

ST DUNSTAN'S Review

www.st-dunstans.org.uk

March 2003



FOR BLIND EX-SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN

Cover story:

Stephen's go-snow day!

St Dunstaner Stephen Menary slides into the unknown on the slopes of Ciampac during the annual skiing trip. **Full details on page 12.**

Night club wrong to bar St Dunstaner

Court makes DDA ruling on night club exclusion. **Full details on page 8.**

There's no place like our home page

St Dunstaners overhaul website for greater access. **Log on at page 20.**

Shooting from the shoulder



Cliff Ford provides a few pointers for fellow St Dunstaner Joyce Phillipon.

More shooting news on page 10.

Plus Letters, Balancing the Books, Ten Questions and other favourites!!!

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From the Chairman



THE FIRST OF THIS year's specialist weeks, The History Week has taken place at Ovingdean. Several localities of historic interest were visited including HMS *Victory* - what an excellent choice! The Music Week will have also reached its finale by the time of publication. There are the Gardening and Widows' Weeks still to come. We hope you will continue to support and enjoy these occasions.

In a few days time, the first of our countrywide reunions is being held in Derby. There are two new venues this year, Chichester and Blackpool. I do hope you will support these and all other gatherings. They are an excellent opportunity to meet old and new friends. For some, it may be the first time they have met other St Dunstaners and realise the extent of our 'family'.

Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN

ST DUNSTAN'S Calendar

Shaftesbury Reunion	March 5th
Computer Club	March 5th-6th
Amateur Radio	March 7th-9th
Bowling Club	March 14th-28th
Golf Club at RAF Chivenor	March 20th-21st
Derby Reunion	March 26th
Brighton Reunion	April 2nd
Ex-POW Reunion	April 4th-7th
Widows' Week (1)	April 7th-14th
Golf Club	April 12th-13th
Dutch Memorial Laying of Flowers	April 10th
Norwich Reunion	April 16th
Masonic Reunion	April 25th-27th
London Reunion	April 30th
Handless Reunion	May 7th-13th
Blackpool Reunion	May 13th
Liverpool Reunion	May 14th

DEADLINES FOR FUTURE ISSUES

The final date for submitting items for publication in the April **Review** is March 10th 2003.

The final date for submitting items for publication in the May **Review** is April 7th 2003.

Noticeboard

Dates for your diary and useful information



STAMPS NOW FEEL FIRST CLASS

Blind people can now distinguish between books of First and Second Class postage stamps thanks to a simple but practical innovation. A tactile clue has been cut into the top right hand corner of the back cover of new stamp books. A single notch indicates First Class stamps, while two notches denotes Second Class stamps. The front cover is also slightly shorter than the back cover so it is easy to tell that the book is the right way up. The stamps are also placed individually to aid people with dexterity problems.

WAR GRAVE PILGRIMAGES

Remembrance Travel have released their 2003 brochure listing pilgrimages to war graves and memorials as well as battlefield tours. It includes trips to Burma in April for the Chindits 60th Anniversary Year and Sicily in July for the 60th Anniversary. Other destinations include Egypt, Singapore and Thailand. For a copy of the brochure write to Remembrance Travel, Royal British Legion Village, Aylesford, Kent ME20 7NX or telephone 01622 716729. They also have a website at www.remembrancetravel.com and can be e-mailed on remembrancetravel@britishlegion.org.uk.

WAR PENSION CHANGES

Details of the War Pension rates that come into effect on April 7th can be obtained on request by telephoning St Dunstan's Head of Pensions Sheila Sauba on 020 7723 5021 or by e-mailing her at sheila.sauba@st-dunstans.org.uk. Information is available in print, braille, tape and electronic formats.

SEA DEFENCE WORK GETS UNDERWAY

The compound for plant and materials for the Brighton Sea Defence project is well on the way to being completed in the field opposite the entrance to St Dunstan's Ovingdean. Access to the under cliff walk will be closed at the top of the steps nearest the tunnel exit but the area nearest those steps will continue to be accessible as a viewing platform throughout the duration of the project which is expected to last approximately 18 months.

The work is not related to proposals for a new sewage treatment works on land adjoining Roedean School. Several sites are under consideration and Southern Water have promised public consultation before any work is commenced.

GOLFERS WANTED

We are looking to expand the Golf Club Membership this year, any St Dunstaner wishing to join St Dunstan's Golf Club please contact Mike Tumilson (Secretary) on 02476 460 113.

MOUNTAINEERING EXPEDITION

Milton Mountaineers will be climbing Carneddau and Snowdon, May 15th to 19th. For details contact Anne Weyers at Crawford Lodge, South Street, Crowland, Lincolnshire PE6 0AH. Telephone 01733 211867 or e-mail miltonmounts@aol.com.

STARTERS ORDERS FOR DERBY SWEEPSTAKE 2003

And they're off!!! Or at least they will be at the Epsom Derby on June 7th! As usual, the **Review** is opening its annual Derby Sweepstake. The draw is open to St Dunstaners, beneficiaries of the Diana Gubbay Trust, widows and widowers.

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

Each applicant should send their name and address, the number of tickets required, and a stamped addressed envelope, to The Editor, Derby Sweepstake Department, **ST DUNSTAN'S Review**, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The draw will take place in London on June 4th.

SIGN UP FOR SULTAN

The camp at HMS *Sultan* will take place from Friday, July 25th until the morning of Saturday, August 2nd. Any St Dunstaner wishing to join in the fun should contact Elspeth Grant at High Acre, Catmere End, Saffron Walden CB11 4XG or telephone her on 01799 522874. Please contact her by May 8th at the latest.

ATHLETICS FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

The 2003 Metro Games will take place at Walthamstow Track & Pool, London E17 on Saturday June 21st (11.30am-5.30pm). There will be events for visually impaired athletes of all age groups, male and female. Those with additional disabilities are also welcome.

The Metro Games is organised jointly by the Metropolitan Sports & Social Club for the Visually Impaired and the London Sports Forum for the Disabled. Accommodation is available and there will be a Buffet and Disco on Saturday night.

There is a dedicated website on www.metroblindsport.org, but details and entry forms are also available from Derek Mileman (Metro) on 020 8203 1286 or e-mail delboy29@Tiscali.co.uk. Alternatively, contact Alan Whetherly, London Sports Forum on 020 7354 8666 or e-mail lsf@disabilitiesport.freeserve.co.uk.

TROOPING THE COLOUR

Trooping the Colour will take place in June. It is possible that St Dunstan's will be allocated tickets. Any St Dunstaner or Gubbay Trust Beneficiary wishing to go should send their name and address to Marion Lurot, St Dunstan's 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD by May 16th. A draw will determine the final allocation of tickets. Those attending will be responsible for their own travel and accommodation expenses.

ANARCHIST BEHAVING BADLY

Vocaleyeyes will be providing audio description for a new translation of *Accidental Death of an Anarchist* at London's Donmar Warehouse on March 22nd. This re-working of Dario Fo's satire on state corruption is by Simon Nye who wrote *Men Behaving Badly*. There is a touch tour, one hour before the 2.30pm performance. Tickets, priced £12 can be obtained by calling 020 7845 5813.

At the Bristol Hippodrome, *Miss Saigon* will be audio described on April 11th and 12th. Call the box office on 0117 9299758 for details.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

We aim to provide the best possible care and service within St Dunstan's. If there is something that you are not happy about, or you can see an area in which improvement is needed, please tell us. It gives us the opportunity to investigate the matter and address it, thereby improving our service to you.

You are encouraged to raise concerns at any time directly with the person involved. He/she will investigate your concerns, try to resolve the problem and advise you if further action is needed. However, if you are unable to discuss your concerns at this level, or you are not happy with the outcome, you may wish to lodge a formal complaint. The following information explains how to do this.

Formal Complaints

You may wish to lodge a formal complaint if:

- Your concerns have not been satisfactorily resolved through the informal complaints process.
- The informal complaints process is not acceptable or appropriate to you, for whatever reason.

How do I make a formal complaint?

- Put your complaint on tape, e-mail or in writing – (preferably using the leaflet available through Reception at Harcourt Street).
- Make it very clear what the complaint is and what you think should be done about it. If you are unable to do this yourself, ask a friend, relative, advocate or member of the senior staff to assist you.
- Send your complaint to:
Susan Harrison,
Director of Professional Services, St Dunstan's,
12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD.
E-mail: susan.harrison@st-dunstans.org.uk

What will happen after I lodge my complaint?

You will receive a letter of acknowledgement, usually within three working days of the complaint being received. You may be asked to give more details of the complaint, you may want to ask a friend, relative or other representative (such as an advocate) to

speaking on your behalf or to attend any meeting which may be required in connection with the complaint.

The Director of Professional Services will investigate and address the complaint, and will write to you within ten days to advise you of the outcome.

What if I am not happy with the outcome?

If you are not happy with the outcome of the complaint, you need to advise the Director of Professional Services who will refer the complaint to the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will carry out further investigation of the matter and will write to you within ten days (of the complaint being referred to him) to advise you of the outcome.

What if I am still not happy with the outcome?

If the complaint has still not been resolved to your satisfaction, you need to advise the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will refer the complaint to the Chairman of St Dunstan's. The Chairman will investigate the matter further and will write to you within one month (of the complaint being referred) to advise you of the outcome.

Is there anywhere else I can go?

The National Care Standards Commission (NCSC) is a public body responsible for regulating the standards of care provided in care homes, including St Dunstan's. You can make a complaint to the NCSC at any time. Any complaint that is not resolved through the Home's internal complaints process (as described above) can also be referred to the NCSC.

You may wish to discuss your concerns with an advocacy service, such as those provided by Age Concern or Counsel and Care. Their contact details, along with those of the NCSC are as follows:

National Care Standards Commission
(Head Office) St Nicholas Building, St Nicholas Street, Newcastle NE1 1NB. Tel: 0191 233 3556.

Counsel and Care, Twyman House, 16 Bonny Street, London NW1 9PG. Tel: 020 7241 8555

Age Concern, Astral House, 1268 London Road, London SW16 4ER. Tel: 020 8765 7200.

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

Help is always welcome

I REFER TO Alan Brown's letter in the February **Review** on the subject of travel. My wife and I have found the railway companies extremely helpful, reserving seats on longer journeys, meeting us at our departure station, carrying our luggage, getting us into our seats, meeting us at interchanges and helping us to bus or taxi at our destination.

As my wife and I, in 2003, will be in receipt of our 80 plus Benefit, we accept help in the areas of uncertainty, such as unfamiliar routes or getting to the appropriate airport passenger lounge, but we raise our metaphorical hats to Billy Baxter and other kindred souls who daily look for challenges.

Aubrey Jones, Dunstable, Bedfordshire

I enjoyed my time at St Dunstan's Ovingdean with guide dog

I'M A FAIRLY new St Dunstaner and I was down at Ovingdean at the same time as Brian Beniston (He's my eyes - February **Review**) with his guide dog Farley, who I thought was a great dog. I'm a new guide dog owner

myself, I got Emma in July and I had no hesitation in taking her down to Ovingdean with me for my tuition in cooking and IT. I really enjoyed the experience and I'm sure Emma did. Most of the people I met down at St Dunstan's were really great and they liked being with a guide dog.

Diamond day

PEGGY AND I would like to thank you all for the gift of a beautiful bouquet of flowers to mark our Diamond wedding anniversary and also the letter of congratulations from the Chairman. They were very much appreciated. We also had a card from the Queen which was a real surprise. We had a wonderful day with our family and friends and we are now looking forward to our 70th.

Tom Lukes,
Old Colwyn, Colwyn Bay

However, with regard to the spending area, where the dogs go, I don't think much to it being a grass area. I thought the guide dogs' representative would have recommended it be a concrete area for dogs to do their spending on. It's far more hygienic and easy to clean and provided there's a water tap near by, after it has been cleaned, the dirt picked up, it can be hosed down. That's what happens at the guide dog centres.

Ted Ellerton,
Sheffield

Giving life to the name on a page

YOU ASKED for feedback regarding the **Review**, which I hasten to add is always very interesting and entertaining. Anyway, this time I felt compelled to comment. Maybe you'll wish you had not asked.

I have never been able to remember anyone with a double-barrelled surname. So it was not only interesting but also our President and Chairman suddenly became real people - no longer remote. So much so that I shall no longer be anxious about them coming over to each table at the lunch after the Remembrance Service asking if we have any complaints.

Having learnt all about our President and Chairman I look forward to actually meeting both of them, maybe at the Ladies Reunion at Ovingdean.

Evelyn Lucas,
Shepherds Bush, London

In loving memory of Bill

I WOULD like to say thank you to everyone for their love and support and sympathy on the death of my darling Bill. The cards and letters which I appreciated so very much at a very sad time. Love cannot be measured till the hour of parting.

Sally Slade, Bognor Regis,
West Sussex

It strikes me ...



Gog and Magog return

Gog hears of a St Dunstaner who has lead a football team to victory - on the Subbutio pitch! However, this table-top soccer success leaves his wife somewhat troubled. "Do I tell the 12 year old he was playing against that he was beaten by someone who can't see?"



Magog tunes into BBC Radio Swindon and Radio Wiltshire in time to hear St Dunstaners Cliff Gower and Ray Hazan. They told listeners about St Dunstan's remit to aid any visually impaired ex-service man or woman.

By coincidence, Gog is listening to Radio Kent were Steve Pendleton is talking about his catering course. Cold weather and a dry reed prevent an al fresco saxophone performance by our culinary St Dunstaner.

Magog is disappointed to hear that a member of St Dunstan's Fund-raising & Communications department will not be running in the London Marathon, even though we knew they couldn't compete with the excellent times achieved by our athletic St Dunstaners.

Night club should not have been a no go-go area for blind

A COURT HAS AWARDED £750 damages to a St Dunstaner after he was refused entry to a Brighton night club. St Dunstaner John Griffiths of Moreton, Wirral was turned away from the Junction night spot because the club's policy refused admittance to people with disabilities unless accompanied by an able bodied person.

Supported by the Royal National Institute of the Blind, he launched an action under the Disability Discrimination Act. "I arrived at the club and told the doorman that I was blind," said John. "I asked if he could give me some assistance to the bar. He asked me if I was on my own. I said yes, but after speaking to somebody inside the club, the doorman refused to let my in saying I would not be able to manage the steps leading down to the club and it would be dangerous in case there was a fire. I was not drunk and this was the first time ever that I had been refused entry to a club. I felt disappointed and very angry about being refused entry just because of my sight difficulty."

A former doorman himself, John, who served in the Royal Air Force, raised the matter with the club's owners, Sound and Music GB Ltd, complaining of a breach of the DDA. He was dissatisfied with their reply, which prompted the RNIB to write two further letters on his behalf which did not receive any reply.

The case was heard at Brighton County Court and a settlement

was reached on January 15th. Apart from a £750 payment, John's settlement included removal of the club's blanket ban on disabled people's admission without accompaniment, instruction to be given to club staff on escorting disabled people, a written apology, a review of their health and safety policy.

John has since revisited the Junction Club (with an able bodied person) and found the steps to be quite manageable.

"I think justice has been done. I don't believe that blind people should be limited in what they can do because of the assumptions people make about disability. Disabled people should have the same choices as anyone else."

The RNIB estimate that 46 per cent of blind and partially sighted people give up their hobbies because of their sight loss.

Len Hatch

Len Hatch, formerly of St Dunstan's Estates department, died on February 10th. He had previously worked as a building surveyor for Cluttons on University of London projects. As Deputy Estates Manager he dealt with much of the department's accounting work as well as looking after the interests of many St Dunstaners and widows as their Area Surveyor. Our sympathy goes to his widow and three daughters.

Talking of the time...

A NEW TALKING calendar watch has been added to the Cobolt Speechmaster range. It is available in Gents (W20G) and Ladies (W20L) versions, with an alternative of strap or bracelet. The hands are synchronised with the spoken time so, once the time has been adjusted with the speech system, the hands move to indicate that time and remain synchronised with the speech.

In addition to the clear male voice, it has two audible alarm sounds as well as a vibrating alarm. The vibrating alarm can be used silently or together with an audible one. The watch speaks the day of the week, full date and has an optional hourly reminder.

It has two volume levels and is splash resistant. The case is gold plated. If requested, alarms can be disabled before despatch. Priced £49.95.

COLOUR DETECTOR

Cobolt have also released a talking colour detector which can be used to check the colour of clothes or the ripeness of fruit while shopping! When held against almost any surface - paper, cloth, wood or plastic - the colour will be spoken. The device has been ergonomically designed for left and right handed use. It costs £49.95.

Both items can be ordered from Cobolt Systems by telephoning 01493 700172.

Billy Baxter's Journey from Hell!

ST DUNSTANER Billy Baxter attempts the Blind solo speed record on two wheels in August this year. Part of his unintentional preparation was probably the slowest journey from London to Ely on January 30th-31st - a journey of nineteen hours! Billy's coach was one of the unfortunate vehicles caught in the snowstorm on the M11. "I left London at half past six and arrived home nineteen hours later. We spent the night stuck on the M11 in sub zero temperatures. The Dunkirk spirit was taken up by all, though we were the unlucky ones on our stretch as no body came and gave us food or drinks."

Clarification - Best Advertisement

In the December **Review**, we featured "The Best Advertisement for St Dunstan's" about our speakers. There may have been some confusion as to whether Nigel Whiteley was the 'man hit by a boom'. Nigel's sight was impaired by a virus he contracted whilst serving in the Lebanon. During a recent talk, Nigel fielded a selection of questions and this prompted the memory of a Navy man who served in the Falklands. "Was he on the ship that got bombed?" "No, he was hit by a boom!" However, the medics seem to have latched on to a potential St Dunstaner.

Ten questions on...

The subject of "Lasts"

Quizmaster Harry Beevers teases out some final frontiers

- 1) Which was the last city to stage the Summer Olympics?
- 2) *Persuasion* was the title of the last completed novel of which English author?
- 3) According to William Shakespeare, "A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse", were the last words of which English monarch?
- 4) The last public concert by the American singer Bing Crosby in March 1977 was held in which English town now a city?
- 5) Who was the last leader of the Greater London Council?
- 6) Who was said to be the last senior British army officer to leave Dunkirk in 1940 who became Commander-in-Chief Middle East, Supreme Allied Commander in the Mediterranean and after the war Governor-General of Canada and Britain's Minister of Defence?
- 7) Lost during the reign of Mary Tudor, which was the last French city held by England?
- 8) The last words of which fictional detective were "Thank Lewis for me"?
- 9) In Disney's *Snow White*, alphabetically speaking who was the last of the seven dwarfs?
- 10) Which entertainer was known as "The last of the red-hot Mommas"?

Answers on page 22.

Quick on the trigger

ON NOVEMBER 26th, a group of St Dunstaners entertained a rifle team from Chippenham in Wiltshire
writes Cliff Ford.

Derek, George and I wish to thank Louise, Katy, Mark and Roger for their help in making it a very enjoyable day.

Thanks also to Ken Nash for the coaching and PBK for the perfect buffet lunch. All the sections I know appreciate the spreads they conjure up for us.

Chippenham have invited us to spend two days with them and we are looking forward to that.

We will shortly be launching the St Dunstaners' Gun Club. The Acoustic Rifle Section is open to all St Dunstaners and meets every Wednesday, 2pm at Ovingdean. The Gun Club is being formed to enter competitions. Three of us



Cliff Ford and Mark Brownlow confer as Ken Burton listens out for the change in pitch that means he has the target.

competing in a National Postal Shoot have already won two golds and two silvers. We need more interested St Dunstaners, so come to the McKinley Sports Hall to have a go yourself.

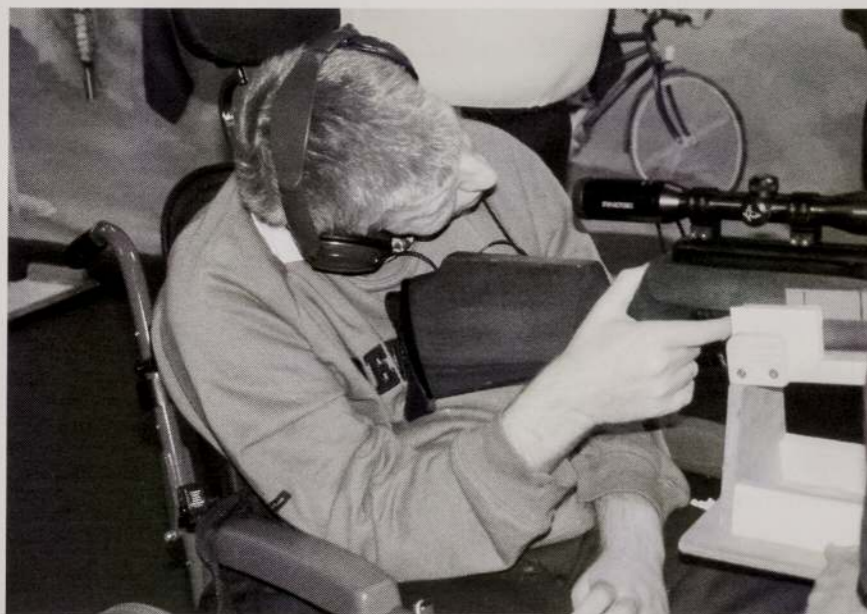
George Oliver and I were shooting in the National Acoustic Rifle

Competition at Wolverhampton for the very first time in February. Our escort, Mark Brownlow from the Sports and Recreation department picks up the story.

After a long five hour journey in a 'bone crusher' van, Cliff Ford, George and Irene Oliver, and myself, arrived at the Quality Inn Hotel, Wolverhampton. It was a lovely hotel with period features.

On February 8th, we went to Aldersley Stadium where the Championships took place. We are unaware of the results as yet but it was a great experience for Cliff and George. It was our first time at these championships, so it was an exciting learning experience for all of us.

That evening we all met up with the members from Chippenham Target-Sports Club, who visited St Dunstan's recently. It was a nice chance to catch up with them and to arrange when we could go up and shoot at their club.



St Dunstan Michael Lennon takes aim.

Catch a devil by the nose

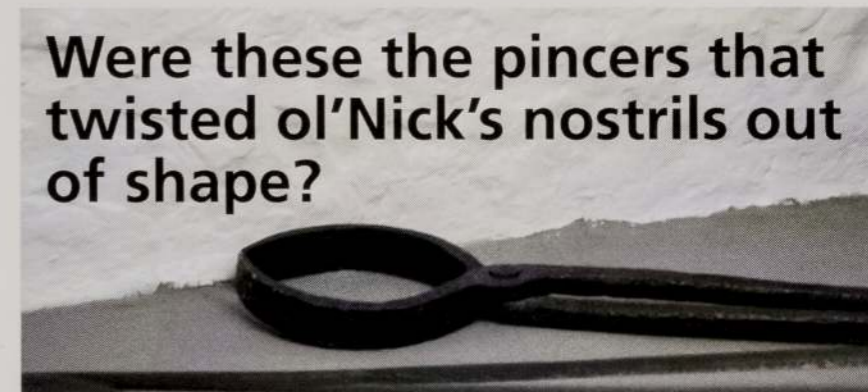
LEGEND HOLDS that the Devil, disguised as a beautiful woman, tried to tempt St Dunstan. However, he noticed that this beauty left cloven hoof marks and responded by grabbing the Devil's nose with a red-hot pair of tongs. In one giant leap, the wounded daemon plunged his nose into a brook some miles distant - which is now known as Tunbridge Wells.

Last issue, St Dunstaner AC 'John' Pointon recalled this tale, adding that he had been told of a girls school which claimed to have the pincers in question. Could this artefact still exist? Kentish Man **Simon Rogers** crossed the border into Sussex to find out.

The village of Mayfield is nestled on The Weald, an undulating wooded area between the North and South Downs. Many of the buildings are old, often built on the foundations of previous structures that succumbed to the ravages of time. Man or myth, Dunstan lives here still. Dunstan, born at Glastonbury in 909AD, exile and adviser to four kings, statesman, artist, musician, architect and mystic. This is where he met the Devil, moved a church by brute strength and summoned forth water with a blow from his staff.

At the centre of the village lies St Dunstan's Church, a Norman building made from local stone, quarried less than two miles south. However, before the Normans had erected the heavily buttressed tower, the site was home to a Saxon wooden church. This wooden building was constructed by Dunstan. It is said that on

Were these the pincers that twisted ol'Nick's nostrils out of shape?



St Dunstan's pincers are kept alongside a sword used by Elizabeth I to knight Sir Thomas Gresham, founder of the Royal Exchange and a riding crop that belonged to Queen Victoria.

consecrating it, he noticed it was out of alignment and so pushed it back to its proper east/west orientation. As the Saxon Archbishop of Canterbury, inclined to the Rule of St Benedict, he had a summer residence in Mayfield - The Old Palace - easily defended as its hilltop position left little cover for approaching armies.

Like the little wooden church, the Old Palace had a Norman makeover, followed by further reconstruction through the Middle Ages. The arches of its Great Hall are reputedly the widest unsupported stone arches of their period. Now part of St Leonard's Mayfield School, the Old Palace also includes St Dunstan's Well.

Legend has it that water flowed from this spot after Dunstan struck the ground with his staff. As a water source the well is unusual for such high ground and, apparently, it tastes better than any drawn in Canterbury.

Finally, the Old Palace is custodian of an unimposing pair of



St Dunstan's Well - better water than Canterbury.

iron tongs and an eroded anvil. They sit alongside mementos of Royal visits. Are they 1000 year old relics of St Dunstan? For the Mayfield faithful there is no doubt!

IN DECEMBER 2000, I visited Clive Jones in hospital a few days after he lost his sight. My parting remark was that "... within a short time, you will be skiing with us". Clive's retort to that idea at the time is unprintable! But, two years later, that remark came true and he was one of the four newcomers to the St Dunstan's skiing group!

There was some doubt as to whether the trip need take place at all as a layer of snow blanketed the UK, but they don't produce such good pasta or pizza over here! On balance, and tickets having being purchased, it was considered wiser to head for higher altitudes.

Once again, Gerry Jones had organised for St Dunstan's to accompany his local village party from St Agnes, Cornwall to Canazei in the Italian Dolomites. It was a repeat venue of last year with the advantages of familiarity, especially where the hotel was concerned, and being able to head straight to the hottest spots!

We shall pass lightly over the journey; checking into Gatwick at four in the morning; the struggle with breakfast on the plane without elbow room; the three-hour coach transfer from Innsbruck – at 10 degrees – to Canazei. For some, the journey had meant no sleep, for others very little. What was remarkable was how so many, from such varied jumping off points as Switzerland, southern Germany, Gatwick, Manchester and Exeter

Skis ready, St Dunstaner Charlie Daly prepares to swiftly slide over the snowy slopes of Canazei.



Veni, Non-Vidi, Vici

I came to Italy, I saw not, yet I conquered!

Ray Hazan slips back to the slopes

all managed to arrive at their destinations on time. Walter, the owner of the Hotel El Caisel, had laid on additional supplies of beer but must have wondered if he had under-bid as the first afternoon wore on. Frequent quaffs of the frothing litres interspersed tales of last year and the intervening 11 months, which in turn were interrupted by yet further moistening of parched throats.

We were very pleased to be part of one of the largest St Dunstaner contingents to go skiing (ten in all). Veterans Gerry Jones, Charlie Daly, Peter Walker, Steve Sparkes, Ray Hazan and Billy Baxter were joined by newcomers Marjorie Scott, Clive Jones, Mark Brewin and Stephen Menary. These last two had never donned a pair of skis before. In addition, the party was accompanied by Helen Walker, Jesse and Kelly Daly and their nephew and Charlie's grandson Danny, all of whom had joined the party in previous years.

The hotel has excellent facilities, a warm and welcoming staff and now has become so familiar that we are able to walk around

unaided, upholding our individual self respect and dignity and saving our guides being dragged away at all times. The food is generous and tasty, so no weight loss is possible. In the basement are sauna, Jacuzzi and steam rooms to ease away the aches and stresses of the day!

NOTHING SHORT OF BRILLIANT

The guides are nothing short of brilliant both on and off the slopes. Peter Zamudio has been a guide for well over 20 years now and he and Charlie Daly are a familiar team on the slopes. Martin Blank has been escorting Gerry for several years, which is important in order to boost confidence in each other and get to know reaction times and accuracy! 'Cam' Cameron and Sparkie, Nathan Jones and Peter

Walker are pairs to be reckoned with and could be seen on the Black runs, which are extremely demanding. Neil Graham had to abandon his ski sticks in order to hold onto the two-way radio he used to guide Ray. This makes a great difference to one who is hard of hearing and adds an element of suspense when communications drop out for five seconds if the transmit switch is held down for too long! Bill McDougal managed to control Billy Baxter's enthusiasm long enough to guide him down in one piece!

The two newcomers to the group, but who had skied before were Marjorie Scott, looked after by Rick Jones and Clive by Mick Shepley. Brand new to skiing were Stephen Menary ably instructed by Vince Stone and Mark Brewin by Vicky Caress. These last two were the undisputed most advanced

'The pressure is on the guide to check the slope'

pair. Vicky had probably never even guided a blind person across a road. To take a beginner and by the end of the week be leading Mark down advanced slopes was a tribute to them both and Mark was awarded the Alpine Cow Bell for best beginner and to ensure that he comes back next year for more!

Although both skier and guide wear warning 'bibs', akin to carrying a white cane in the street, they are rarely noticed by others on the slope. The pressure is on the guide to check the slope before giving the command to 'turn right now!' They have to choose the spots for us, and them, on which to turn. They have to weave us in and out of classes, beginners and 'show offs' out of control. It is demanding and concentrated work and we take our hats off to them all!

Most of the party spent the first day at Ciampac, a short bus ride up the valley. The area is relatively uncrowded and contains the nursery slope and a couple of other limited runs. But it is a useful place in which to 'cut one's teeth' on the first day.

Many skied the area above the village of Canazei, which meant a short walk to the cable car. From the top, there were a multitude of chair lifts and gondolas to choose from. There were numerous occasions when I heard over my radio headset that the slope ahead was completely empty and I was free 'to do my own thing'. This has to be the ultimate in blind skiing when you can let yourself go, turning as you like and feel the

exhilaration of freedom, speed, sound and that all important adrenalin surge of achievement. It is all very intoxicating but the very next run is generally sobering as a fall brings you back down to earth – literally!

As part of his contribution to the 'Blind Ambition' campaign, Ray made another annual attempt on the 'Fly Dive Off Piste Record'. Having failed to react quickly enough to Neil's instruction to 'go right!', the ground fell away suddenly as he dropped eight feet into a deep and soft patch of snow. However, he did improve on last year's three-point-two for elegance in scaling a vertical snow wall to extract himself. This was thanks to the large boulder he narrowly had missed on the way down and proved to be a useful stepping stone out of the problem!

As the week progressed, so did all participants. The sun generally shone from a blue sky and it was pleasant to sit in the cafes with a warming cup of soup, gluwain or coffee. Sparkie and Peter successfully completed the Sellaronda, a 37km course around the area. Gerry and Ray attempted a mini version, less successfully as it included the flying drop.

An integral part of a skiing trip is the night-life. This is possibly more exhausting for some than the day-time. Local bars and clubs were visited and re-visited. On the Wednesday, Walter and his staff gave us a 'gala evening'. Champagne and canapés preceded a candle-lit four-course dinner, which included the chef

parading a suckling pig around the dining-room. The whole evening was enjoyed to the accompaniment of two yodelling accordionists, interspersed with Scottish airs played on the bagpipes by Cam.

An important feature of the skiing week is the nightly presentation of the Staveley award. This involves the presentation of a silly hat to the biggest 'plonker' of the day. The hat must be worn for the subsequent 24 hours. Qualifications for a Staveley may consist of a silly deed or saying. Believing the day of departure to be the Sunday rather than the Saturday and having ten minutes to pack is a classic example. Another might be arranging to meet someone at Twickenham for an important rugby match, armed with a mobile telephone number which turns out to be your mother several miles away, rather than your esteemed guide and drinking partner, is not clever! Much fun, rebuttals, embarrassment and laughter was drawn from the nightly presentation.

As I write this not a week later, my mind is still alive with the laughter and comradeship of everyone who got on so well together. I can still feel the warmth of the sun versus the crisp freshness of the early morning sub zero temperatures. I can hear the swish and hiss of the skis on the snow and the wind in my hair. I can still sense the exhilaration contesting with apprehension at 'letting myself go straight down!' Above all, now that it is over, I feel on top of the world and raring to go back again next year!

The ski group is very grateful to St Dunstan's and to Babs and Brian Druce who helped make the trip possible.



St Dunstaners Pete Walker, Stephen Menary, Gerry Jones, Ray Hazan, Marjorie Scott, Mark Brewin, Charlie Daly, Billy Baxter, Clive Jones and Steve Sparkes with the guides who kept them straight.

DESPITE ST DUNSTANERS travelling from all over the UK and guides coming from Northern Ireland, Scotland, Switzerland and Germany, by 20.00 on Saturday January 11th we had all met up in the bar of the El Ciasel. A new guide this year was Vicki Caress, an aircraft technician serving with Army Air Corps (AAC). Old guides, Vince Stone who had missed out the previous year and Nathan Jones who had somehow missed the past fifteen, were welcomed back.

The first day we all skied at Ciampac, a quiet, gentle area and only a two minute bus ride away. This was a great area for the experienced skiers to find their ski legs once again and an ideal area for the new skiers to find out what the sport was all about. On the second day the group just naturally split into two. The new skiers plus Billy Baxter and Charley Daly remained on the

Gerry Jones reports from the Italian Dolomites

slopes of Ciampac and the others, Ray Hazan, Peter Walker, Steve Sparks and Gerry Jones led their respective guides to visit the bars on the steeper slopes which were accessed by gondola lift from the centre of the village. This area was a great place to meet at the end of the day's excitement as

both the lifts and buses stopped here. The hotel was only 200 yards away along a flat road.

By Thursday, Peter Walker and Steve Sparkes were led by their respective guides, Nathan and Cam, around the Sellaronda. This is a route which links many ski resorts and is 35km in total. This was a brilliant effort, especially as they had only got to bed at 3 am that morning. Ray and Gerry stayed in the local area with their own brilliant guides, Martin and Neil, enjoying a terrific week and skiing some tricky slopes, made possible by making early starts and finding at that time of the day not many people around. Charlie and Billy kept up their good work with Peter and Billy doing their

stuff, whilst Clive and Stephen struggled on with Mick and Vince patiently guiding them through their own particular nightmares. Marjorie made great progress, with Rick out-talking her by the end of the week. Marjorie became famous for her "Marjorie-isms" and was a contender for the Staveley award on several occasions, having made one of her outstanding one-liners again. Our sympathies go out to Mick who was not at all well during the week but carried on to ensure Clive had a good holiday.

For the fifth time we had joined forces for this holiday with the St Agnes Skiers. There were seventy of them let loose in the village this year. Twenty of them stayed in the same hotel as ourselves. Many were old friends and much of our

social time was spent in their company, swapping the year's news and yarns. It didn't matter where we went on the slopes or in the village, we were sure to meet a friendly face from St Agnes. It is great fun to have them around and we look forward to next year when we hope we shall all meet up again.

Once more we have experienced an exciting, exhilarating, taxing holiday. We have felt the wind in our faces, the snow covering us all over after the odd tumble, yet we have all laughed and are ready for anything the world wants to throw at us this year. All this has been made possible by our wonderful guides, without them we would have been back in the UK tapping our way to the library for our talking book or finding our way to the local to hear of others'

adventures. This way we have something to savour, and what a story we can tell.

Any St Dunstaner wishing to join us should contact Gerry Jones on 01872 552520. A word of advice: this is essentially a skiing holiday with lots of socialising in the evenings. There is plenty of time for a sauna, steam room or a swim. Remember the guides have given up a week of their holidays to help you to ski. If you have never skied before, you should ensure that you are fairly fit. There will be lots of falling down, picking yourself up, putting your skis back on, and walking up small slopes, yet we have all been there. Stick at it and you will have probably one of the most fantastic weeks of your life. Ask any of those who went this year!

Just like riding a bike

A Personal Account by Marjorie Scott

THIS WAS MY first skiing holiday with St Dunstan's and I was apprehensive. I seemed to be the only lady St Dunstaner going and I had not skied for over six years. I was told that it was like riding a bike, you never forget, but I had my doubts.

Our guides took charge of everything and after an uneventful journey we arrived in the pretty alpine village of Canazei. The hotel was excellent, the food good and plentiful and the snow was deep and crisp and even – what more could we ask!

The next morning we were taken to the sports shop to collect our

gear. A short bus ride and a trip on the cable car and we were up on the slopes. I stood with my guide Rick, a knot in my stomach, and tried to engage him in meaningful conversation, but to no avail. It was on with the skis and over to the button lift. Rick went up and I had no choice but to follow him. I thought I will never get off this and will end up in a heap at the top, but I had let go and it was true, it all came back to me. After a slow start I soon regained my ski legs, and the sense of freedom you get as you ski backwards and forwards across the piste is wonderful.

Mind you, it was not all plain sailing. One day we decided to take the chair lift further up the mountain but it proved to be a chair too far and, after a couple of falls when I also brought down Rick, I decided I had had enough. As I could not be left to cling to the mountain until the spring thaw, I was taken down in tandem, not an elegant way to travel. A traumatic experience I will never forget, and I don't think Rick will either, but I can now look back and laugh.

I have many happy memories: the jokes and laughter when we met up for a drink or lunch at the restaurants on the piste; beautiful sunny days and crisp clean mountain air; the lovely crunching sound as you walked over the snow and the swish of the skis; putting on warm boots every morning. Thank you, Rick.

But it was the laughter that seemed to go on forever, and then there were the guides. Without them this trip would not have been possible. They looked after us both on and off the slopes and nothing seemed too much trouble. Thank you boys. I think you are all wonderful and I hope to see you in 2004!

The very best of companions



Mark Thompson, publican of The Good Companions, Peacehaven, presents a generous donation for St Dunstan's raised by his customers. St Dunstaners Cliff Ford, Nigel Whiteley and Derek Hagger get their hands on the loot before it is whisked away to the Cashier's office.

Fast fund raising on the Berlin front



Lieutenant Colonel Iain Pickard and Lieutenant Colonel Richard Hewitt of JDCC Swindon ran the Berlin Marathon in September on behalf of St Dunstan's. Their Germanic jaunt raised £1,000.

Over 25,000 runners took part in the event and Richard completed the course in 3 hours and 22 minutes. Iain ran the distance in 3 hours and 51 minutes.

50 YEARS AGO

ST DUNSTANERS IN THE East found themselves at bay from floods. One spent several hours on his coal shed roof before rescue, another found his tobacconist kiosk had taken quite a battering. George Reed of Weybridge collected 28lbs of sweets for distribution to people in flood areas.

St Dunstaner John Wall of Sydney became the only blind man in Australia to hold a licence to sell alcohol. He was running a hotel and was complimented by magistrates on the way in which he managed it.

Was Kaiser Bill at the Coronation Day of King George V? A debate raged amongst St Dunstaners who had taken part in the procession, some convinced that as Honorary Colonel of the First Royal Dragoons he was "riding with 'Bobs' and Kitchener." The Lord Chamberlain's office later confirmed that the Kaiser had not been at the Coronation but been in London previously.

Eamonn Andrews put away his big red book to start St Dunstan's Seven Mile Championship Walk.



Aided by Rick, Marjorie reclaims the pleasure of skiing.

Welcome to ST DUNSTAN'S

January 17th

Leopold Bachtowicz of Leeds, West Yorkshire served with the Polish Forces under British Command from 1944 to 1948. Captured by the Russians, he escaped to France where he joined a Polish Army unit. Freedom was brief as he was caught by the Germans. He escaped and was smuggled into Switzerland before he was able to join a Polish Unit in the British Army. He was involved in ordnance disposal. After settling in Yorkshire, he worked for ICI, the building trade and West Yorkshire foundries. He enjoys walking and wood carving. He and his wife have a son and a daughter.

Allan Bembridge of Allenton, Derbyshire served in the Sherwood Foresters as a Junior Bandsman during 1966. In civilian life he worked for a bakers until his sight deteriorated. After retraining, he worked for an engineering firm. He is a Guide Dog Owner and has devoted much of his time to support Guide Dogs for the Blind. He enjoys talking books, the radio and walking with his dog.

Frederick Claridge of Orpington, Kent served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946. He worked in a factory before joining up in the RAF as a ground gunner, later the RAF Regiment. He served as a Corporal in the Middle East, Egypt, Palestine, Italy and the UK before being demobilised. He now enjoys talking books from the RNIB, the radio and short walks. In civilian life, he worked as a bricklayer. He has seven children and 11 grandchildren.

James Eadie of Bellshill, Strathclyde served in the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) from 1954 to 1957. He served in the UK and BAOR and was a keen marksman. In civilian life, he returned to the steel industry and later became a self employed haulage contractor travelling to the Middle East as far as Syria and Iraq. He is married and enjoys gardening, woodwork and golf.

Edgar Saddington of Kettering, Northamptonshire served in the Merchant Navy from 1943 to 1946. He was involved with the Atlantic

convoys, North Africa and the Normandy Landings. In civilian life he was involved in ditch-digging, scaffolding and cement laying before he became the licensee of a public house. His great interest and hobby used to be clay pigeon shooting, shooting in general and breeding and training gun dogs. He and his wife have two children, nine grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

January 31st

Roland Aldridge of Newport Pagnell, Buckinghamshire served in the Royal West Kent Regiment, Sherwood Foresters and The Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers between 1940 and 1946. After training he was posted to North Africa with the West Kents, before being transferred into the Sherwood Foresters as a re-enforcement. He remained in the Foresters through West Africa and Italy and took part in the Battle for Monte Cassino where he suffered shrapnel wounds and shell shock. After hospital treatment he was sent to Naples for recovery and was transferred to the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers where he became a crane driver until the end of the war. In civilian life he worked for the GPO and Ministry of Defence. His interests include gardening. He has a son, a daughter, and six grandchildren.

Maurice Bowley of Saltdean, Brighton served in the Royal Signals from 1945 to 1948. He trained as a vehicle mechanic and driver and served at Abingdon and Catterick. After leaving the service he returned to Wales, installing machinery in a tin mine. He later moved to Kent and joined the Police Force in Tonbridge. He then became a representative for a weighing machine company before starting his own business. He loves music and is taking piano lessons. He has a son, daughter and four grandchildren.

Morris Dixon of Seaford, East Sussex served in the Royal Air Force Police from 1940 to 1946. After training, he joined the Special Branch (SIB) and was immediately posted to the Middle East where he was attached to Popski's Private Army. Working behind the lines, he supported the 8th Army before a brief attachment to the Intelligence School in Cairo as a

teacher. Further assignments took him to Palestine, Iraq, Iran and Malta where he helped arrest two spies. He helped provide security cover for Churchill and the Big Five meeting at the Tehran conference. Returning to the UK in 1944, he worked on internal security. In civilian life he taught at polytechnics, retiring as a Professor of Applied Sciences. He used to enjoy cycling and played hockey but since retiring he has made collages from coloured hessian. He has a wide taste and has become interested in music. He has a son living in Essex.

Norman Kerslake of Winchester, Hampshire served in the Royal Navy between 1938 and 1946. He became a member of the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve in 1938, before being called up in 1939. He then spent two years on the North Atlantic Run as an Engineer on an armed Merchant Cruiser. He was posted to the Far East where his ship was taken by the Japanese. For the next three-and-a-half years, he endured life as a FEPOW including one year in Changi Gaol (alongside late St Dunstan Ken Walker). In civilian life, he set up a small business repairing diesel engines before joining with a Canadian group to set up a marine business. His major interest has always been sailing and despite his visual impairment, last year he sailed the coast of Croatia. He is a member of the Royal Southampton Yacht Club and the Royal Naval Sailing Association. He and his wife Doreen have one daughter and two grandchildren.

Raymond Mason of Trimdon Village, Co Durham served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946. He qualified as an airframe fitter 2 and worked in a Base Maintenance Unit stripping down and inspecting Wellington Bombers. After the war he resumed work as a mining surveyor, later becoming an overseer. He then worked as a line mechanic in a factory. He was a very keen gardener and still does his best to maintain his garden. He has two sons, a daughter and four grandchildren.

Thomas Nicholls of Carshalton, Surrey served in the Buffs, the Gordon Highlanders and subsequently the Royal Army Service Corps between 1943 and 1948. He volunteered to join the Seaforths but after training was sent to the East Kent Regiment. The battalion was sent to reinforce units in Italy but he and two friends were held back and transferred to the Gordon Highlanders for the invasion of Normandy. Wounded in action at Lutain Wood, he

was transferred to Egypt for escort duties. He was then transferred to the Royal Army Service Corps as a clerk where he remained until his discharge in 1948. In civilian life he worked as a French Polisher.

Josephine Symonds of East Grinstead, West Sussex served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force between 1942 and 1946. She attended a driving course where she learnt to drive everything from a car to three-ton lorries. She joined the 605 Intruder Squadron, moving from airfield to airfield every two months. Much of her driving was done at night. After the war she sold radios and light fittings, then trained as a telephonist and joined the GPO. She has always enjoyed artistic interests including painting, dress making, flower club and classical music.

Singaporeans learn about blindness by eating in the dark

SINGAPOREANS ARE PAYING to eat a meal they'll never see. Waiters at Singapore's Intermezzo restaurant aren't just dimming the lights for dinner, they're putting them out completely so patrons can feel, taste and hear their way through a dinner in pitch blackness.

The event was organised by the restaurant and the Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped to educate those with perfect sight what it's like to dine out as a blind person.

The restaurant used heavy curtains and duct tape to convert a private dining room into a darkroom. Guests were said to be upbeat when they arrived but when they emerged after several hours their mood had changed to reflective and quiet.

Sim Kah Yong, a visually impaired office worker who was recruited to be a waiter complained that guests were noisy. The three-course menu included sauteed scallops, cod fillet and banana mousse. The programme was advertised as a sensual exploration and an adventure for the senses. It was inspired by a sight-free restaurant in Zurich, Switzerland, called the Blind Cow, according to the Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped.

BALANCING THE BOOKS

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

The Seaside Murders

Editor: Jonathan Goodman

Reader: Robert Ashby

Catalogue Number: 6037

Duration: 6 Hours 50 minutes.

THOUGH HIGHLY sceptical of the claim that all the stories in this book are true (especially the one about the Scottish cannibals) I can't deny that murder has a fascination no matter where it is committed. Here, the scene of the crimes is on or near the coast, and I remember some of the cases myself. I expect many of our more mature readers will recall them too; with the keen public interest in the various trials and the satisfaction in the press when the perpetrators eventually went to the scaffold.

“Not only do most murder victims know their killers but they may be married to them as well”

Amidst the myriad motives for one human being to kill another, monetary gain must be high on the list and this supposition is well supported by several of the examples given here. One of these, the celebrated “Brides in the bath” case, which involved claiming on life insurance policies, also gives considerable weight to the assertion that not only do most murder victims know their killers but they may be married to them as well.

All thirteen of The Seaside Murders are interesting, but living close to the sea myself, being married and also insured for a modest sum, you may guess I've been very cautious since I heard of them.

Forging a new approach to www.st-dunstans.org.uk

St Dunstaners spin a new web

A GROUP OF ST DUNSTANERS have put their mark on the organisation's website which was relaunched on March 3rd writes **Rosemary Cottrell**.

“It was important that we have a website which tells everyone about the work we do and that helps potential new St Dunstaners find out about our admissions process. It was also important that the site met all the web accessibility criteria and was easy for our St Dunstaners to access immediate news and updates. I'm delighted we have achieved all this and more with our new site,” said Ray Hazan, Head of Public Relations.

Ray was one of St Dunstaners who provided valuable advice to help build the site and ensure we met the worldwide accessibility guidelines. St Dunstaner Mark Threadgold was enthusiastic about having his suggestions put into action.

“When I use my screen reader at the site, it skips all links and goes straight to the content, starting to read the actual page. That's great. I'd seen this on other sites and made the suggestion to the developers. Its great to see my ideas put into practice,” said Mark.

St Dunstan's IT Instructor Janis Sharp added “Computers and the internet provide a new interest for St Dunstaners, but there aren't many sites that are easy for them to access.”

The new updated site has been designed for St Dunstaners, potential new recruits, donors and volunteers, members of the press, schools and any one interested in the welfare of blind ex-servicemen and women.

Among the features available on the new St Dunstan's website are the latest events and news, personal contributions from St Dunstaners, profiles of St Dunstaners, progress with the Blind Ambition campaign and other fundraising activities.

At the new site, you can register to receive regular e-mail updates, make donations online and, of particular importance, give us your feedback. We encourage you to visit our new site and let us know what you think.



ST DUNSTAN'S Council

Continuing our series of profiles of personalities currently serving on St Dunstan's Council.



Michael Delmar-Morgan Vice-Chairman of St Dunstan's

I WAS BORN IN Malaya in what is now the Georgetown Post Office; it was a hospital at the time. I am told that I failed to eat properly and was brought up on Marmite and bananas, both of which still form part of my diet.

During the War years the family spent much of its time in Scotland, near Aberdeen. We met my father at various ports in the UK when the Navy allowed him leave from his mine-sweeping duties.

My early school days were spent at Blair Atholl when our Prep School in Winchester was evacuated; we had been invited to use the castle by a former pupil, the Earl of Atholl. The castle was extremely cold, central heating being unheard of in those days, but the local wild life made up for the discomfort of Hypothermia. Secondary School was at Eton

College, where my language tutor was the only person who taught me anything, and that was French. Outdoor and sporting activities were of far greater interest.

I completed National Service in the Scots Guards which coincided with the Suez Crisis in 1956. However, the nearest we came to firing a shot in anger was at the seagulls over Dungeness where we exercised amongst the sand dunes.

Banking followed the army. My Grandfather had been a partner in the Merchant Bank, Brown Shipley known for financing imports and exports. When it was taken over, I teamed up with a colleague to start a financial services company.

My involvement with St Dunstan's began, I think, in 1966 when my wife and I were introduced to the then Chairman of St Dunstan's,

Lord Fraser and his wife, Chips. I recall visiting him at his office in South Audley Street. Shortly after that meeting I was invited to join the Council. In 1972, my wife and I were sent to attend reunions in Australia and New Zealand. Since then I have been Treasurer and now Vice-Chairman. I have served under four different Chairmen.

Leisure time has been preoccupied with Yacht Racing and this continues. We still follow the main International Yachting events but for my wife and I it is now mainly cruising time. Now, freed from some corporate responsibilities, watercolours take up some time. However, love of the sea overrides most things to the extent that later this month I am racing with some friends across the Atlantic to St Lucia in the West Indies. Life in retirement, is far from dull!!!



John Varley, Honorary Treasurer

I HAVE BEEN a member of St Dunstan's Council and a member of the St Dunstan's Finance & General Purposes Committee for eight years. I have a busy life as the Group Finance Director of Barclays Bank. My association with St Dunstan's is, for me, a wonderful contrast to my professional life: St Dunstan's causes me to stop and think; to reflect on the important things in life in a way that, as we all know, working life often makes difficult. I started life as a solicitor and practised for a few years. I then moved into Barclays and have been there ever since, with the exception of a year in the middle of the 1990s when I left Barclays to work for Crispin Odey, another member of St Dunstan's Council. I am married with two children, who are aged 13 and 17.

Ten answers on ...

The subject of 'lasts' from page 9.

- 1) Sydney, Australia.
- 2) Jane Austen.
- 3) Richard III.
- 4) Brighton.
- 5) Ken Livingstone.
- 6) Lord Alexander of Tunis.
- 7) Calais.
- 8) Inspector Morse.
- 9) Sneezzy.
- 10) Sophie Tucker.

FAMILY NEWS

BIRTHS

Congratulations on the birth of:

James William Bradley on August 3rd. He is the grandson of Lillian Bradley of Rosliston, Swadlincote, Derbyshire, widow of *Alfred Bradley*. There was another addition to the family on September 27th, a great-granddaughter, Holly Limer.

Molly Lynch on December 12th. She is the granddaughter of *Jerry and Pat Lynch* of Horsham, West Sussex.

Eleanor Taylor on December 18th. She is the great-granddaughter of Nancey Taylor of Preston, Lancashire and the late *Tom Taylor*.

Alfie Ray on January 7th. He is the great-grandson of *Percy and Joan Walker* of Woodford Green, Essex.

Thomas George Harrison on January 20th. He is the grandson of *George and Irene Oliver* of Woodingdean, Brighton.

Bethany Louise Rhodes on January 20th. She is the daughter of *Matthew and Michelle Rhodes* of Peacehaven, East Sussex.

SILVER ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Morton and Anne Williams of Lanelli, Dyfed on February 3rd.

DIAMOND ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Thomas and Peggy Lukes of Old Colwyn, Clwyd on February 8th.

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Bernard and Dorothy Pitcher of Newbury, Berkshire who celebrated 61 years of marriage on January 26th.

Bertie and Eva Williamson of Colchester, Essex who celebrated 63 years of marriage on January 27th.

William and Ivy Hain of Weymouth, Dorset who celebrated 67 years of marriage on February 6th.

William and Gladys Reid of Peterborough, Cambridgeshire who celebrated 63 years of marriage on February 12th.

Gerald and Joan Cluley of Leicester, Leicestershire who celebrated 62 years of marriage on February 15th.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to:

Colin Freeman, on graduating from the University of Warwick with a Master of Engineering (with Honours) in Electronic Engineering. He is the grandson of Betty Freeman of Wyken, Coventry and the late *Dennis Freeman*.

DEATHS

We regret to announce the death of:

Dorothy Bull of Stretton, Burton upon Trent, Staffordshire on January 27th. She was the widow of *Maurice Bull*.

Bridget Lacy of Cromer, Norfolk died on January 27th. She was the widow of *Norman Lacy*.

Mary McCarthy of Godalming, Surrey on January 28th. She was the widow of *Alfred McCarthy*.

Jenny Dixon of Prescott, Merseyside on February 11th. She was the widow of *Robert Dixon*.

Doris Duxbury of Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria on February 12th. She was the widow of *Tom Duxbury*.

Lilly Dakin of Blackpool, Lancashire on January 20th. She was the daughter of the late *Harry Dakin*.

Our sympathy goes to their families and friends.

IN MEMORY

Alan Skene

Royal Artillery

Alan Charles Skene of Prudhoe, Northumberland died on January 8th, aged 84. He served in the Cavalry and then the Maritime Regiment Royal Artillery from 1938 to 1958. After training he volunteered for the Maritime Regiment, manning guns on merchant ships. In early years he completed Atlantic convoy runs and one trip to Russia where he

was rescued from the water after his ship sank. He left after the war but soon rejoined the Royal Artillery as an Assistant Instructor in Gunnery. After leaving the service he emigrated to Australia and worked for Aurec deep mineral drilling company. His main interests were making hi-fi amplifiers and walking. Our sympathy goes to his son Philip and all other members of the family.

Roland "Roly" Dean

2/19th Infantry Battalion,
Australian Imperial Forces

Roland Mushett Dean of New South Wales, Australia died on January 10th, aged 84. Born in Liverpool, he was apprenticed as a hairdresser but decided to set off for Australia to work on a sheep farm near Canberra. He also worked as a driver before joining the Australian Permanent Army in 1938. When war was declared, he transferred to 2/19th Infantry Battalion, 8th Division Australian Imperial Forces and was in Jemaluang when the Japanese invaded Malaya. The Battalion fought down through Malaya to Singapore where he was captured by Japanese forces in 1942. He was held in Selarang Barracks before being shipped to Japan where he was held in turn at Nagasaki, Kobe and Itchioka until the war ended. In civilian life he worked for Trans Australian Airlines. He was also committed to the Returned Services League of Australia and was President of the Ex-Prisoners of War Association. Our sympathy goes to his widow Rita, sons Robert and Perry, and all members of the family.

Bernard Manser

Royal Artillery

Bernard William Manser of Pevensey, East Sussex died January 23rd, aged 88. He had been a St Dunstaner since 2000. He served in the Royal Artillery as a vehicle mechanic in Africa and the Middle East from 1943 to 1946. After leaving the service he took over his father's road haulage business, which he expanded to create a builders merchant supply company. Mr Manser was a lifetime honorary member of his local Rotary Club. Our sympathy goes to his partner Audrey Luker and all members of the family.

Alfred "Butch" Sageman

Royal East Kent Regiment (The Buffs)

Alfred George Sageman of Dartford, Kent died on January 26th, aged 83. He had been a St Dunstaner

since 1951. He worked in a paper mill before joining the Royal East Kent Regiment (The Buffs) in 1940. While serving in North Africa he suffered a gunshot wound to the face, losing his right eye altogether. He was discharged in 1942 and later resumed work at Horton Kirby Paper Mills. He later turned to rug making and netting. His interests included picture framing and gardening. Mr Sageman also lived with diabetes for over 50 years. Our sympathy goes to his carer Kathleen Woods and all members of her family.

Josef Ryska

12th Podolian Lancers

Josef Ryska of Ovingdean, Brighton died on January 29th, aged 83. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1998 though he had been associated with the organisation since 1945. Having enlisted in the Polish Army in 1931, he was taken prisoner by the Russians when they invaded Lithuania in 1939. Sentenced to ten years hard labour near the White Sea, he was released along with other Polish POWs when Germany's alliance with Russia broke down. He then joined the 12th Podolian Lancers in Italy as a Staff Sergeant. Wounded at Monte Cassino in 1944 by a shell blast, he lost sight in his right eye and suffered shrapnel wounds on the left side of his body. After treatment, he arrived at St Dunstan's in Church Stretton and joined the staff as an orderly, later transferring to Ovingdean. Our sympathy goes to his widow Leokadia and all other members of the family.

William Mills

Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps

William Herbert Stanley Mills of Thurnby Lodge Estate, Leicester died on January 30th, aged 86. He had been a St Dunstaner since 2000. He served in the Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps. In civilian life he worked in a brickyard, tannery, light engineering and as a driver's mate. His interests include music. Our sympathy goes to his son, daughter, grandson and all other members of the family.

James MacKenzie

Lothian and Border Yeomanry

James Tait MacKenzie of Cosby, Leicestershire died on February 6th, aged 84. He served as a Trooper in the Lothian and Border Yeomanry from 1939 to 1946. He fought through North Africa and Italy to Austria. In civilian life he worked in the drapery business. Our sympathy goes to his widow Eileen, son Colin, daughter Isobel and all of the family.



St Dunstaners on HMS Victory, near the spot where Nelson fell.

WE SAW NO SHIPS!

THE COMMAND OF the 'original' blind serviceman attracted a group of St Dunstaners during the History Week in January. They travelled to Nelson's flagship HMS *Victory* - the oldest commissioned warship in the world - now dry-docked at Portsmouth Historic

Dockyard. Guides offered our St Dunstaners an enthusiastic explanation of daily life under sail in the 18th century. Many terms coined by sailors of the day have entered the common language. Our historians also visited Henry VIII's *Mary Rose*, the remains of which are preserved alongside the *Victory*.

St Dunstaner Leslie George gets to grips with the anchor rope.

