

# St Dunstan's Review

[www.st-dunstans.org.uk](http://www.st-dunstans.org.uk)

March 2002



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**MARCH 2002**

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*Billy Baxter on the ski lift.*

**Full details on page 10**

# From the Chairman



We welcome two new appointees; Richard Lake took up the post of Manager, St Dunstan's Ovingdean on February 11th. Barry Porter becomes Welfare Manager at Headquarters on March 18th.

Our reunion season starts in a little over five weeks. These occasions are an excellent opportunity to meet other St Dunstaners and widows from your area of the country. Experience has shown that newcomers to St Dunstan's find these get-togethers especially helpful. It is an opportunity to share stories and for you to meet the staff face to face. Your Welfare Officer will contact you with details, and I hope that you will think seriously about joining us at the next reunion near you.

Finally, we are well advanced in consultation about the image of the charity and each St Dunstaner who participated will have received a report summarising their comments and ideas. Even the criticisms have been constructive and we have all learnt a great deal from this exercise. We look forward to carrying forward the image that everyone has done so much to influence.

My grapevine tells me that there are those amongst you who think we are trying to change the St Dunstan's badge. May I re-assure you all that this project is concerned ONLY about the IMAGE of St Dunstan's, and the badge worn by St Dunstaners, their wives, widows or widowers, is NOT affected!

*Michael Gordon-Lennox*

Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN



## NOTICE BOARD



### CHANGE OF E-MAIL SUFFIX

Will e-mail users please note that the St Dunstan's e-mail suffix has changed from 'co.uk' to 'org.uk'. This is to be consistent with our web address and is in line with naming conventions. The new address should read: name@st-dunstans.org.uk

Any e-mails sent to the old address will be forwarded for a short while.

### SUMMER CRAFT EXHIBITION AT OIVINGDEAN - JUNE 14th-19th

A second Summer Craft Exhibition is being organised by the Rehabilitation & Training department at Ovingdean. All St Dunstaners, friends, relatives, volunteers and staff are welcome to join in. Entries will be judged in various categories and, if you wish, exhibits can be offered for sale.

The opening of the Exhibition will be on Friday 14th June, so all entries need to be at Ovingdean by Monday 10th June. Bring, or send them in, anytime after the middle of May – let us know if you need something collecting and we will try and arrange it.

If you would like to take part, please contact Vanessa Young in the Rehabilitation & Training department at St Dunstan's, Ovingdean (telephone 01273 391475) and she will send you, or fill in on your behalf, an entry form.

### FISHING CLUB COMMITTEE

St Dunstan's Fishing Club held its Annual General Meeting on January 23rd. The Honorary Secretary Jock Carnochan informed the meeting that he was retiring from this position. The following members, along with helper Stan Bowers, were elected to the committee: Chairman Fred Bentley, Secretary Philip Dobson, and Treasurer Cliff Ford. One committee position remains open.

### RICHARD LAKE

Richard "Dick" Lake took up the post of manager of St Dunstan's Ovingdean on February 11th. He joined the Royal Navy in 1966 and specialised as an observer in the Fleet Air Arm flying in Sea-King helicopters on anti-submarine and search-and-rescue missions. He commanded a fishery protection vessel HMS *Pollington* before becoming the Operations Officer of the aircraft carrier, HMS *Illustrious*. From 1992 to 94 he qualified as a social worker and then directed the Navy's Social Work department until his retirement as a Captain in November 2001.



Dick is married with two children at university. His interests are gardening and, in what spare time he has, he is a counsellor with Cruse Bereavement Care. He is also involved with his local church.

Dick said "It is a privilege to be here at St Dunstan's and I'm looking forward to the challenges."

### HANDLESS REUNION

The Blind and Handleless Reunion will be held at St Dunstan's Ovingdean from May 8th to May 14th.

### IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM

St Dunstan's holds membership of Friends of the Imperial War Museum which allows access to the Imperial War Museum, Duxford Air Museum, HMS *Belfast* and Cabinet War Rooms. Benefits include a 20 per cent discount on purchases made from Museum shops and the café at Lambeth Road. For details contact Carol Maloney, PA to the Chief Executive at St Dunstan's Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD. Telephone 020 7723 5021.

### DEADLINES FOR FUTURE ISSUES

The final date for submitting items for publication in the April *Review* is March 11th 2002.

The final date for submitting items for publication in the May *Review* is April 8th 2002.

## DERBY SWEEPSTAKE 2002

Horses are being lined up for the Epsom Derby on June 8th and the *Review* is once more opening its annual Derby Sweepstake. The draw is open to St Dunstaners, beneficiaries of the Diana Gubbay Trust, widows and widowers.

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 5th and the draw will be made that day.

Each applicant should send their name and address, the number of tickets required, and a stamped addressed envelope, to The Editor, Derby Sweepstake 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.

## FEEL THE STARS

The Royal Observatory Greenwich will be holding a "Hands-on" astronomy day on March 17th. It starts at 2pm with a touch talk exploring how time can be determined from the spinning of the earth. Later it turns to the surface of the Moon. For details contact the Bookings unit on 020 8312 6608.

## RUGBY TICKETS

Anyone interested in obtaining half-price tickets (£7) for the Army versus Navy Rugby game at Twickenham in May should please contact Carole Woodgate on 020 7723 5021.

## A BIGGER PULL THAN RUBY

The Meridian television series *St Dunstan's* documenting life at Ovingdean has proved a popular draw despite the 10.50pm slot. The half-hour programme was scheduled against broadcasts from Ruby Wax and *Newsnight*, but around 227,000 people in the Hampshire, Sussex and Kent area tuned into the first episode. Subsequent episodes have maintained a high share of the viewing audience.

A video copy is available for anyone outside the Meridian area. Contact Karen Brodie at St Dunstan's on 020 7723 5021 for details.

## SULTAN CAMP 2002

The camp at HMS *Sultan* will take place from Friday, July 26th until the morning of Saturday, August 3rd. Will those who enjoyed the camp in previous years and would like to come again please contact Elspeth Grant at High Acre, Catmere End, Saffron Walden CB11 4XG or telephone her on 01799 522874. Please contact her no later than May 9th.

## TROOPING THE COLOUR

Trooping the Colour will take place in June. It is possible that St Dunstan's will be allocated tickets. Any St Dunstaner or Gubbay Trust Beneficiary wishing to go should send their name and address to Carole Woodgate, St Dunstan's 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD by May 15th. A draw will determine the final allocation of tickets. Those attending will be responsible for their own travel and accommodation expenses.

## A HOUSE OF DELIGHTS

The story of Elizabeth I's home at Greenwich is unveiled in a touch talk and tour on May 26th. A House of Delights examines the history behind The Queen's House including gossip, tragedy and high entertainment. For details contact the Bookings Unit on 020 8312 6608.

## SKIN DEEP

The development and diversity of tattooing over the past 200 years is covered in a touch talk and guided gallery tour at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich on April 28th at 2pm. It begins with Cook's tour of the South Pacific. For details contact the Bookings unit on 020 8312 6608.

## ST DUNSTAN'S IMAGE

Just before Christmas last year, more than 100 St Dunstaners, staff and Council members volunteered to join a design project that would look at ways of describing St Dunstan's and the work of the charity.

This is quite a challenging task because everyone has their own views about what St Dunstan's stands for. The aim in the first round of consultation has therefore been to use the discussions to find a group of images and phrases that mean the same to everyone whether they are donors, St Dunstaners or part of the charity itself.

The first stage is now almost complete and all of us involved in the project have been extremely impressed by the enthusiasm and ideas put forward by everyone - especially the 84 St Dunstaners and their families who participated in very full telephone interviews.

However, at the start of some interviews it has become clear that there are some natural concerns about whether the badge itself will change. The position on this subject is quite clear.

This project is ONLY concerned about the IMAGE of St Dunstan's and the badge worn by all St Dunstaners, their wives, widows or widowers is not affected.

The opinions of everyone who has been involved in this project will be taken into account and every contributor will receive a copy of the research report on the interviews.

Finally, this is a consultation project and will take full account of ALL constructive criticisms, whether positive or negative. Any designs that have been shown to volunteers before or during interviews are simply presented for the purposes of creating discussion on issues such as modernity, memorability and accuracy in portraying St Dunstan's work. At this point, it is NOT a question of choosing one design in preference to any other.

Stage two takes place when we analyse everyone's views and move on to developing a set of generally agreed images and descriptive phrases. This selection will form the short list from which the final design will be selected and gradually introduced onto all broadcast and published material.

**Nick Ward,**  
**Director Fund Raising and Communications**

## HAVE YOU EVER MET THE QUEEN?

As part of St Dunstan's celebrations of Her Majesty The Queen's Golden Jubilee, we are seeking St Dunstaners anecdotes of their encounters with our Patron during her reign (prior to the St Dunstan's reception at Buckingham Palace last May).

If you have any memories of such an occasion or photographs, please write to Golden Jubilee Project, *St Dunstan's Review*, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD.

Similar projects are being undertaken by *The Times* and the *Daily Mail*. *The Times* ask people to send letters to Royal Memories, *Times 2*, 1 Pennington Street, London E98 1TT or e-mail: royalmemories@thetimes.co.uk.

The *Mail* asks people to send photographs to My Picture of the Queen, *Weekend Magazine*, *Daily Mail*, 2 Derry Street, London W8 5TT. They add "Please make sure you write your name, address and telephone number on the back of your print and include a SAE big enough to accommodate the photo without having to fold it. Entries must reach us no later than March 16th 2002."

## METRO GAMES

The Metro Games Visually Impaired Athletics and Pool Tournament will be held in London on Saturday, June 22nd. The athletics will be held in Walthamstow E17 and the pool in Kentish Town NW5. A dinner and disco will round off the event. Accommodation will be available for June 21st and 22nd. For details contact Derek Mileman at Flat 29, Gilda Court, Watford Way, Mill Hill, London NW7 2QN. Tel: 020 8203 1286. Fax: 020 8202 6196. E-mail: delboy29@tiscali.co.uk.

## LYRICAL DESCRIPTION

The Lyric Hammersmith, London will have audio described performances of a Royal Shakespeare Company production of *The Prince of Homburg* on March 9th and March 18th.

On a different plane, poet, singer, writer, composer, wit and raconteur Ivor Cutler makes a rare appearance on March 3rd and March 10th.

For details of all these performances and others call their Ticket Office on 020 8741 3119.

## STAFF CHANGES AT OIVINGDEAN

### Grant Cooper

Grant Cooper resigned from St Dunstan's in February. He took up the post of Sports and Recreations Supervisor nine years ago in February 1993 having been a PT Instructor in the Royal Navy. He was responsible for setting up a very sophisticated gymnasium at Ovingdean, encouraging many young and old St Dunstaners to keep fit. The antics seen on the front lawn at Ovingdean, men and women throwing buckets of water at each other, sliding on soapy carpets of polythene, were largely his responsibility. He organised St Dunstan's participation in the London to Brighton bicycle ride, the London Marathon and the Great South Run, taking part himself in all these events as an escort. We shall miss his cheery laugh and wish him all the best in the future.

### Lynda Stringer

Lynda Stringer left St Dunstan's on January 31st. She joined the staff at Ovingdean as rehabilitation and training co-ordinator in May 1996. Lynda played a busy role in the department with regard to programming and record keeping. She also took part in the London to Brighton Bike Ride the London Marathon and other running events as an escort. She leaves to join her husband in his business and we wish her good fortune.

## A FISTFUL OF FILMS

RNIB Home Video have an exciting batch of audio described videos due for release on March 18th. These films have an additional narration woven around the soundtrack using pauses in the dialogue to fill in detail about facial expressions, body language, actions, scenery and costumes. This enables blind people to follow what is happening and enjoy the film more fully.

*Some Like it Hot* (Certificate U) is the classic comedy starring Tony Curtis, Jack Lemmon and Marilyn Monroe.

*A Fistful of Dollars* (Certificate 15) was the first of the "Spaghetti Westerns". Clint Eastwood stars in this extreme western with a now legendary, haunting soundtrack by Ennio Morricone.

*Chocolat* (Certificate 12) Juliette Binoche stars in her very unusual chocolate shop, creating confections that almost magically inspire the strait-laced villagers to abandon themselves to temptation and happiness.

*Billy Elliot* (Certificate 15) tells of a coal miner's son in Northern England who is forever changed when he stumbles upon a ballet class. *The Emperor's New Groove* (Certificate U) is a hilarious animated yarn.

All titles will be released on March 18th and can be found in RNIB's Home Video Catalogue, containing details of all RNIB audio described videos and documentaries. Videos can be borrowed for up to two weeks for £2.50. Alternatively, videos can be purchased for the recommended retail price.

To order a copy of the catalogue or any of the new releases please contact: RNIB Customer Services Department, PO Box 173, Peterborough, PE2 6WS. Telephone: 0845 702 3153.

The *Review* examines DVD on page 17.

## THE POPPY PIN – MARK II

In 1999 Sue Cox produced a lapel pin depicting a poppy with the word 'Remembering' beneath. A donation was made to St Dunstan's from the proceeds of the sale. The following year another pin made its appearance and the donation went to BLESMA. The proceeds from this latest pin is to be shared between St Dunstan's and BLESMA.



Sue decided that, as a large proportion of the sales are made in France at the South African Memorial on the Somme, it would be a good idea to incorporate the French flower of remembrance – the cornflower. The new pin depicts a single poppy with three tiny cornflowers above and the words 'Never Forget'.

Sue hopes that stocks will last for about six months so place your order now. Many people remarked on the original pin and wished they had bought it when advertised so please do not hesitate or you WILL miss out.

The price is £2.50 and cheques should be made payable to Sue Cox and sent to her with your order to: Fovant Elm, Tisbury Road, Fovant, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP3 5JY.

Please note that Sue is regularly commuting between England and France, so if your order is a little late in arriving please be patient. If you have any queries then contact Robbie Hazan on 020 7616 7933.

# GETTING A FEEL FOR THE EURO

THE FOLLOWING is an extract from the RNIB guide to distinguishing Euro notes and coins. A consultation with regard to the design of notes was carried out with visually handicapped groups and their views were taken into consideration. The value in pounds sterling is approximate.

### How to distinguish the notes in summary

On each note, the denomination is boldly printed at the top right. The Large numerals use intaglio printing, which can be perceived by touch. The smaller notes increase in width and height according to their value.

**5 Euro (£3):** The dominant colour of the 5 Euro is grey. It is the smallest note, measuring 4<sup>11</sup>/<sub>16</sub> by 2<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches (12cm by 6.2cm).

**10 euro (£6):** The dominant colour of the 10 euro note is red. It is a little bigger than the 5 euro, measuring 5 by 2<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches (12.7cm by 6.7cm).

**20 Euro (£12):** The dominant colour is blue. The note measures 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> by 2<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches (13.3cm by 7.2cm).

The foil feature on the low value notes differs in shape and position from the foil feature on the high value notes.

**50 euro (£30):** The dominant colour is orange. It measures 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> by 3 inches (14cm by 7.7cm).

The large denomination notes all measure 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches (8.2cm) in height, but their length varies.

**100 euro (£60):** is mainly an olive green colour. It is 5<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches (14.7cm) long and has no tactile lines on it.

**200 euro (£120):** Yellow-brown, it is 6 inches (15.3cm) long. It can be distinguished by a band of vertical lines along its bottom edge, made to be perceptible by touch. The band runs from the centre to the right hand corner, but is interrupted partway along, so as not to interfere with the doorway motif.

**500 euro (£300):** Mainly purple, a suitably grand colour for this, the largest note, it is 6<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inches (16cm long). It can be distinguished by a band of short, diagonal lines running down the right hand edge, made to be perceptible by touch. The band is interrupted partway down, for a distance of about 3mm.

### How to distinguish the coins in summary

The lower value coins are very light. They are covered with copper and are a reddish colour.

**The 1 cent** coin is the smallest and lightest coin. It has a smooth edge. It is <sup>10</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inches (16.25mm) in diameter, under 0.055 inch (1.36mm) thick (on average) and weighs 2.3grams.

**The 2 cent** coin also has a smooth edge, but is the only coin to have a groove scored around its circumference. It is <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches (18.75mm) in diameter, <sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inch (1.36mm) thick and weighs 3 grams.

**The 5 cent** coin is the largest coin to have a smooth edge. It is <sup>13</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inches (21.25mm) in diameter, <sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inch (1.36mm) thick (on average) and weighs 3.9 grams.

The middle value coins are gold coloured. **The 10 cent** coin is the smallest coin to have a scalloped edge. Smaller than the 5 cent coin it is made of a different metal and considerably thicker. It is <sup>25</sup>/<sub>32</sub> inch (19.75mm) in diameter, 1.51mm thick and weighs 4.1 grams.

**The 20 cent** coin is notched at 7 points around the circumference, giving it a unique "Spanish flower" shape. It is <sup>27</sup>/<sub>32</sub> inch (22.25mm) in diameter, 1.63mm thick (on average) and weighs 5.7 grams.

**The 50 cent** coin is the largest to have a scalloped edge. It is <sup>15</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inch (24.25mm) in diameter, 1.88mm thick (on average) and weighs 7.8 grams - that's almost twice as much as the 10 cent coin.

The higher value coins have two colours, silver and gold.

**The 1 Euro** coin has a gold outer circle and an inner circle that is silver coloured. Its edge is alternately smooth and serrated - a style known as "interrupted milling". It is smaller and lighter than the 50 cent coin. It is <sup>29</sup>/<sub>32</sub> inches (23.25mm) in diameter, <sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inch (2.125mm) thick and weighs 7.5 grams.

**The 2 Euro** coin has an outer circle that is silver and an inner circle that is gold. Its edge is finely milled, with lettering or stars. It is the biggest and heaviest coin. It is 1 inch (25.75mm) in diameter, <sup>3</sup>/<sub>32</sub> inch (1.95mm) thick (on average) and weighs 8.5 grams.

RNIB has free copies of the booklet from which these extracts are taken: *The Euro Made Easy - Understanding euro notes and coins - A guide for people with poor vision*. It is available on the RNIB website [www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk), or as a hard copy in print, on tape, as electronic text document and in braille. If you would like a copy contact RNIB Customer Services on 0845 702 3153.

# STAFFORD SHOOT TARGETS GOLD

*St Dunstan's lose to Havant and Hayling but regain form in time for BBS contest*

by Barbara Degenhardt

**T**HE ARCHERY WEEK, February 9th to 15th, began on a sombre note with the sad news of the death of Princess Margaret, and each preliminary session started with a minute's silence in remembrance.

David Habgood welcomed members to the competition for the Laurie Austin Trophy, and described for the benefit of newer members the invaluable contribution that Laurie had made in instituting Visually Impaired archery, developing the tactile sights and not least in inspiring the present coaches with his quiet methods of teaching. He finally succeeded in having the shooting venue moved from a narrow basement corridor in St Dunstan's Ovingdean where only one archer could shoot at a time. Fortunately the McKinley Sports Hall allows eight members on the line together, otherwise with today's membership we would still be shooting! We were honoured to have Amy, Laurie's widow, for our Lady Paramount. She presented Nigel Whiteley with the trophy. Nine of the 13 members shooting improved their scores considerably.

## TRIPLE WHAMMY

The Club hosted 12 members of the Havant and Hayling Bowmen when they visited Ovingdean on February 10th. The visitors included two boys, Alan and Aran, fortunately shooting in separate sessions! The match was a return challenge from July 2001, when a shoot was arranged by HMS *Sultan* between the Hampshire club and a party of St Dunstaners. Owing to space limitations half of each club shot in the morning while the others were touring the house. After lunch they changed places. As ever, shooting was of a very high standard, and in return for our victory over them last year, we allowed them to beat us handsomely this time. A "return return" is planned for this year, and it looks set to become an annual event.

At the Club's AGM on Monday John Glazier our President presented Steve Moseley with the medal for the most improved handicap and the meeting went

on to discuss various matters, notably that of our silver jubilee to be celebrated this year. Apparently there is an archery scrapbook which has not been seen for some years, and also a missing club banner. If anyone knows of the whereabouts of these two items please let David Habgood know, and if you have memories of the last 25 years send them to him as well.

Tuesday saw Nigel taking the Longhill Trophy, and on Wednesday St Dunstan's shot against Ditchling (formerly Cuckfield) who by this year were getting fed up with being beaten, so they pulled out all the stops and got their revenge.

After the Habgood Rules Fun Shoot on Thursday there was a session with the TV Publicity team with some members demonstrating the techniques used by VI archers and coaches. They were very thorough and interested in the sport, so if you see a TV man with a camera in one hand and a bow in the other, you will know that he has been hooked.

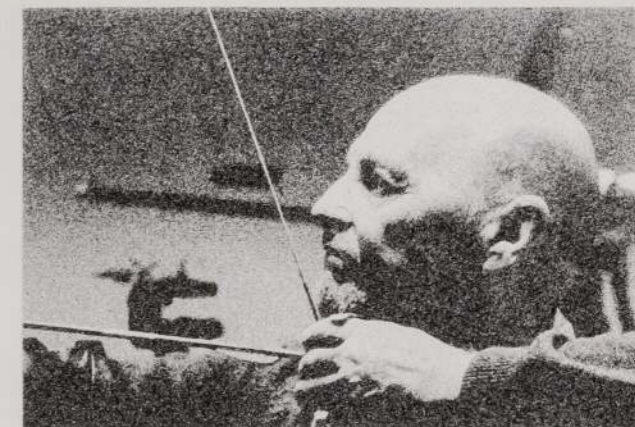
Now the Greenways Archers decided that it was about time that they gave the St Dunstaners a lesson too so proceeded to whop them comprehensively. To paraphrase Oscar Wilde "To lose one match may be regarded as a misfortune, to lose both looks like carelessness, to lose three ..."

## NATIONALS AT STAFFORD

So it was a chastened team leaving for the British Blind Sports Indoor Archery National Championships on Friday morning. Seven archers, coaches, spotters, escorts and of course our driver Stan Bowers, set off for Stafford where a couple of dozen other VI archers from all over the country were ready to take them on.

Staying in a motel near the venue, we needed somewhere to have dinner, so Clive who lives in the area took us to his local. The cooks had about three hours notice of the imminent arrival of 18 starving individuals and did us proud. From fish to chicken to steak ("which is the lady with the 4oz rump?") to gammon to bangers and mash piled up so high on trenchers we had to stand up to reach the top. One member said he didn't know whether his mash was to be eaten or climbed so he did both. It will be interesting to know whether Clive will be allowed back into his pub again.

Saturday was the big day. Nerves were very taut to begin with when the local press were photographing and interviewing, but gradually everyone calmed



*St Dunstaner George Oliver was on target.*

down and got on with the business in hand. Being shot in two sessions the results were not available until late afternoon and with a sigh of relief St Dunstan's found they were back on form with four golds and a silver.

Norman Perry came first in the B1 Compound class beating an old friend and rival. Terry Ottewell won the B1 Recurve, Nigel Whiteley came second with B2 Compound. Clive Jones and Derek Hagger won the B1 Novice Recurve, and B2 Novice Compound classes respectively. They would have been well within the medals had their scores been ranked along with the experienced group. Euphoria was rich garnish for the evening meal that night.

Altogether a highly successful and enjoyable week, leaving everyone looking forward to our next meeting in May.



*Clive Jones takes aim.*



**Top:** Norman Perry shoots for gold at Stafford.  
**Bottom:** Derek Hagger is presented with his trophy by David Sherratt of The Grand Archery Society.

# EXHILARATION BY DAY - EXAGGERATION BY NIGHT!

Ray Hazan is back on the slopes

**I**F EVER you want to witness the true spirit of St Dunstan's and its links with the Services, then look no further than the skiing week. It is a mixture of daring, determination and exhilaration on the one hand, combined with the expertise, confidence and competence of the Army guides on the other. In the evening, close your eyes and listen to the laughter, banter and sheer exaggeration of the achievements of the day!

It was, however, a quiet beginning. I am still trying to decide whether it was a practical joke to be woken at St Dunstan's Ovingdean by the electronic warble of the telephone at 2 o'clock in the morning when we didn't have to be ready until 3.30am! A thick fog on the way to Gatwick and the encouragement of the taxi driver 'I doubt you'll take off in this' could

hardly dampen the excitement and slight apprehension. It was a first for Billy Baxter, 12 years since I had last skied and an eight year gap for Steve Sparkes. We were soon in the capable hands of Mick Shepley, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, who herded us and the other guides through the check-in at Gatwick. Others were to join the party from Manchester and Exeter.

Attempting to separate a plastic breakfast from its cling film coverings with two inches of elbow room and a folding table which is trying continually to deposit its contents on your lap, is not within the syllabus of the Training and Rehabilitation department. We arrived at Innsbruck Airport in Austria 80 minutes later, feeling a little the worse for wear after the uncooked sausages. So much for the comforts of modern travel!



Our St Dunstaners indulge in a quick mountainside cuppa before putting on their skis.



Speed-king Ray Hazan assumes the position as escort Eddie Edwards reintroduces him to the piste.

During a three-hour coach ride, we wound through picturesque countryside, straddling the 'autostrada', winding around hair-pin bends, but becoming a little concerned as our coach took us through snow resorts under a cloudless blue sky, and which seemed to be devoid of a white covering at the lower levels. The weather forecast for the coming two days did not include the four-letter word 'snow'.

By the evening, we had settled into our rooms in the Hotel El Ciasel, sampled the bar, unpacked, been fitted for skis and boots by an effusive mother and son team and re-sampled the hotel bar. We had already begun to get used to the new Euro. If there were any criticisms to be made, it was that the hotel was far too generous with their meals. This does not take into account that the word 'no' is non-existent in the gourmand's vocabulary! Four courses including pasta, of course, far outweighed, literally, any beneficial effects brought about by our daily overdose of fresh air and exercise! Particularly to be remembered was a gala 'surprise' night when the hotel offered a glass of champagne preceding a candle-lit five-course dinner to the accompaniment of two excellent accordionists complete with Tyrolean hats and yodelling.

But what of the skiing, I hear you ask? There can be no greater thrill, scare, exhilaration and feeling of accomplishment by both skier and guide to successfully navigate from top to bottom of the slope, hopefully without a fall. The feeling you are travelling at 60mph may be only 6mph, the style dubious and the performance not worthy of TV's *Ski Sunday* but that is immaterial. The calm words of command from your guide, the swish of the skis on the snow, the wind rushing in your ears and the sheer feeling of freedom of movement is a sensation more than amplified for a visually handicapped person.

The partially sighted follow their guides who pin a bright yellow 'bib', warning others of a blind skier, to their rucksacks. Peter Walker was told to "do exactly as I do" by Rick Jones, Royal Artillery. When Rick had a fall, Peter was seen passing him on his backside shouting, "You told me to copy you!"

In the case of the totally blind skier, the guide skis just behind or by the side giving words of command; "left now, right now, point more right." Fortunately, guide Neil Graham, REME had thoughtfully brought along some small one-to-one-radio sets. This greatly



*Ready on the edge! St Dunstaners Gerry Jones, Steve Sparkes and Gary Lomas with their guides.*

assisted Ray Hazan with the headset obviating the need for hearing aids, which are often distorted by the sound of the wind rushing by! Because they had to operate the pressor switch, it meant his guides Eddie Edwards, RA and Neil had to ski without sticks making life even harder for them. There was always the fallback on the adage "If you can't take a joke, then don't join!"

The St Dunstaner skiers divided naturally into two groups – adults and children! The former being the over 55's and the others the under 45's. One highlight of the week was the achievement of the 'children', Steve Sparkes, Peter Walker and Gary Lomas with their guides, Mick Shepley, Rick Jones and Cam Cameron, REME who skied the 26kilometre course of the Stellaronda. This was covered virtually non-stop apart from their rests on the ski lifts and is quite a feather in all their caps. REME SNCO's are not renowned for their map reading and it was a miracle that all returned safely. We place credit on the sole representative of the Royal Marines for that – thanks Sparkie!

Gerry Jones, a veteran St Dunstan's skier with guide Martin Blank (RA) and Ray with guides Eddie and Neil completed a more gentlemanly 12 kilometres.

This was Billy Baxter's first ski on real snow since he lost his sight. The total disorientation was made

amply apparent when our new guides had to experience what it was like to ski blindfolded. Some fell, others tried to do the splits as they gently rolled down the hill backwards unaware they were moving at all. But full marks to them as it must be a frightening experience. At least we St Dunstaners have had plenty of practice!

We took our hats off to a veteran of many ski trips, Charlie Daly who was an inspiring example of fitness and a great leader to the bar! Emma Covell, an Army teacher, who brought a ray of sunshine and an infectious laugh to the party and Bill McDougall (REME), guided Billy who made great progress. If his skill matched only half his ebullience, then his achievement was great!

What goes on after the day's skiing is an essential part of the trip. Local bars and clubs were hushed as the St Dunstan's group descended on them led by the skirl of the bagpipes skilfully played by Cam. This was eminently preferable, at least for the 'adults', than the chest crushing cacophony of the disco dance beat.

Each evening after dinner, the Stavely award was presented to the 'wally of the day'. Crimes included not being able to find the hotel after a hard night out; one St Dunstaner trying to show another totally blind St Dunstaner what his eyes looked like and

acrobatics on the slopes – vis, the author. The penance is to wear a silly hat with ears and a long protruding elephant trunk for the whole of the following day. The only advantage for the St Dunstaner is that he does not have to see the stares of bemused people around him!

The author claims the most spectacular 'off piste' skiing of the week, earning him a Stavely. While trying to ski around someone on the edge of the piste, his skis caught some nylon netting, meant to prevent the skier descending into a gully. Ray and his skis parted company as he forward somersaulted over the netting landing in a sitting position several feet down in the gully. He heard Eddie's voice from somewhere high above him say "Don't move." But far more undignifying was attempting to climb out of the situation up a vertical snow wall and judges only awarded 3.2 for style. Ray decided to leave the replay until next year!

We are so lucky with our guides, most of whom have escorted St Dunstan's literally for years. Not only do they show courage, skill and competence on the slopes – how many times have we been assisted across a road by a trembling hand and here they are taking us down a ski slope! But their friendship, their banter, their cheerfulness and their devotion is something to be witnessed. On our final evening, each had a word, mostly complimentary, to say

about the St Dunstaner he or she had guided and made a presentation of a badge or little present. This was particularly applicable to Billy, who celebrated his birthday on the day of departure. Each guide received a small St Dunstan's lapel badge and Peter Zamudio (ex-RA) a book and sweatshirt in recognition of the 20 plus years that he has been a guide.

So a most wonderful week of camaraderie and plain 'joie-de-vivre' came to an end with breakfast served at 4.30am prior to departure. Of course many didn't bother to go to bed that night as tales were told and re-told, bars were visited and glasses upended.

We are very grateful to Helen Walker and Kelly Daly who were most helpful at all times. We cannot praise the guides enough and we thank their respective Commanding Officers and wives who gave them the time off. We thank St Dunstan's and all who made the trip possible. We are indebted to Italo Frioni, President of the Italian War Blind who arranged for us to have concessionary ski lift passes. Our final debt of gratitude is to our organiser Gerry Jones who has continued to encourage and enable the ski trip to take place through thick and thin.

Anyone interested in joining the group or receiving details for next year should please contact Gerry Jones through Ray Hazan on 020 7616 7930.



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the Editor are always welcome.

Send a letter, tape or disk to 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD. Fax: 020 7262 6199.

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

**From: Terry Bullingham,  
Smethwick, West Midlands**

I was very pleased that you acknowledged the 150th anniversary of the death of Louis Braille in the February *Review*. Many will also have listened to the emotive biographical play broadcast by BBC Radio 4 during the afternoon of January 14th.

There is a disturbing tendency nowadays, both within and without St Dunstan's, for Braille's wonderful system to be dismissed in favour of modern technology. True, the potential of a personal-computer system to offset the handicapping effects of serious sight loss is impressive to say the least. Computers, however, have serious disadvantages in that they require electrical power and like all electro-mechanical devices they can, and do, malfunction, often with disastrous consequences. The braille system, with its inherent simplicity and flexibility, still has a vital role to perform, even in today's technological age. This role may be as basic as labelling the multiplicity of compact discs, cassettes, as well as the 'come-in-handly' tobacco tins of fasteners in the garage. Indeed the ubiquitous 3.5" computer floppy disc itself may be identified by a simple brailled 'Dymo' strip.

There is simply nothing to replace the sheer pleasure of reading a tactile book at one's own speed with the ability to place your own interpretation on the text under the fingers. There is something very reassuring about the format of the 'written' word on the page, that all the synthetic speech systems (or talking and digitised books) cannot replace. Would it be too contentious to suggest that without Braille skills (or its companion, Moon), a seriously visually impaired person is not strictly literate?

I was taught braille by two dedicated St Dunstaners and I will be eternally in their debt for their patience and perseverance. I have been privileged to pass this knowledge to many rehabilitation professionals and blind people. I have also had the honour of representing our Organisation on the Braille Authority of the United Kingdom - the national standard-setting body. Many who denigrate Braille's system as a useful 'tool', are individuals who can actually read standard or large print.

Braille himself, failed to get his system officially accepted during his woefully short life as his sighted contemporaries were resistant, due to the code being difficult to interpret visually. It is somewhat ironic that, 150 years later, countless blind individuals' basic right to literacy is being withheld by the lack of committed teachers!

**Wendy Borthwick, Rehabilitation Officer,  
Hartlepool, Cleveland**

I frequently visit one of your members and his wife and sometimes have the privilege of reading the *St Dunstan's Review*. Today was one of those occasions and I note with interest your article, 'The World at Our Finger Tips', relating to the wonderful invention of Braille.

I love the comment, "the ability to read under the bedclothes on a cold night." This must be the ultimate in luxury and so very true. Even we sighted people cannot achieve this level of late night comfort with our very ordinary printed text reading etc. In the words of two other people that I regularly meet, both registered blind and avid readers using Braille, both saying, "there is nothing quite like relaxing with a book on your knee." When these two people go on holiday they arrange to have their Braille holiday reading sent on ahead to their hotel. They say the spoken word can rob the reader of applying their own emphasis which in turn can influence their interpretation of the text. I would tend to go along with this.

Despite the advances in technology I agree Braille can still, and should, hold its own. It is extremely subtle, universally recognised and has the ability to extend the curriculum over a wide area. It has, however to be learnt to be an important part of accessing and assessing information and literature etc. Sadly as we are all aware, it is the opportunity to learn that is so often missing. Rarely is the teaching and learning of Braille offered to people who are experiencing loss of vision. Despite the technological age we live in Braille should not be discounted and I echo your thoughts about the freedom and dignity that the use of Braille can offer. A freedom and dignity that is so often denied to people with a visual loss.

**From: Mike Lorenz**

I read with interest the article in the February *Review* "People of Anzio honour courage of George". My father Donald Lorenz, himself a St Dunstaner and now in his 85th year was a veteran of Anzio serving with the 7th Battalion, Cheshire Regiment throughout this campaign.

Whilst a very modest man and like many rarely recall, to others that is, his experiences, I know that he was and is still very proud to have been involved in this particular theatre of war.

I note from the article that the Anzio Research Centre is issuing Tributes of Honour to those who were at Anzio in 1944. I know that my father would be thrilled to be bestowed with such a honour in the knowledge that future generations of our family could share in his pride in having fought for King and Country and that those people of Anzio have recognised the sacrifices made by so many.

If you have any contact details I would very pleased to receive these so that I might write to the organisation on his behalf.

**Editor's Note:** Anzio Veterans should write to the 1st Army Association, Orchard House, White Cross Road, Salterton, Exeter EX5 1EN.

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## Morton bowls the world down-under

ST DUNSTANER Morton Williams of Llanelli, Dyfed has been selected for the IPA World Championships in Australia. He has won the Welsh Singles Championships five times and won Gold in the UK Singles Championships in 1993.

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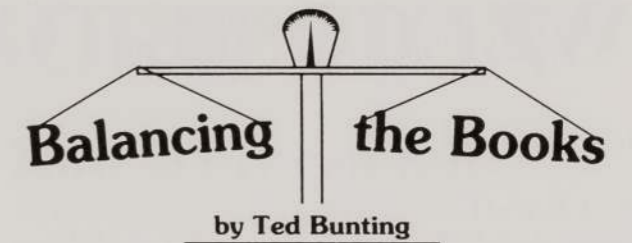
## CORRECTION

Mrs Marise Falkingham served in the WRNS from 1943 to 1946 (not 1936 to 1946) and was posted to HMS *Roseneath* (rather than just the Clyde).

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## QUICK QUIZ

- 1) Who lives in Ambridge?
- 2) What do we call the Light Programme now?
- 3) Who originally presented *Desert Island Discs*?
- 4) Who left *Today* last month?
- 5) Who chairs *Any Questions*?



**Mum and Mr Armitage**

Author: *Beryl Bainbridge*

Reader: David Sinclair

Catalogue number: 5991

Duration: 4 Hours

This is a collection of funny stories, though not, I fear, "funny" in the comical or amusing sense. No, I found them odd, peculiar, strange and even somewhat weird. The secret of successful short story writing I believe, (as demonstrated by Arthur Conan Doyle, W. Somerset Maugham, and other past masters of the art) lies primarily in finding a suitable ending, to round the narrative tidily off, or give a twist in the tail. Dame Beryl, as she now is, chooses to solve this difficult problem by ignoring it completely - she just stops! Sometimes, it is true, she may use a "throw away line" but the ending is still abrupt. It might be intentional, of course, and involve something psychological that I'm not clever enough to spot. I hope it is, in a way, because otherwise her stories are like half-eaten jam sandwiches discarded by little children; very messy, very untidy and unsatisfactory all round.

**The Oxford Book of Royal Anecdotes**

Author: *Elizabeth Pakenham-Longford,  
Countess of Longford*

Reader: Roland Markham

Catalogue No: 7644

Duration: 22.75 hours

Twenty-two and three quarter hours! Almost a day! Nearly a whole day of fable, myth and inconsequential tittle-tattle. Did you hear the tale about Alfred burning the cakes? Of course you did, and Canute commanding the tide to turn, and of Henry VIII having six wives. At our mother's knee we learn such stories as these though we may still be ignorant of the history which surrounds them. Do you know why Alfred was hiding in the fens? Or why Charles II was hiding in a tree? Well if you don't, it's no good expecting the answers here because a textbook this certainly is not! It lists Kings and Queens from Boadicea to Elizabeth II, but reveals remarkably little detail about them; for those seeking knowledge this book is unrewarding, make no mistake!



# WELCOME TO ST DUNSTAN'S

January 11th

**Ruth Bell** of Leeds served in Civil Defence before joining the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1942 to 1946. Posted to Camberley and then Wales, she was driver on vehicles ranging from staff cars to field ambulances. After leaving the army she worked as a wages and banking clerk.

January 25th

**Albert Coad** of London served in The Rifle Brigade from 1935 to 1946. After he year in the UK he was posted to Malta, then India and was in Palestine when the war broke out. He returned to the UK as an instructor before being deployed to Algiers. He was awarded the DCM in action at Hammon Lif and was later appointed Company Sergeant Major. In civilian life he worked with the Corps of Commissionaires, the Post office and as a security officer at the Old Bailey. He has two children, six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

**Amy Gordon** of Warminster, Wiltshire served in the Army Nursing Service from 1939 to 1945. A qualified nurse and reservist, she was transferred into the military on the outbreak of war. She was stationed at Bath, Oxford and Wales before being posted to North Africa with a Casualty Clearing Station. She also served in South Africa, India, the Persian Gulf and Egypt. After the war she returned to Bath Hospital before moving to Woolwich to complete her midwifery studies. In 1946 she moved to Warminster as a theatre sister and later turned to orthopaedics.

**Patrick Mahoney** of Gravesend, Kent served in the Merchant Navy from 1935. Promoted to 2nd Engineer he served in a number of ships and was torpedoed twice during the war. After leaving the Merchant Navy, he joined the Port of London Authority in Greenwich as an engineer. He later moved to Gravesend and became an engineer on seagoing tugs. He is keen on bowls and has a daughter and two grandchildren.

**Colin Mills** of Barnwood, Gloucester served in the Royal Artillery and Royal Army Service Corps from 1944 to 1948. After training he was posted to

Scotland in preparation for operations in the Far East. The unit was disbanded at the end of the war and he was posted with the RASC as a clerk to India. He then worked in the Judge Advocate General's Office on war crime trials. In civilian life he worked as an accountant. He and his wife Edith have a son.

**Adrian Monk** of Llanddewi Brefi, near Tregaron, Dyfed served in the Merchant Navy from 1933 to 1949. He joined the Pacific Steam Navigation Company as a Deck Apprentice and having gained his 2nd Mates Certificate elected to remain in the Merchant Navy on the outbreak of war. He served on oil tankers and sailed to New Zealand, Australia, Bombay and across the Atlantic. He was torpedoed on an Atlantic Convoy and picked up a Canadian destroyer. After the war he became Chief Officer on the Falkland Islands Steamer and spent three years in the Southern Ocean. In 1949 he became a sheep farmer on the Falkland Islands, remaining there until after the Falkland War. His interests have included playing chess, horse riding and painting. Mr Monk and his wife Norah have a son and daughter.

## The Diana Gubbay Trust for The Blind

**Carl Adamson** of Runcorn, Cheshire served in the 22nd Cheshire Regiment from 1995 to 2001. He was on duty in Northern Ireland when the land rover he was in overturned and he suffered severe injuries to the head. Before joining the Army he worked in a power tool centre, a cleaning firm and ship yard.

## 50 YEARS AGO

St Dunstan's beat Brighton Police in a shooting match. The St Dunstan's team consisted of Messrs Redford, Walton, Webster, Dennis, Osborne and Lipscombe.

A.J. Radford wrote that he thought he was "born to be blind." He had been rejected by the Royal Naval College, Greenwich because of a cyst on his left eye. The fear was it would grow behind the eye. The cyst was torn out when he had a fight with another boy. He later emigrated and came home on a ship named SS Dunstan. When he was blinded in France in 1918 he was returned to the UK aboard the same ship.

# DISCS OF DESCRIPTION

**N**EW VIDEO technology DVD - Digital Versatile Disc - offers great potential for making film and video material accessible to blind people. It allows manufacturers the capacity to add audio description in a manner that can be turned on and off as required.

Although many manufacturers have yet to grasp the opportunity to open up this market, DVDs with audio description are already available for sale or hire from High Street outlets. The RNIB has identified the following films available on DVD as having audio description:

<i>Armageddon</i>	<i>The House of Mirth</i>
<i>The Rock</i>	<i>Late Night Shopping</i>
<i>Rogue Trader</i>	<i>War Zone</i>
<i>The Croupier</i>	<i>Sexy Beast</i>
<i>East is East</i>	<i>Pretty Woman</i>
<i>Enemy at the Gates</i>	<i>Purely Belter</i>
<i>Very Annie-Mary</i>	<i>Gangster No 1</i>
<i>The Rescuers</i>	<i>Chicken Run</i>
<i>Mary Poppins</i>	<i>Peter Pan</i>
<i>Simba's Pride</i>	<i>Sleeping Beauty</i>

The term audio description takes on great importance in this new environment. Some DVD discs will offer "commentary". This doesn't necessarily mean that they provide details of actions, scenery or costume. You may find the director or actors from the film discussing elements of the production, problems they faced but it will not tell you that a car chase is in progress. Activating "commentary" may also trigger a series of text banners that annotate the film as it is playing.

## DESCRIBING THE DANCE

Two DVDs currently available find drama in the lives of blind people, both mine fields of terrible passions, both are darkly tragic.

*Dancer in the Dark* unites Danish director Lars Von Trier and Icelandic pop-diva Björk in a modernistic musical that mixes highly choreographed song and dance routines with naturalistic drama. It co-stars Catherine Deneuve, still glamorous in a pair of wellies, and features a courtroom cameo from Joel Grey (the creepy compere from *Cabaret*).

## How DVD can put audio described films on the High Street counter but commentary might leave you in the dark

The film tells of Selma, a Czech immigrant, who is going blind. She works long hours in a factory in the hope that she can save enough money for an operation that will save her son's sight. When a desperate neighbour steals from her, it sets off a tragic series of events. Selma has one chance for salvation but it will deprive her son of the vital surgery.

Certified 15, *Dancer* has similarities with Denis Potter's *Pennies from Heaven* and it was received with similar acclaim. This offbeat mix won the Palme d'Or at Cannes 2000 Film Festival and Björk won Best Actress.

Some DVD editions come with a "commemorative Braille cover" but all include audio description. However this is activated via an on-screen menu which does not have any audio indications to allow a blind user to navigate from one item to another. Using the DVD drive on a computer with screen reader is not an option because of software conflicts.

Other features on the *Dancer* DVD, which include news clips from Cannes and behind the scenes items, go un-described. Equally a feature that allows the musical routines to be played individually does not operate in conjunction with the audio description.

## TA, TA, TA - B FENBY

The second film is based on real life events. *Delius: Song of Summer* has been retrieved from the BBC archives by the British Film Institute. This 1968 black and white film, made by Ken Russell in collaboration with Eric Fenby, explores the life of the composer, blind and paralysed from tertiary syphilis. Max

Adrian portrayed Delius, Maureen Pryor, his ever-suffering wife, while Christopher Gable made his screen debut as the naive and idealistic Fenby.

Russell made a series of biographical films of famous composers during the Sixties, and *Song of Summer* is widely regarded as the finest of these projects. It tells how a young Fenby left Scarborough to join the composer in France with the intention of helping Delius complete unfinished scores. This task would occupy the next five years of his life, but he was ill prepared for the egotistic and cantankerous monster awaiting him.

This DVD does not have any audio description, so when Fenby says he feels uncomfortable entering the composer's home, the blind user is not informed that this is prompted by a succession of nude paintings that adorn the walls. When Delius demands that a German manservant carry him upstairs, there is no dialogue to indicate that he is thrown over a shoulder like sack of potatoes and whisked away.

The "Director's Commentary" when activated replaces the usual soundtrack with Ken Russell talking about the production.

Despite the lack of audio description, there are many aural qualities built into this film. There are sounds of wildlife, crashing waves, steam trains, the inner thoughts of Fenby, to say nothing of the music which laces the soundtrack, a counter to the blind despot dominating the lives of those in his household.

Ken Russell's *Delius: Song of Summer* is certified PG.

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## February Quiz Answers

- 1) Beethoven composed the *Moonlight Sonata*.
  - 2) Bax was the Master of the King's Music who had a low opinion of folk dancing.
  - 3) The Beach Boys recorded *Pet Sounds*.
  - 4) Sir Thomas Beecham founded the London Philharmonic Orchestra.
  - 5) The Beatles originally performed *Yesterday*.
- 

## FAMILY NEWS

### BIRTHS

#### Congratulations on the birth of:

Susannah on November 30th. She is the granddaughter of Rose Shed of Burgess Hill and the late *George Shed*.

### DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY

#### Congratulations to:

*Bernard and Dorothy Pitcher* of Newbury, Berkshire on January 26th.

### SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY

#### Congratulations to:

*Charles and Peggy Blockley* of Sileby, nr Loughborough, Leicestershire who celebrated 61 years of marriage on February 19th.

*Bertie and Eva Williamson* of Colchester, Essex who celebrated 62 years of marriage on January 27th.

*William and Ivy Hain* of Weymouth, Dorset who celebrated 66 years of marriage on February 6th.

*William and Gladys Reid* of Peterborough, Cambridgeshire who celebrated 62 years of marriage on February 12th.

### DEATHS

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

**Mabel Ellis** on February 1st. She was the wife of *Ron Ellis* of Upton St Leonards, Gloucestershire.

**Mildred Jakins** of Guildford, Surrey on December 20th. She was the widow of *George Jakins*.

**Maud Usher** of Fleet, Hampshire on February 1st. She was the daughter of late St Dunstaner *Samuel Usher*.

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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.**

#### Leonard Walker

*Royal Engineers*

Leonard Walker of Guildford, Surrey died on December 13th, aged 89. He served in the Royal Engineers from 1939 to 1946. A substantive Sergeant/Acting Warrant Officer, he served in the Anti-Aircraft Division throughout the UK. After the war he joined the West Midlands Gas Board as Supervisor of the Nechells and Saltley works. Later,

he joined ICI in their titanium plant. He used to enjoy diving, crosswords and bridge. Our sympathy goes to his daughter Penelope and all of the family.

#### Hugh Ellis

*Royal Air Force*

Hugh Henry Valentine Ellis of Hassocks, West Sussex died on December 27th, aged 93. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1938 to 1946 in the UK, France and South Africa before retiring as a Flight Lieutenant. A chartered accountant, he established a firm which still deals with clients working in art, literature and politics. Our sympathy goes to his widow Jane and all other members of the family.

#### Desmond Bissenden

*Royal Marines*

Desmond Bissenden of Putney, London died on January 25th, aged 78. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1991. While under age, he left an apprenticeship as a toolmaker to join the Royal Marines in 1939. He trained as a Commando on the Isle of Wight and at Fort William in Scotland. His unit was posted to Yugoslavia to help the Loyalist Underground Army with a series of coastal raids. He was wounded on three separate occasions and lost his left eye during an assault on the Island of Brac in 1943. A German stick grenade exploded on his position. After treatment he joined Wandsworth Borough Council as a Civil Defence Worker. His interests included football and athletics. Our sympathy goes to his daughter Carol, son Michael and all of the family.

#### Charles Cummings

*10th Gloucestershire Regiment*

Charles Wesley Cummings of Verwood, Dorset died on January 27th, aged 90. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1945. Before joining the 10th Gloucestershire Regiment in 1940, he had worked as a timber cutter and also kept pigs and poultry. He was posted to Burma where he was injured by a hand grenade explosion in 1944. Returning to the UK, he resumed work with pigs and poultry, branching into cattle and vegetable farming. Our sympathy goes to his sons Brian, Charles and Peter, daughter Sonia and all of the family.

#### Frederick Morton

*Green Howards*

Frederick William Morton of Ovingdean died on January 27th, aged 83. He had been a St Dunstaner

since 1994. He enlisted in 1939 and served with the Green Howards in North Africa, rising to the rank of L/Sgt. In February 1943, whilst on a training exercise in Benghazi, he received injuries to eyes. As a result he underwent training at St Dunstan's in Church Stretton but was able to resume his pre-enlistment occupation of bricklayer. He retired early due to a back injury. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

#### Frank Parsons

*Royal Engineers*

Frank Parsons of Ovingdean died on January 27th, aged 105. He served in the Royal Engineers from August 1915 to 1919. A drill and musketry instructor at Chatham, he deployed to Egypt. After the war he worked as a carpenter until 1934 when he moved to Southport and became clerk of works to a firm of architects. In 1947 he set up his own business as a jobbing builder before retiring in 1966. A keen cricketer, he played as an all-rounder for a number of local clubs. Our sympathy goes to his daughter Audrey and all other members of the family.

#### Ray Benson

*Ministry of Supply*

Albert Raymond Alfred Benson, MINE, AMI, Mech Engs of Billingham, West Sussex died on January 29th, aged 76. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1954. He was blinded whilst on research work at the Guided Weapons Experimental Range in Australia. He also suffered injuries to his hands and hearing. After training at St Dunstan's, he worked at the Royal Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough, Hampshire and continued with his engineering studies. In later years he worked for ARDE, Fort Halstead and RAE Mathematical Services before becoming an engraver. His interests included amateur radio, picture framing and woodwork. Our sympathy goes to his daughters Sharon and Laura, stepson Andrew and all of the family.

#### Douglas Kneale

*Royal Air Force*

Douglas Kneale of Framwellgate Moor, Durham died on February 1st, aged 81. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1939 to 1946. Posted to Iceland, he was a tail gunner on Sunderland flying boats. After leaving the RAF he returned to journalism and moved to Scotland where he became the youngest town councillor to be elected in Banffshire. He was later elected their Dean of Guild. He had a number of other jobs before finally becoming a publican. His

interests included painting, gardening and bowls; in addition he maintained an active interest in RAF issues. Our sympathy goes to his widow Ricky, sons Nigel and Andrew, daughters Alison, Suzanne and Fiona and all other members of the family.

### **Ralph Preece**

#### *Royal Artillery*

Ralph Edward Preece of Bournemouth, Dorset died on February 9th, aged 74. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1950. He served as Gunner with the Royal Artillery. His interests included fishing and bowls. Our sympathy goes to his son Terrance, daughter Lyne and all other members of the family.

### **David Brown**

#### *The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)*

David Brown of Worcester, Worcestershire died on February 10th, aged 83. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1990. He enlisted in the 1st Battalion, The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in 1937, hoping to be career soldier. After basic training he trained as a Regimental Carpenter. He was a keen sportsman, boxing at regimental level. Stationed in India, he was posted to Burma and was captured by the Japanese after the invasion. He served the remainder of the war as a POW in Singapore and Malaya, suffering malnutrition and nutritional deprivation. As a result of his experiences he was discharged in 1946. Our sympathy goes to his widow Ann, daughter Maureen and all other members of the family.

### **David Young**

#### *Royal Engineers*

David William Young of Birmingham, West Midlands died on February 11th, aged 86. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1991. Originally a Plumber's Mate, he joined the Royal Engineers in 1937 with the intention of being a career soldier. Posted to Singapore, he was captured during the fall and was amongst the first British prisoners to be moved north to Burma to build the infamous railway. He suffered malnutrition and privation but was able to break out of his camp and raid a Japanese military pharmacy for medical supplies. Later, he escaped and was hidden by a friendly Burmese village before being picked up by a British patrol. He was Mentioned in Despatches for his actions as a FEPOW and discharged in 1949. In civilian life he returned to the

building trade. Our sympathy goes to his widow Alma, son Russell, daughters Caryne and Maxine, and all other members of the family.

### **Preston Woon**

#### *Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry*

Preston Guy Woon of Taunton, Somerset died on February 13th, aged 82. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1989. He served as a Private in the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry from 1940 to 1941. He was blinded by enemy action during an air raid, suffering wounds to his face, neck and arms. In civilian life he worked as a male nurse at Musgrove Park Hospital and was a keen gardener. Our sympathy goes to his widow Reta, son Christopher and all other members of the family.

### **Lionel Scott**

#### *Royal Marines*

Lionel Frank Scott of Plymouth, Devon died on February 17th, aged 73. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1990. As a 14-year-old, he joined the Royal Marines as a boy bugler in 1942. His first posting was to HMS *Pembroke* in Chatham followed by a tour on HMS *Kenya*. In 1948, he qualified as a Marine Naval Gunner and served continuously at sea on HMS *Jamaica*, *Glasgow* and *Sheffield*. He qualified as a Gunnery Instructor in 1953 and completed a tour at Whale Island before becoming a Royal Marine Commando. Later he qualified as a Heavy Weaponry Instructor. He was a Warrant Officer II when discharged in 1968 and became a radio operator with the police force in Plymouth. His interests included walking, toy making and music. He also ran a local club for disabled people. Our sympathy goes to his widow Jean, sons Michael and Robert and all other members of the family.

### **Albert Waddington**

#### *Royal Artillery*

Albert Waddington of Burnley, Lancashire died on February 18th, aged 86. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1977. Originally a weaver by trade, he enlisted with the Royal Artillery in 1937. Serving as a Gunner, he was captured by the Japanese and the privation he experienced as a Prisoner of War would eventually claim his sight. He was discharged in 1946. Our sympathy goes to his widow Eleanor, daughter Linda and all other members of the family.