

BLIND AMBITION CAMPAIGN Rigid Lion Billy Whizz and The Flying Gunners

St Dunstan's Review

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September 2002



FOR BLIND EX-SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN

St Dunstan's Review

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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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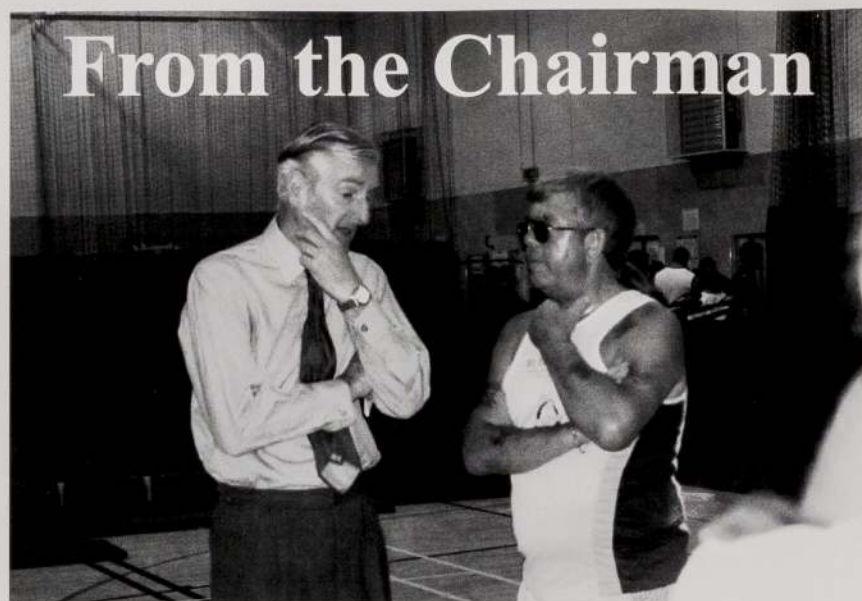
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Cover picture:
St Dunstaner Mark
Threadgold with Sapper
Steve Board zoom across
the Solent in preparation
for Operation Rigid Lion.

Full details on page 16.



The Chairman and Don Planner take a break from vigorous exercise during the HMS *Sultan* Sports Day.

I HAVE PAID tribute in previous issues to various departments within our great organisation who do not always make the headlines, but who are invaluable nevertheless. I want this time, to pick out the unsung heroes of Ovingdean, without whom the centre would not function. They work behind the scenes, often unnoticed and frequently unappreciated. I refer here to people such as our maintenance, security and reception teams, laundry and office staff, drivers, cleaners, kitchen staff, with apologies if I have left any out. We take for granted clean sheets on our beds, a lounge that is spick and span, windows that shut out the wind and rain and a car waiting for you just when you need it. On behalf of everyone who uses Ovingdean, I thank them all.

I am delighted that we continue to enjoy some close ties with serving members of HM Forces. The Royal Engineers recently made a car park for us at Ovingdean and the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines gave a third concert in what has now become an annual event for us. The "Blind Ambition" campaign continues on two fronts with Billy Baxter now an established member of the Flying Gunners motorcycle display team, leading towards his blind solo motorcycle record attempt in August 2003. Mark Threadgold, as you will read, was involved in an exciting boating adventure with a team from several different Regiments and Corps. These are excellent ways for St Dunstan's to spread its name amongst the Services, from whom we receive so much support.

Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN



NOTICE BOARD



BOOKING AND OCCUPYING ACCOMMODATION AT ST DUNSTAN'S OVINGDEAN

St Dunstan's Ovingdean can accept direct bookings for holidays only. Other bookings (including for holidays over the Christmas-New Year period) must be made through Welfare Officers. In order for you to be able to do this, it is of the utmost importance that you appreciate our requirements here at Ovingdean to ensure you are given the best bed allocation, care, attention, and a comfortable stay. Demand is now such that there are occasions when there is insufficient in-house accommodation to meet everybody's wishes. In these circumstances, we may have to limit the length of stays or apply a priority system, while those without overriding care needs may be offered sleeping accommodation in our close-by premises at Beacon Hill or Nevill Road as an alternative to not obtaining a place at all. In addition, we will cease to offer 'two weeks for the price of one' as from March 31st 2003.

Firstly, we have to point out that the Local Authorities register us and we have to abide by their regulations. **Anyone needing any supervision, support and/or care cannot be assigned to holiday beds.**

The interpretation of care is if you need:

- assistance with medications, oxygen, nebulisers, etc.
- injections, dressings to ulcers, wounds, etc. (however small)
- assistance with wheelchairs
- assistance with washing, bathing or dressing
- assistance with eating or drinking

We do have other options here at Ovingdean for those unable to be admitted into a holiday bed because they are in need of care. The two categories are:

Residential (short-stay respite)

Where Carers are able to help with items a, c, d and e above; or

Nursing (short-stay respite)

Where Registered Nurses and Carers are able to help with all categories above.

HOW TO BOOK

Holiday bookings should be made via our Bookings Coordinator, Jackie Castle on 01273 391422. Residential and Nursing Bookings for short-stay/Respite must be made through your Welfare Officer.

For direct holiday bookings you will continue to be sent an assessment sheet and we ask that you are frank and honest with your replies in order for us to assign you to the area of the home best suited for your needs. If, on arrival or subsequently, we find that your health and mobility are not appropriate for the holiday category, you will have three options:

- Transfer to Residential or Nursing bed (*dependent on need/bed availability*) and pay the appropriate rate.
- Return home.
- Transfer to the Accident & Emergency Unit (Sussex County Hospital) if your health is considered poor. In non-emergency cases of cancellation, a fee will be levied. Details follow.

CURRENT ACCOMMODATION CHARGES (Weekly Rates effective from April 12th 2002)

Residential (short-stay/Respite)	£149
Nursing (short-stay/Respite)	£242
Holiday	£142
Children aged between 3 & 14	£ 78

A surcharge will be applied for certain occasions or provisions e.g. Christmas, reflecting the additional costs incurred by St Dunstan's.

CANCELLATION AND AMENDMENT CHARGES

Cancellations, unless for a valid reason, can spoil someone else's chance of a holiday. Amendments, likewise, cause additional work and potential disappointment. We have had to introduce a cancellation charge as follows:

1 month's notice or more	no charge
2 - 4 weeks' notice	£25
Under 14 days' notice	£50

Amendments made after a booking has been confirmed will be charged a fee of £5. These charges may be waived in cases of exceptional circumstance or illness.

MISCELLANEOUS

In order that rooms can be properly prepared for subsequent occupants, you are kindly requested to vacate your room by 10am. Rooms may not be occupied on arrival until 12 noon. All linen and towels are supplied.

If these times are not convenient to your travel arrangements then, please, avail yourselves of our other facilities while you wait. Luggage may be stored temporarily at Reception.

For holiday stays

Please remember to bring adequate medications for the **whole** period of your stay. If a holiday visitor runs out of medication then the pharmacist can, in exceptional circumstances, issue a five-day supply of medications but there may be a charge of £4.85 per item issued. Normally, the visitor will meet this charge. Only emergency appointments can be made with the a) GP, b) Physiotherapist, c) Dentist, d) Chiropodist, e) Ophthalmic Surgeon, etc. A charge will be made to holiday visitors for b to e above.

We will always try to include you in any outings arranged for our permanent residents, subject to availability.

For Nursing/Residential stays

Please bring with you:

- Sufficient medication (in correctly labelled bottles, not medication wheels) to tide you over for the duration of your visit, or three days supply and a fresh prescription obtained from your GP for the remainder of your duration. This prescription is to be filled by the Pharmacist at Ovingdean only, not by your own Pharmacist at home.

It is very important to note that we can only use medication brought into the home by a St Dunstaner if the medication is very clearly labelled with the name of the patient, the name of the drug, the dose and frequency of administration. Medication cannot be used if it has been put into a different box or the label adjusted in any way.

- If you use a wheelchair then, please, bring it with you for your stay.

- Respite care nursing and residential visitors only see our GP in an emergency, not as a matter of routine.

TRANSPORT

Whilst St Dunstan's will usually provide free travel, St Dunstan's vehicles will normally only be provided for those unable to use public transport unless it is more practical or cost effective to provide Ovingdean vehicles. Welfare Officers should be consulted in cases of doubt.

In order to make best use of transport and drivers, car sharing may be required. Every effort will be made to make the journey as comfortable as possible. The Transport department will decide on the route taken, the type of vehicle used and the date and time of pick up and return. The Transport department will also liaise with the Head of Care when general transport is deemed unsuitable for those with a medical condition. The driver will contact you to give the details of the pickup some two days before coming to Ovingdean. Anyone taking regular medication and travelling in St Dunstan's vehicles should carry sufficient supplies for the journey. The driver will make your journey as comfortable as possible, making 'convenience' and refreshment stops as required. He will help with mobility to and from the restaurant or toilets but will not be able to provide 'nursing' or other intimate care. Anyone unwilling to comply with any of the above requirements will be responsible for arranging their own transport at their own cost.

If transport arrangements are altered by the user for reasons other than ill health or bereavement, and the Transport department cannot supply transport on the revised dates, the user will be responsible for making his or her own travel arrangements at his or her own expense.

However, if you are driven by your spouse/carer we will subsidise your travel mileage at (currently) 17p per mile. If you travel by train using a disabled rail card, we will reimburse you on production of your and your escort's tickets or receipt. In both cases, please see the Cashier (mornings only) on the First Floor before you leave.

PLEASE REMEMBER

1. Bookings cannot be taken more than six months in advance and will be confirmed at about the three month stage.

2. Special requests for particular rooms and/or equipment *e.g.* *Appollo baths* cannot always be met. (There are *Appollo baths*, *Clos-o-mat* toilets, walk-in showers, *Arjo baths*, etc. available to all on the nursing floors, on request).
3. Couples, unless requiring different types of care, cannot be provided with separate single rooms due to pressure on accommodation.
4. Unless there are overriding reasons of care need, accommodation may be offered at *Nevill Road* or *Beacon Hill* rather than in-house.
5. Please settle your bills before you leave. Failure to do so may mean that it will not be possible to offer you accommodation in the future.

GUIDE FOR HOLIDAY MAKERS

Holidays are for the independent, self-caring, mobile St Dunstaners, Spouses and Widows or Widowers. However, holidays can also be taken in the Nursing and Residential wings, if necessary, on a respite basis, which must be arranged through your Welfare Officer.

Think as if you are going to a hotel in the community, such as Brighton or Blackpool. Would you be able to look after yourself without carers?

The advantages of coming to Ovingdean are:

- To know you are safe and secure in an environment/building you know well.
- To mix with friends and colleagues.
- To join in the entertainment.
- St Dunstaners can use the craft workshop, gym and swimming pool. A GP's certificate will be required from those wishing to use the gym.
- To have good food.
- To be able to drink at the in-house bar.
- To join the outings with the permanent residential and nursing care St Dunstaners when space permits.
- To have a reasonable amount of laundry free of charge.
- To have newspapers available.
- To benefit from heavily subsidised accommodation charges.

- Free travel to and from Ovingdean with mileage/train fare reimbursement.

Should you need care/assistance by Ovingdean staff it is better to have respite residential or nursing care, so do let us know.

If an offer of guidance to show you around the building is overlooked, please ask and we will be delighted to familiarise you with the building.

I hope this information assists you to understand what will help us to provide you with an excellent, safe and happy holiday. We look forward to seeing you.

Dick Lake
Ovingdean Manager
St Dunstan's Ovingdean

"SHORING UP" THE SEA DEFENCES

The final phase of reconstruction work on Sea Defences, from Brighton Marina to Ovingdean, will commence in October. The Undercliff Walk will be closed from Marina Boatyard ramp to the east of Ovingdean. As a result, St Dunstan's has been asked to cease use of beach chalet No 7 by September 30th. Completion is expected to be in approximately 18 months, when it is understood that chalet facilities will be offered to St Dunstan's once again. On occasions the section of the promenade between Ovingdean and Rottingdean will also be closed to allow works traffic to and from the site.

In addition to renovating the promenade and reinforcing the existing sea defences, the works will involve a new café, toilets and chalets. Measures are also being taken to protect pedestrians from rock falls.

A Historical Note:

The Undercliff Walk was originally built in the 1930's at a cost of £360,000 as a job creation scheme during the recession. The estimated cost of the final phase of the current scheme is £10 million!

HISTORY AFLOAT

The history of the River Thames and archaeological finds from along its banks will be examined during a boat tour organised by London's Transport Museum and the Museum of London on September 26th. Adults cost £15 and details are available by telephoning 020 7814 5777 or by e-mailing groups@museumoflondon.org.

POMP AND PAGEANT FOR STAR AND GARTER

A concert in aid of The Royal Star & Garter Home will be held at Chichester Cathedral on Friday, September 27th. Featuring the Band of the Royal Artillery and the Choir of Chichester High School for Girls, it promises to be an evening filled with Pomp and Pageantry in celebration of Her Majesty's Golden Jubilee.

The concert starts at 7.30pm and doors open at 7pm. Tickets will be on sale on the night but can be purchased in advance from The Cathedral Shop on 01243 783390 or from Michael Kent of The Royal Star & Garter on 01903 265757 (answerphone). Tickets cost £7 and concessions are £6. Credit Cards are accepted.

DEVON HOLIDAYS

Cliffden Hotel, Teignmouth, Devon offers a dedicated service for blind holiday makers. All the staff have been trained to recognise and appreciate the needs and special requirements of visually impaired people. Guide dog owners will find all the facilities for looking after their guide dog.

The hotel has a number of themed breaks planned for later this year. They are also offering a special five night break at a £155 half board rate.

Themed breaks include:

Ramble and Amble	November 2nd to 9th
Teignmouth's Jazz Festival	November 14th to 17th
Activities Week	November 23rd to 30th
Lucky Dip	Nov 30th to Dec 7th
Traditional English	December 10th to 14th
Lull before the Storm	December 16th to 20th
Christmas	December 21st to 28th
New Year Celebration	Dec 28th to Jan 5th

For full details of these events and general breaks call Cliffden Hotel on 01626 770052 or e-mail cliffden_hotel@afbp.org.

DEADLINES FOR FUTURE ISSUES

The final date for submitting items for publication in the October *Review* is September 12th 2002.

The final date for submitting items for publication in the November *Review* is October 7th 2002.

ST DUNSTAN'S MAILING LIST

A mailing list is electronic noticeboard using e-mail where you can pose questions and get answers. Have you ever had a question regarding your visual impairment that you cannot solve or want to share with others? Is there a piece of technical equipment that you have forgotten how to use? Is there a problem regarding, for example, day-to-day living?

The idea of a mailing list is to post your query or problem to the list where there is likely to be someone with the knowledge to answer it. Within St Dunstan's we have a vast range of experience.

If you are interested in joining, then please send a blank e-mail to vi-std-subscribe@topica.com. This will not automatically enrol you. You then need to reply to a confirmation e-mail that they send you and then David Poyner, who is managing the list, has to authorise you to join. All mail will be vetted. This is to stop the mailing list becoming libellous, out of order or used for chat.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Jenny Gordon-Lennox, wife of our Chairman, on being made a Lieutenant of the Victorian Order in the special Honours list. Jenny was a Lady-in-Waiting to the late Queen Mother.

GO TO THE DOGS WITH SSAFA

The Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association - Forces Help will be hosting a Night at the Dogs on October 3rd. This annual Event at Monmore Green Greyhound Stadium, Wolverhampton, commences at 6.30pm. The price of a three-course meal is £16. All proceeds to SSAFA Forces Help Walsall Branch. Contact Bob Hopkins on 01902 634016 for details.

BRaille CORRESPONDENCE

Brenda Stephenson would be happy to correspond with any braillists amongst St Dunstan's community. Write to her at 1 Greys Road, Woodthorpe, Nottingham NG5 4GU.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to The Editor are always welcome. Write to the Editor, St Dunstan's Review, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD. Telephone 020 7723 5021 or e-mail ray.hazan@st-dunstans.org.uk.

From: Elspeth Grant, Saffron Walden, Essex

I was totally overcome and speechless when I was presented at Prize Giving at HMS *Sultan* with the really beautiful crystal rose but I cannot let the occasion go by without thanking all the St Dunstaners, the camp 'dogs' and helpers for this lovely gift. I was truly touched. I have enjoyed every moment of the last 30 years – has it really been that long? – of my connection with St Dunstan's and the organising of the camp. The many friends I have made over the years has been a joy and I really do not know what I would have done without you all. Age is catching up with me as it is with us all but I hope I will be able to continue with you all for a while at least. Meanwhile, thank you all so much for all you have given me – fun, tears, laughter and much happiness – and this lovely Rose!

From: Thomas and Grace Renshaw, Radcliffe on Trent, Nottinghamshire

We would like to thank our friends and the Welfare department for the beautiful flower arrangement sent on our 62nd wedding anniversary. It gave much pleasure!

From: Liz Pearce

I would like to thank everyone in the South West who has been so kind as to send cards and flowers during my recent month's sick leave - I hope to be out of plaster and back on the road in mid-September.

Best Wishes to Mary

On July 31st, Mary Comberbach retired as secretary to Welfare Officer Carol Henderson. Mary has worked for St Dunstan's for 14 years and is known by many St Dunstaners and widows in the North West.

Carol said, "Mary has been a enormous help and support to me and I will miss her greatly. I know we all wish her a long and happy retirement."

Life and Times of Ovingdean

by Lyn Mullins

WELL HERE WE are at Ovingdean in the middle of another summer, and unfortunately a very wet one too. In July we had our annual Ladies' Reunion. All the lady St Dunstaners enjoyed a week of visits out and in house entertainment and of course the chance to catch up with old friends and make some new ones. Betty Parkin gives a full report on page 12.

One day when we were much luckier with the weather was July 24th when we were entertained by the Band of The Royal Marines, Portsmouth. The sun shone as we drank Pimms, ate cream teas and listened to the wonderful music in the inner garden. The Director of Music had only been with the Band for three weeks. They played a selection of military music and show favourites. Among the many St Dunstaners and guests who joined us for the day were colleagues from the Princess Marina home in Rustington, Sussex, down in Storrington and Gifford House in Worthing. It was very nice to share such a lovely occasion with them all.

The fete on July 27th proved a popular draw and a full account appears on page 10.

August 8th was another very busy day at Ovingdean with the blessing of the newly refurbished chapel. The Right Reverend John Hind, Bishop of Chichester conducted the service which was attended by the Mayor of Brighton and Hove. Afterwards there was a buffet lunch for all in the ballroom. More details on page 9.

We recently visited Ashdown Forest, they have over 100 llamas on the farm. We were allowed to stroke a baby llama. This "baby" was about 18 months old and came up to my shoulders!! It was an interesting day and really quite amazing - so soft their fur is and how sweet natured they are considering that they are part of the camel family. We had been told that they spit but none of us got spat at!

As we come into the end of August, we enter the time of the year for the various airshows here in Sussex. St Dunstaners are planning to visit both the Eastbourne and Shoreham airshows this year, and along with the organisers, are praying for no rain!!



VICTORY OVER BLINDNESS

Chairman pays tribute to golden examples of St Dunstan's spirit

Struck in gold, the St Dunstan's Jubilee Badge has the familiar blazing torch motif, but carries an italic 50 above the crossbar. The curved edges are striped red, white and blue.

Harry Preedy, blinded 62 years ago, is presented with his jubilee badge. The Chairman made similar presentations to "Tiny" Pointon (top right) and Ray Sherrif (right).



THE COURAGE of long-standing St Dunstaners was feted during a presentation of jubilee badges at Ovingdean on August 8th. Our Chairman, Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox explained that the occasion of Her Majesty The Queen's Golden Jubilee seemed an appropriate time to recognise those who had been St Dunstaners for 50

years or more. Many of those present have actually been St Dunstaners for a lot longer than half a century.

Harry Preedy, currently our longest serving St Dunstaner, having been blinded over 62 years ago, was amongst those to receive the commemorative badge. He served with The Cameronians as a Rifleman.

In all, the Chairman made 14 presentations to St Dunstaners who had served in Army, Navy and Air Force before being blinded in their respective theatres of conflict.

Some had lost their sight on the battlefield or at sea, others as a result of the extreme conditions experienced as prisoners in the Far East.

Fred Bentley, Bernard Blacker, Colin Fraser, Ron Freer, Theo Giles, Reg Goding, John Perfect, Gomer Hopkins, Bill Phillips, "Tiny" Pointon, Jack Pryor, Ray Sheriff, and Paul Walker were all commended.



Jack Pryor with the Chairman.



Para St Dunstaner Paul Walker receives his badge from the Chairman.

BLESS THIS HOUSE



Above: The Bishop of Chichester leads the congregation in song. Left: Nigel Whiteley was Standard bearer during the proceedings. Right inset: The blessing of the Chapel by Bishop John Hind.

Bishop re-dedicates St Dunstan's Chapel

ST DUNSTAN'S CHAPEL was blessed by The Bishop of Chichester on August 8th. The Right Reverend John Hind was following in the footsteps of his predecessor Dr George Bell who conducted the service of dedication at the chapel on October 25th 1938. The new ecumenical ceremony followed a period of refurbishment to the building, most significantly repairing a leaking roof.

St Dunstaner Nigel Whiteley stood to attention with our Standard as the congregation came in, filling the hall to exclusion. Guests included the Mayor and Mayoress of Brighton, MP Desmond Turner and former Ovingdean Commandant Arthur Neve. After a brief welcome from St Dunstan's Chaplain Father Tony Otterwell, Nigel marched down the aisle and handed the standard to His Grace, The Bishop. Following the first hymn and prayer St Dunstaner

Ron Cattell read from *Corinthians* while our Chairman Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox read *Psalms* 83:3-5. *The Gospel* was read by former Chaplain to St Dunstan's Father Duncan Lloyd-James. The Bishop then addressed those assembled, speaking of Dunstan's life and determined faith.



John and Audrey Perfect greet the Bishop.

THIS ISN'T WHAT I MEANT BY A ROCK AND ROLL LIFESTYLE

Laughter and frolics at Ovingdean funday



Les Copeland chuckles along with the Punch and Judy Show.

St Dunstan's Head of Care Jacqueline Greer holds on for dearlife while riding the robotic rodeo.



Actress Dora Bryan asked everyone to enjoy themselves while supporting St Dunstan's.

Dora was re-acquainted with St Dunstaner Nancy Chadwick. The pair originally met up at Royton Cricket Club when Dora's husband was playing cricket.

AROUND A THOUSAND people strolled out in the sun to show their support for St Dunstan's when they attended a fun day at Ovingdean on July 27th. The event was opened by actress and entertainer Dora Bryan who currently appears in *Last of the Summer Wine*.

A mix of face-painting, bouncy castles and miniature railway proved an enticing lure for young families. Other highlights of the day included a band from HMS *Sultan*, Sgt Stone's Punch and Judy show and a robotic rodeo.

SHOW STEALER

Darrell Peters, St Dunstan's Security Assistant, stole the show with a trio of classic cars including a prize-winning 1958 Rover P4 75. Walter Briggs pointed out that he had once owned a similar model, though he had paid considerably less than the estimated five-figure sum attributed to Darrell's car.

The day concluded with the release of several hundred helium filled balloons which flew off majestically over the roof of St Dunstan's Ovingdean. All were tagged with addressed reply cards for the people that find them to send in. The one that travels the furthest wins a £50 prize. At least one made it out of Sussex - it followed its purchaser back home to the Kent borders.



Darrell adds a little shine to his vintage Rover.



St Dunstaners Alice Gimbere, Archie Luxton and Jim Moffatt soak up the sun in Ovingdean.

St Dunstaner Betty Parkin reports on the Ladies' Reunion

It rained on our parade

A SCOT FASHIONS? No! Raincoats and sou'westers were the rig. The weather was not kind to us during the Ladies' Reunion held between July 8th and 13th.

On Monday evening the get-together was soon brightened by Lynn Mullins' company, sherry and biscuits. We were mostly of 'vintage' era but younger voices soon joined the discussions on the programme.

Tuesday was a shopping trip to Crawley. Rain did not matter in a huge shopping Mall with every possible kind of shop. At least that is how it seemed to one unused to such concentrations. The lifts with their secret routine turned the whole trip into an adventure. Lunch was taken in cafes of our choice before the long drive back.

Wednesday was marked by a special lunch in the Winter Garden. There were 12 St Dunstaners and some specially invited guests, staff, helpers and escorts. We were joined by Dick Lake who spoke of his Naval background and his further work in social welfare, also of the future plans and hopes of St Dunstan's. After lunch he seemed to enjoy chatting with those present. The splendid meal was enjoyed by all and our thanks go to PBK. Later the garden made a good place to enjoy the sudden sunshine amid its wealth of blossom and colour.

Thursday we left for the drive to Fishbourne to view the excavated Roman Palace. The sun shone whilst we drove through beautiful countryside and it was good to hear that the cows and sheep were grazing safely again. Despite the effort required in guiding or pushing

chairs along tricky wooden paths, our escorts did a wonderful job describing such a wide area of ruins and mosaic pavements. Ploughman's lunches were served in the site café and we drove back via Arundel with a short stop beside the River Arun, with its swans.

Friday – Rain stopped play. The trip to Sheffield Park and the outdoor lunch had to be cancelled. Instead we set out for Arundel Castle. Before reaching there the staff and escorts, in a wonderful effort, served us with a picnic lunch, and tea or coffee, in the coach. They did work hard. Arundel Castle, the library and the chapel are magnificent but difficult for access with wheel chairs. My escort and I did a tour of seemingly unused corridors before having to be let out from a heavily barred door. Once again the staff managed to serve tea in the coach.

On Saturday we attended the annual fete of a local school with the usual festivities of stalls, bands and singing. And the sun shone!

On Sunday we visited the vineyard, where we had tea, strawberries and cream. There was wine on sale in the shop and a selection of goods knitted with llama wool. Some of these animals were to be seen in a field nearby.

Crosswords, quizzes, dominoes and bingo enlivened the evenings and the warm welcome that is so much a part of St Dunstan's embraced us all. To the staff, escorts, helpers and the drivers whose interesting comments enriched our rides and to each and all who made our reunion a time of talking, listening and of great enjoyment, we send our very sincere thanks.



St Dunstaner Norman Perry drives a GAFIRS Lifeboat. About 12 St Dunstaners took turns driving the Avon RIBs on the Solent.

SULTAN SCRAPBOOK

The annual camp at HMS *Sultan* on July 26th to August 1st was filled with the usual hijinks and camaraderie. We hope to have a full report next issue.



Bryan Alexander throws himself into the shot-put with customary vigour.



Mark Brewin enlists the aid of Carl Williams for the Walking Race.

Ten questions on ...

The British Royal Family

- 1) Who was named as the BBC Sports Personality of the Year in December 1971?
- 2) Which member of the Royal Family shares his initials with the organisation, Child Poverty Action Group?
- 3) According to Wisden Cricketers' Almanack, which future king performed a hat-trick, dismissing a reigning king and two future kings with three successive slow left-arm deliveries?
- 4) What are Queen Elizabeth II's two other Christian names?
- 5) Which of the Queen's grandchildren shares her name with that of the last Empress of France?
- 6) What relation is Prince William to Queen Victoria?
- 7) Who was the first British monarch to learn how to drive a car?
- 8) Who was the last British monarch to be married whilst on the throne?
- 9) The first Investiture of the Queen's reign took place at Buckingham Palace on February 27th 1952. The first person to be presented was Private William Speakman, of The King's Own Scottish Borderers, who received the Victoria Cross for his actions during which war?
- 10) Over the reign, Her Majesty has given regular Tuesday evening audiences to how many Prime Ministers?

Answers on page 25.



How many Flying Gunners does it take to ride a motorcycle?



Billy in action, trying a wheelie during a training session.

ALTHOUGH BILLY has a year to go before making his Land Speed Record attempt he is already preparing for the event, and has been appearing in public with the Flying Gunners, the Royal Artillery's famed motorcycle display team.

Recent months have seen Billy join them in a variety of arenas such as Cromer Carnival, the Game & Country Fair and Liverpool's first military show.

The show starts with Billy riding into the arena - solo - while a quadbike trails him with the rider offering directions over a radio coms system.

During this, The Flying Gunners' Graham Footer tells the audience that Billy lost his sight after a tour in Bosnia, the work of St Dunstan's and of Billy's ambition to set a Solo Landspeed record.

Billy rejoins the show later on for "The Tulip" where he links up with the Flying Gunners at the centre of a five-man formation riding on a single motorcycle (pictured left).

There was an extra challenge for Billy at the Edinburgh Truck Fest in August. The arena was particularly muddy in the wake of a combination of heavy rain and heavy vehicles. However, Billy navigated his way across the slippery surface with distinct aplomb.

"If you could bottle the feeling of riding a motorcycle blind you would be a millionaire," said Billy.

Helping blind ex-Service men and women to achieve the ordinary and the extraordinary

Billy gets his whizz



St Dunstan's original blind speed king Ken Moss introduces Billy Baxter and Martin Lambert from Kawasaki Motors UK.

Simon Rogers reports

ST DUNSTANER Billy Baxter declared his intention to set a new blind land speed record on a motorcycle at the Super Bike Show at Brands Hatch on July 26th.

Billy was introduced to assembled supporters including The Flying Gunners, TV presenter Jane Omorogbe (former Miss UK-finalist and Gladiator Rio), sponsors and St Dunstaners by Ken Moss who set the Solo Blind Landspeed Record.

Martin Lambert, Marketing Manager of Kawasaki Motors UK presented Billy with an unmodified, high performance Kawasaki Ninja ZX-12R motorcycle. Billy will ride solo on this top performing supersport bike for his daredevil

challenge on August 2nd-3rd 2003. The bike has a new aluminium monocoque frame, revised steering geometry and a powerful engine. It is reputed to be the world's only true ultrasports machine.



Martin, Billy and Graham Footer from the Flying Gunners with the bike.

AN AMBITION TO ACHIEVE

IN THE 1960's St Dunstan's agreed to cease fundraising as it was thought that sufficient funds were available for the foreseeable future. Subsequently, this proved not to be the case, but as a result of this action St Dunstan's fell from the public consciousness. Thus, despite 87 years of caring for blind ex-Service men and women the majority of the public is unaware of St Dunstan's work.

The Blind Ambition Campaign has been set up to raise public awareness of the charity through extraordinary activities that individual St Dunstaners wish to achieve following rehabilitation and training. The campaign will also provide a platform upon which the charity aims to raise a target figure of £100,000.

The campaign has been launched with three endeavours. Ex-Royal Horse Artillery Staff Sergeant Billy Baxter will be making a World Land Speed Record attempt on a motorcycle, ex-Royal Signals Sergeant Mark Threadgold aims to set a World Blind Endurance Record in a RIB (Rigid Inflatable Boat) and 16 year old Army Cadet Stephen Menary will parachute jump with the Red Devils.

Anna Robinson
PR and Events Manager

"The only problem is, I run out of ways to say how great this is"

The Chance of a Lifetime

by Mark Threadgold

WHEN I WAS ASKED if I would take part in a powerboat event being organised by a team of serving soldiers, I couldn't resist it. To then be told it would be an attempt on the powerboat endurance driving world record was the icing on the cake. Major John Winskill, Royal Scots, had organised a trip around mainland Great Britain for a group of volunteer young soldiers. The finale to this event was to be the world record distance endurance attempt for a blind cox on August 18th, following their 3,200 mile trip. I will have full control of the boat throughout and, being totally blind, will have a sighted guide assisting me.

The chance to set a new World record for powerboat driving is a once in a lifetime opportunity. The present record stands at some two and a half miles as

part of the previously set speed record for a blind cox. In order to break this by a significant distance, a circumnavigation of the Isle of Wight was ventured. Being around 56 miles, this event should take between two-and-a-half to three hours, but

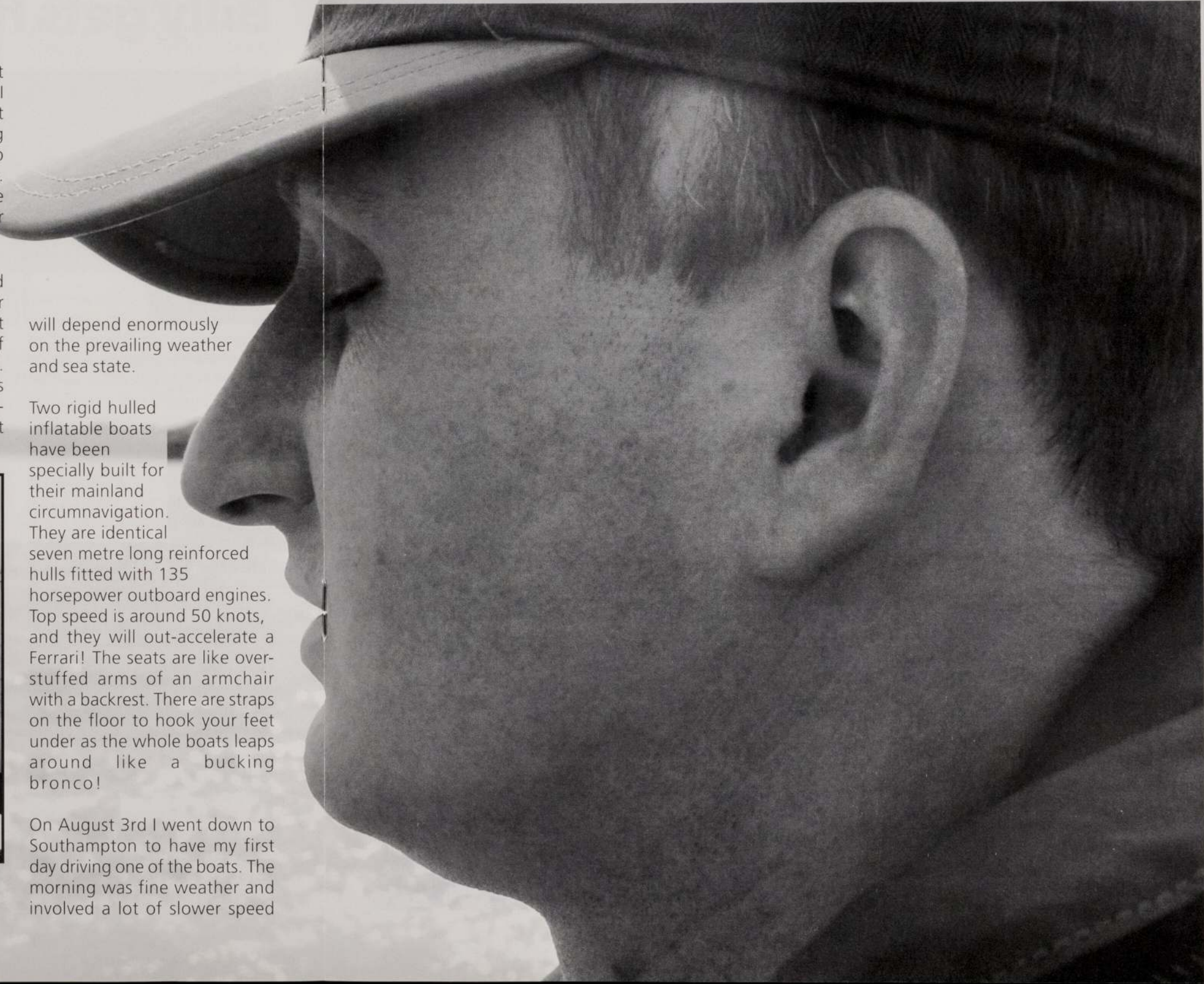
will depend enormously on the prevailing weather and sea state.

Two rigid hulled inflatable boats have been specially built for their mainland circumnavigation. They are identical seven metre long reinforced hulls fitted with 135 horsepower outboard engines. Top speed is around 50 knots, and they will out-accelerate a Ferrari! The seats are like overstuffed arms of an armchair with a backrest. There are straps on the floor to hook your feet under as the whole boats leaps around like a bucking bronco!

On August 3rd I went down to Southampton to have my first day driving one of the boats. The morning was fine weather and involved a lot of slower speed



Mark familiarises himself with the RIB's controls.





Mark with the Rigid Lion Crew at Southampton.

manoeuvring to get used to the handling of it. The lucky individual giving me instruction and sighted guidance was Steve Board. Steve is a Sapper in the Royal Engineers and will skipper one of the two ribs on their trip round Great Britain. His commentary on both our progress and the surrounding boat traffic was excellent, and we quickly had the basic instructions sorted out. While we were learning this, the other boat followed us with the St Dunstan's film crew on board. They didn't get much footage after lunch, however, as the rain set in with a vengeance! This did not deter us from getting up more speed and having another hour-and-a-half driving practice.

The following Tuesday saw the launch of the round Britain trip and I was invited back to do more filming and drive the boat once again. Ray Hazan was given a seat in the second boat for the morning, and we both enjoyed some white-knuckle rides as they showed everyone

what they could do. As we were out in the Solent I had the privilege of driving through the afternoon again. It was exhilarating powering through the waves at high speed and almost jumping some of them. On the way back up the Solent we managed to reach a top speed of 35 knots.

HMS *Belfast*, moored in London as a floating museum, is the location of the launch of the event to the press on the August 16th. This should serve to lift the profile of both achievements by the blind community and the excellent support given to us all by St Dunstan's. From here we head back to Southampton to take the challenge on the morning of the 18th.

With enormous confidence in

both the boat and my sighted guide, my feelings are of anticipation and pure excitement. Many thanks are due to all those who have contributed to this amazing opportunity.



Editor's note:

Did Mark succeed? Time prevented us waiting to publish until after the attempt on the 18th. The final report will appear in the October issue.

My Life Story

A very personal history by St Dunstan's Widow Rose Shed

I WAS BORN IN STREATHAM, London on June 21st 1916. My mother's name was Ellen, Nellie for short. My father's name was Ernest George Underwood, but people used to call him Nobby. I had two brothers, George was the eldest, then Ted, and two sisters, Olive and Ethel. We lived in a small upstairs flat which had two bedrooms, a kitchen and a scullery. There was a range in the kitchen where most of the cooking was done and a stone copper in the scullery where the washing was done. Well, it was boiled very white. My Grandmother had one of the bedrooms and we were all in the other one.

There were two big beds and a cot which really was an orange box made into a cradle. We had no floor covering; everything was scrubbed white, the stairs, table and chairs; we had to work hard.

IN THOSE DAYS my mother was never very well and my dad never treated her right. When we had to go and get our Mum's medicine for her we had to take a bottle and paid threepence for it, then we went to get ours. She

used to mend our shoes. We had to go and get a shillingsworth of leather and we were told to get a thick piece so it would last us. My mother also took in washing and ironing. I used to stand and watch her doing the ironing and then we had to take it to the Lady. I can't remember how much my mother got paid for it, not a lot. If she was going to carry a pot from the scullery to the kitchen to put it on the hob she asked me to walk behind her in case she fell. I used

It turned out to be a workhouse

to do it, I don't know what would have happened if she had fallen.

One day my mother was in bed and she said to me "I am going into hospital, will you look after Ethel and Olive for me?" I said I would, but I was only ten myself. Ethel was three years old and Olive was two, Brother Ted was eleven and George was about thirteen. She told me we were going into a home.

When we went in this home it turned out to be a workhouse with a big wall round it; there was no way you could get out of it, we looked. The classroom was upstairs, so we never walked anywhere. (It was in Swaffield Road and run by the Wandsworth Union and Parish Association. It was closed shortly after the end of World War II though part of the building still stands and has been converted into flats.)

When I got in they said to me "Come up to the dormitory and I will show you how to make the bed." I was up there all the afternoon. As soon as I made it she pulled it to pieces and made me do it again! At last I got it right and so I could go downstairs. By this time it was teatime and I was told to hand round the bread, two slices each and no more. Ted said to me "Try to get the crusts to me, it will fill me up more" Sometimes I could not manage to get to him and he used to grumble at me.

In the mornings we had porridge for breakfast which had lumps of cement which had fallen off the wall in the kitchen, also there was a lot of big black beetles floating in it - I made sure I never got any of them! On Friday we used to have fish which had a lot of salt in it and potatoes which had no salt in them and we were made to eat

it, we could not leave it. Afterwards we had to have some white mixture which was horrible, that was every Friday.

Ethel and Olive used to wet their pants now and then so I used to creep up into the dormitory and climb up the cupboard and get them some clean ones and put the others down the loo, otherwise they would have been hit.

One day a nurse said to me "Your brother has gone into hospital with diphtheria." The next day they told me that Olive had gone away as well. After that they told me that Ethel had gone as well, but she was very ill and on the danger list and wasn't expected to live, so I was left in there on my own.

A little while after that they told me that I was going home. I could see my mum sitting by the fire waiting for me, but when they came it was my Aunt and my Grandmother, both dressed in black. I asked them why they were in black. I never thought of what I was about to hear. We got round the corner at the bus stop and they kept nodding to one another, then my Aunt said "I will go into the shop." When she went my Grandmother said "You won't see your mum again because she has gone to Heaven." My mother was only 36. I don't know what happened after that - I must have fainted because I cannot remember getting on the tram to come home or to get to my Aunt's house. Well, I lived with my Aunt. She had about five children, the eldest was the same age as me.

When I first went there we were having tea and they said to me "Would you like some more bread?" and I said "I have had my two pieces" and of course they thought that was funny. My aunt

was very good to take me in, but I had to work or take the baby out.

THEN MY DAD brought a woman home. I have forgotten to say that Ethel and Olive and Ted went round to my Grandmother's and they had to sleep on the floor. Well, he brought this woman home and she was awful. She made us go and wash as soon as we got home from school and then go and get the shopping in for the next day and then go to bed. Well, one day she made a bread and butter pudding and it was horrible, but she made us eat it every day until it was gone. Then one day we went to school as usual and when

"Your brother has gone into hospital with diphtheria."

we got home she had gone and had taken my mum's wedding ring, the rent and the insurance money off the dresser, but all this time we never saw our father, I don't know where he was.

Then I went back to my aunt's and the little ones and Ted went back to my Grandmother's. I don't remember how long we were back with them. Then my father brought another woman home. I hated her, she was so lazy, she never did anything. She never did any housework, she used to tell us what to do. She gave me some pearls and every time I put them on I felt sick, so I put them in the dustbin. Anyway, one day she went also. My father went with

her and left us on our own for a while and we got very hungry. One day he came back and he brought a top of a cottage loaf. He cut it up and gave everyone a piece except me and I was so hungry I went down on to the step and I sat down and cried. The lady next door came out to me and said "Never mind, Rosie, I will give you some bread and dripping", then my brother Ted came out and the lady said to him "It's all right for you, you've got your bread buttered both sides" and he said to me "I haven't got my bread buttered both sides, have I, Rose." Then I felt sorry for him.

After that my dad hit me whenever he could. Sometimes he hit me and said "That's because you are sniffing" and it was the buckle end of his belt. We never had any shoes, well, I never, and someone gave me a pair of gaiters. They fitted over your shoes, so it hid the fact that I never had any shoes on and my dad said "Look at her, it looks like two matchsticks in tree trunks", and he laughed. One day he went out and never came back, so we were left on our own. I don't know where my brother George had been all this time. I suppose he had been living at home by himself because he was 15 years old. I looked after my two sisters the best I could. At times we were very cold. We burnt everything we could move, all the chairs, the shelves, there was nothing left. I went out doorstep cleaning. They gave me threepence and I bought a pennyworth of tea, a pennyworth of milk and sugar. We had no gas to boil the kettle up on, well, we never had a kettle, it was a saucepan and George used to hold it on the open fire. We never had much to eat; we used to wait for the lady next door to call us to give us her leavings. She had a lot

of children, so it was good of her to think of us. One day we were very hungry and Ted said to me "I know what to do, we will wet some coats and put them in a sack. When the rag and bone man comes round we will give it to him, it will weigh heavy". We did, and we got two shillings and sixpence. We thought "At last we can get something to eat." Them thoughts never lasted long because he soon came back and said next time he would call the police, so we never done that again.

ANOTHER TIME my brother came in and said "I know where we can get something to eat." We went down to the allotments and dug up some roots - I know now they were artichokes and we ate them. The Salvation Army gave us some food once.

I remember one Christmas I went to clean the doorstep. Well it was after Christmas because my brother Ted said he would come with me. We knocked at the door and the lady came to answer the door. She said "come in." My brother was pleased because we were cold, but I had to clean her steps and when I finished she gave us the carcass of the chicken or turkey. Whatever it was, it was very good!

I think it was that Christmas that my brother and I spent Christmas alone, I don't know where Ethel and Olive had gone to. We had nothing to eat, but Ted said to me, "Let us sing out loud, so the lady next door will think we are having a nice time." It must have sounded awful because neither of us could sing. We found a hat that was different coloured straw. We pulled it to pieces and made paper chains.

My brother George asked me to stand near the window and see if

anyone threw a cigarette end down, and if they did I had to run downstairs and get it for him. While I was looking out of the window I saw two men standing over the road. I told my brother and he said "Don't take any notice of them, if they knock don't let them in." Well, they did knock and the old lady downstairs opened the door and they came up and told us we couldn't stop there any longer because we hadn't paid any rent. We hadn't had any gas for a long time. Of course we never paid for anything, we had no money. They put the iron bedstead and the coats which were our bedclothes out in the street. Then my aunt Nesta came and took me to her house and Ethel and Olive to my Grandmother's (my father's

My job was to work a capstan all day from eight in the morning until six in the evening

mother). They didn't stay there for very long, they were put in a home. Ted was put on a training ship and George got to Scotland and joined the Black Watch. (He was killed in Crete in 1943). I stayed at my aunt's house. It was good of her to have me because she had five children of her own, so it must have been a struggle to keep me, because I don't think she got any money for me. I had to work, I had to clean the scullery and whiten all round the cooker and scrub the other part, then when we had our tea I had to

take the baby out and my aunt's eldest girl was able to go out and play. She had a scooter and she wouldn't let me have a go - at the time I thought she was very mean.

I went to work in 1930, when I was 14, to a factory which made gas meters. I started on the drill, tapping machine and then the capstan. It was hard work. I stayed at my aunt's until I was old enough to leave at 16 and then I went into lodgings in West Norwood, near Crystal Palace. My landlady was an awful person, I had to do all the washing up and wiping and I had to clean my own room and make my bed before I came out in the morning. I walked to work, which was about four or five miles, then when I got there my job was to work a capstan all day from eight in the morning until six in the evening. I used to walk to work with two friends. We had a lot of fun and we used to find money on the common where couples had been courting and it fell out of their pockets, so we bought three pennyworth of stale cakes and ate them on the way home. I stayed there for about six months then my aunt asked me to go back to her house. I think she wanted the money more than me. Anyway, I went back on my conditions that I never had to have the baby. I didn't have so far to walk in the mornings and I could go out when I wanted to, so I was better off in lots of ways.

MEETING GEORGE

BEFORE I MET GEORGE I was engaged to another one, but that only lasted for a few months. I think I only did it for the ring. He was a silly chap, he kept buying me boxes of chocolates and I got fed up with him. Well, then I used to go out with my friends every night and we had lots of fun. We

used to go on Streatham Common, well, not exactly on the common, at the bottom. One evening George said "Would you like to have a ride on my bike." I said I would, but I said "You must keep to the road." He said he would, so we went for a nice ride and I enjoyed it. Then he said "Would you like to come to Littlehampton for a ride out," and that was how it started. We went out together for about four years. I got on with his mum and dad very well and his brother Bid. I took George home to my aunt's house but she didn't like him. She liked the one I was engaged to, in fact she kept in touch with him until he married, then he still went down there. Well, I stayed there until I got married. They were very good to me in the end. We had no money.

When we said we would get married George's Mum was very good; she had the cake made for us with a motor bike on it - it was very nice. My aunt and uncle gave me the wedding breakfast but we went to church on the bus. It was the 118 bus from Mitcham to Streatham Vale. Luckily it stopped right outside the church. We were going to tour around for our honeymoon, but it rained a lot so we never did anything.

We had a room in George's Mum's and we lived in with his mum and dad. I was all right at first then his mum said "Do George's sandwiches, don't cut them like that, do it this way" and every Sunday after dinner they used to go to bed and leave me to do the washing up and clean the cooker and wash the floor. I soon got fed up with that, so George said we would get a place of our own, which we did. His dad didn't like it and told us to get out and not come back, well, he never said that, he said "If you go don't ever

come back." Well, we never had to because we got a self-contained flat across the road. But we soon made it up and were good friends after.

GEORGE AND I WENT to work. We never ever had any money between us but we never worried about it. We had the motor bike which we went out on every weekend, we never stayed in. We had a good two years and then the war came. It was on a Sunday lunchtime. I was cooking the dinner, but George, who had been working as a bricklayer, got on his bike and went and joined the fire service. He did quite well in it, but he didn't like it. I think it was all

George came home on leave when Pat was about two years old. I think that was the last time he saw her.

the dead bodies he had to move because there were quite a lot of air raids. He passed out as a fireman and got a Diploma. It wasn't long before they sent for him once he came out of the Fire Service. I carried on working and George was stationed in England. He got some leave because he got impetigo, and that's when I think I fell for Pat, our daughter. I carried on working until I was seven months. Pat was born and I stayed home until she was eight months old. George's mum said she would have her for me as we never got a lot of Army pay. I think it was ten shillings and sixpence a week, but things were a lot cheaper in those days. I could buy 16 eggs for one shilling - that's five pence these days.

The air raids were awful. I never knew what day it was. I never got undressed at night because when

the siren went I had to get up and wrap Pat in a shawl and run across the road to get down the shelter. It was very frightening, everything was pitch black and I used to walk sideways because I was frightened of falling over with the baby. Sometimes, going sideways to get over the road in case I tripped over the kerb, I would find myself at the bottom of the road and have to walk back.

THEN I THOUGHT I would stay in the hallway of my own house - it was only a passage because it was a self-contained flat. One night they brought a big gun outside of our house and the soldier shouted "Fire!" It was

awful, the door nearly came in, so that put paid to that. I went over to George's mum and dad's Anderson shelter at the bottom of their garden after that. We used to hear the bombs coming down, we were told if you could hear them coming down you were safe, they would miss you.

George came home on leave when Pat was about two years old. I think that was the last time he saw her.

Well, the war was still going on and the bombs were falling. We were in the shelter when a bomb fell very near us. It tipped the shelter up at one end - that was a near miss.

It got so bad we had to go away. We got billeted down in Launceston, Cornwall. We went to this old man's house. He was very mean - he didn't have a

Round about 12 noon I came over bad

fridge so he kept all his food in the larder. There were no shops near us. We walked about eight miles to the shops and we went into a shop and asked for some tomatoes. They said "They are for our own people" and they wouldn't serve us. I don't know how long we were in Cornwall, but when we got home our ceilings were down, everything I had on the dresser was broken, curtains were all torn, it was a real mess. All the windows were out. I don't remember who put them in, I suppose it was the landlord. Anyway, the war was still going on, but it was getting quieter, not so many raids.

It was very funny, on Sunday, March 18th, my auntie asked me down for dinner. I felt OK - I had walked down to her house with the pram and I felt fine. Round about 12 noon I came over bad. I said "I must go home". I left my aunt's house and got home. I took the baby over the road to George's Mum. She said I looked awful, so I went to bed. Afterwards I found out that was the exact time George was blown up.

George wrote to me quite often. I didn't hear for a while, but I never worried, because it was only two weeks that I hadn't heard. Then I got a letter from the War Office to say that George had been wounded and had hurt his arm.

Two or three days after the first letter I got another one to say he was on the danger list, but they would keep me informed. A week went by, then a letter came to say that his face was badly cut, he had lost one eye and they were trying to save the other. Another letter came to say his arm was badly

wounded and he had lost his thumb, then the last letter said, he had lost his right leg and his left leg was wounded. I rang the War Office to ask if I could go to him - of course, they said no.

Well, George was brought back to England by boat. They put him on a stretcher and left him on the platform and a sergeant came up to him and said "What are you doing here?" George said "I don't know." The sergeant said "Do you know you're on the wrong platform?" George said "You had better read my notes." He ended up North, I can't remember the name of the place. I could not get up there, I never had the money. I went to the CAB and they could not lend it to me, but in one or two days he was brought down to a London hospital. When George came round in hospital someone was singing "You'll never walk alone" and he thought he was finished. He wondered what could he do, then a lady from St Dunstan's spoke to him and she told him what he could do. She gave him his watch, which he thought was wonderful because he was able to tell the time.

His Mum and I went to see him and we promised one another not to cry. Well, the hospital had a lot of dark passages we had to walk down. When we got to the ward they said I had to go and see the Matron first, so I thought "I know why." I thought "He hasn't got his nose" and before she could say anything to me I said "Has he lost

his nose?" She laughed at me and said, "No, his face is very mauve, but that will fade in time."

GEORGE WAS SITTING UP in bed, he was very jolly and joking. A nurse brought his tea. He had sandwiches - it was awful watching him feel for the plate. After he finished the sandwiches the nurse brought him some trifle and he put his spoon down in the dish and took an empty spoon to his mouth. I looked at his Mum, she looked at me and we were both crying, but we never let him know.

The next time we went we took our daughter Pat. She was two years old and I thought I would tell her that her daddy would not be able to see her as he had hurt his eyes. I thought he would be in bed and she would not know about his leg, but he was sitting on the bed. She said, "Hello, Daddy. Where is your leg?" He said, so quick, "That will be alright when it grows," and she was content.

Well, after that he was moved to Stoke Mandeville Hospital, so we had to go by train every week, of course. Pat, our daughter, loved going on the train but as money was short we always took egg sandwiches, which did smell a bit. She has told me that since then she has always hated egg sandwiches.

George stayed at Stoke Mandeville Hospital for a few months then he came home. I cannot remember who brought him home, but I suppose it was

I found out that that was the exact time George was blown up

St Dunstan's. Of course, all our road knew that he was coming home and what time. They decorated the house up and all the road had flags flying - it looked very nice. The car turned the corner and everyone was very quiet until the car got to our house. It pulled up and the driver got out and opened the door and then everyone cheered George. He told me he was so frightened that he was shaking, but he did want to come home to his own house. Of course, it was an upstairs flat. There was no handrail up the stairs and he was on crutches, painted white at the bottom, which went under his arms. I didn't know what to do - he tried all ways to get up those stairs but could not. In the end he said "I'll go over to Mum's house across the road". Well, I couldn't lead him; I thought I couldn't get him down the kerb and if he fell over I don't know what I would have done, so his mother came and took him. She must have felt awful. I couldn't watch them going over, but she did it - it must have been frightening for her.

When things had calmed down a bit we came back to our own house and he managed to get up the stairs on his behind. Then the neighbours started coming in to say hello to him. One brought some cakes, another brought him some kippers with all the bones in, someone else brought their teapot in, because no one had a lot to give as everything was rationed. George thought a lot of that.

We had our son a few months after George came home. He was born in 1946 and we called him Robert. We were thrilled we had got a girl and a boy.

St Dunstan's came and asked what George would like to be

trained for. At first he said he would like to be a poultry farmer, but they put him off that. They said as he only had one leg it could be slippery for him when it was bad weather. They suggested keeping a shop. George went to St Dunstan's for a while and they found us a tobacconists and confectionery shop in Hurstpierpoint in West Sussex.

We packed up everything; it was a lot to do because the baby was only eight months old and our daughter was three years old. It was a nice ride down from Streatham.

George had never served in a shop, nor had I. No one told us how to go on and George never had any training. Next day when we opened the shop our first customers were a coachload of kiddies wanting twopennyworth of

All the road had flags flying

Lemonade Powder each, but we got through the first day. Both George and I got on very well.

We stayed there for seven years, but the shop was not very good, so we asked if we could buy some land and have one built in Burgess Hill, which we did. St Dunstan's lent us the mortgage. It was a lovely shop and house. George told the builder how he wanted it built - he showed him with matchboxes and it turned out very nice. All our customers were very nice as well. We stayed there for about 25 years, then we found our bungalow. It needed a lot of work done on it, but it is lovely now. I have a large garden at the back and one in the front. It is in a small private road and I have six

neighbours who are all very nice and friendly and will do anything for me if I ask them. The Town Crier lives next door to me.

George and I made our fish pond - well, George was the foreman and told me how to do it, but it looks nice.

I have travelled quite a lot. In 1989, George and I went to Jordan by invitation of King Hussein. We went on that trip through St Dunstan's. King Hussein was an amateur radio man, and one of the members spoke to him. He invited seven St Dunstaners and their wives for a ten day stay. It was wonderful. When we landed in the Middle East we were taken to the VIP lounge where we were greeted by Prince Raad and were given a drink. We went on the royal yacht; it was lovely, all the people were waving at us.

Unfortunately King Hussein was away at a summit meeting, but we met HRH the Crown Prince while we were there, and we dined at the regal banquets. The Prince Raad invited us to a garden party which was beautiful. The little girls who were carrying the food on big silver trays didn't look older than eight; they all had lovely black hair with fringes and beautiful little dresses. While we were at the party the Prince Raad gave all the men a braille watch, and also all the ladies, and in the speech said the king was very sorry he couldn't be with us.

We went to see the famous Treasury in Petra, the Rose-red city carved out of sandstone rock in the desert. We also got caught in a sandstorm in the desert - we weren't worried because all the men had their radio handsets with them and we got through it OK.

We also visited a number of ancient and historic sites. We went to Jerash, also to Wadi Rum, the Royal stables, Aqaba, the Dead Sea (which I paddled in), Madaba, Mount Nebo and the Red Sea. We visited the Jordan Royal Signals HQ at Zarka. They were very nice sailors. We had tea with cream cakes. It was a holiday of a lifetime. That all happened in 1989.

After we retired, for eleven years we used to go to Spain for a month every winter, now I wonder how I did it, with two cases and a wheelchair and George, but people were good. The first year we went, we were at the airport (Gatwick). They used to take us out to the plane in a little bus.

When we got to it the driver said "You get in first, then help George." I got in and I tapped the seat and said "Sit here, George," and a man at the other end said "He wasn't a corporal, was he?". I said, "Yes" and he was thrilled. He said "I was in his platoon when he got blown up. They had a long chat. When we got to Spain we found they were stopping in the same hotel as us, and they were stopping for a month as well, so we had a lovely holiday together.

I have also been to America three times and visited West Virginia, Salt Lake City, Las Vegas, San Francisco; and I have been to Canada, Germany, France, Norway, Sweden, Holland and Hong Kong, so I have seen a good deal of the world and have done quite a lot.

I have also done a lot of handicrafts. I made a dolls house. George thought he could have helped but it was bit too much to expect as he lost half of his thumb and could not hold it, so I made it myself. I also made two old

fashioned dolls - one girl and a boy, dressed in red velvet.

I did a lot of gardening. I won 1st Prize for my garden out of all of Burgess Hill, another year 2nd Prize. I belonged to the Horticultural Club and all together I won 12 First, 14 Seconds and 11 Thirds for all sorts of things I have made. So I have had a full life one way or another.

I have an easy life now. I only do a bit of knitting but my sister lives in the sheltered housing across the road to me and the Scheme Manager sometimes asks me to make something for them to sell for the Hospice. Sometimes I go out with them in the mini bus to look after my sister.

I also drive my little car. I take my sister shopping, I go up the town most days and, of course, I meet a lot of my old customers and we have a chat, which is nice.

I expect there is a lot I have not told you, but most people would not believe how life has changed and how lucky the children are today.

Quiz Answers

1) Princess Anne. 2) Charles Philip Arthur George, the Prince of Wales. 3) The Duke of York who became George VI, dismissing his grandfather Edward VII, his father later George V and his elder brother who became Edward VIII. 4) Alexandra Mary. 5) Eugenie. 6) Great-great-great-great-grandson. 7) Edward VII. 8) Queen Victoria. 9) Korean War. 10) Ten: Winston Churchill 1951-55, Sir Anthony Eden 1955-57, Harold Macmillan 1957-63, Sir Alec Douglas-Home 1963-64, Harold Wilson 1964-70 and 1974-76, Edward Heath 1970-74, James Callaghan 1976-79, Margaret Thatcher 1979-90, John Major 1990-97, Tony Blair 1997-present.

Towering achievement



Marathon running Yeoman Warder Chris Morton during a slower paced moment.

THE STREETS of London may not be paved with gold, but a trio from the Tower ran up a glistening sum for two Service charities during the London Marathon in April 2002.

Yeoman Warders Vic Lucas and Chris Morton teamed up with Brian Pryce of Digby Trout Caterers to put their best foot forward running in the 26-mile event on behalf of St Dunstan's and BLESMA. Their efforts, coordinated by fellow Yeoman Tony Strafford, captured an impressive £2,000.

WELCOME TO ST DUNSTAN'S

July 5th

Arthur Dickison of Honiton, Devon served in the Royal Navy from 1940 to 1962. Halfway through Signals training he was posted to Submarines. He joined his submarine P211, later called HMS *Safari*, in Scotland. A 19-month tour in the Mediterranean followed. He remained in Submarine service until the end of 1951 when he joined the regulatory branch. After five years he joined HMS *Bulwark* in Belfast where he was Acting Master of Arms. He was then posted to Singapore Naval Base before returning to Portsmouth for discharge. In civilian life he joined the Atomic Energy Group and was also a member of the Dorset Special Police Constabulary. Later he joined the computer department at Southampton University. He and his wife Clare have three daughters, two grandsons and two granddaughters.

Cyril Evans of Southway, Plymouth served in the Gloucestershire Regiment from 1937 to 1946 and the Royal Army Pay Corps from 1949 to 1963. He was in the Royal Corps of Signals Territorial Army before the war. He was posted to Rangoon with the Gloucestershire Regiment in 1939. He fought the Japanese through the retreat to India where he served the remainder of the war. He joined the Royal Army Pay Corps in 1949 serving variously in the UK, Nairobi, Bermuda and BAOR until he retired as a Staff Sergeant in 1963. As a civilian he worked for the Associated Electrical Industry before moving to Plymouth where he became a bus conductor. A member of the Burma Star Association, he used to enjoy maintaining train sets. He and his wife Violet have three sons and two daughters.

Joseph Harrison of Cannock, Staffordshire served with the Worcestershire Regiment and King's Own Royal Regiment between 1940 and 1946. After basic training he was posted to 2nd Battalion Worcestershire Regiment in Egypt. He was isolated for suspected diphtheria and on return to active duty was sent as reinforcement to join the King's Own Royal Regiment who were surrounded in Tobruk. The battalion fought their way out of Tobruk taking many Italian prisoners. He was then posted to Syria and suffered a further bout of malaria before returning to Egypt. The battalion was posted to

India. They completed jungle training in Ceylon and were then flown in behind Japanese lines with the Chindit expedition where they fought for six months, suffering heavy casualties. He returned to his old job as manager of the Maypole Dairy company near Wolverhampton but later worked as a miner and grocer. He used to enjoy walking and football and is a Wolves supporter. He is married to Joan.

John Hogan of Bootle, Merseyside completed National Service with the Royal Artillery from 1949 to 1951 and served with the Royal Army Service Corps from 1953 to 1954 and later with the Territorial Army from 1961 to 1965. When called up for National Service, he was posted to the 12th Anti-Tank Regiment in Tripoli, later moving to the 38th Ack-Ack Regiment in Trieste before joining 49th Field Regiment in Celle, Germany. He was a gun layer and driver during this period. Rejoining the Army, he was sent with the Royal Army Service Corps to Korea. He then took up driving heavy goods vehicles within the UK and Europe. Once keen on playing football and boxing, he still follows the horses. He and his wife Elizabeth have two sons, two daughters and five grandchildren.

Ronald Newton of Peterchurch, Hereford served with the Royal Artillery from 1936 to 1961. He was posted to Donegal, Northern Ireland to join a coastal gun unit before moving to Mauritius as a signaller. He was stationed on Rodrigues when war broke out. Returning to the UK via Mombassa, he joined 40 Field Regiment equipped with 25-pounders and deployed with them to France after D-Day. At the end of the war he remained in Germany before returning to Scotland in 1947 as a volunteer instructor. After various postings in Dover and Hong Kong he left the Army in 1961 as a WOII. In civilian life he joined the RAC as a motorbike patrolman before becoming an HGV tanker driver with Esso. He later worked in a plastics factory. An Army footballer, he enjoys metal detecting and was a very keen gardener. He and his wife Doris have two sons, three daughters and 13 grandchildren.

Ronald Oakley of Littlehampton, West Sussex served in the Royal Corps of Signals from 1937 to

1946. When war broke out he was posted to France with the BEF. Evacuated through Dunkirk, he was posted to Ireland and then on to Persia and Iraq where he spent 18 months laying line and HF signalling as part of the deception plan. After several months in Egypt, Syria and Palestine, he was posted to Italy with the Central Mediterranean Force. His unit then deployed to Greece where he remained until the end of the war before returning on a hospital ship via Naples to be discharged. After leaving the Services he went on a course in Fleet Street to become a printer, but later travelled to Bermuda, New Zealand, and America. In the past Mr Oakley has enjoyed painting, boxing and golf and is a member of the Royal British Legion. He is married to Gladys.

Clarence Payne of Northfield, Birmingham served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946. He had two brothers serving with the RAF and volunteered to join them on the outbreak of war. After training he was posted to Fighter Command in Essex but the location was destroyed by bombing and he was moved to join his brother at RAF Lindholme, York. He then trained as an Armourer and spent three years on station before training on the Bofors gun and being posted to Dimchurch where they used the guns to engage VI missiles. After the war he returned to his position as a printer with the *Birmingham Post and Mail*. He and his wife Viola have two sons, seven grandchildren, 14 great-grandchildren and one great-great grandson.

John Prescott of Springwell, Sunderland served in the Royal Navy from 1944 to 1946. He was posted to East Africa where he worked in the shipyards until the war ended. He continued in the shipyards in civilian life as a plater and framebender. He is a keen gardener.

Reginald Smith of Harrogate, West Yorkshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1943 until 1946. He qualified as an Air Gunner before being posted to India, serving in Bombay and Karachi as a member of the new Air Trooping organisation. He helped to run the reception centre, looking after air crew and passengers from all three Services. In civilian life he worked as a decorator before joining Hull's deep sea trawling fleet. He later returned to decorating, specialising in supporting exhibitions. He and his wife Doris have a son, five daughters, 13 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Noel Wharf of Stourport on Severn, Worcestershire served with the Royal Engineers from 1939 to 1946. Called up at the outbreak of war, he joined 59 Field Squadron as a driver in a bridging unit, later transferring to 203 DCRE. He took part in the D-Day landings, fighting through to Caen and then Holland for harbour clearance before being detached to work with the Americans in Cologne. After the war he returned to work for a firm maintaining arcade machinery. After he lost his eye, he moved to Worcestershire and became a telephone operator with the GPO, later BT. He used to enjoy swimming and supporting his grandchildren at football for training and matches. Mr Wharf has two daughters, five grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

July 19th

Raymond Ball of Fleetwood, Lancashire served in the Royal Navy from 1941 to 1946. He was posted to the light cruiser HMS *Trinidad* and took part in Russian convoys. His ship was damaged by torpedo en route to Russia but was repaired. However, on the return journey it was sunk losing a quarter of all hands. He transferred to a destroyer, later joining HMS *Bermuda* to take part in further Russian convoys, Atlantic runs and the North African landings. Posted to Combined Operations, he joined a flotilla in the Far East, supporting operations in Burma, Java, Sumatra and the Philippines. After leaving the Service, he worked as a chartered engineer for Lincoln Transport Department and Salford City Transport before joining the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation. He used to enjoy golf and working on the engineering of cars. He now makes good use of his computer, enjoys DIY and is chairman of the local Macular Degeneration Society. He and his wife Jeannie have three daughters, five grandsons and a granddaughter.

Willoughby Dampier of Plymouth, Devon served with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1947 to 1949. He initially joined the Royal Berkshire Regiment before transferring the REME at Aborfield. He then became a journalist, working on local publications and in public relations. He later ran a news photographic agency.

Michael James of Havant, Hampshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1956 to 1961. He completed a basic aircraft mechanics course at Wheeton before

being posted to West Rainham to the Aircraft Service Flight. He was then sent to 59 Squadron, Geilenkirchen, where for one-week-in-three he was on permanent standby for the four-minute warning response. After leaving the Service, he built sailing boats, then worked for Laing Builders. His interests included model-making, photography, and music. He and his wife Audrey (Pearl) have four daughters, one son and six grandchildren.

David Matthews of Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946 and from 1953 to 1970. He served as a Spitfire fighter pilot completing two full tours in North Africa and the Mediterranean. He was shot down and had to bale out into the sea. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his actions in North Africa. After the war he became a cattle and sheep farmer in Somerset but then rejoined the RAF as an instructor and served variously in the UK, Singapore, Malaya, on exchange with US Marine Corps in California and in Zambia. He retired as Squadron Leader in 1970. His interests include chess, music and walking. After he retired from the RAF he held the stewardship of a royal farm in Somerset. He and his wife have a son, daughter and two grandchildren.

Robert Morgan of Stourbridge, West Midlands served in the Royal Air Force from 1952 to 1954. He was posted to Boscombe Down where he worked as a ground electrician before being posted to Innsworth where he maintained the electrical aspects of MT equipment. After completing his service he returned to his work as an electrical engineer and worked for companies such as GEC and BMC. He qualified as a chartered electrical engineer, then became a teacher at the Walsall College of Technology. He was a keen cyclist and enjoyed reading and computers but now concentrates on voluntary work. He also enjoys gardening and music. He and his wife Sara have three sons, one daughter and six grandchildren.

August 2nd

Alexander Mair of Edgware, Middlesex served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946. After training as a clerk he mustered as an operator for the operations room and was posted to the Middle East where he served on an number of different air bases throughout North Africa and Italy in support of the

8th and 1st Armies. He returned to the UK, rejoining Wetherby's and continued to work in the administration of horse racing. He later joined the Civil Service at Stanmore. He has two sons.

Joseph O'Donnell of Ramsgate, Kent served in the Royal Military Police from 1950 to 1952. Posted to the 3rd Infantry Division Provost Unit in Colchester, he spent the first nine months mainly under canvas. He was later posted to Libya where he served in Tripoli and Tobruk. He spent the final few months in the Canal Zone before being discharged. After leaving the Service he joined the London Port Authority Police. His interests include the Classical period, travel and woodwork. He and his wife Laura have one son and two daughters.

Eric Prior of Kidderminster, Worcestershire served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1939 to 1946. He deployed to France and was evacuated from St Nazaire after Dunkirk. Posted to London, he completed a technical radar course before being sent to Iraq and Bombay. After leaving the services he rejoined GEC before setting-up his own radio repairs service in Droitwich. A keen salmon fisherman, he is very interested in the arts particularly painting and antiques. He and his wife Patricia have three sons, one daughter, eight grandchildren and are expecting their first great grandchild.

Margaret Richardson of Middlesborough, Cleveland served with the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1941 to 1944. She was in the first batch of women to be called up. She was posted to Chipping Norton, where she worked in the Sergeants Mess, and was then posted to Ballycastle in Northern Ireland where she was promoted to Mess Sergeant. After the war she raised a family, qualified as a cook and then ran the kitchen staff preparing meals for schools of around 700 children. She enjoyed sewing, bowls and cooking and has a son, daughter and three grandchildren.

James Rivers of Redcar, Cleveland served with the Royal Navy from 1940 to 1944 and from 1951 to 1953. As a sick bay attendant, he was posted to the West Indies with the Fleet Air Arm. He then returned to North Wales to support training for Royal Marines preparing for the D-Day landings. He later served on the destroyer HMS *Penn*. In civilian life, he worked

as a bulldozer driver in the collieries but was called up from Reserve for the Korean War and service in the North Atlantic. At the end of the Korean War he joined ICI as a transport clerk. A keen golfer, he was captain of the local club and is also an accomplished wood carver. He and his wife Ena have a daughter and two grandchildren.

Bernard Sleath of Blackpool, Lancashire served in the Army from 1942 to 1945 and in the Royal Navy from 1947 to 1954. While in the Army he served in a Field Ambulance unit before volunteering for the airborne forces. Posted to 225 Field Ambulance Parachute unit, he took part in airborne D-Day operations, landing at Ranville near Caen. He was taken prisoner at Pegasus Bridge, eventually ending up in Poland via Stalag VIII. Towards the end of the war the prisoners were marched from Poland to Hannover where he remained until he was released in 1945. After a short time in civilian employment he decided to join the Royal Navy. After training as a stoker/mechanic he was posted to HMS *Resource*, a

repair ship. He later moved to Malta where he served on the frigate HMS *Magpie* where one of the officers was the Duke of Edinburgh. Back in the UK, he took up landscape gardening and making flowerpots before becoming a driver. His interests include cricket and bowls. He and his wife Iris have a son and daughter, two grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

50 YEARS AGO

LORD FRASER returned to the Longmynd Hotel, ten years after it had been annexed by St Dunstan's for the duration of the War. "This caused acute nostalgia," he wrote. "The Longmynd has gone back to its original role as a hotel; the carpentry and other workshops have reverted to their use as garages. The girls' house, is now a boarding house, but the railings which we had put up on the steep stairs to prevent the girls slipping are still there. Tiger Hall is a block of flats, Denhurst a hotel, and Brockhurst a Roman Catholic Students' College."

Colin Beaumont-Edmonds has poem-hunting fun at summer school

Real life hidden behind the author's words

HIDDEN LIVES IS NOT only the name of Margaret Forster's autobiography, but was also the name given to my one-week Summer School at Bristol University. The course is especially designed for the Visually Impaired, where each student is allocated a personal guide to look after his/her needs for the seven days in residence.

We were to study the influence that an author's family life and background has upon their novels and poems. Two months before going to Bristol I received 24 tapes, covering Forster's *Hidden Lives*, *Shadow Baby* and John Betjeman's *Summoned By Bells*. It also included a collection of his letters to publishers and the BBC, and some information about Tennyson and Clevedon, which he and other poets of the period had visited.

This was the twelfth year that I have attended this Summer School. Whatever the subject, the programme has always included a whole day and an

afternoon visit to a relevant site. On this occasion a day in Clevedon gave us the opportunity to visit Clevedon Court, where Arthur Hallum lived, and whose death inspired Tennyson to write *In Memoriam*. An afternoon was spent in Bristol with an hour's cruise on the river Avon, and a three-hour visit to Bath, which finished with tea in The Pump Room.

This course comprised ten students and during lectures our guides sat immediately behind us, ready to assist with any explanation of diagrams or other help that might have been needed.

If one chooses to write an assignment on returning home, credits may be awarded towards a qualification, but many of those whom I have met there, including myself, go there year after year, treating it as an activity holiday, with the result that I have not written an essay every time - it just depends what one feels like - but it has always been a very friendly and enjoyable week.

BALANCING THE BOOKS

St Dunstaner Ted Bunting reviews the
best and the worst of the
Talking Books available

Memoirs of a Dance Hall Romeo

Author: Jack Higgins

Reader: Stephen Thorne

Catalogue No 7804

Duration: 4 hours, 44 minutes

WHEN A BOOK seems to end too soon you know it's a good one; and how I enjoyed this little gem which certainly left me wanting more. Set in the late forties when a chap could entertain a lady royally for less than a fiver (if he possessed one) it describes with accuracy and rich humour the amorous adventures of a young demobilised soldier named Oliver Shaw.

He transports his reader back to the sights and sounds of those drab, ration-ridden post-war years like it was only yesterday

Or is Shaw none other than Jack Higgins himself? I'm inclined to think he must be, because surely he knows too much of the thoughts and reactions of his supposedly fictional Romeo for it to be otherwise. Either way the result is convincing, entertaining and utterly compelling; he transports his reader back to the sights and sounds of those drab, ration-ridden post-war years like it was only yesterday. And how well he knows and describes his characters; not only his lady-friends, but the others too, like the trainee louts at the school he works at the chain-smoking headmaster coughing and spluttering his way to an early grave.

He gives you the impression that you know them all too; you like the ones he likes and are ready to despise the ones he does not. All in all this is a wonderful little book – true to life and down to earth, certainly – but you'd need to be a remarkable prude to find it the least bit offensive.

POETS' CORNER

A selection of verse by St Dunstaners

Fredbare NHS (No Hospital safe)

by George W. Powell

Aunt Nell's on the list
To remove a large cyst,
The hospital said be there at ten
Nell's packed a small case
And made up her face
And gave Fred his instructions ...again!

Fred's visited Nell
And hopes she is well.
He's brought her some fruit and some drinks,
He sat in a chair,
Ate her grapes and a pear,
Then dozed off and had forty winks

Fred awoke with a start,
Jumped up feet apart,
Caught his foot in the chair and was floored.
He hit a commode
Standing their with full load,
And sent it, at speed, down the ward.

Young Dr Patel
Jumped, slipped and fell
On her back right into it's path.
The commode came to rest
Upside down on her chest.
A veil will be drawn on the aftermath!

Aunt Nell's getting better
With no Fred to upset her.
Visiting times are much better by far.
She hears all that's new
From Tom, Sue and Pru,
While Fred waits outside in the car!

Light in the dark

by Frank Tinsley

In this dark world of downward crashes
Where all my dreams lie in ashes
Lives a bright and shining star
Who gazes at me from afar
It smiles at me from high above
It has no other name but Love
She gave her heart
And asked for nought
But what a lesson she has taught
To be true and not deceive
Just to give and not receive

FAMILY NEWS

BIRTHS

Congratulations on the birth of:

Amy Elizabeth Pugh on July 11th. She is the great-granddaughter of Rose Haskey of Pinner, Middlesex and the late *Henry Haskey*.

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Geoff and Bronwyn Rudge of Amble, Northumberland on August 9th.

Walter and Thelma Scott of Hartlepool, Cleveland on August 9th.

DIAMOND ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Stewart and Eileen Harris of Andover, Hampshire on July 26th.

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Donald and Betty Lorenz of Blofield, Norwich, Norfolk who celebrated 61 years together on July 27th.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to:

Joesph Cousineau of Liverpool, Merseyside has achieved a First Class pass in his Pitman's Word Processing Essential Level exam.

Sonja Elshaw on obtaining a 2:1 Honours Degree. Her proud grandparents are *John and Sheila Wellings* of Neston, Wirral, Cheshire.

DEATHS

We regret to announce the death of:

June Benson on July 17th. She was the wife of *Ron Benson*, Pocklington, Yorkshire.

Doreen Cowley on July 26th. She was the wife of *Lt Col James Cowley* of Padstow, Cornwall.

Evelyn Cooke of Crewe, Cheshire on July 12th. She was the widow of *George Cooke*.

Helen Farnen of Burnage, Manchester died on July 26th. She was the widow of *Herbert Farnen*.

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.

Colin MacDonald

4th Anti-Tank Regiment

Colin Ewen MacDonald of Ballarat, Victoria, Australia died on June 26th, aged 81. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1965. He had worked for a packing company before joining the Anti-Tank Regiment as a Gunner in 1941. Taken prisoner by the Japanese, he was forced to labour on the Burma Railway. The malnutrition and privation he experienced as a prisoner of war would eventually cause his loss of vision. Our sympathy goes to his widow Marjorie.

James Wootten

Royal Electrical & Mechanical Engineers

James Charles Wootten of Littlehampton, West Sussex died on July 29th, aged 76. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Electrical & Mechanical Engineers in Europe and the Mediterranean from 1943 to 1947. In civilian life he was a bus driver and later became a fireman. Our sympathy goes to his widow Maria and all other members of the family.

Malcolm Hadley

Royal Engineers

Malcolm Hadley of Edgware, Middlesex died on July 31st, aged 75. He served in the Royal Engineers from 1946 to 1948. He was stationed at the Military Railway Centre, Longmoor before being posted to Singapore. He worked for the forerunner of GEC, but retrained as an audio typist after losing his sight and joined BT. Our sympathy goes to his widow Violet.

John Shepherd

Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

John Edwin Shepherd of Birmingham, West Midlands died on August 2nd, aged 81. He served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps and then the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1941 to 1946, serving in India as a Warrant Officer. After leaving the service, he joined the Gas Board as a fitter and was in charge of mechanical maintenance for the West Midlands when he retired. His interests included amateur radio and building electric organs. He and his wife used to teach old time and sequence dancing. Our sympathy goes to his widow Rose, sons and daughters and all other members of the family.

WALKING THE WINDMILL WAY

Gentleman Stan strides across the Sussex Countryside

ST DUNSTANER STAN GRIMSEY made his return to the Rottingdean Windmill Walk in his usual inimitable style on July 14th. Beneath a sweltering sun, 85-year-old Stan completed the 14 mile (24km) trek.

Stan, who was a prisoner of the Japanese during World War II was the oldest participant in the event, a fact recognised by the presentation of a special print at the end of the day. He is no stranger to the event, having taken part in five previous walks although last year's was cancelled because of the foot-and-mouth crisis.

The Windmill Walk cuts a circular path through the Sussex countryside, passing St Dunstan's Ovingdean, taking in the seafront before dipping into undulating farmland and tree covered hills. Stan was accompanied along the way by St Dunstan's staff members Maeve Dillion, Ben and Glynis Gillam and Kathy Eley. Also walking with Stan was Jim Johnson who as St Dunstan's representative was the first person to walk from John O'Groats to Land's End at the start of the Millennium.

Stan's efforts have raised £262 to help aid work for children displaced by the Bosnian conflict.

Main picture: Stan and crew on Kingston Hill.
Below: Up on the Downs behind St Dunstan's.
Centre: Marching through St Dunstan's.



Photographs: Simon Rogers