

St Dunstan's Review

June 2002

www.st-dunstans.org.uk



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WHO'S WHO AT ST DUNSTAN'S

By popular request, this handy guide to St Dunstan's staff returns to the Review. Please cut out and keep for reference.

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Malet, Greville
Maloney, Carol
Osborne, Tim
Porter, Barry
Reinhold, Michael
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Stanley, Barbara
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Ward, Nick
Woodgate, Carole
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PA to Director of Property Services
Accounts Receivable Administrator (Rent Accounting)
Housing Services and Benefits Supervisor
Marketing
Transport and Services Assistant
Purchase Ledger Administrator (Grant Payments)
Chairman
Director of Professional Services
St Dunstaner Liaison, PR Manager, Editor
Admissions Assistant
Director of Admissions and Grants
Chief Accountant
Chief Executive
Beneficiary Liaison Assistant
Operations Manager (Fundraising and Communications)
PA to Chairman and Chief Executive
Director of Property Services
Welfare Manager
Deputy Head of Estates
External Press Coordinator
Editorial Assistant
Head of Pensions (Medical Appointments)
Director of Finance and IT
Insurance and Estate Records Coordinator
Receptionist/Telephonist
Transport and Services Assistant
Admissions Assistant
Director of Fundraising and Communications
Head of Grants
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OVINGDEAN

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Cameron, Suzanne **Director of Human Resources**
Castle, Ray **Maintenance Supervisor**
Castle, Jackie **Bookings Coordinator**
Gillam, Glynis **Primary Nurse**
Golds, Velda **Housekeeping Supervisor**
Greer, Jacqueline **Head of Care**
Hartley, Paul **Rehabilitation Officer**
Hebborn, Ian **Rehabilitation Officer**
Henrickson, Sue **Primary Nurse**
Hordell, Michael **Facilities Manager**
James, Paul **PBK Catering**
Lake, Dick **Ovingdean Manager**
Lyth, Bill **Head of Security**
Malpass, Nina **Primary Nurse**
Mobsby, Eileen **Wills & Trusts Coordinator**
Mullins, Lynn **Activities Coordinator**
Richardson, Trevor **PBK Catering**
Rowlands, Sue **Primary Nurse**
Scourfield, Mary **Craft Instructor**
Sharp, Janis **IT Supervisor**
Stevens, Sue **Rehabilitation Officer**
Styche, Lesley **Head of Rehabilitation & Training**
Tarrant, John **Head of Housekeeping**
Tinkl, Diane **Residential Care Supervisor**
Town, Sandra **Housekeeping Supervisor**
Vinal, David **Head of Transport**
Young, Vanessa **Rehabilitation Officer**

St Dunstan's Review No. 914

JUNE 2002

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London W1H 4HD

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PUBLISHED MONTHLY
The Review is also
available in braille, on tape,
computer disk, via
e-mail and in large print.

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Cover picture:
*Golden Years! Her Majesty
The Queen celebrates 50
years as our Sovereign and
Patron.*

Photograph: John Swannell, Camera Press

Feature on page 11.

From the Chairman



I am sure you will all want to join with me in expressing our happiness and joy on the Golden Jubilee of our Patron, Queen Elizabeth the Second, and to thank Her Majesty from the bottom of our hearts for her constant commitment and dedicated sense of duty. The celebration commemorates half a century of service to her country. Remember, when we look forward to retirement, Her Majesty serves on!

On Tuesday June 4th, St Dunstan's Standard will be carried in a parade of 22,000 people who will march two and a half miles through the streets of London, all representing some aspect of Her Majesty's reign. I am grateful to St Dunstaners Arthur Carter and Stephen Menary, who will be representing us on this occasion, and I have no doubt will bear the banner well.

Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN



NOTICE BOARD



OVINGDEAN BAR PRICES TO RISE

Due to accumulating increases in the cost of beer and spirits from the breweries as well as staff salaries and overheads, we need to increase the bar prices at St Dunstan's Ovingdean from July. We last increased our prices overall in November 2000. But, as we are all aware, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has raised our taxes several times since then. We have looked at various options for reducing costs, including restricting bar hours, but there is no real alternative to putting the prices up and we must keep the bar account solvent.

The cost of beer will rise by up to 25 pence per pint and some other lines by between 5p and 20p. We have done a cost comparison with The Queen Victoria Public House at Rottingdean against whom we will still remain considerably cheaper and the Royal British Legion with whom the prices will be more in line. Although we are not able to purchase our spirits and wines in the bulk that RBL do and thus receive the discount they get, we will only be a few pence more expensive on some items and our beer will still be below their prices.

SUMMER CRAFT EXHIBITION

A Summer Craft Exhibition featuring the work of St Dunstaners, friends, relatives, volunteers and staff will be held at Ovingdean from June 14th to 19th. Some of the items will be available for sale.

VETERANS AGENCY HELPLINE

The recently re-organised Veterans' Agency, which has drawn together the War Pensions Agency, the Veterans' Advice Unit and ex-Service organisations, has established a single helpline. The War Pensions Agency's call centre will now deal with veteran's issues and has a new free number 0800 169 2277 (Outside the UK dial +44 1 253 866043). A new website www.veteransagency.mod.uk provides information about services offered to veterans.

TELEPHONE HELP AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

St Dunstaner Steve Moseley is offering help and technical support with IT facilities to his fellow St Dunstaners. This service will be available 24 hours per day and free of charge. Contact Steve on 0117 330 5798. Mobile: 07900 515539. E-mail: steven@moseleya2498.fsnet.co.uk.

GOLF CLUB AGM AND INVITATION DAY

St Dunstan's Golf Club will hold their Annual General Meeting at Ovingdean on June 21st at 6pm. All St Dunstaners are welcome. Nominations for the positions of Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Captain and Committee should reach the Secretary (Mike Tumilson, 38 Dilcock Way, Canley, Coventry, West Midlands CV4 8BX) by June 14th.

Rusper Golf Club will again host the Invitation Day on June 22nd. Details and entry forms can be obtained from Mike on 02476 460113.

AUDIO DESCRIBED SHOWS

VocalEyes have provided audio description for the following productions:
Miss Saigon at the Palace Theatre, Manchester on June 10th (including a Touch Tour at 6pm). Call 0161 245 6680 for details.

Sweeny Todd at Sadler's Wells Theatre, London on June 15th (020 7863 8000) and The Lowry, Salford Quays on June 18th (0161 876 2000).

Big Night Out at the Palace Theatre, Watford on June 29th. Call 01923 225671.

The People are Friendly at the Royal Court Theatre, London on July 6th also has a Touch Tour. Details on 020 7565 5000.

MICROSOFT EXCEL 97, 2000 AND XP FROM THE KEYBOARD

The latest *From The Keyboard* tutorial and manual covers the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet program and works well with Excel 97, 2000 and Excel XP. As far as author John Wilson is aware, it is the first Excel tutorial of a specialist nature for visually impaired people produced in the UK. It uses keyboard and screenreader procedures to get things done, with no mouse or monitor being required.

"I have written this tutorial using a combination of Excel's own in-built short cut keystrokes plus a good array of hot keys specific to JAWS, HAL and Window-Eyes. The tutorial has 47 main sections and is over 32,000 words long with a comprehensive appendix of Excel shortcuts," says Wilson.

This tutorial covers all of the main beginner, much intermediate and some advanced Excel spreadsheet skills. It should be suitable for a wide range of users both as a learning tool and as a reference manual. So, whether you would just like to do calculations quickly or keep a running balance on your household expenditure, or if you would like to use Excel for business purposes, this tutorial should be an asset.

As usual, the tutorial is available as a plain text file by e-mail, which costs £15, or on floppy disk which costs £17.

Would any interested persons please contact John Wilson by phone on 0113 2575957, or e-mail at jwjw@onetel.net.uk. Website: <http://web.onetel.net.uk/~fromthekeyboard>.

FREWARE MP3 PROGRAMME

A Freeware Text to MP3 converter/Talking Text Editor called SayPad is located at <http://InspiredCode.net>. It serves as a Volunteer Book Reader, Talking Text Editor and maker of books on tape, books on CD, books on MP3 and books on MP3 CD.

REQUEST FOR INFO ON THE 92ND MILITARY HOSPITAL, NAPLES

I am very interested to hear from anyone who has personal memories of their stay at the 92nd Military Hospital in Naples during WWII. If you can help then please contact me at St Dunstan's on 020 7616 7933. Thank you.

Robbie Hazan, Archivist

MUSIC BEHIND THE LINES

In 1913 Cecil Coles was tipped as a musical genius by Sir Henry Wood and Gustav Holst. In 1918 that promising future died when a German sniper killed the young composer as he carried a wounded man back to British lines.

Nearly 80 years later, his daughter recovered manuscripts of 40 compositions, still splattered with blood and mud from the Somme. Coles' music has now been performed and recorded by the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra.

Cecil Coles' Orchestral Music (CDA 67293) is released on Hyperion this month with a recommended price of £13.99.

ARNHEM ANNIVERSARY TOUR

A Battlefield and Anniversary Pilgrimage tour to Arnhem is being organised by Galina International Battlefield Tours. A six-day programme has been arranged for September 19th to 24th, including ferry and accommodation. The cost is £299, subject to a deposit of £50, insurance £15 and single supplement £140. For full details, of this and other tours, telephone Galina on 01244 340777.

PHOTOGRAPHY AT V&A

A photography day with visually impaired people in mind will be held at London's Victoria and Albert Museum on August 20th. Sighted escorts and guide dogs are welcome. For details call 020 7942 2197 or e-mail bookings.office@vam.ac.uk.

SAFER STREETS PLEASE

The Guide Dog for the Blind Association is calling on local authorities to raise awareness about obstacles for visually impaired people. Some authorities have responded with initiatives to remove overhanging bushes and street furniture.

RONNIE HORDELL

Ronnie Hordell retired early on March 31st. She had been with St Dunstan's as War Pensions Coordinator for 11 years, 11 months having joined the staff at Ovingdean in April 1990.

We apologise for the delay in publishing this entry and trust she is enjoying a healthy and happy retirement.

DEADLINES FOR FUTURE ISSUES

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

The final date for submitting items for publication in the August *Review* is July 9th 2002.

THIS TRAIN IS A STRAIN IF YOU ARE A GUIDE DOG

Colin cancels cross-channel trip when guide dog Robert is refused carriage

ST DUNSTANER COLIN DAVIES is campaigning to encourage cross-channel train company Eurostar to let guide dogs on their trains. Nearly 1,400 people have signed a petition saying that they feel Eurostar should change its policy prohibiting guide dogs from their carriages.

Colin of Peacehaven had to abandon a daytrip when he found that Eurostar ban all animals – including guide dogs. The only alternative was by ferry from Dover. “I could have flown, but that would have meant putting Robert in the hold, I didn’t want to do that.”

The Calais to Folkstone route through the Channel Tunnel is covered under the Pet Travel Scheme, via the freight carrying Eurotunnel Shuttle Service, but not Eurostar.

Eurostar spokesman Jonathan Kinsella told the *Review* that they were re-examining their policy. “Our main problem is that when Eurostar was launched we couldn’t carry animals of any kind, that situation has changed with the introduction of pet passports but we don’t have any animal handling facilities. If for some reason the authorities in France refused entry to an animal for whatever reason, we would become responsible for the care of that animal and we wouldn’t want to part an animal as important as a guide dog from its owner.

“Obviously this is something that will change, which has got to change but it’s very difficult to put a time frame on it.”



Colin presents Desmond Turner with 1,400 signatures from supporters who feel Eurostar should allow guide dogs on their trains.

A spur to put that change into action may be the many people who supported Colin’s campaign. He presented the petition to Desmond Turner, MP for Brighton Kemptown who said he hoped of having the Pet Travel Scheme extended.

St Dunstaners who wish to add their support to Colin’s campaign can write to him care of St Dunstan’s *Review*, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD.

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: David Dutton, Norwich, Norfolk

You may be interested to know that I was the first patient of St Dunstan’s in the 1939 war. I was sent there early in November 1939 after being kicked in the eye at football at HMS *St Vincent*, Portsmouth in September while waiting to be drafted as a telegraphist to a trawler. I had been in the RNVWR. I had spent six weeks in RN Hospital, Haslar under observation but as I was not bed-bound, I fetched and carried for others! When I arrived at St Dunstan’s (war hospital) in Brighton as their first patient, I had two surgeons (ex-Moorfields), a matron, four sisters and 26 nurses to look after me!

I still have my detached retina to remind me of my incompetence at football! Fortunately, the sight in my left eye is still good so I am not seriously inconvenienced by being half-blind in my right eye.

From: Betty C. Parkin, Swansea, West Glamorgan

Thank you very much for your letter telling me of the prize in the Story Competition – it makes a nice present for my 92nd birthday. With best wishes to the *Review* which I always enjoy.

Which prize did Betty win? Who else won? What was the judge’s final verdict in the *St Dunstan’s Review* writing challenge? All will be revealed on page 16.

From: Nancey Taylor, Leyland, Lancashire

Nancey Taylor and family would like to express their thanks to fellow St Dunstaners and staff for their kind thoughts, letters, cards and telephone calls during the time of Tom’s illness and on the occasion of his death. These were very much appreciated.

A HOWLING GOOD TIME!

A GROUP OF ARCHERS and their spotters spent a week in Devon at Lyne Akres Archery Centre. Greeted by Sally and Dave Moss, the party prepared to tackle the magnificent meals awaiting us.

After last year’s foot-and-mouth gloom it was lovely to see the animals in the fields again and a couple of members went searching for deer. Having found a huge unidentifiable paw print it was noticeable that people subsequently went out in force armed with walking sticks, sending Bert Wood (with his guide mouse) ahead to reconnoitre. All returned safely dismissing the howls coming from Baskerville Hall as those of the Newfoundland which had cleared the local pub of some rowdies who were unable to see the size of the beast.

Dave and Sally baked a musical cake for David Poyner’s birthday. How they imagined that we had room for it after the usual enormous dinner I don’t know, but David would not disappoint them and

manfully disposed of half of it before the rest of us could get near it.

A trip to Morwhellham Quay to see a restored copper mining village and port resulted in some very wet sit-upons after three hailstorms in less than an hour. Yes, there was lots of archery and some excellent shooting in idyllic weather. Thanks to David and Sue H for arranging a very rewarding week spent perfecting technique and equipment in readiness for the National Championships at Lilleshall in June.

Even the unfortunate hiccup with the coach on the return journey couldn’t spoil the trip. Brian had thoughtfully arranged for us to break down in a country park with café attached.

PS When Nigel Whiteley rang Sally afterwards, she told him how much they missed our roars of laughter from the dining room - even at breakfast!

Barbara Degenhardt

21 - ALL OUT!

Alf Lockhart releases the details of the Twenty-First Ex-POW Reunion

Pictures: Simon Rogers



Savouring freedom in the ballroom at Ovingdean, our former prisoners of war with their wives and friends.

APRIL 19TH SAW the start of our 21st ex-Prisoners of War Reunion. During the week, the ex-POWs started arriving and a fair number of members came. We had an informal gathering in the Bar and Blue Room where a sumptuous buffet had been set up by PBK. We all had a great time and the party broke-up about midnight. It is good to meet old friends and drink to absent friends whose spirits are always with us and to the end will always remain.

On Saturday morning we held the AGM with Air Chief Marshal Sir John Gingell, GBE, KCB, KCVO presiding and Bill Griffiths MBE in the Chair. The



St Dunstaner Alf Lockhart, High Sheriff David and Mrs Pennock, Rev Williams and Hazel Lye.

business went smoothly but with a tinge of sadness – we had lost 12 members during the year and Captain Richard Bingley died on the day before the AGM. In the election of the Officers, the present committee was re-elected “en bloc”. As 2002 is the Golden Jubilee Year of HM The Queen Elizabeth, we asked PBK to provide something special for the reunion dinner to mark the occasion. This they did by giving us a most excellent dinner, which they always do, but on this occasion it was “par excellence”. We also had a souvenir menu card to go with it.

Our Guest of Honour was the Hon. David Pennock, the newly-appointed High Sheriff of East Sussex. In his speech, he praised St Dunstan’s and the other Ex-Service Organisations who look after the War Disabled. Bill Griffiths ended the Dinner by thanking the Guests on our behalf. We then all adjourned to the bar. We do seem to spend a lot of time adjourning to the Bar. It must be the Brighton air.

On Sunday we held a Divine Service of Memorial celebrated by the Rev David N. Williams. During this Service, the Lesson was read by Alf Lockhart and the Exhortation from Lawrence Binyon was given by Tom Hart.

Later, we had a concert in the Lounge. We were entertained by a group of singers named the Music Makers, directed by Duncan Reid. They gave us hits from such shows as *The Merry Widow*, *Our Miss Gibbs*, *Chu Chin Chow*, Doris Day et al. An evening thoroughly enjoyed by everyone, except for two men in the back row. The group of singers, who perform for charities, are very good and deserve every encouragement. The concert ended the ex-POWs weekend.

I must take this opportunity to express the ex-POWs thanks to all our Helpers over the weekend, especially Mrs Beryl Gardner, who does so much to assist all through the year. Thank you Beryl, you’re a treasure. Then there are Linda and Lyn who are always unstinting in their support over these Reunion weekends. Thank you, girls! And of course, PBK! With Paul and Trevor, the catering is first class, as is the cooking. Their professionalism in table setting and décor is perfect and the waiter service was right up to



Bill Griffiths, aided by his daughter-in-law, presents a bouquet of flowers to Ken and Violet Barber to celebrate their 56th wedding anniversary.

the minute. Congratulations on a job very well done.

The Care Assistants too were marvellous, always helpful, ensuring we got our meals on time during our stay at Ovingdean. Thank you all.

A salutary tale of microwave users injured by energy charged liquids

THE DANGERS OF SUPERHEATING

THE THOUGHT OF a quick cup of coffee in the microwave has turned into a visit to casualty for some people. Knowing that the talking microwave oven is a popular member of many St Dunstaners kitchen equipment, **Terry Walker** explains the nature of a common accident and offers some simple methods to avoid a painful experience.

One victim placed a cup of water in the microwave to heat it up (something that he had done numerous times before). Intending to boil the water, he removed the cup when the timer shut the oven off.

The water was not boiling but then - instantly - it “blew up” into his face. The cup remained intact. He suffered 1st and 2nd degree burns, which might leave scarring and he may have lost sight in his left eye.

This kind of accident is caused by a phenomenon known as superheating! Here liquid is heated above its normal boiling point - faster than the vapour bubbles can form. Because this is an unstable state it can suddenly produce three-times the volume of steam, hence the spontaneous “explosion”. This often happens when objects such as a spoon or granulated coffee are suddenly added to the mix.

Some handy tips for avoiding the superheating effect

- Before putting the water into the oven, insert a non-metal object with a surface that is not smooth. (e.g. a wooden stirrer. A wooden skewer or ice cream stick will do.)
- Use a container whose surface is at least a little scratched.
- Do not heat for longer than the recommended time for the quantity of water used.
- Tap the outside of the container a few times with a solid object while it is still in the oven. Use a long object so that your hand remains outside the oven. Alternatively, still keeping your hand outside the oven, insert a stirrer while the container is still in the oven. (Thus, if vigorous boiling occurs, most of the boiling water will strike the inside of the oven.)
- Keep your face well away from the open oven door and from the container.

All these precautions should reduce the chance or extent of superheating and resultant injury. Nevertheless, very hot water is always dangerous and one should always treat it with caution.

Brother David Youngson on April's St Dunstan's Masonic Weekend

BROTHERS IN ARMS

ONE OF THE PLEASING features when becoming a St Dunstaner is that interests from elsewhere can be pursued with fellow St Dunstaners. Not least is the Annual Masonic Weekend, which was held at Ovingdean from April 26th to April 29th.

There are quite a few St Dunstaners who are Freemasons and many have held high office in the Fraternity throughout the UK. However, some of them are now elderly and find it difficult to attend but those who do thoroughly enjoy the time spent together. This year some eight Provinces were represented.

So what does the weekend involve? It is in the main an informal gathering affording time to meet up with old friends and make new ones. On the Saturday morning we met to discuss the programme for the weekend and matters pertinent to ourselves. There is no doubt that from among those who are joining St Dunstan's some are Freemasons. Every effort is to be made to get them to join us. Once this has been achieved several lapsed ideas and events will become operative once more.



Brothers Ernest Firth, Bill Miller and Cecil Green with some friends from local Lodges.

We visited Temple Lodge in Brighton on the Saturday evening. As usual we were given a warm welcome and enjoyed an excellent Masonic evening with a nice meal and drinks to follow.

All enjoyed a semi-formal Luncheon in the Winter Gardens on the Sunday with distinguished guests from the Province of Sussex and Temple Lodge. The usual speeches of welcome and thanks were given and the replies from our guests showed a great respect for those of us who, despite our visual impairment, have carried out many duties in our respective Lodges.

Thanks must be expressed to all who helped not least several of the "dogs" from the Sultan Camp who acted as escorts.

Anyone seeking to join us on future occasions should write in the first instance to R.A. Freer, 37 Wicklands Avenue, Saltdean, Brighton BN2 8LN or contact David Youngson on 01642 650742 for information.

Alan Huntley, Assistant Grand Marshal of the Province of Sussex addresses the assembled Freemasons.



Two Ronnies! Brothers Freer and Cattell.

Pictures: Simon Rogers

IN CELEBRATION OF HER MAJESTY'S GOLDEN JUBILEE

DIEU ET MON DROIT



IN FEBRUARY 1952, King George VI passed away. This sad event heralded the dawn of a new Elizabethan age as his eldest daughter accepted the mantle of Monarch and became our new Queen.

At the time, St Dunstan's Chairman Ian Fraser said of the King "Service men admired his knowledge of their craft and his high sense of duty. Ex-Service men admired his understanding of their problems and the disabled were warmed by his compassion and his example." The qualities were evidently inherited by Queen Elizabeth II. St Dunstaners who have been privileged to meet her have commented on her humour, warmth, tactile approach and understanding. The *Review* takes a walk through memory lane and recalls a few Royal encounters.

By God and Faith Queen Elizabeth II has reigned for 50 glorious years



REME ST DUNSTANER Leslie Shorter made a wedding gift - a bedside lamp - to be presented to Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh when they married in November 1947. On December 16th that year Sgt Shorter and his own bride, Enid were invited to Buckingham Palace (they are pictured on their way in).

Enid recalls meeting the future Queen and her husband: "We had been married for ten days, they had been married for three weeks and the Duke said we were like an old married couple."

HER MAJESTY graciously participated in St Dunstan's own Golden Jubilee on March 26th 1965. Anniversary celebrations were held at St James's Palace. "You have been a fine example to the blind world, and as your Patron, I wish each one of you long life and success." As with other occasions she met and spoke with St Dunstaners representing all fields of achievement.

"The Queen was exceedingly charming, speaking to the men and joking with them, leaving us with a warmth of affection hitherto not experienced by those who had not met her personally," recalled St Dunstaner Alf Abram.

On this occasion the Queen had been introduced to Eileen Williams, then the eldest lady St Dunstaner who presented a bouquet of flowers. She was also

introduced to St Dunstaners from Australia, New Zealand, Canada and South Africa.

A MODEL VISITOR

Only four years earlier she and the Duke of Edinburgh had visited St Dunstan's Ovingdean. The tour of the centre started with The Queen being shown a model of the building. This is the tactile model used by trainees to orientate themselves.

Her Majesty and the Duke were introduced to St Dunstaners learning braille and typewriting, assembly and inspection work. They were shown a range of appliances and aids developed by St Dunstan's Research Department, followed by a selection of craftwork. Afterwards she was greeted, to loud applause,



Queen Elizabeth II at Earls Court Royal Tournament in 1963. Royal Marine Brian Beniston (second left), now a St Dunstaner, stands guard.

by some 300 St Dunstaners who had gathered in the Lounge. On that occasion she had another six appointments following her activities at Ovingdean.

The visit most St Dunstaners will remember took place in 1985,

when Her Majesty returned to Ovingdean to formally open the refurbished South Wing. On this occasion her tour of inspection began in the Winter Garden where St Dunstaners such as Reg Goding and Jim Padley were playing Bridge. The Amateur Radio

they were wearing dead cats. We were aware of the crowds cheering on either side but we were disciplined and just kept marching.

"Afterwards we marched back to Earls Court, had a salad and then went back to the West End. We walked up to Tower Bridge then back on the other side of the river. If we found a pub where there was a bit of singing we'd go in and have a half.

"The march could have gone for ever. We didn't want the day to end."

Arthur was demobbed soon after the Coronation Parade, elated that he was able to close his service days in such spectacular style.

WE DIDN'T WANT THE DAY TO END

ST DUNSTANER ARTHUR JONES of Dunstable, Bedfordshire is proud to say that his final days in the Royal Air Force coincided with the beginnings of Her Majesty's reign. His last official duty was the Coronation Parade on June 2nd 1953.

"We were taken to RAF Uxbridge and spent about four weeks smartening up our marching," said Arthur. "We also had to pick up our stamina. There were about 45 or 50 people. We had a Sgt Evans in charge of drill and he said 'I don't care what rank you are, you are in my squad and my squad is going to be the best.'

"We would go for marches, 15 miles with rifles and Sgt Evans would walk backwards in front of us. There would be a Corporal walking ahead of him to make sure he didn't walk into anyone. The watchword was 'The best is not good enough.'

"A day before the Coronation we were taken by tube to Earls Court. At the barracks our rifles were chained to the bedposts and we got some sleep. We were woken at 3.30 in the morning, had some breakfast and then marched from Earls Court into London.

"We were kept out of sight at the back of Buckingham Palace and waited for the call."

Eventually the call came and we marched past the Palace, down the Mall, then to the right. The Guardsman were in bearskins and it was raining so it looked like

Society had also set up a special event station. St Dunstaner Ted John explained that contacts were being made all over the world.

St Dunstaners Phil Duffee and Steve Smith were demonstrating a braille lesson. Bill Norton found his guide dog Velvet stealing the show, while Brenda Tinsley piqued the Duke's interest with a chicken casserole. Dorothy Martin, whose husband would later be a recipient of some Maundy money, recalled that she had visited Windsor Castle in 1940. On that occasion, the then Princess Elizabeth had been playing Prince Charming in pantomime.

On the first floor, Gwen Obern and Bill Griffiths demonstrated rooms that had been adapted for St Dunstaners who are handless as well as blind. Other displays concentrated on wrought-iron work and bowling.

WHICH REGIMENT?

Peter Watson, demonstrating judo, confessed to some confusion on how to answer The Queen when she asked which was his regiment. "Should I say Your Lancashire Regiment or Queen's Lancashire Regiment?" He settled for Queen's and she laughed "Not a bad one, eh?"

In the final part of Her Majesty's tour, Tommy Gaygan, a handless St Dunstaner was demonstrating archery. Having just shot three golds he received a royal complement on his accuracy.

On this occasion when Her Majesty entered the Lounge there were 500 St Dunstaners waiting. A special chair, made from Yew wood was presented to The Queen. The back of the chair incorporates a small panel of



Maundy Thursday April 1971. St Dunstaner, Councillor Leslie Webber as Mayor of Tewkesbury, was host to HM The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh when they visited his town. This was the first visit by a reigning monarch for 120 years.



Her Majesty learns how St Dunstaners play Bridge.



Dickie Brett showing off his joinery skills in 1954.

A happy smile

St Dunstan's President Colin Beaumont-Edmonds writes:

In 1957, The Scout Association celebrated its Golden Jubilee with a Jamboree in Sutton Coldfield Park. As Secretary to the local Scout Association, I was presented to The Queen. My daughter, Felicia, then four-and-a-half years old, was chosen to present a bouquet to The Queen. My wife, Joyce, described the Queen as looking very serious entered the Town Hall, but as soon as she saw Felicia step up, she bent forward with the most lovely happy smile to receive the bouquet.

In 1964, My wife and I were presented to The Queen at Buckingham Palace as Mayor and Mayoress of Sutton Coldfield. The Queen immediately commented on the problems facing Birmingham Education Department. We were most impressed with her knowledge of the situation.



St Dunstan's Tommy Milligan is presented to Her Majesty The Queen in 1965 at St James's Palace. His escort that day, Lilian Woolrych had joined the organisation as a Braille teacher in 1915. In retirement she continued to assist a doubly handicapped St Dunstan's.

carved English walnut depicting St Dunstan's badge on a backing of English oak from a tree felled in 170AD. The chair is held in the Blue Room for future visits.

After a brief introduction from then President of St Dunstan's Colonel Sir Michael Ansell, The Queen declared the new South Wing open by unveiling a plaque of Cumberland slate gilded with gold leaf. "Since I last came to Ian Fraser House," she said, "Much has happened. New faces have joined St Dunstan's and the facilities have been greatly improved. I was very impressed with the new South Wing this morning. But what is most important is that the great spirit of St Dunstan's continues as strongly as ever and was evident wherever I have been today. I am sure you

will maintain this spirit in the years ahead and continue to give your wonderful example of how to overcome the immense sacrifices you have made for your country."

FRIENDLY

In many respects St Dunstan's have come to feel that they have a special relationship with our Monarch. Many were amazed and delighted by the informal and friendly manner in which they were greeted at a reception at Buckingham Palace last May. The event on that occasion was marking 85 years of St Dunstan's.

One suspects that those feelings of respect and affection are mutual since Her Majesty remained with the assembled St Dunstan's for

an unprecedented time. On this Golden Jubilee we toast her health and look forward to the Diamond equivalent with happy anticipation.

Long may she reign!



St Dunstan's Chairman Lord Fraser with Her Majesty The Queen in 1956.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN!



FAREWELL BLUE

Our feline friend Blue, otherwise known as 'Brigadier' Blue Velvet Pearson, Chief Rodent Operative, St Dunstan's Pearson House, died on April 22nd.

BILLY WHIZZZZZZZZZZ!!!

Who let St Dunstaner Billy Baxter take control of a four-wheel motorcycle? Why wasn't he fined for speeding when he hit 150mph? Where was he able to indulge in this high speed pursuit? What lies behind his top secret training programme?

Find out next issue!



Photograph courtesy of Soldier Magazine

Words provide Maurice Aldridge with clues to Viking incursions

A VIKING AT O VingDEAN

ONE OF THE MOST exotic recruits we ever had onto the staff of Ovingdean was an Icelander, one Gunnar Njalson, born in and only too happy to leave the capital of that island, Reykjavik, meaning 'Smokey bay' from 'reykja' = 'smoke' and 'vik' = 'bay'. Gunnar was a very popular man and within seconds acquired the title, Viking.

Viking failed to develop a Sussex accent while he was with us but he told me often that he felt he had come home when he arrived in Ovingdean. The reason, apart from his many conquests among the beautiful VADs who looked after us and made our lives happy, may well have been that his ancestors had been in the village long before. At that time, Vikings were not at all popular, of course, even among the young women as the history of the lovely church of Ovingdean testifies.

When friend Viking's ancestors arrived, the name 'Ovingdean' still had a meaning which they would have been able to understand. The syllable 'Ov' is all that is left of the name 'Offa' while 'ing' means 'people'. Thus, 'Ovingdean' means 'valley of the people of Offa'. Not that the name would have impressed the

Vikings - 'people of the bay' - they were happy to plunder and destroy anyone's property from the 8th century monarch's to the house of God itself.

The Vikings didn't restrict their visits to the South East, of course, they were all over the place especially in the North East and the far North of Scotland where they not only pillaged and plundered the land but actually set up their own houses. The name of one town in particular still proclaims their mastery. Wick - most Northerly town in Britain and capital of the herring industry until our marvellous modern fishing methods successfully trawled the oceans free of fish - takes its name from the Icelandic word for bay and many of the great land owners thereabouts have Scandinavian names to this day.

Everything changes, of course, and one day, Viking told me over a pint of beer in the White Horse - popular watering hole for St Dunstaners at that time - that he would soon be setting sail. Where did he go?

Believe it or believe it not, he went off to set up house in Wick where for all I know he still lives surrounded by his fellow Vikings.

STORY COMPETITION RESULTS

THREE TALES emerged victorious in the *Review's* story competition which was judged this year by Venetia Newell. Our £50 First Prize was won by St Dunstaner Nancy Chadwick, writing under the name of "Bill". Her story is published in this issue. The Second Prize of £30 went to "Gran" or Betty C. Parkin and the Third Prize was won by Ted Bunting, writing under the name of "Willy Ekerslike."

Judge Venetia made the following comments:

1st Prize

Is There A Doctor In The House? by Bill
"I much enjoyed reading this original and lively account of childhood memories involving Mum and her medical remedies. It is well-written and

some of it is very funny. I loved the story of the chicken which was rubbed with the camphorated oil and had a woolly scarf wrapped round its neck. Altogether a delightful piece of work."

2nd Prize

Passing Through by Gran
"Another fine piece of work and very well-written. The author knows how to tell a story – not easy – and the piece has a beginning middle and an unexpected ending. A ghost story pleasantly narrated."

3rd Prize

Capricorn by Willy Ekerslike
"A soldier's earthy humour. A short amusing anecdote, well told with a surprise ending."

Is There A Doctor In The House?

by Bill
(Nancy Chadwick)

WELL, THERE WAS in the 1920's. Her name was Martha, and she was my mother. At the age of twelve, she went into domestic service and rapidly acquired the social graces, speech, and bearing of the upper class. In fact, she identified herself with the "top drawer" people. She changed her name to "Madge", to fit the new image. In her twenties Madge was suspected of having TB, and spent some time in a sanatorium where she began to be really focused on the subject of health. Therefore, when she later married a widower with a son, and she herself produced two daughters, she put their welfare at the top of her list of priorities. Nicknamed "Bill", I was the elder daughter, and "Booty" was the younger. We lived in a house in Lancashire. There was no electricity, no bathroom, and no indoor toilet.

From the very beginning, my mother was determined that her offspring would be ladylike, dignified, in no way common, with good table manners, softly spoken, but most of all, they would be in good health. On all these points she failed miserably, except the last. There was a price to pay for good health, and we certainly paid for it! Madge's general

maxim was that medication, to succeed, had to smell foul, look foul and taste appalling.

The little window in our bedroom faced the East, overlooking a communal backyard, two large huts, a hen pen, some fields and, finally, the golf course. The window, a sash one, was always half-open, but a crude, painted plank of wood was inserted into the open gap. This was to let in the fresh air. It did!

It also let in the snow, which lay on the window ledge and on the bed. When out shopping with Madge, we were constantly told to, "pull your shoulders back, throw your chest out, and take deep breaths". If a group of workmen was spotted mending the cobbled road, we were rushed off to breathe in the fumes from the huge tank of black boiling tar. This was supposed to put a lining on your lungs. It probably did!

Mum did not wait for winter to arrive, but began the preventative treatment about September. She rubbed our chests and backs with camphorated oil and then slapped on a piece of warmed flannel between the chest and the liberty-bodice. The word "liberty-bodice" was a misnomer if ever I heard one. It was

made by Mum on her sewing machine. Made out of stiff white calico, it had strips of white tape from top to bottom. Stretching from the neck to the waist, it was supposed to keep the heat in. It also, (be it intended or not), prevented one from developing a big bust later in life. My sister and I have only worn bras as a symbol of our femininity. Each morning "Booty" and I were compelled to swallow a dessert spoonful of neat cod liver oil. The spoon had a bent handle so that it could be distinguished from other cutlery. It was quite unnecessary, as the spoon was gradually going green, and one could catch the odour from two yards away! We complained bitterly about the taste haunting us all day at school, so Mum started to give us a pinch of salt after each dose. From then on we could taste oil and, in addition, salt all day.

Where did Madge get all her medical knowledge from? The source was a big medical book which she kept at the ready on the bookshelf. We were forbidden to read it, so naturally, at the first opportunity, we dipped into it. The reason it was banned was obvious. There were two large diagrams of nude people on the opening pages. They were covered in arrows to identify each part of the anatomy. It was a great shock to me to see the extent of a man's external plumbing arrangements. Only five minutes of reading left one with a firm conviction that one was suffering from Scarlet Fever, Mumps, St Vitus's Dance and possibly, a nervous breakdown! No wonder that our official doctor had, with colourful language, ordered mum to get rid of the publication. Of course, she did not. It was her bible! Not that she was averse to outside advice. One day, a local busybody told Madge that a piece of brown paper soaked in vinegar, was good for the prevention of colds, if worn on the chest, next to the skin. Guess who was chosen to try out this idea?

The very next day I stood in the hall in the Primary School with the piece of paper down my vest. As the last line of "All things bright and beautiful" died away, the headmistress proclaimed in a loud voice that there was a dreadful smell in the hall. I stood, terrified, as she came to inspect the troops. I tried to hold my chest so that the paper would not rustle. It did not need Sherlock Holmes to winkle out the culprit. I stank like a mobile fish and chip shop. I was dragged to the front and humiliated. If ever there was a case of child abuse - that was it!



Winning author Nancy Chadwick.

Sore throats were commonplace in those bitter Swintry days, but my mother was always prepared with hot bread poultices, Sanderson's Specific for gargling, Friar's Balsam for inhaling, and salt water to sniff up the nostrils. The bread poultice-on-the-throat treatment was replaced with hot boiled onions in a bag, if we developed quinsy, (a tonsil infection). No little girls wore long stockings so bare legs were more or less chapped all winter, scarred with falls on cinder paths - they needed, (and got), the "drawing" ointment. We took heart that Spring was on its way. My little sister spent hours outside in the inclement weather as my mum considered her to be a bit "delicate". Personally, I considered her to be particularly robust, but having an allergy to any form of housework. Any casual reference to "washing up" would send her scuttling off to the toilet across the yard where she had hidden her coat in readiness for such an emergency. We would not see her again until the next meal.

Springtime did come, but it brought another Shazard. There was the "Spring cleaning". Not only was the house cleaned out, but the kids also. When mother told us to go and clean the hens out, we knew that she was not to be taken literally, but the idea of giving the children a good clearing out, was just what it meant. My mum favoured a brew of camomile flowers for this operation. Others used senna pods or brimstone and treacle. The end result, if you pardon the expression, was the same. One year Madge was told that a little dose of turpentine was effective. It certainly was! The official doctor had to be called in the early hours, so we must have been next to death's door, and the bill must have taken weeks to pay in weekly instalments.

My mother kept hens. If she spotted that one of them was "off colour" she would bring it into the living room under her arm, put it into a basket near the open fire, and treat it as she would her children. It

had its neck rubbed with camphorated oil and a woolly scarf tied round, fastened with a large safety pin. Her record of success with the patients was not poor - it was abysmal! One evening with only Booty as a witness, a patient suddenly rose from the basket in a burst of activity in its death throes, and, making horrific screams, expired! The spectator has never really recovered either!

There was one field of medicine that mum did not trespass into, and that was dentistry. On the first occasion that I confessed that I had toothache, I was sent to see a neighbour - an old man who was supposed to have a knack with problem teeth. Sitting the sufferer in a chair, he tied a length of strong cotton round the offending tooth and then tied the other end to a door handle. He promptly shut the door with great alacrity and force. The patient either fell off the chair, or uttered a howling noise as the tooth left its moorings! I never again complained of any pain in this area. I just waggled any faulty tooth until it came out. It was another story when I arrived a Junior school. Each morning, in assembly, the headmaster would wade through the hymn, the sermon, the general warnings, and, arriving at the notices, would announce, "The following pupils will attend the dental clinic at half past ten. Collect your cards from the secretary." One crossed one's fingers behind one's back, as he reeled off names. Of course it had to happen - one morning I was on the list! There were rumours of what happened at this establishment, and all these surfaced.

Arriving at the clinic, I climbed the rickety stairs to enter the waiting room, which was filled with kids, (mostly unwashed), sitting on the forms which lined the room. They were strangely subdued. At intervals, a little elderly man appeared, peered through his half-moon glasses, warned us about our behaviour, and then read out a list of about seven or eight children who had to line up promptly in the sloping corridor outside the dentist's surgery. The scene in the corridor was quite different, as the bullies pushed their weaker brethren, and, (naturally), the girls to the front of the queue. A voice shouted, "Next!" and from behind I felt a hand in the small of my back pushing me through the door. On entering, I saw the dentist and the nurse. There was no greeting - just an order to "sit down and open your mouth".

Petrified with fear, I listened to the conversation between the two of them. I was not "street-wise" in the affairs of the heart, but even I gathered that they were having, (if not an affair), a serious flirtation. Fascinated with the provocative remarks, the giggles, the fluttering eyelashes, I struggled to hear any

reference to the action about to take place in the chair. I had already been informed by my classmates that he, the dentist, never did any fillings. Apparently it was always a mass extraction job. Perhaps the man had never finished his medical course at college! I caught sight of the pliers and froze. Through a mist of pain and fear, I heard the next command: "go into the bathroom and swill your mouth out and spit in the bath". With shaking legs, I obeyed. The bathroom looked as if there had recently been a battle. The bodies had been removed, but the blood remained! I could already hear the whimpering of the next victim.

As I made my way back to school down the back streets, with tears slowly falling down my cheeks, I suddenly had a very clear, mature perception - It was hellish patches of life that made the bits in between so heavenly! I thought of the centre of attention that I was going to be, back in the classroom, the sympathy I would be given. I must have had at least eight teeth out - if not more. I quickened my steps and spat once more into the bloody handkerchief.

Over seventy years have passed now and I am still here. Because of my mother's efforts, because of, or in spite of, I have survived. I forgive her for everything!

Next issue: *Passing Through* by Betty C. Parkin.

POET'S CORNER

VICTORY

Do not worry over me
Even though I cannot see,
For if this is my Lord's decision,
You and He will be my vision.

It was on that cross that I did see,
Just how much love, you had for me,
I saw the Angels at your side,
The Gates of Heaven were opened wide.

The loved ones that had long, long passed,
I again, could see at last
All my enemies, were now my friends,
Great Joy and Peace, now extends.

All my sins were now, no more,
As I gazed on that heavenly shore,
In my blindness, I now can see,
All that lies ahead for me.

Roy Armstrong

MAN OVERBOARD!

Swept into a stormy sea our St Dunstaner was being dragged down by oilskins and heavy boots

IN 1952, FIRST WORLD War St Dunstaner Ted Oxborough recalled his days as a fisherman, one of the crew of a sailing drifter, *Our Boys*. "On 26th October 1909, we left Yarmouth for the herring fishing grounds about 27 miles away. We shot our nets and, after drifting until 12 o'clock midnight, we started to haul. We had a good catch of herrings and finished hauling about nine the following morning.

"The wind had risen during the night and by then it was blowing a full gale. After reefing the sails, we got under way for Yarmouth having the wind on our port quarter. Some of the crew went down to breakfast while the rest of us coiled up the halyards, and the skipper was at the tiller. Suddenly he shouted, 'Look out, water,' and we shipped a heavy sea. Another man and myself were washed overboard but, although I was a good swimmer, I was handicapped by oilskins and 36 inch leather boots. I struck out for the surface and on reaching it saw the stern of *Our Boys* going away from me. Then I saw the other man who was washed overboard with me put up his hands and sink - I never saw him again. I determined not to give up as I thought that the boat might come about and rescue me. I could see it aluff about two miles away and I began to wonder if they could see me as it did not seem that they were making any attempt to come after me.

"By now I was beginning to feel tired, so I floated to reserve my strength. But, as soon as I turned on my back my heavy boots pulled me under, so I turned over, struggled and managed to get to



Ted Oxborough after he became a St Dunstaner.

the top of a wave. I could still see *Our Boys* with her sails still aluff, but now I began to give up hope. I tried to get my knife to cut my oilskins and tried to kick my boots off, but as soon as I put my hands down to get at my jack knife in my pocket, my boots pulled me under again. I was by now very tired and had almost given up hope, but as I struggled to the top of a sea, I saw our little boat with the skipper and a third hand rowing towards me. This put new life into me and the thought struck me that I must not try and get hold of the boat or it might capsize. That was what my

rescuers were afraid of. They came alongside of me; the third hand grabbed me by the collar of my oilskin, worked me round to the stern and pulled me into the boat. They now had a couple of miles to row to the drifter and, after a long pull, came alongside. I was able to scramble aboard myself. They pulled the little boat aboard, and after having another look around to see if there was any sign of the other man, we made our way to port. I was, through being a good swimmer and through the bravery of the skipper and the third hand, alive.

"At the Board of Trade inquiry my rescuers were commended by the Registrar, and they both received the Edward Medal. The skipper was also presented with a gold watch by the Carnegie hero Fund and the third hand was presented with a cheque for 20 guineas.

"I had a good many other narrow squeaks, but I think that was the closest."



A sailing drifter off the Yarmouth coast. It was a similar vessel on which Ted became a fisherman.

WELCOME TO ST DUNSTAN'S

April 12th

George Childs of Iver Heath, Buckinghamshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946. He trained with the American Air Force in Alabama, later converting to Wellingtons before joining Transport Command. He then flew Liberators from the UK to North Africa. In civilian life he flew for Scottish Aviation, BEA, and British Airways. A keen athlete, linguist and sportsman he has been diving, sailing, trekking and climbing. He also acted as Refugee Co-ordinator for Amnesty International. He and his wife Lucienne have a son, two daughters and five grandchildren.

Alan Jakeman of Bognor Regis, West Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946. He trained as a Flight Mechanic but, after Crete fell, transferred to a ground defence roll with the RAF Regiment. He served in India, Burma and Sumatra. In civilian life he worked in the wholesale fruit and vegetable business. A keen bowler, he enjoys walking and radio. He and his wife Margaret have two sons, one grandchild and one great-grandchild.

Charles Rhodes of Redruth, Cornwall served in the Royal Armoured Corps and the 12th Royal Lancers (Prince of Wales's) in Cyprus during the Enosis troubles. Afterwards, he returned to work as a plumber. He played football and enjoyed golf and gardening.

William Robertshaw of Turton, Bolton served in the Royal Scots from 1940 to 1946. Posted to North Africa and then Italy, he was deafened, lost his left eye and suffered damage to his right eye in an explosion at Cassino. In civilian life he became a dairy farmer. He and his wife June have a son and two grandchildren.

Eva Stephenson of Garstang, Lancashire served in the Women's Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1943. She trained as a tele-printer operator, serving in Morecambe and Coventry. After leaving the RAF, she became a Special Police Constable in Burnley. She used to enjoy sewing, gardening and caravan holidays. She has two sons and four grandchildren.

April 26th

Thomas Clack of Syston, Leicester served in the Northamptonshire Regiment from 1943 to 1945. He joined the Warwickshire Regiment and was posted to India where he transferred to the 1st Battalion Northamptonshire Regiment. Deployed straight into action in Burma as a 17-year-old, he fought alongside the Gurkhas during the subsequent campaign. In civilian life he worked for the railways until it was nationalised. He then became a lorry driver. He is married to Marjorie and has a daughter and three grandchildren.

Russell Gibson of Norwich, Norfolk served in the Royal Artillery from 1940 to 1946. He served in the Middle East, Sicily and North Africa.

Mervyn Goddard of Salisbury, Wiltshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1948. After training as a Radio Operator, he saw service in India, Malaya, Singapore and Egypt. After leaving the Service he worked in the Railway Goods Office at Salisbury before joining Ushers Brewery. He later ran a newsagent and worked for a hydraulic company. He and his wife Elizabeth have a son, daughter and two grandchildren.

Dennis Hope of Newport Pagnell, Buckinghamshire served in the Royal Navy from 1941 to 1946. He was torpedoed 200 miles south of Greenland whilst escorting a Russian Convoy and survived eight hours in the sea before being recovered. He transferred to the Submarine service before joining Destroyers operating in support of D-Day and actions in the Mediterranean. He also served in the Middle and Far East. After the war he studied as an Engineer and became a member of the Institute of Builders. He has a son, daughter and four grandchildren.

Gordon Lawrence of Rednal, Birmingham served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1949 to 1951. He served in Egypt and at Mons Officer Cadet School, followed by a further three years in the TA. In civilian life he worked as a Heating and Plumbing Engineer. He and his wife Norma have two daughters and four grandchildren.

Roland Veysey of Cocking, Midhurst, West Sussex served in the Royal Navy Voluntary Reserve from 1941 to 1946. He started the war as part of a Fleet Ambulance Unit attached to the Finnish Army who were fighting the Russians. Later attached to Naval Intelligence, he served in Greece, Russia, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Cairo, Bucharest, Yugoslavia and Norway. In civilian life he worked for the De Havilland Aircraft Company, Rolls Royce and Associated Electrical Industries. He has enjoyed sailing, sports and is learning to play the guitar. He and his wife Anne have a son, daughter and five grandchildren.

Norman Wallbridge of Hailsham, East Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946. He trained as a Nurse Orderly, before transferring to Air Sea Rescue. Later joined a Troop Ship operating between the UK and Halifax, Canada, also serving in the Pacific, India and Australia. In civilian life he worked as a diamond setter. A keen gymnast in his youth, he also enjoyed fishing. He and his wife Joan have a son, and two grandsons.

Donald Wright of Devizes, Wiltshire served in the Royal Engineers from 1942 to 1974. Commissioned into the Indian Army for the duration of the war, he served in the Middle East before joining the Army of Occupation in Japan. After a spell in BAOR, he was posted to Korea as a squadron Commander. He served in Hong Kong, Ghana, Congo and Kenya before completing service in the UK as a Major. In civilian life he was a Health and Safety Advisor. Keen on sport, particularly cricket and golf, he enjoyed tinkering with cars and DIY. He and his wife Shirley have a son, daughter and one grandson.

Late bloom for Gertrude

RENOWNED landscape gardener Gertrude Jeckyll (1843-1932), who was originally a painter and embroiderer, took up gardening at the age of 48 after her eyesight started to deteriorate. Despite this late start and accompanying disability, she cultivated a reputation as a green-fingered expert.

An advocate of natural cottage gardens with plenty of herbaceous borders, she created over 200 gardens in partnership with architect Sir Edwin Lutyens, designer of the Cenotaph. He also designed her home at Munstead Wood, Surrey.



Mrs Pooter's Diary

Author: Keith Waterhouse

Reader: Elizabeth Proud

Catalogue Number 7685

Duration: 5 Hours 43 minutes

AFTER *The Diary of a Nobody*, (the creation of the Victorian Grossmith Brothers) this book might well have been entitled "The Diary of a Nobody's wife" for this Mrs Pooter is no other than the spouse of Charles Pooter, the original "nobody". And what a pleasant experience it is to see her side of the coin. In her petty snobbery and lower middle-class views she holds so much in common with husband "Dear Charlie" but in the time-honoured contest which is a feature of every marriage she also holds much more than her own. Aspects of her man management skills, in fact, contribute to some of the funniest parts of this very amusing book; no husband, I think, could fail to recognise similar ploys, which have been used in the past to manage him. Considering that so little actually happens, (even a visit to the butcher's is an "occasion") Mrs Pooter is never at a loss for words, like so many ladies before and since, she happily reports the most trivial events. Personally I realised too that in the last century of so-called "progress" human nature has advanced not one inch. Mothers are still blind to the shortcomings of their sons, and women's appetite for gossip and tittle-tattle remain quite undiminished. At the very end, however, my own wife pointed out to me that *Mrs Pooter's Diary* was actually written by a man (a fact I'd completely overlooked in my absorption), and that subsequently, the insight I thought I'd gained into the working of the female mind was nothing but an illusion. Women, alas, remain as mysterious to me as ever!

50 YEARS AGO

ST DUNSTANER Alan Milne, who would go on to a distinguished academic career, obtained his PhD and was scheduled to take up a Commonwealth Fund Scholarship at an American University.

REUNION ROUND-UP

THE REUNION SEASON continued apace at Shaftesbury on April 17th. Air Chief Marshal Sir John Gingell was the Member of St Dunstan's Council presiding at a gathering of 18 St Dunstaners and 12 widows at the Royal Chase Hotel, Shaftesbury.



Picture: Vivienne Saunders

James and Edna McGoff at the Norwich Reunion.

On April 24th, Ray Hazan was the Member of St Dunstan's Council presiding at the Norwich Reunion at the Swallow Nelson Hotel. Fifteen St Dunstaners, one member of the Diana Gubbay Trust, a St Dunstaner's wife and eight widows were joined by their guests.

Thirty-six St Dunstaners and 13 widows attended the Liverpool Reunion at the Gladstone Hotel on May 1st. Again, Ray Hazan was the Member of St Dunstan's Council presiding. The day was special to begin with for one person at the gathering. A bouquet of flowers was presented to May Gregory, wife of St Dunstaner Joseph Gregory, who was celebrating her birthday.

The London Reunion at the RAF Club in Piccadilly, united 26 St Dunstaners, 11 widows and other friends on May 15th. Tim Bacon was the Member of St Dunstan's Council presiding.

FAMILY NEWS

BIRTH

Congratulations on the birth of:

Alexander Marsh on April 10th. He is the great grandson of Irene Norman of Bradford, West Yorkshire and the late *Douglas Norman*.

DIAMOND ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

George and Marjorie Allan of Grundisburgh, Suffolk on May 16th.

Dick and Bett Hall of Hassocks, West Sussex on May 16th.

DEATHS

We regret to announce the death of:

Frances Marsland on April 15th. She was the wife of *James Marsland* of Altrincham, Cheshire.

Gwen Mills on April 27th. She was the wife of *Frederick Mills* of Tavistock, Devon.

Myrtle Prior of Reading, Berkshire on April 28th. She was wife of *George Prior*.

Daisy Kenward on April 18th, aged 107. She was the widow of First World War St Dunstaner *Edward Kenward*.

Yvonne Caudle of Salisbury, Wiltshire on April 28th. She was the widow of *Lindsay Caudle*.

Edward Fitzpatrick on April 16th. He was the son of *Lavinia Fitzpatrick* of Hawcoat, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria and the late *Bernard Fitzpatrick*.

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 heartfelt sympathy to their widows, family and friends.

Barbara Walker

Royal Air Force

Barbara Walker of Birstall, Leicester died on April 13th, aged 80. She served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1942, training as a Radar Operator. After losing her sight in 1954, she took a course as a home teacher for the blind at Westminster and worked for the Industrial Society for the Blind. She continued to work as a social worker until her retirement. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

Captain Richard Bingley

Royal Signals

Captain Richard Arthur James Bingley of Newton Abbot died on April 19th, aged 82. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1986. Having set himself on a military career as a teenager, he considered lying about his age and running away to fight in the Spanish Civil War. Instead he actually joined the Territorial Army in 1938. Embodied into the regular Army the following year, at 19 years old he was a full Sergeant with the Middlesex Regiment. Posted to France with the "Die-Hards" as part of the British Expeditionary Force he was subsequently wounded by a mortar grenade in 1940. Evacuated from Dunkirk, he spent seven weeks in hospital before volunteering for a new parachute unit, Number 2 Commando. This was later renamed 11th Special Air Service Battalion and then 1st Parachute Battalion. Soon after being commissioned, he was wounded in Sicily during an attack at Primosola Bridge in 1943. A year later, having jumped into Arnhem, his unit came under heavy fire, they re-grouped and managed to capture the local SS HQ. The Germans responded by blowing the building up and Richard's unit was captured soon after they emerged from the debris. He was held in solitary confinement after throwing coffee over a German guard. Demobilised in 1946, he worked in commerce but rejoined the TA in 1949. Recalled to active duty with the Royal Signals in 1951, he served as Second-in-Command, B Company, Welsh Regiment in Korea. He was wounded during an attack on a Chinese position in 1952, losing his left eye. He was Mentioned in Despatches and retired from the Army in 1974. In civilian life, Richard was a staunch advocate of St Dunstan's, BLESMA and The Royal British Legion. He was President of the Dunkirk Veterans Association, South Devon Parachute Regiment Association and Newton Abbot Lions. He also served on the Council in Newton Abbot, taught writing skills to unemployed teenagers and championed the creation of a sensory garden in the local park. He provided a great deal of the funding for this project himself and also instigated a number of activities to raise the balance. His interests included music, wild birds and gardening - he won second prize in the 1993 Britain in Bloom contest. Our sympathy goes to all of his family.

James Empson

Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

James Empson of London died on April 21st, aged 89. He served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical

Engineers from 1939 to 1946. He was deployed as a vehicle mechanic, serving in Nottingham, Kent and Shrewsbury. After the war he became a bench fitter. Our sympathy goes to his widow Freda and all other members of the family.

Philip Knight

Royal Army Pay Corps

Philip Knight of Bognor Regis, West Sussex died on April 20th, aged 82. He served in the Royal Army Pay Corps from 1940 to 1970. He had various postings worldwide, including Sierra Leone, Singapore and in the UK as RSM of Edinburgh Castle. After leaving the service, he managed a commercial computer centre and then worked for the IBA. His interests included walking, gardening and travelling. Our sympathy goes to his son Colin and all other members of the family.

Douglas Southwold

Royal Air Force

Douglas James Rupert Southwold of Plymouth, Devon died on May 7th, aged 80. He served as an armourer in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1947. After the war he returned to International Paints as a technical representative. Later he joined Devon County Council Social Services and managed a centre for disabled people in Plymouth. His interests included art. Our sympathy goes to his widow Dolly, daughter Deborah and all other members of the family.

Hollis "Ollie" Capon

Home Guard

Hollis "Ollie" Capon of Borough Green, Sevenoaks, Kent died on May 11th, aged 86. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1991. He was in a Reserved Occupation on the outbreak of war, but in 1940 joined his local Home Guard and was shortly promoted to Lance Corporal. Whilst on duty at his Platoon HQ in 1942, a detonator exploded in his face. He came to St Dunstan's at Church Stretton where, although he lost sight in his left eye, it was possible to restore sight in his right eye. He was discharged in 1943 and started work in the Hospital Service, retiring in 1979 as Head Porter. His interests included gardening, boxing, golf, cricket and horseracing. Our sympathy goes to his widow Cissie, with whom he recently celebrated 62 years of marriage, sons Michael and Nicholas, daughter Catherine and all other members of the family.

PEDAL POWER PUTS MARK AND LIZ AHEAD



Mark and Liz pick up their prize for best improved time.



ST DUNSTANER Mark Noble took part in the BOLD Tulip Tandem Marathon - a time challenge for visually impaired cyclists. The event organised by Blind Outdoor Leisure Development on April 27th was celebrating its 20th anniversary and Mark from Aylesford, Kent has taken part in all-but-one.

The route takes the tandem riders through 26 miles of idyllic countryside in Spalding, Lincolnshire. As with last year, Mark, who served in the Royal Corps of Transport, was joined on

Simon Rogers reports

this venture by his partner Liz. This year they had more time to prepare and had invested in a customised tandem. Competing

against 56 other teams they were riding on a time trial basis. The pair were scheduled to be the fourth team to start but when another team experienced a few technical problems they moved up the line. This meant that they were the second team to start pedalling. Once they overtook the first team they had an open road ahead.

At maximum speed Mark and Liz were cycling at 28.7mph, on average they travelled at 18.24mph. Despite some windy turns and having to dodge some arable workers, they completed the marathon in 1 hour, 27 minutes and 23 seconds.

They were the first team to cross the finish line, though other competitors completed the route in faster times. Mark and Liz won the trophy for Best Improved time and came second in the Mixed Team category.



Keep those wheels moving. Mark and Liz race to the finish.