir Ian Fraser to ruminate on the lot of the blind cinema-goer, adding that he preferred a straight play with more talk. "It is distracting to me to hear a band playing when the young man and his girl are sitting on the balcony in the moonlight, obviously alone. Not only does the band make it more difficult to hear what they are saying, but it seems unnatural and out-of-place. The motor-cars make too much noise, very much more noise than a modern American motor-car really makes and even more noise than those which we hear in BBC programmes. It gives me the impression that the fellows who are responsible for

the noises are like children with toys and they must show them off."

Ted Miller was presented to the King and Queen when they visited Warwick Castle. Ted, who also lost his hands when he became a St Dunstaner, worked as a guide at the castle. St Dunstaners William Carr and William Crabbe demonstrated their upholstery skills to the Duchess of Kent when she visited Parker-Knoll's furniture factory.

St Dunstaner Tom Daborn won the Coronation Cup at Bexleyheath and District Angling Society for landing the heaviest dog fish and the Novices' Cup since it was also the heaviest catch for a beginner.

St Dunstaner George Reed and Percy were on stage at several events. Percy was a doll and George was a skilful ventriloquist.

POET'S CORNER

THE CENSUS (or Thoughts on filling in Forms) by Audrey Perfect

On the first day of April 2001 just pick up a biro and
Write just for fun
The names of the people who
Live in your house
Remember the dog, and the budgie and mouse
They must be in residence
Not on the Moon
The day of the census
Will come round so soon
And all are obliged to declare
Who they are
How many toilets and what make of car
The government then will declare
A large tax
To pay for the thing till
Ten years should elapse

FAMILY NEWS

BIRTHS

Congratulations on the birth of:
Charlotte Katy on November 12th. She is the great-granddaughter of *Bertie and Doris Partington* of Over Hulton, Bolton, Lancashire.

Oscar Wortley on February 13th. He is the grandson of *Alan and Joan Wortley* of Lincoln, Lincolnshire.

Katie Louise Susan on February 26th. She is the great-granddaughter of *Tom and Nancey Taylor* of Leyland, Preston, Lancashire.

WEDDING

Congratulations to:
John and Corrina Kennedy on September 29th 2000 at Peterborough. John is the son of *William and Carole Kennedy* of Walton, Peterborough.

RUBY ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations to:
Leslie and Jenny Davy of Harold Hill, Romford, Essex on March 18th.

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:
Jacob and Dorothy Morgan of Swansea, West Glamorgan on March 8th.

Violet and Kenneth Withers of Kingswood, Bristol on March 17th.

DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations to:
Ken and Joan Revis of Oxford on March 1st.

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations to:
Frederick and Gwendoline Mills of Tavistock, Devon who celebrated 61 years of marriage on February 24th.

DEATHS

We regret to announce the death of:
Norma Dufton of Shurlock Row, Berkshire on February 24th. She was the widow of *Richard Dufton*.

Ingeborg Maries of Redditch, Worcestershire on February 26th. She was the widow of *Norman Maries*.

Joan Gallagher of Sunderland, Tyne & Wear on February 28th. She was the widow of *Daniel Gallagher*.

Dorothy Miller of Isles of Scilly, Cornwall on February 28th. She was the widow of *George Miller*.

Monica Edwards of Bury, Lancashire on March 4th. She was the widow of *William Edwards*.

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.

Jaroslav Muzika *Royal Air Force*

Jaroslav Muzika of Chalfont St Peter, Buckinghamshire died on January 27th, aged 85. He served in the Czech Air Force in 1940 and the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1968 when he retired as Squadron Leader. He served in the UK, Rhodesia and Cyprus and was awarded the Air Force Cross in 1953. Our sympathy goes to his son Frank, daughter Hannah and all other members of the family.

Major Henry Jackson *Royal Army Education Corps*

Major Henry McPherson Jackson of St Albans, Hertfordshire died on February 25th, aged 84. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1939 and trained as a Gunner before moving to Iraq in the Royal Army Education Corps where he taught International Affairs. He then worked for the British Embassy in

Baghdad but was deployed to Kurdistan to monitor the Iraq/Kurd situation. He was commissioned in 1944 and granted the honorary rank of Major. After the war he joined the Iraq Petroleum Company, working in Dubai, Baghdad and Syria. Our sympathy goes to his widow Hilda and all other members of the family.

David Jones

Royal Air Force

William David Jones of Dinas Powis, Vale of Glamorgan died on February 25th, aged 87. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946. As an aeronautical engineer he was deployed after D-Day with 2nd Tactical Air Force in support of Army re-supply in France. After the war he was manager of a motor dealership in Cardiff. A keen motor rally competitor he took part in many international rallies including Monte Carlo, RAC and the London to Sydney. Our sympathy goes to his daughters, son and all other members of the family.

William Perry

Royal Norfolks

William Perry of Corsham, Wiltshire died on March 2nd, aged 81. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1991. Originally a stone cutter, Mr Perry and his twin brother joined the Army in 1940. He trained with the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry but later joined his brother in the Royal Norfolk Regiment. They served in India and then Singapore. Having been taken prisoner during the fall, they spent time on the Burma railway. Mr Perry was separated from his brother and sent to Japan where he spent the rest of the war working in an iron foundry in Osaka. At the end of the war he was brought out of Japan through Hiroshima, some 19 days after the bomb had been dropped. His brother survived the war but died in 1950. Mr Perry returned to work as a stone cutter but later became an industrial civil servant with the Admiralty. His interests included gardening and sporting activities, particularly boxing. Our sympathy goes to his widow Margaret, daughter Diane and all other members of the family.

Herbert Frost

Royal Engineers

Herbert Frost of Moston, Greater Manchester died on March 4th, aged 91. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1946. He worked the docks before joining the Royal Engineers in 1943. He served with them as a

Corporal until his vision failed in Singapore. After training at St Dunstan's he became a capstan lathe operator for Hawker Siddeley. Mr Frost enjoyed woodwork, toy making and gardening. Our sympathy goes to his widow Gladys, son Arthur and all other members of the family.

Joseph Copas

Royal Air Force

Joseph Charles Copas of Minster, Ramsgate, Kent died on March 10th, aged 72. Having worked as a cabinetmaker, he served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1946. He lost his right eye in a bomb explosion. After recovering he was posted to Eastbourne and was injured again when his hotel was bombed. Mr Copas was then posted to Canada with the Canada Flying Training Command. After the war he worked in cabinetmaking, bookkeeping and construction work. Our sympathy goes to his wife Eileen, son and daughter and all of the family.

Geoffrey Cock

Royal Artillery

Geoffrey Cock of Rawdon, Leeds died on March 11th, aged 90. He served as a gunner in the Royal Artillery from 1940 to 1941. He initially came to St Dunstan's in 1942 and trained as a physiotherapist. His sight recovered but had deteriorated by 1977 and he became a St Dunstaner again. Our sympathy goes to his widow Gladys and all of the family.

"Jimmy" Shepherd

Queen Victoria Rifles

"Jimmy" George William Randall Shepherd of Reading, Berkshire died on March 13th, aged 83. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1943. He enlisted in 1933 and served as Rifleman in the Queen Victoria Rifles. He suffered gunshot wounds at Calais in 1940 and was taken prisoner of war by the Germans. As a blind POW he was passed into the care of Lord Normanby who had been able to set up a braille school behind enemy lines. He was repatriated in 1943 and after training took over the running of a public house in partnership with a fellow ex-POW. He later turned to poultry, pig keeping and other agricultural activities. In 1978 he received the Freedom of the City of London. Mr Shepherd's interests included gardening and sports. Our sympathy goes to his widow June and all other members of the family.