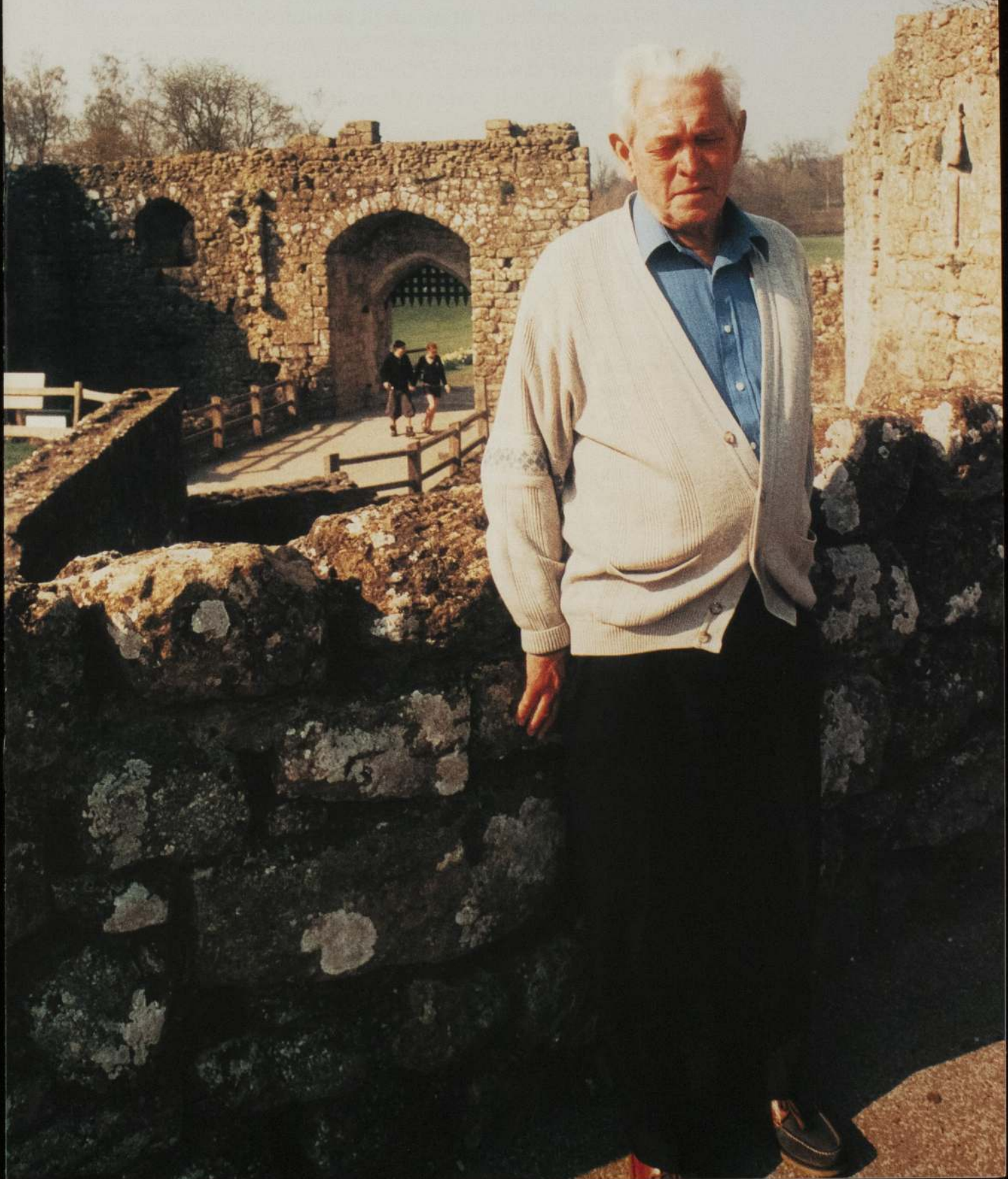


St Dunstan's Review

May 2002

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St Dunstan's Review

No. 913

MAY 2002

12-14 Harcourt Street,
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Tel: 020 7723 5021
Fax: 020 7262 6199

Editor: Ray Hazan
ray.hazan@st-dunstans.org.uk

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Cover picture:

Norman Killick stands on the approach to a fortified mill. The ancient portcullis behind him has a river running through, an early source of power.

Full details on page 10.

From the Chairman

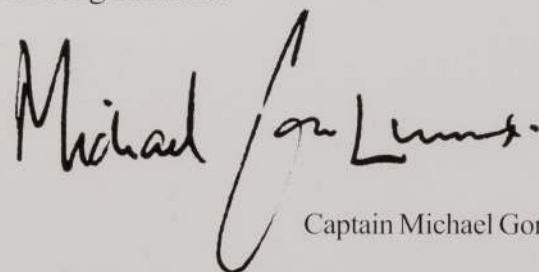
BY THE TIME you read this, the funeral of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother will be over. We have lost a unique person, and I have written to Her Majesty the Queen on behalf of us all. St Dunstan's Ovingdean was honoured to receive a visit from Queen Elizabeth in 1948 when she saw much of the training going on in those days. Several St Dunstaners will no doubt have warm memories of the visit.

* * * * *

FOR THE PAST 12 months, staff at all levels throughout the organisation have been working hard towards achieving the Investors in People (IIP) accreditation, a process that normally takes a minimum of 18 months. The aim of IIP is to encourage a motivated, informed and competent staff, all developed to their full potential, with the underlying objective of producing a better service for St Dunstaners, widows and widowers.

This is achieved by training staff, regularly briefing everyone to ensure all are aware of a common objective, strategy, policy, and 'family' news. All staff are appraised twice a year to strive to meet aspirations on both sides! A particular benefit is to improve internal communications, downwards, upwards and sideways. I have already seen tremendous progress in these vital areas.

Many members of staff around the country, and both in London and in Brighton were interviewed during the week of March 18th. I am pleased to say that, as a result, St Dunstan's has now been accredited and I extend my thanks and personal congratulations to all members of staff for what is a truly great achievement. This is only a beginning however, and we shall constantly work to keep our staff up to the mark in order that you, the members of the St Dunstan's family, will enjoy an efficient and understanding service.



Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN



NOTICE BOARD



REMINDER FOR THOSE WITH A LIFELINE TELEPHONE LINK

Would users of the 'lifeline' telephone system please note that they should carry the pendant call button with them at all times whilst in the house. It is not simply for night-time emergencies.

You should also use the system once a month to check that all is working satisfactorily and that the battery in your pendant is OK. The operators are very happy for you to call in and tell them you are just checking the system. One way of remembering to do this is that if your birthday is on the eighth day of the month, then call in on the eighth of every month.

Finally, please remember to tell the operator if you are going to be away from home for any length of time.

SKIING 2003

Anyone interested in taking part in the 2003 trip to Canazei, Italy from January 11th to 18th should contact Ray Hazan at Headquarters without delay. The cost will be around £400 maximum.

EARTH AND FIRE

An unprecedented exhibition examining the full range of Italian terracotta sculpture will be held at the Victoria and Albert Museum on June 27th and July 3rd. It covers sculpture from Donatello to Canova. The talk includes some touch and some description. For details call 020 7942 2197 or e-mail them on bookings.office@vam.ac.uk.

AUDIO DESCRIBED THEATRE

London's Donmar Warehouse will be staging an audio described production of Proof on May 25th at 3pm. Tickets which include a touch tour starting at 1.30pm have been reduced from £23 to £12. Bookings can be made on 020 7845 5813.

BOARD AND ACCOMMODATION CHARGES AT OIVINGDEAN

There was an increase in Board and Accommodation charges at St Dunstan's Ovingdean from April 10th 2002. The new rates are as follows:

Nursing Care	£242.00 per week
Residential Care	£149.00 per week
Hotel Visitors	£142.00 per week.

Odd days will be charged at £34.60 on Nursing Care, £21.40 on Residential and £20.40 for Hotel Visitors. Children will still be free of charge under the age of 3 years and those aged 3 to 14 years will be charged £11.20 per night.

If a resident has three or more days out of the house for any reason, he will still receive a reduction of £6.00 per day.

EXSIGHT-MENT IN DEVON

Exsight is running a new pilot project in Devon aimed at creating new opportunities for visually impaired people to access leisure and everyday activities in the area. At a subsidised cost of £2 per hour, VIPs can book an enabler who provides sighted support and transport to enable them to do the activity of their choice - from visiting local shops to canoeing or horse riding. For more information call Exsight on 01392 286287 or e-mail info@exsight.freemove.co.uk.

JUBILEE AIR FAIR

The 40th Biggin Hill Air Fair will now be held on June 2nd and 3rd to coincide with the Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations. There is also a special preview day on June 1st. The Royal Air Force promise displays by The Red Arrows, Tornado F3, Harrier, Hawk, and Tucano planes. There will also be a Battle of Britain Memorial Flight with a Spitfire, Hurricane and Lancaster taking to the air. For more details telephone 01959 578100.

DEADLINES FOR FUTURE ISSUES

The final date for submitting items for publication in the June Review is May 10th 2002.

The final date for submitting items for publication in the July Review is June 10th 2002.

DERBY SWEEPSTAKE 2002

St Dunstan's Review annual Derby Sweepstake 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. The Epsom Derby is on June 8th.

Each applicant should send their name and address, the number of tickets required, and a stamped addressed envelope, to Simon Rogers, 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 individual to whom the winning ticket was sold.

SUMMER CRAFT EXHIBITION

The Rehabilitation & Training department at Ovingdean is organising another Summer Craft Exhibition from June 14th-19th. 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 June 14th, so all entries need to be at Ovingdean by Monday June 10th. 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.



BARRY PORTER, WELFARE MANAGER

Barry joined the staff of St Dunstan's on March 18th. Originally from Ireland, he attended University in England and has stayed ever since!

After leaving University, Barry went into social work ascending to the rank of Team Leader in Sutton and Principal Service Manager in Bromley. This involved the management of social workers dealing with a wide range of disabilities of people of all ages. His role with St Dunstan's will be to manage, support and back up our Welfare Officers and the service they provide to St Dunstaners, wives, widows and widowers.

Barry, who is married with three children, is a keen rugby fan and a supporter of Tottenham Hotspur. Much of his spare time is spent exercising his pet Italian Spinone dog.

SHOPPING ONLINE AT THE RNIB

An extensive range of goods is available via the web from <http://onlineshop.rnib.org.uk>

You will need to register online before being able to purchase but take a look anyway!

THE POPPY PIN

The Poppy Pin depicts a single poppy with three tiny cornflowers above and the words 'Never Forget'. The proceeds from this latest pin will be shared between BLESMA and St Dunstan's.

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

FAREWELL MA'AM

The Nation pays tribute to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother



Photograph: Rachel Broadmore



Above: The Queen Mother left an indelible impression on many St Dunstaners, such as Bob Osborne, during her visit to Ovingdean in 1948. She toured the training facilities and recalled many details of this visit when meeting those St Dunstaners on other occasions.

Left: Pipers from many Regiments led the procession to Westminster Abbey for the funeral of The Queen Mother.

HER MAJESTY QUEEN Elizabeth The Queen Mother passed away peacefully in her sleep on March 30th at Royal Lodge, Windsor. Born on August 4th 1900, she lived through some of the most turbulent events of Britain's history, though her dedication to the service of her Country built a remarkable bond with its people.

The following is the text of a letter sent by the Chairman to our Patron:

"With humble duty may I on behalf of all St Dunstaners, their families and our staff, offer our most sincere condolences to Your Majesty, and all the Royal Family, at the passing of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.

"We have lost a unique person who with her charm, cheerfulness and energy, inspired and reached out into the minds of all who had the privilege of meeting her. Her Majesty created an indescribable feeling that somehow she had become a very special and permanent part of their lives. Her loss will be deeply felt and her sense of duty will be an inspiration to us all."

On April 9th, the Nation paid tribute with an estimated one million people standing vigil along the route from Westminster Abbey to St George's Chapel Windsor where she was buried next to her husband King George VI who died 50 years ago. At St Dunstan's Ovingdean, a service of remembrance led by Father Tony Otterwell was held in the Blue Room.

St Dunstan's in the Late Night Spot

by Ray Hazan

IT IS A DREAM when a film company comes to them and says they would like to make a documentary about the work of their organisation, the people in it, their successes and achievements. It is dreamier still when there is no charge involved!

A Brighton based production company called 'The Bridge' was commissioned by Meridian television to make six half-hour documentaries, which were transmitted weekly in the South of the country commencing on January 28th.

As Meridian covers Kent, Sussex and Hampshire, the programmes concerned mainly what goes on in and around Ovingdean in the realms of training, welfare, and also Remembrance Sunday. Residents, visitors and staff were very patient with all the 'intrusions' by camera and sound recorder and we are grateful to all concerned for their patience.

One episode featured Win Jordan travelling from home to Brighton to visit her husband Chris, currently being looked after in Nursing Care. Artistic licence portrayed Win being transported by car on her own, which is an unlikely occurrence; the cameraman and producer had to be there as well! The programme was seen by an old army friend of theirs who had been present at their wedding 30 years ago and was moved to write and regain contact.

In similar vein, Ray Sheriff also heard from the sister of a long-lost friend with whom he had been at school.

Although the programme was transmitted late at night, an estimated quarter of a million viewers tuned in on each occasion. It can only have helped to enhance the work of St Dunstan's and it would be yet another bonus if we didn't have to hear Brightonians say "I have always wondered what went on in that place?"

First-aid Cadets show feeling for communication

YOUNG FIRST-AIDERS from Lynn, Norfolk have been feted by a St Dunstaner and his carer for the effort they have taken in learning sign language. Sixteen St John Ambulance Cadets added this tactile method of communication to their first aid skills. They received tuition from Terry Gleadall who acts as an interpreter for St Dunstaner Michael Ryan.

As a blind and deaf St Dunstaner, Michael is dependent on sign language, with words spelt out on the palm of his hand. The cadets used this technique to tell him their name and ask a question. Michael then replied with Terry's help.

Terry commented "I was extremely pleased with the enthusiasm shown by each and every one of them and the time they had taken to practice.

"Most of all, Michael was very happy that so many young people cared enough not only to give up their time to be members of St John, but also to learn a skill which to him is very much a lifeline. This is the only way he can communicate and he is really happy when anybody has a go."

As a result of Michael and Terry's praise the cadets were hailed as "Super Kids" in their local newspaper, *Lynn News*.

Life in the Trench

ST DUNSTANER Arthur Halestrap of Banbury, Oxfordshire who served in the 46th Divisional Engineers (Signals) was one of four First World War veterans who recounted their experiences of that conflict for a BBC2 series *The Trench*.

The series recreated the experiences of the 10th Battalion, The East Yorkshire Regiment in 1916 on the Western Front. Modern-day volunteers from Hull and East Yorkshire spent two weeks in an authentically constructed trench system in northern France.

The Imperial War Museum has launched an exhibition to coincide with the series which will run until October. The BBC also have a dedicated website at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/programmes/trench/index.shtml>.

Copyright Bill gets second reading

THE COPYRIGHT (Visually Impaired Persons) Bill cleared its first major parliamentary hurdle on March 15th. The Second Reading debate ended with unanimous agreement that the Bill go forward for more detailed consideration at Committee stage. The Minister with responsibility for copyright, Melanie Johnson MP, indicated the Government's support for the measure. Nobody voiced fundamental opposition, all agreeing that the Bill addresses an important issue.

MPs have recognised that this is not merely a dry, legal issue, but a fundamental question of social inclusion. Blind and partially sighted people are entitled to read the same material as everyone else, at the same time, and copyright difficulties have hindered this.

The Bill proposes that single alternative format copies can always be created without permission, as

long as this is done on a non-commercial basis. Similarly, multiple copies can be produced and distributed, but must comply with a licensing scheme if one exists. There will be safeguards to prevent licensing schemes from imposing excessive conditions, but also safeguards to ensure that author and publisher are given due acknowledgement and that material is supplied only to those entitled to it.

Existing guidelines launched in October 2001 at The British Library indicate that visually impaired people who have lawfully obtained a copy of a published work may make whatever transcription, copy or format changes they require to enable personal access to the work. This includes speech synthesis, Braille, Moon, large print, single voice recording and electronic file, providing a suitable format is not readily commercially available. Copies may be made provided it is for the personal use of a VI person.

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 F.P. "Pat" Curry, Woodingdean, Brighton

In your April issue (*Bus Museum is just the ticket*) I am promoted to "Care Assistant" whereas I am only an aged volunteer. I recalled that these buses were used in the First World War to carry troops to the front areas, my father being one of the drivers.

Peter J. Hammond, Walton-on-Naze, Essex

I have recently become a St Dunstaner, if I had been a year earlier the following event would have been for St Dunstan's. For the past 10 months, myself and two friends have been organising a Charity Ball/Auction for my local branch of Guide Dogs for the Blind Association. The event was held on March 30th, we raised a total of £1,800 for them.

Being blind, I thought your listeners would find it funny to know that in the raffle I won one of the top prizes – five free driving lessons! Fortunately my son has just started to learn to drive so I shall be passing

them on to him. However, it raised a good laugh on the night when I went up to receive them.

From: Betty Ford, Middlesbrough.

Mrs Betty Ford and family would like to take this opportunity to thank fellow St Dunstaners and Staff for their kind thoughts and wishes during their sad bereavement. The many telephone calls, cards, letters and offers of support during this time have been very much appreciated and it is gratifying to know that a warm welcome would be given by everyone at St Dunstan's in the future.

From: Eileen Bramley, Cleveleys, Blackpool, Lancashire

I would like to thank everyone for the many letters and cards of condolence that we received after Walter passed away. Their thoughts are greatly appreciated.

SOUND VICTORY FOR SUSSEX SMALL-BORES

ON SATURDAY March 30th, five St Dunstaners took on Sussex Small-bore Rifle Association in an acoustic rifle shooting match staged at St Dunstan's Ovingdean. Many of our players had been practising regularly for this shoot, hoping to seek revenge for a match played between the two teams last October, where the Sussex squad beat St Dunstan's 794 to 717.

For those who are not familiar with this form of shooting, the equipment is set up so that no vision is required and it relies solely on hearing. This is done using audio sights that measure the reflected heat from the target and convert this into sound, which the participant hears through headphones.

Special targets are used with white in the centre, darkening to black for the outer scoring rings. For each target five shots are fired and for this event each participant had four targets, allowing a maximum score of 200.

Katy Russell reports

St Dunstan's team captain, Cliff Ford, was hoping to settle the score with Sussex and prove that we could compete against a team that included Linda Smallbone, a National Small-bore Champion. Other players representing St Dunstan's were Derek Hagger, Stephen Menary, Dave Humphrey and George Oliver. All were looking forward to the match if not for revenge but to meet up with the opposition for some friendly banter and camaraderie. It was decided that having Linda on the Sussex squad, already gave the opposition an advantage, so she suggested that she would shoot two cards and John Hibbert, who was a new participant to the sport, would shoot her other two cards. We readily agreed, thinking that we might then be in with a chance!

The stage was set for Cliff Ford and Sue Thomas, shooting for Sussex, to open the scoring. Sue struggled at first to get to grips with the adaptations



Photographs: Simon Rogers

St Dunstan's and Sussex teams looking forward to future challenges.

and technicalities of acoustic shooting. At the midway point the prospect of a home win was looking good. Derek, Stephen and Dave all gave it their best shot concentrating on the pitch as they took aim. However, Sussex began to get used to the style of shooting and their natural prowess started to show. Despite George Oliver's grand effort, Sussex took charge of the match and adapted well to the conditions of acoustic shooting.

When the scores were totalled up, it was announced by Roger McMullin, who was our honorary judge and scorer for the day, that Sussex had yet again beaten our endeavouring shooters. The final score was Sussex 853, St Dunstan's 755.

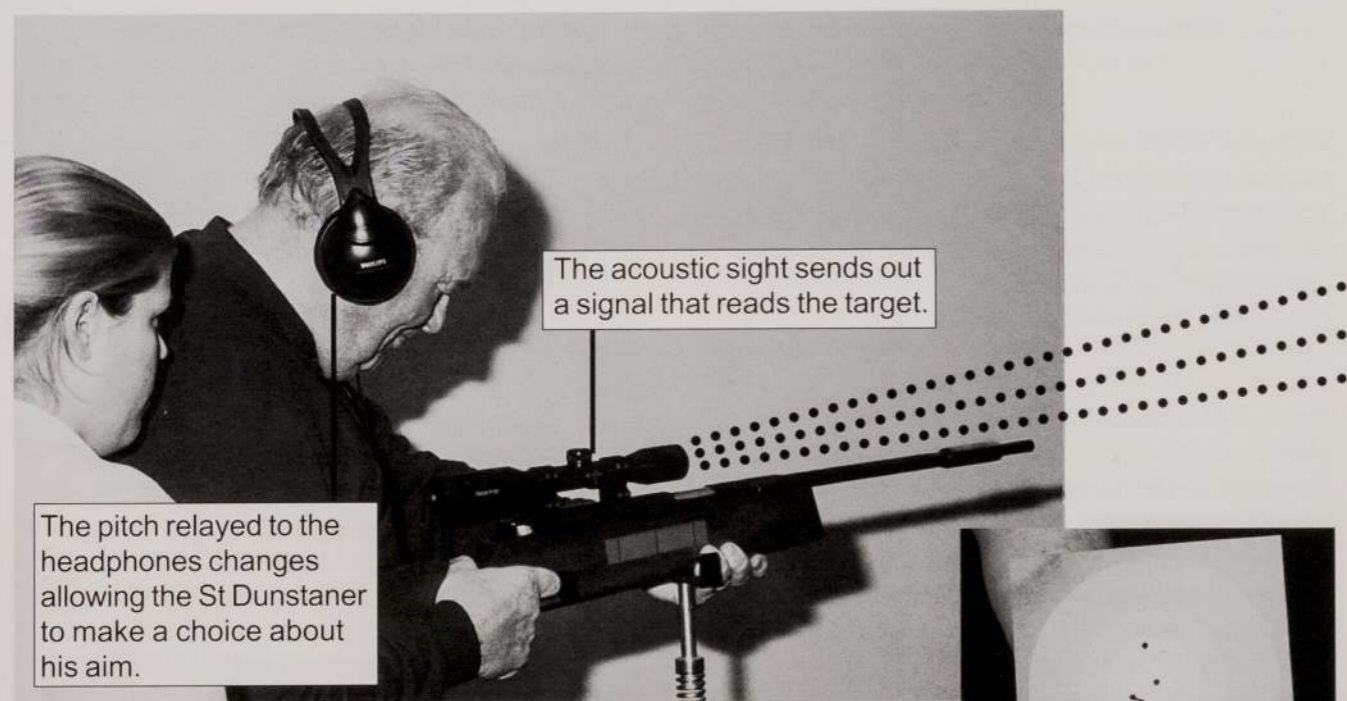
Despite having to console ourselves with another defeat, our thanks go out to the Sussex team who once again made the day most enjoyable, with their friendly and good-humoured approach to the match. Thanks also to Roger, who calculated the scores, we did check to see if his adding up was correct, but to

no avail. So, we will keep on practising in the hope of one-day achieving victory.

The Scores were as follows:

St Dunstan's		Sussex	
Cliff Ford	170	Sue Thomas	138
Derek Hagger	154	Sara Bell	181
Stephen Menary	156	Geoff Thomas	181
Dave Humphrey	105	Jim Grant	183
George Oliver	170	John Hibbert	170
		/ Linda Smallbone	
TOTAL	755		853

The participants from the St Dunstan's side are keen to get a shooting club up and running. To this end, a meeting was held last month and it is hoped that membership details will be outlined in the *Review* very soon. In the meantime, if anyone is particularly interested in future shooting events, has suggestions for the club or would like details regarding acoustic rifle shooting, please contact Katy Russell from the Sport and Recreation department.



The acoustic sight sends out a signal that reads the target.

The pitch relayed to the headphones changes allowing the St Dunstaner to make a choice about his aim.



Above: St Dunstaner David Humphrey takes aim with the acoustic rifle. **Right:** Stephen Menary's target where he scored a bullseye, closely surrounded by four other shots.

Life and Times of Ovingdean

by Lyn Mullins

THE EASTER WEEKEND brought us a great surprise in that the weather was glorious - a definite surprise for an Easter bank holiday weekend!

On the Easter Monday we had a tea dance in the ballroom with Olga and Phil Millard. All the residents who had made Easter bonnets joined in a parade and were judged by Olga. Although it was a hard decision Olga announced that Arthur Lowe with his rose covered bonnet was the winner!

Immediately after Easter we had St Dunstan's first Historical week. We started off on the Wednesday near to home with an afternoon walk around old Rottingdean and were entertained in the evening by Glenda Clarke who told stories of Brighton's ghostly goings on. There are quite a few I have to say!

There is a full report of this and other trips we made on page 10. We must now start thinking of places to visit next year.

A TALE OF AGES

David Youngson reports on a St Dunstan's celebration of Britain's rich and glorious heritage



Photographs: Simon Rogers

DURING THE WEEK when the Nation mourned Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, a group of us went back into history and events on the South Coast. St Dunstan's held its first Historical Week from April 2nd-9th.

We began with a most informative tour of Rottingdean discovering many fascinating facets of the village. Anyone wanting to know more should contact Lyn Mullins when at Ovingdean as the two hours wandering around is worthwhile. An in-house evening about Ghosts in the Brighton Area highlighted places of interest still in existence.

The first outing on April 4th was to Leeds Castle, which is in Kent. Built shortly after the Norman Conquest it unfolded many interesting stories through the Tudor period and on to the present day. It remained a treasured property of the Crown until 1952 and was fortified and enriched by Kings and Queens such as Edward I and Eleanor of Castille. No doubt the most famous resident was Henry VIII and his first queen Catherine of Aragon.

St Dunstaners Arthur Whittington and David Taylor soak up the Kentish sun at Leeds Castle.

The Castle has been beautifully restored over the last seventy years and is now a magnificent setting for high-level conferences and functions. It takes the form of several interconnected islands surrounded by a moat.

On April 5th, a little shop in a side street of Eastbourne took us all back into history and times that many of us recalled. The South Coast Museum of Shops brought back memories of childhood and austerity. Most people, while remembering those days, spoke of happy times and family life, which is now almost a thing of the past.

Next day found us on a trip to Winchester Cathedral which has its origins in the 7th Century. We had cream teas and an excellent guided tour ended with a visiting choir, the Oriana Singers, providing Choral Evensong.

Newhaven Fort has seen many historical events going back to the Armada. Several audio-visual exhibitions reminded us of the part the Fort and the Port played during the two Great Wars of the 20th century.

The last day provided yet another excellent guided tour round the Brighton Pavilion with plenty of time afterwards for personal discovery of this very fine restored building.

Most agreed that the week was well planned and enjoyable. But the vexed problem of Disability Access for wheelchairs cropped up from time to time. It is a problem for some but inevitable considering the age and period in which many of these fine buildings were built. Thanks must go to everyone who assisted throughout the week as without them the manoeuvring and guiding that such places required would have been difficult for those of us who are VIP's.



Where's David Starkey when you need him? Our happy historians after their tour of Leeds Castle. Top right: Somehow Joy Walters managed to keep her fingers during a tour round the aviary.

LET'S LEG IT THROUGH LONDON



St Dunstan's runners limber up on Blackheath Common preparing for the challenge ahead.

THE LONDON MARATHON strikes a 26-mile route that starts in near-rural idyll and passes through our Capital's history, ultra-modernistic monoliths and urban decay. As usual, a hardy group were wearing St Dunstan's badge and the colour of our major sponsor, FRIDAY-AD. St Dunstan's team began the run at the Green start, sandwiched between Sir Christopher Wren's bandstand and the one-time residence of Max Wall, just a skip and a jump from our former Blackheath annex.

Simon Rogers reports

Veteran runner Don Planner, running for SeeAbility, consoled new-kid-on-the-block Jonathan Hazan with tales of heart failure and bypass surgery following a marathon. Don proved his ability to bounce back from such trials by improving his time. Jonathan, son of Ray Hazan, maintained the Army's honour with an enviable four-hour finish.



Don Planner advises Jonathan Hazan on the dangers of Marathon running.

St Dunstaner Andy Mahoney as usual set the pace. The manner in which he arrives at athletics meetings, out runs his peers and vanishes into the mist again, is reminiscent of the man called Wilson. One almost expects to find him living on a strange Scottish moor living off a select diet of roots. Taking six minutes off last year's time, after 2 hours, 55 minutes he was the 719th person to finish.

Likewise Iain Millard managed to knock an hour off last year's time. Despite the increased hubbub (around 32,000 people were running this year) he completed the route in a little over 5 hours.

Maria Bullingham, wife of St Dunstaner Terry Bullingham completed last year's Marathon in 6 hours, 53 minutes. It transpired that she had done so with a broken

foot. This year, uninjured, she did it in 5 hours, 43 minutes.

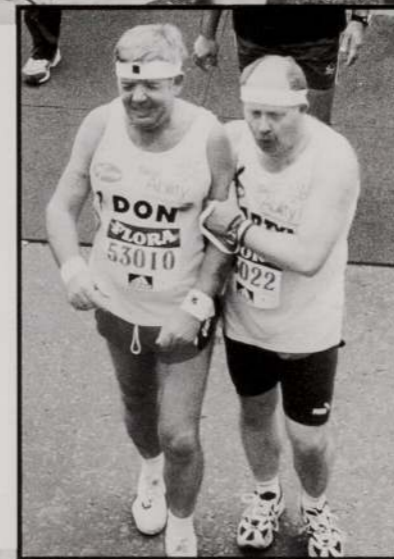
Also pounding the streets were Ovingdean ROVI Paul Hartley, Sports Assistant Bob Willis, who coordinated Marathon planning, Colin Douglas, a former Naval Officer who has run with St Dunstaner Gerry Jones in previous years, three members of the Kidger family, Sam, Tom and Katy, Mark Walker, Gerry Coates, Terry Pearson and Anthony Smith.

Their efforts, combined with the support of FRIDAY-AD have so far raised an estimated £12,000 for St Dunstan's.

Place	Name	Time
719	A.Mahoney	2:55:29
1,410	G.Coates	3:03:22
1,708	T.Pearson	3:06:45
6,435	M.Walker	3:38:33
6,790	S.Kidger	3:40:14
10,999	A.Smith	3:56:21
13,339	J.Hazan	4:05:37
14,032	K.Kidger	4:08:34
15,252	T.Kidger	4:13:50
15,253	B.Willis	4:13:50
16,002	C.Douglas	4.16.35
20,747	P.Hartley	4:34:48
27,534	I.Millard	5:09:04
29,415	D.Planner	5:26:20
30,739	M.Bullingham	5:43:42



Above: Bob Willis and Colin Douglas run by the Naval College, Greenwich.



Centre: Don Planner makes a weary but triumphant finish.

Below: Maria Bullingham concludes a valiant run.



Running for St Dunstan's, Katy Kidger speeds through London Docklands.



St Dunstaner Alec Mason recalls the Forgotten Campaign

LIFE IN THE CANAL ZONE

by Simon Rogers

THE ACTUAL CANAL ZONE isn't terribly big," says St Dunstaner Alec Mason. "It's just one hundred miles north to south and east to west, the widest point is 20 miles. On the East side there is nothing at all, nothing but the Sinai Desert." This stretch of nothing, however, was the venue for a drawn out and bloody conflict

The Suez Canal is an artificial waterway, running from Port Said to Suez, linking the Mediterranean and Red seas, separating Africa from Asia, and providing the shortest sea route from Europe. It was conceived and constructed by a Frenchman Ferdinand de Lesseps between 1858 and 1869 and came under British control in 1875 when British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli acquired a major shareholding.

By 1951 things had changed, Arab hubris over the creation of Israel and Britain's role in the birth of that nation, cultivated an active resentment against British troops stationed in Egypt. General Neguib led a coup against King Farouk and declared Egypt a republic.

On January 18th of that year Alec had started his National Service at Aldershot with the Royal Army Service Corps. After six months training he was transferred to the Royal Military Police, as a Lance Corporal and following a brief spell at Woking he was shipped out to Egypt.



A British checkpoint on the Suez Canal.



"The first thing I noticed was the heat, it was so hot out there, that and the abject poverty. It made you realise how lucky we were to be living in England." Alec settled into a 'routine' of security checks and patrols. "I remember a ship going through the canal, it was slicing the edges and suddenly there were these men jumping off and the people on the ship started firing on them. They were deserters from the French Foreign Legion."

Some obstacles could be dealt with at the touch of a button: "The jeeps we used had a large bumper at the front. You would get some wily oriental gentleman lying down in front to stop us passing. Well you could charge the bumper with electricity, that gave them a shock. They soon jumped up when you did that."

The tensions of the political situation also brought many dangers to the Canal Zone.

"It was in October 1951 that the Egyptian Government decided we were no longer welcome. They were arming the civilian population to try and encourage us to leave the area. There were bombings and couriers who had their heads cut off by piano wire stretched across the road. We were on 24 hour duty, active Service conditions."

When Alec arrived in the Zone, there were many families stationed with the British Forces, almost overnight they were flown out. "The government then brought in two divisions of troops, that's hundreds, even thousands of people." At its peak, there were 80,000 British troops stationed in the Canal Zone.

As relations between the Egyptian and British Governments decayed, Local labour was withdrawn and food supplies were cut off. "We had mostly dried food then which was supplemented by fruit from Cyprus."

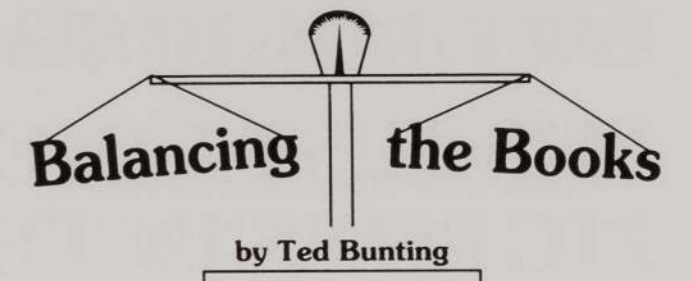
Although Alec and his fellows were supposed to liaise with the local civilian police, this wasn't a straight forward prospect as they were distributing many of the arms. "There was an incident at Ismailiya where we tried to evacuate the police HQ and it became a pitch battle. We lost several men during that."

Another patrol ended in tragedy for Alec. He and a colleague struck a mine in their jeep. Alec was thrown clear but his friend was killed by the blast. "I was subsequently part of the guard of honour at his funeral."

It was eventually negotiated that British forces would be withdrawn over the next six months. Alec's unit was posted to Cyprus. "You get good and bad in Army life, Egypt was bad, Cyprus was good."

Alec added that it felt strange recalling those days over 50 years later. "At the time it seemed like the sort of thing that one would be expected to do in the Army. We didn't have any experience of military life, but we imagined it was the sort of thing they would do. I just took it in my stride. In retrospect, I feel they should have issued some kind of medal, a General Service medal, they've done it for other campaigns, they've done it for less."

Petitions from Suez veterans for a campaign medal have fallen on deaf ears. The Ministry of Defence have said that they consider the matter closed.



Prime Target

Author: Martin Russell

Reader: Hugh Ross

Catalogue No: 5862

Duration: 5 Hours 25 minutes

Some books have an arresting quality; they grab and hold the reader's avid interest from start to finish. Sadly, this is not one of them, for I have seldom encountered a novel with such a parochial sort of opening as *Prime Target* has. Various people address Lionel Pin as "Mr. Spencer" which awakes a mild curiosity, I suppose, but after a chapter or two describing banal domestic arrangements and petty office gossip one is inclined to wonder if its worth carrying on with the book. But here comes the good news; I did continue, and I was eventually rewarded with a tale of mystery and intrigue that might delight even a James Bond fan with twists in the plot and the evil intentions of the villains. All right, the author sometimes steps across the dividing line between the possible and the incredible, and maybe he over-employs coincidence too, but in the end, with the aid of poetic licence he gets away with it to his reader's benefit. But what a shame about the beginning!

A TRIBUTE IN TULIPS

SIX YEARS AGO, a statue, symbolic of the friendship between the United Kingdom and Holland was unveiled at St Dunstan's Ovingdean. It shows a British Tommy and a Dutch Resistance Woman greeting each other after the liberation in 1945. Every year a bouquet of tulips is placed in the Dutch woman's hands in memory of those who served in Holland. This year St Dunstaner Ray Sheriff, who was blinded at Arnhem, and his wife Betty led the ceremonial laying of flowers.



Picture: Wendy Birch

Cliff Ford has both barrels blasting at Bisley IT'S JUST LIKE SHOOTING PIGEONS IN THE DARK



Pictures: Anna Robinson

The Bisley shooters were aiming to support St Dunstan's and Orbis. Below: The Chairman is ready to fire.

IT IS THE morning on April 11th, the alarm has just awakened me, it's 5 o'clock! Where are we going? We are going to the shooting ground, Bisley in Surrey for a fundraising clay pigeon shoot. We are being picked up at 6am by car. There are four St Dunstaners, Dave Humphrey, Derek Hagger, George Oliver and myself.

We first came here in February but this is something special that has never been done before! It is a sponsored shoot for two charities, St Dunstan's and Orbis, an international charity dedicated to eliminating blindness in the developing world. Over 15 million people have been treated worldwide and of course, St Dunstaners know just how precious sight is!

The shoot is open to the public and over 60 are here to compete. We met Paul again. A marvellous man who coached us throughout the day. We were sorry Stephen Menary was not with us, he was undergoing surgery on his eye. We hope all went well. Don't worry Stephen, we hope to be going again and you will be there. That's an order! You impressed everyone back in February.

There was also a team from St Dunstan's Headquarters – The Chairman Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, Chief Executive Robert Leader,

Director of Fundraising and Communications Nick Ward and External PR Coordinator Anna Robinson. So St Dunstan's was well represented!

Our special thanks must go to Anthony, Bob, Paul, Jacky Maguire and the rest of the girls. It was Jacky who asked if we would like to go clay pigeon shooting. I said "How do we do that?" George said "With difficulty." But that was before we met Paul and really why on April 11th we were shooting.

Now the icing on the cake. We were awarded the St Dunstan's & Orbis Charity Shoot Top Team 2002. There was an auction of donated prizes, raising £1,387. A leather cartridge belt donated by Dave Humphrey reached £100. Over £2,500 was raised in all. Our thanks to all who supported the shoot.



WELCOME TO ST DUNSTAN'S

March 8th

Brian Beniston of Billington Clitheroe, Lancashire served in the Royal Armoured Corps, Merchant Navy and Royal Marines between 1953 and 1969. He did National Service with the 8th Royal Tank Regiment as a Gunner. He then spent a brief period with British Rail before joining the Merchant navy as a stoker. He later joined the Royal Marines serving in Malta, Borneo, Brunei and Singapore. In civilian life he worked as a driver for a cement company. During this time he joined the Army Cadet Force as a Sergeant and was promoted to Lieutenant, completing 15 years with the Queens Lancashire Unit. He also served as a Special Constable. He and his wife Maureen have a son, two daughters and two granddaughters.

John Brazier of Stroud, Gloucester served in the Royal Navy from 1948 to 1961. He joined HMS *Glasgow* in Malta and later transferred to HMS *Chevron*. Returning to Portland, he worked on and offshore before being posted to the Royal Naval Drafting Unit. He retired as a Petty Officer and went to work for IBM. In later years he ran a small holding in Wales and a B&B. His interests include making model aircraft and he was involved in a project to restore a steam engine. He and his wife enjoy walking and are members of the Gloucester Archaeological Society. He and his wife Josephine have a daughter, son, and four grandchildren.

Cecil Green of Nunthorpe, Middlesborough, Cleveland served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1945. He trained as a fitter armourer, working with Halifax and Mosquito planes. He served as part of 76 Squadron and was later posted to Cambridgeshire for special radar duties. In civilian life he worked for ICI. His interests included golf, football and masonics.

William Lockert of Brighton served in the Royal Artillery from 1941 to 1946. He was posted to 246 Mobile Ack-Ack Unit providing air defences around the coast. Promoted to Bombardier he helped train recruits on Predictors. In 1944 he was posted to the Royal Surrey Hospital, Guildford where he was responsible for assisting the newly arrived wounded.

In civilian life he worked in the wine trade. His interests include bowls, tandem cycling, dominoes and bingo. He and his wife Rose have a daughter and one granddaughter.

David Stack of Trusham, Newton Abbot, Devon served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1946. He joined HMS *Glenrae* as a member of the maintenance staff, but later transferred to HMS *Howe* where he completed a North Atlantic run. He took part in the landings on Juno beach on D-Day. He later joined HMS *Cheviot* for a tour in the Mediterranean. In civilian life he worked in the engineering trade. His interests include history, walking and swimming. He and his wife Margaret have two daughters, a son and two grandchildren.

James Swan of Newcastle-upon-Tyne served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1947. He served in the Middle and Far East on HMS *Ulster Queen*, later joining HMS *Indomitable* for the D-Day landings. In civilian life he worked as a taxi driver in Newcastle.

March 22nd

Harry Bayes of Wellingborough, Northamptonshire served in the Lincolnshire Regiment from 1940 to 1945.

Robert Dixon of Gosport, Hampshire served in the TA, Royal Engineers and Royal Artillery from 1939 to 1946. A member of the TA when war was declared he transferred to the Royal Engineers for home defence duties with the Searchlight Regiment. When the Searchlight Units were taken over by the Royal Artillery he was deployed to Singapore. He was taken prisoner by the Japanese on his 18th birthday in 1942 and was demobbed in 1946. He rejoined the Royal Artillery in 1950 and served in Kenya during the Mau Mau campaign. He also served in Egypt, Dover and as a Provost Sergeant in Larkhill. He left the service in 1961. In civilian life he ran a general grocers business.

John Gray of Bournemouth served as a Paratrooper in the Royal Engineers from 1941 to 1946. He made

14 jumps, including operational jumps in Italy, Sicily and Greece. He also served in Iraq, Iran and North Africa. In civilian life he worked as a tower crane operator for Wimpey. His interests include tapestry, painting and music. He and his wife Muriel have a son.

Richard Hollingsworth served in the Royal Air Force from 1939 to 1946. He trained as a wireless operator before joining a training unit. He taught navigation in a flying classroom at Bristol Flying School. After the war he rejoined his brother in their family garage business, running the agricultural side. His interests include golf and restoring antique furniture. He and his wife Jane have a son and two grandsons.

Dennis King of Kingston, Surrey served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946. He completed a number of tours with Coastal Command before completing a two-year tour in Iceland. After the war he worked in aircraft production. His interests include football, cricket, rugby and classical music. He and his wife Marsella have two daughters, two sons, two granddaughters and two grandsons.

George Whitehouse served in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment and the Royal Army Service Corps from 1942 to 1947. He served in Italy, Casino and Naples. In civilian life he was a foundry worker and machine operator. A keen gardener, he also enjoyed sports. He and his wife Joan have a son, daughter and one grandson.

REUNION ROUND-UP

The Reunion season got off to a resounding start with the first of the Brighton gatherings on April 10th. St Dunstan's Chairman Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox presided over an assembly of 38 St Dunstaners and eight widows.

50 YEARS AGO

St Dunstaner Godfrey Robinson was elected Chairman of the National Institute for the Blind.

April Quiz Answers

- 1) The first FA Cup was held around 1871 to 1872.
- 2) Kevin Keegan won 63 England caps.
- 3) Stanley Matthews was first Footballer of the Year.
- 4) Bobby Moore led England to victory in 1966.
- 5) Subbutteo is a table-top football game.

FAMILY NEWS

BIRTHS

Congratulations on the birth of:

Owen Matthew Westhorpe on January 20th. He is the third great-grandchild of *Bill and Mary Marsh* of Hartlepool, Cleveland.

Jack Redmond in March and Rhys Stephen Philip in April. They are respectively grandson and great-great-grandson of *Sam and Jean Threlfall* of Stockport, Cheshire.

SILVER ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations to:

Bernard and Vera Mason of Romsey, Hampshire on March 21st.

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations to:

Arthur and Mabel Porter of Bognor Regis, West Sussex on April 4th.

Arnold and Sheila Rimmer of East Grinstead, West Sussex on April 12th.

DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations to:

Reginald and Jean Packman of Hailsham, East Sussex on April 8th.

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Cedric and Vera Mays of Steeple Bumpstead, Suffolk who celebrated 66 years of marriage on March 30th.

Ted and Iris Miller of Leamington Spa, Warwickshire who celebrated 62 years of marriage on April 7th.

DEATHS

We regret to announce the death of:

Maisie Robinson on November 15th 2001. She was the wife of *Leslie Robinson* of Byfleet, Surrey.

Greta Saunders on April 7th. She was the wife of *David Saunders* of Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire.

Elsie Redford of East Molesey, Surrey on March 27th. She was the widow of *Charles Redford*.

Vera Matthews of Colchester, Essex on March 29th. She was the widow of *William Matthews*.

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.

James Smith

Dorset Regiment

James Kitchener Smith of Mere Green, Sutton Coldfield died on August 20th, aged 85. He served in the Dorset Regiment from 1933 to 1938 and from 1939 to 1946. He served in India and Malta and has both the Africa and Burma Stars. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

Kenneth Revis, MBE

Royal Engineers

Kenneth Claud Revis, MBE, Assoc ICE, FI Arb of Oxford, Oxfordshire died on March 7th, aged 84. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1944. Originally a civil engineer with the County Surveyor of Bedfordshire, he joined the Royal Engineers in 1939 and was posted to the 12th Bomb Disposal Company. He was injured in 1943 when 13 anti-vehicle mines exploded during a clearing operation at West Pier, Brighton. He suffered facial and chest injuries and came to St Dunstan's at Church Stretton. He was awarded the MBE in 1944 and later travelled to India to carry out welfare work for St Dunstan's. Returning to the UK, he joined the British Motor Corporation, later to become British Leyland, working as a press officer for the Nuffield Group, Cowley. During this time, Mr Revis studied law and qualified as a solicitor in 1960. His activities included piloting a glider, water-skiing, horse riding and driving an MG car at 100mph. These exploits were recorded in a book, *The Blinding Flash*, and an appearance on television's *This is your Life!* Mr Revis had a life-long interest in aviation and motoring. In 1930 he had boarded the R101 airship which was lost on its maiden flight. In 1961 he became President of the Bullnose Morris Club, and would later take part in the London to Brighton Vintage Car Rally and the 8th International Veteran and Vintage Car Rally in South Africa. A strong supporter of the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, he also served on the Oxford Crime Prevention Committee and Oxfordshire Prisoners' Aid Society. His interests included the organ, music, bowls and motoring. Our sympathy goes to his widow Joan and all other members of the family.

Anthony Bowyer

Royal Navy

Anthony Paul Bowyer of Rushden, Northamptonshire died on March 19th, aged 61. He served in the Royal Navy from 1955 to 1967. As an Able Seaman he served with two future Chairmen of St Dunstan's - Sir Henry Leach then captain of HMS *Dunkirk* and later with Captain Gordon-Lennox on HMS *Ganges*. After leaving the Royal Navy he worked as a bricklayer. Our sympathy goes to his wife Helen, daughter Kim, son David and all of the family.

Tom Taylor,

King's Own Royal Border Regiment

Tom Taylor, BA (Hons), MSc of Leyland, Preston, Lancashire died on March 26th, aged 80. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1945. Originally a printer, he enlisted in the King's Own Royal Border Regiment in 1939. He was posted to India as a Corporal in the 2nd Border Regiment. In 1945, he received gunshot wounds to the head, during action against the Japanese at Stapangan, Burma. Left for dead, he survived on the battlefield for five days. When the area came under Allied control once more he was casevaced home. After training at St Dunstan's he became a poultry farmer. He also studied theology and achieved BA (Hons) and MSc degrees from Lancaster University. Mr Taylor also served on the Advisory Committee for BBC Radio Blackburn and was a prison visitor for many years. He was a Member of St Dunstan's Council from 1991 to 1997. His interests included computers and picture framing. Last year his biography *Through the Hole in My Head* was published detailing his experiences in Burma. Our sympathy goes to his widow Nancey, son Paul and all of the family.

Dorothy Easterbrook

Civil Service

Dorothy Hilda Easterbrook of Herne Bay, Kent died on April 11th, aged 85. She was blinded by an incendiary bomb as she tried to render it safe. Her interests included gardening. Our sympathy goes to her son Roger and all other members of the family.

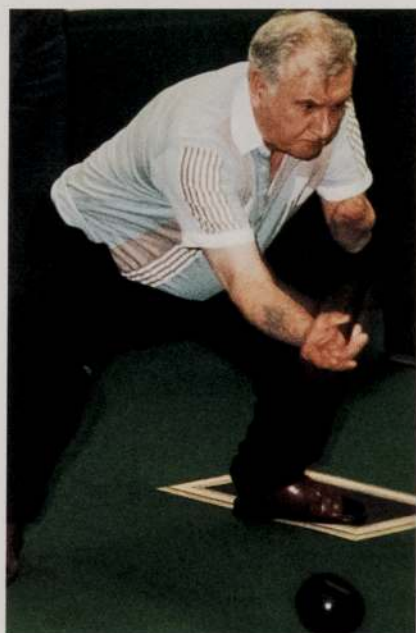
Mark Line

Royal Artillery

Mark Line of Taunton, Somerset died on April 9th aged 81. He served in the Royal Artillery between 1936 and 1939. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Stephen's tree blooms on Route of Kings

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN and The Duke of Edinburgh planted two sweet chestnut trees in Hyde Park on a site known as the Route of Kings on March 18th. The event took place during a heavy downpour of rain as the Light Cavalry, Honourable Artillery Company stood guard. After the ceremony, Her Majesty was introduced to St Dunstaner Stephen Menary who is honoured by one of 76 trees planted along the route. The trees restore a passage through the park that was first established when King William III (of Orange) bought a Jacobean mansion that would later become known as Kensington Palace. The replanting of the route celebrates Her Majesty's Golden Jubilee.



Club Chairman Bob Osborne.

IT WAS GREAT meeting old friends at the March tournament. Some have been supporting the Bowling Club for over 20 years and they were joined by four new members who were warmly welcomed.

Despite illness and upsets I think everyone enjoyed themselves. There were 29 bowlers taking part and once again we had some great bowling. We had two new helpers. Lillian and Brian James together with our old friends Vi and Reg Bradford who we were pleased to have "back in the fold" after Reg's illness. I must say their help was greatly appreciated.

Spring rolls at Brighton

RESULTS

Singles

Winner Phil Dobson

Runner-up Elwyn Rees

Pairs

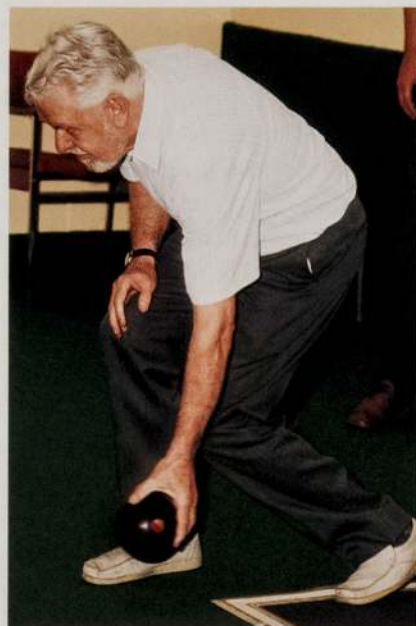
Winners Bill Allen and Phil Dobson

Runners up Alan Mitchell
and Iain Millard

Triples

Winners Jack Pryor, Frank Smith
and Ted Arnold

Runners-up Cyril Stanley,
Eric Church
and Bert Brantingham



Above: Frank Smith rolling wood.

Below: Marjorie and Doris provide a spot of refreshment.

THANK YOU ALL

I must thank everyone who helped – the back room ladies, Joan, Mary and Rita, the tea ladies, Marjorie and Doris and all the bowlers who assisted on the green.

Also our thanks to the Ovingdean staff who were always on hand to help.

Looking forward to meeting you all in October.

Bob Osborne,
Chairman.

