

November 2003

www.st-dunstans.org.uk

ST DUNSTAN'S Review



FOR BLIND EX-SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN



Cover story:

Robert becomes the fastest guide dog on earth!

Guide dog Robert broke new frontiers with a London to Paris trip on the Eurostar train. As the fastest guide dog on earth, crossing the Channel at 186mph, he has opened the door for greater access to continental travel for his master St Dunstaner Colin Davis and other visually impaired travellers.

All aboard on the back page.

Blind batmen!

A St Dunstaner joins four blind cricket teams playing at The Oval.

Full story on page 8.

Is it a bird?

No, it's a balloon with St Dunstaner Eric Colman taking to the sky.

Report on page 9.

Steve is a master of the bow

St Dunstaner Steve Moseley becomes the first archer to achieve bowman status.

Report on page 15.

Return to the Russian Front!

St Dunstaner Raymond Ball visits St Petersburg.

Report on page 24.

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

Published by
ST DUNSTAN'S
 an independent future for blind
 ex-Service men and women
 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD.
 Charity Reg. no. 216227.

Printed by Maund & Irvine Limited

Tel: 020 7723 5021
 Fax: 020 7262 6199

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

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

Noticeboard

On Page 4

- Large print diaries
- Archived on Radio 4
- Delivery delay
- St Dunstan's Day
- Story Competition

On Page 5:

- New Welfare Officers
- RNIB's new boss
- Staff Changes
- Widow's Week

On Page 6:

- Christmas Cards

On Page 7:

- Women and War
- Photographs wanted
- The Unreturning Army

From the Chairman

TWO MEMBERS of St Dunstan's Council have recently retired and on behalf of everyone, I would like to express our sincere thanks for the valued and wise contribution they have made over the years.

Lieutenant-General Sir Maurice Johnston KCB, OBE, DL was elected to Council in 1985. He was the senior Army representative, attending many reunions, including joining in on one of the walks in commemoration of the 1,000th anniversary of the death of St Dunstan. He performed his duties in addition to his very demanding position of Lord Lieutenant of Wiltshire.

St Dunstaner John Walbrugh was elected to Council in 1997. During his working life, John ran a horticultural business and was a prime candidate for the co-Chairmanship of the Gardening Club where he shared responsibilities for organising many outings to garden centres and places of horticultural interest.

ON SEPTEMBER 22ND, I attended the first day of the International Congress of War Blind Organisations (IKK) General Assembly. There were ten nations represented. The UK's Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Jock Stirrup was present as well as the Mayor of Brighton, and a number of Military Attaches from participating



The Chairman offers Colin Williamson some impromptu computer advice while showing Air Chief Marshal Sir Jock Stirrup around St Dunstan's Ovingdean.

countries. I consider it hugely important that St Dunstan's be involved on a worldwide basis in matters relating to the war blind. We have facilities to offer which no other country could match and we are one of the few expanding organisations. The amount of work by Ray Hazan, strongly supported by Robbie and the team both at Ovingdean and at HQ in the setting up of this highly successful venture was considerable, and the resultant contribution by St Dunstan's to the international blind community was immensely valuable. Suffice to say, the members voted Ray to continue as their President, and we will have a chance to host the IKK conference once again in 2006.

My congratulations and heart felt thanks to all concerned.

Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN

**ST DUNSTAN'S
 Calendar**

- Bowling Club Oct 24th- Nov 7th
- Remembrance Sunday Nov 9th
- Writers' Forum Nov 15th-16th
- Christmas Craft Week Dec 1st-8th
- Writers' Forum Dec 6th
- Christmas Week Dec 20th/21st-27th
- New Year Dec 28th-Jan 3rd/4th

2004

- Historical Week Jan 22nd-29th
- Archery Club (1) Jan 31st-Feb 7th
- Widows Week (1) Feb 11th-18th
- Musical Week Feb 19th-26th
- Computer Club (1) March 3rd-4th
- Amateur Radio March 5th-11th
- Bowling Club (1) March 12th-26th
- Masonic Weekend March 27th-28th
- Brighton Reunion (1) March 31st

For events at St Dunstan's Ovingdean, please allow a day either side for travel. Arrangements will be made to maximise use of Ovingdean vehicles.

**DEADLINES FOR
 FUTURE ISSUES**

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

The final date for submitting items for publication in the February **Review** is January 10th 2004.

Noticeboard

Dates for your diary and useful information

A BIG DATE FOR 2004

LARGE PRINT DIARIES FOR £6.95: A4 size, large-print diaries are now available from St Dunstan's. Weeks are spaced across two pages giving plenty of space for notes and there are additional sections for useful numbers and notable dates, as well as important information on St Dunstan's.

The ring-bound diaries are priced at £6.95 each. Cheques should be made payable to 'St Dunstan's' and sent to Siân Roberts, Fundraising and Communications, St Dunstan's, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD. If you have any enquiries please contact Siân Roberts on 020 7616 7958.

ST DUNSTAN'S ON RADIO 4

ON THE AIR: St Dunstan's will feature in a programme on BBC Radio 4 (92.4-94.6FM, 198LW Dab, Sky 854 (FM)/893 (LW) cable or Freeview 74), 8-9pm on Saturday November 8th. Called *The Archive Hour* it examines the changing role of technology for visually impaired people.

DELIVERY DELAY

STUCK IN THE POST: We would like to apologise to readers who received the print October **Review** later than normal in the wake of last month's postal dispute. The problem has been brought to the attention of Royal Mail and we trust normal service will be resumed from now on.

We would also like to apologise for the absence of the Christmas Card details in the braille edition. This was due to copy being provided after the deadline.

ST DUNSTAN'S DAY

IN MEMORY OF SIR ARTHUR: St Dunstan's Day on December 9th will mark 82 years since the death of our founder Sir Arthur Pearson, Bart. It was his determination and inspiration that laid the foundation for the organisation that we know today. After losing his sight, he defied the conventions of the day and encouraged other blind men and women to reclaim productive roles in society.

STORY WRITING COMPETITION

ENTER YOUR TALE: ST DUNSTAN'S Review's story writing competition is open once more. Entries should contain the word 'Record' in the title and the meaning of the word is left to the author's imagination! Submissions may be fiction or non-fiction and should not have been previously published. The competition is open to St Dunstaners, Members of the Diana Gubbay Trust, their wives, husbands, widows or widowers.

Please will you follow these steps when submitting your story: **1)** Entries should be typewritten and should not exceed 1500 words; **2)** Please submit your entry under a nom-de-plume; **3)** Please write your nom-de-plume and your real name and seal them up in an envelope, which should accompany your entry. Envelopes will not be opened until the judge has made his or her decision; **4)** Only one submission per person. Multiple entries will be disqualified; **5)** Entries must be received by the Editor, **ST DUNSTAN'S Review**, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD by Monday January 12th, 2004. The winner will receive £50, runner-up £30 and third story selected £20. The winning stories will be published in the **Review**.

NEW WELFARE OFFICERS

HILARY AND RACHEL JOIN THE TEAM: Hilary Brown is St Dunstan's new Welfare Officer responsible for Surrey, West Sussex and some parts of London. Living on the borders of Hampshire and Surrey, Hilary has worked in the social care field for the last 18 years. Hilary qualified as a Social Worker during and after raising her children, she now has one daughter and one dog left at home.

She worked at Hillingdon Social Services specialising in working with people with a visual impairment of all ages for over 15 years. Leaving Hillingdon as a Practice Service Manager, she moved to Guide Dogs for the Blind Association at Hindhead as the Rehabilitation Training Manager. The school trains a large proportion of the rehabilitation workers who work alongside people with a visual impairment to improve their quality of life. Outside of work, Hilary enjoys gardening, walking the dog and listening to traditional jazz.

Rachel Jennings is St Dunstan's new Welfare Officer responsible for an area of central England. She lives in Worcestershire and previously worked for the Warwickshire Association for the Blind, Worcestershire County Council and until her appointment as Welfare Officer with St Dunstan's, was the Senior Rehabilitation Officer with Sandwell Council in the West Midlands.

Rachel is interested in country pursuits especially horses and dogs and is a particularly keen rider. Rachel is involved in the breeding of spotted ponies. She is already quite well known to some St Dunstaners, having referred many people to us in recent years. She is now looking forward to now being on the 'other side' providing a welfare service in this new area.

RNIB APPOINTS NEW BOSS

HOUSING DIRECTOR TO BRING NEW VISION: The Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) has appointed a senior housing manager as its new chief executive. Lesley-Anne Alexander, currently director of operations at London-wide housing association the Peabody Trust, will replace Professor Ian Bruce who has stepped down after 20 years at the head of the RNIB. Ms Alexander will take up her new post at the start of next year.

STAFF DEPARTURES

CHANGES AT OIVINGDEAN: LESLEY STYCHE, HEAD OF REHABILITATION & TRAINING Lesley Styche joined St Dunstan's in November 1998 from the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association where she trained their Rehabilitation Officers. While at St Dunstan's, she navigated the Rehabilitation and Training department through a period of expansion. We wish her the best of luck in her new post at Chichester College. Lesley says farewell on page 13.

VANESSA YOUNG, REHABILITATION OFFICER

Many of you will know Vanessa who has worked for this charity for the last four-and-a-half years. The work that Vanessa has done over this time stands as an enormous testimony to her. Many may not know however just how much she has contributed to this department over that time, without her dedicated support, both as a friend and colleague – the teams job would have been all the harder.

St Dunstan's is losing a rehabilitation officer of immense quality- she will be greatly missed.
Lesley Styche
Head of Rehabilitation and Training

SUE STEVENS, REHABILITATION OFFICER

Sue has been with St Dunstan's a little under two years. She is off to pastures new with her partner to Devon – we wish her well.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sue for the fantastic work she has done with so many St Dunstaners- many of you will know her and have benefited from her support and commitment. Good luck Sue and many thanks.

Lesley Styche
Head of Rehabilitation and Training

WIDOWS' WEEK IN FEBRUARY

A GENTLE PROGRAMME: The first Widows' Week of 2004, running February 11th-18th will feature activities specifically geared to those who feel they are less mobile.

ST DUNSTAN'S CHRISTMAS 2003

A SEASONAL SELECTION OF CARDS:

Every sale from this year's Christmas selection goes towards the good work of St Dunstan's, training and rehabilitating blind ex-Service men and women.

SD01 – No Room at the Inn

This card is a nativity scene set in Bethlehem – using green and yellow as the main colours. The card depicts Mary and Joseph finding an inn.

10 Cards & Envelopes
Size: 171 x 121 mm
Price £3.00

SD02 – Fun in the Snow

This card shows two children making a snowman in the park, with their dog playing around them.

10 Cards & Envelopes
Size: 171 x 121 mm
Price £3.00

SD03 – Bird Houses

This card shows three different scenes. The first shows a bird house in the snow at night with a stocking left outside. The second scene shows Santa's sleigh flying above the bird house. The third scene shows the stocking full of presents, and a Robin at the entrance to his bird house.

10 Cards & Envelopes
Size: 171 x 121 mm
Price £3.00

SD04 – A Wassaling We'll Go

This card shows six geese one behind the other in the snow. There is a border around this picture, with the words: Wishing you a wonderful Christmas and New Year. Merry Christmas to you.

10 Cards & Envelopes
Size: 83 x 165 mm
Price £2.75

SD05 – Christmas Delivery

This card shows a plump Robin sitting in the slot of a traditional red postbox. It is snowing and there is holly in the picture.

10 Cards & Envelopes
Size: 121x171 mm
Price £3.00

SD06 – Dove of Peace

The card is white with a small box on the top in purple/blue with a dove flying in the air with a star in the distance.

10 Cards & Envelopes
Size: 98 x 130 mm
Price £2.75

SD07 – Star of Royal Beauty Bright

This card has white around the border with a picture on the rooftops of Bethlehem, with a rich blue sky and a large star above. There is writing beneath in gold, which reads: Star of Wonder, Star of Light. Star of Royal Beauty Bright. Star of Wonder, Star of Light. Star of Royal Beauty

10 Cards & Envelopes
Size: 98 x 130 mm
Price £2.75

SD08 – Holly Sprig

This attractive card has a sprig of holly in the centre with gold and silver boxes behind (with silver writing on). There is a gold border around this and then a white border surrounding it with gold writing on it repeated all the way round, reading: The Holly and the Ivy.

10 Cards & Envelopes
Size: 121 x 121 mm
Price £3.00

SD09 – Stars Gift Wrap

This gift wrap has different sized stars on the wrap, and the wrap comes in different colours – red, white, blue, green and purple.

5 sheets with matching tags
Price £3.00

SD10 – Festive Napkins in either holly or Poinsettia design.

Price £3.00

SD11 – Festive Tissues in either Santa or Holly design.

Price £1.10

SD12 – St Dunstan's Hot Air Balloon Notecards

This lovely card shows the St Dunstan's hot air balloon (see page 9) in the air and flying over the countryside, with a lovely blue sky in the background.

10 Cards & Envelopes
Size: 98 x 130 mm
Price £2.75

SD13 – Message in a Bottle/Dropping you a Line Notecards

This pack holds two designs. The first is a drawing of a golden fish swimming at the bottom of the ocean, with a piece of paper in a bottle sinking to the bottom of the ocean – with the words 'Message in a bottle...' at the bottom. The second design shows a drawing of a deep sea diver at the bottom of the ocean holding an envelope at the end of a fishing line. The wording at the bottom reads: Dropping you a line... The inside of the cards is blank.

10 Cards & Envelopes (5 each of 2 designs)
Size: 98 x 130 mm Price £3.00

SD14 – Tulip Notecards

This pack holds two designs. The first is a drawing of a red tulip in a brown pot, the other is of a yellow tulip. The inside is blank.

10 Cards & Envelopes (5 each of 2 designs)
Size: 98 x 130 mm Price £2.75

SD15 – St Dunstan's 2004 Diary

This slimline diary is navy blue leather diary etched in gold on the outside with 2004 at the top and the St Dunstan's logo and badge at the bottom. Inside the diary there is one page of information about the Charity. Each page is gold lined. Dimensions are 80mm x 170mm.

Price £4.00

All of our Christmas cards carry our charity acknowledgement and the greeting "Every good wish for Christmas and the New Year."

To order your cards, please call our order line on 01934 522920 or go online and order directly at www.st-dunstans.org.uk/christmas. Alternatively, write to St Dunstan's, PO Box 280, Weston-super-Mare, North Somerset BS22 9ZD.

WOMEN AND WAR

AMBITIOUS EXHIBITION : The Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, London SE1 is telling the story of servicewomen, nurses, land girls, factory workers and pilots from WWI to the present day. Item's include Marlene Dietrich's uniform and Amy Johnson's flying tunic. The exhibition runs until April 18th next year.

KEEP HISTORY IN THE PICTURE

ST DUNSTANERS IN UNIFORM WANTED:

St Dunstan's Archive department at Harcourt Street, London is the custodian of the organisation's 88 year history. Currently, they are researching St Dunstaners and checking the need for further information. As a result of various requests from the media with regard to military documentaries, they have realised that there are very few photographs on record of St Dunstaners, past and present, in uniform. "We would be very grateful to receive any photographs readers are happy to loan. We will return all pictures after making a copy," says Archivist Roberta Hazan.

Please send any photographs to The Archive Department, St Dunstan's, 12 -14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD. If you have any queries then please do not hesitate to contact Roberta Hazan or Tanya Flowers on 020 7723 5021.

THE UNRETURNING ARMY

LOVE, LOSS AND GREAT BRAVERY: Cotton Grass Theatre will perform *The Unreturning Army*, on November 5th-9th. Examining the impact of the Great War on lives of Peakland men and women it is told with songs, reminiscences and the poems of Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred Owen and others. A donation from ticket sales will be made to St Dunstan's.

The production will be touring five venues in the Derbyshire area, each with its own box office. For details of times and ticket prices call the following telephone numbers:

Wednesday, November 5th - Matlock: Wheeldon Hall, Highfield School, call 01629 581888.

Thursday, November 6th - Bakewell: Medway Centre, call 01433 630233.

Friday, November 7th - Ashbourne: St Oswald's Church, School Lane, call 01433 630233.

Saturday, November 8th - Wirksworth: Town Hall, call 01433 630233.

Sunday, November 9th - Buxton: Paupers' Pit Theatre, Old Hall Hotel, call 01298 22841.

HOWZAT!

St Dunstaner plays blind Cricket at the home of our national sport

A ST DUNSTANER has played cricket at The Oval in Kennington, London, home of the Sussex Cricket Club. Ex-Paratrooper Gary Ogden of Peacehaven who

has been playing with the Sussex Sharks, a blind cricket team that have quickly built a reputation as cricketers to be reckoned with.

Rules follow traditional cricket, though B1 cricketers can catch an opposing player out on the second bounce of the ball.

On October 11th, they were playing a quick stand-off tournament against Birmingham, London and Metro (also from London), three other teams that have also been pushing back the boundaries of blind sport.

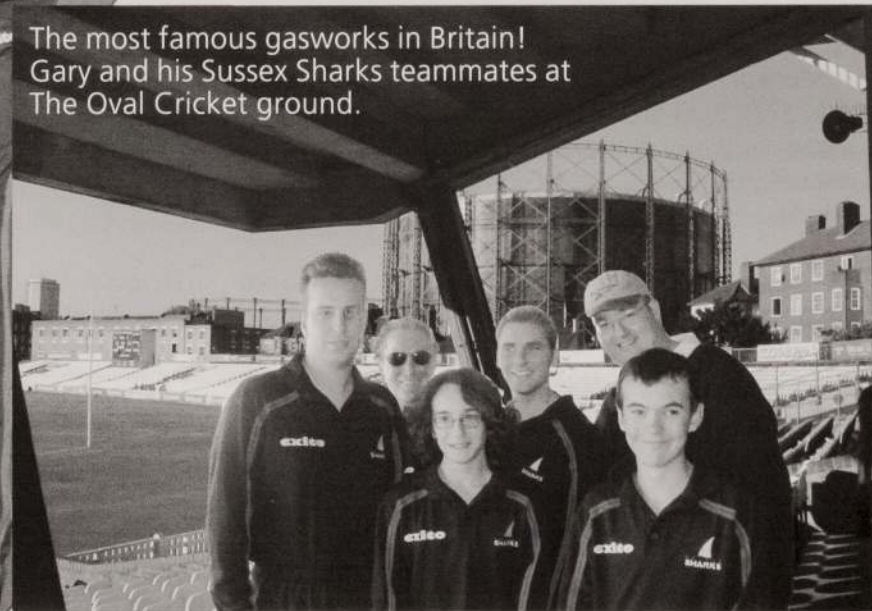
“Are you ready batsman?” asks the bowler with courtesy. “Ready!” comes the reply and the ball comes hurtling towards him. The game seems faster than its sighted counterpart, but each team has its own strategy to cover the green.

The teams are a mix of B1 and B2 players, wickets are as you would expect, but the small hard cricket ball has been replaced with a football, which seems to lend itself to over-arm bowling.

In the first match, the Shark’s win against Birmingham, much to their surprise, since their opponents have a stream of wins behind them. Final play is between the Sharks and Metro, though this time fortune favours their opponents, though as Gary says it’s how you play the game that counts.

“It’s great,” said Gary. “You’ve got every one talking and clapping so you know where everyone is.”

The most famous gasworks in Britain! Gary and his Sussex Sharks teammates at The Oval Cricket ground.



We have take-off!

It’s up, up and away for Eric and the St Dunstan’s balloon



Eric Colman flew over the Yorkshire countryside in the St Dunstan’s-Royal Artillery hot-air balloon.

HARROGATE ST DUNSTANER Eric Colman fulfilled his ‘Blind Ambition’ when he flew over the stunning Yorkshire countryside at 2,500 feet on September 9th. Although he served in the Royal Air Force, Eric’s return to the sky was aided by members of the

Royal Artillery’s Balloon Team (The **Review** suggested something might be in the air when Eric met up with the RA team at Woolwich in April. Now we know it was Eric). Following on from its association with The Flying Gunners during Billy Baxter’s land speed record attempt,

St Dunstan’s is now the proud co-sponsor of a hot-air balloon. St Dunstan’s was offered the opportunity to tie-in with the Royal Artillery over a five-year period. “The balloon is a visual explosion in yellow, red and blue and the St Dunstan’s logo stands head height in glorious technicolor alongside the Royal Artillery cap badge,” says St Dunstan’s Head of Public Awareness Anna Robinson.



Eric joined Royal Artillery Balloon Pilot Steve Armstrong for the balloon’s maiden flight which took off from the Army Foundation College in Harrogate, North Yorkshire. They flew over Knaresborough and a euphoric Eric came back down to earth an hour later to be met by his guide dog Chloe. “I can’t wait to go again,” said Eric after his flight.

The balloon will be used at public and military events with flights being offered as fundraising incentives for competitions.

It strikes me ...



with Gog and Magog

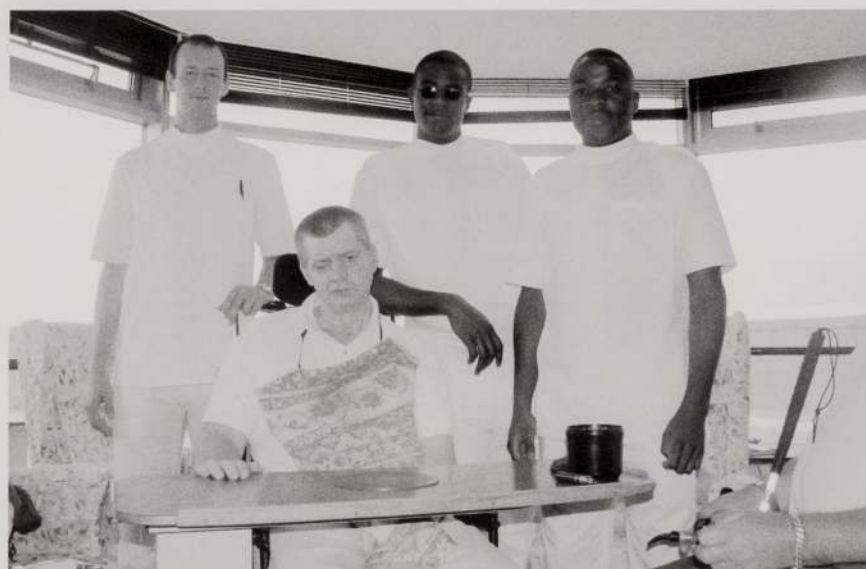
Gog and Magog hear that some St Dunstaners have been taking part in a unique experiment in rehabilitation. The gang of reprobates taking part in the recent Activities Week, a mix of rock climbing, watersports, horse riding, skiing and other pastimes, found there was a new thrill at the Bowles Centre in Tonbridge, Kent. They were asked to climb an high pole and step onto a platform.

"It was like a tea tray at the top, it was really small and the pole starts swaying under your weight as you climb. So you have to get yourself on top and it's wobbling all over place," said one of the St Dunstaners who attempted this David Blaine-style stunt.

"Then you have to stand up and a few feet ahead, not that we can see it, was a trapeze, but it was also higher so you just had to jump for it and grab out. You wouldn't believe how scary it was!" All the St Dunstaners present subjected themselves to this ordeal, completing it with exuberant if petrified delight!

Later one of the Bowles instructors revealed that they wanted to know if the set-up could be used by a blind person. "We get a lot of young offenders down here and they often tell us nothing can scare them, but now we will take them to the pole and say 'Can you do this when wearing a blindfold?'"

Forces medics hone skills at Ovingdean



St Dunstaner Michael Lennon with Royal Army Medical Corps students Paul Schofield, Lewiston Parris and David Muchera.

EARLIER THIS YEAR St Dunstan's was approached by the Defence Medical Services Training Centre to consider accepting a placement of some Forces personnel, who were undertaking training to be Medical Technicians in the field writes **St Dunstan's Head of Care, Jackie Greer, RGN.** These personnel could come here for a 2-4 week placement, where they would learn more about the Charity and how to care for visually impaired people, and St Dunstaners who had other debilities or illnesses.

The students are supernumerary to staffing requirements and therefore have been most useful in assisting us by providing additional escorts for some of the nursing trips and by making more time available to spend having conversations and general interaction with the St Dunstaners.

We have found the experience extremely valuable and the students thus far feel that it has been a great learning curve for them. The initial placements have been students from the Royal Air Force although other Services have now also become involved with the programme.

One of the first group of students who were on placement was moved to write a poem about their experience at St Dunstan's, and presented it to Jackie Greer before their placement ended.

So, if you see some additional younger staff in white uniforms when you next visit Ovingdean, you will know who these people are. Please introduce yourself and have a chat with them about their Service experiences and your own, as they are most interested in learning a lot more about the St Dunstaners.

Generation dame!

Edna celebrates being a great-great-grandmother

ST DUNSTAN'S WIDOW Edna Maple of Ravensbank, Higham Ferrers is celebrating being the eldest of five generations of her family. The birth of Chloe some six months ago made the 84-year-old a great-great-grandmother. In all, she has two daughters, six granddaughters, five great-grandsons, five great-granddaughters and now a great-great-granddaughter.



from the dead. I didn't think I would see him again and when he came back it was like starting again."

Edna's late husband was Kenneth Maple who served in the Royal Norfolk Regiment. He was taken prisoner while in hospital in Singapore. During his four years as a Far East Prisoner of War, Edna knew nothing of his fate. "When he returned it was as if he had risen

Edna and Ken had their first daughter, Diane in 1947. She had four daughters, who had ten children between them. She is now a great-grandmother at 55.

Emotional finish to pilgrim run

JO PROWSE completed her 500-mile run along the Pilgrim route of St James to Santiago on September 18th, four days ahead of schedule. An international fell runner and the daughter of Jo Hamilton and the late Francis Hamilton, she is aiming to raise £50,000 for children's outpatients at St James Hospital.

"I ran to Monte del Gozo this morning and met Mike and the others as planned," wrote Jo in her online journal. "Then we walked the last 5 km into Santiago reaching the cathedral together just before mid-day our time (11 am at home) and it was such an emotional moment that I found it hard to talk. We went into the cathedral for the special Pilgrim Mass in which we each embraced the statue of St James and the Tree of Jesse. Afterwards we queued to receive the 'compostela.'"

Anyone wishing to support Jo's run can write care of David Marlow, Secretary to the Charitable Foundation, The General Infirmary, Great George Street, Leeds LS1 3EX.

Ten questions on...

Ships and the Sea

Harry Beevers sets sail this month

- 1) The clipper *Cutty Sark* which was launched at Dumbarton in 1869 was originally built to carry which cargo?
- 2) Which film of 1942, written and directed by, and starring Noel Coward, was loosely based on Lord Mountbatten's service on HMS *Kelly* in World War II?
- 3) The *Terra Nova* was the ship of which British explorer on his final expedition to the Antarctic 1910-12?
- 4) What kind of vessel was HMS *Hood*, which was sunk by the German battleship *Bismark* in 1941 during World War II?
- 5) Known as USS *Phoenix* prior to 1951, by what name was this former American cruiser known during the Falklands campaign of 1982?
- 6) "They who go down to the sea in ships see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep," is a quotation from which Old Testament book of the *Bible*?
- 7) The Soviet ship *Lenin* was the first nuclear-powered surface vessel, for what purpose was it built?
- 8) What name was shared by Nelson's ship at the Battle of the Nile and by Britain's last and largest battleship launched at Clydebank in 1944?
- 9) The ships *Exeter*, *Achilles* and *Ajax* engaged which German pocket battleship off the coast of South America in 1939?
- 10) Which famous three-decked vessel, 300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide and 30 cubits high, ran aground on its maiden voyage?

Answers on page 30.

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.

Billy's real message shines through

I was highly gratified this week when I listened to Billy The Whizz Baxter being interviewed by Philip Mann on the *Soundings* magazine, as I must confess I have been somewhat fed up with the Public Relations department and their continual exposure of the St Dunstaners who have performed incredible and extreme exploits!!

I of course applaud wholeheartedly the achievements of these individuals and there is no doubt that this has appealed to the media and the Fund Raising department has made capital out of it.

However, I feel that the emphasis has been out of balance and would like to see the Public Relations Office address some of the less glamorous activities of a newly blinded St Dunstaner, such as going for a walk for the first time

on his own, making a cup of tea, taking up training for a new job and generally fitting into society again.

I agree this wouldn't be as sensational as the 'one off' exploits but might well attract some admiration from the public.

Therefore, in view of these sentiments, I was pleased to hear Billy express his feelings, and for those who haven't heard it, I quote ...

In answer to the question about what message does his achievement give he said "It doesn't mean in any way for everyone to go out on a motor bike and ride at speed. The message is as simple as this. No matter how extreme your ambitions are, whether it's just to go out of the front door and go

down to the shops on your own with a white cane or to overcome a problem, that in itself is a bigger achievement than riding a motor cycle but it shows you that if you put your mind to it and with the help of other people, it will give you the inspiration to carry on and do things. The awareness side of this unfortunately in the media's eye, people are always looking at the extraordinary and the extreme and to get people to actually take note, you have to do something silly and its quite unfortunate really so hopefully next time some-one looks at people with disabilities they will think of them in a different light and think, hey, what do they do on a weekend?"

Well done Billy!

**Norman Hopkins,
Cardiff, South Glamorgan**

Thank you for giving me a little lift

I would like to say a big thank you to St Dunstan's, The Royal Artillery and all those concerned with making my hot air balloon flight possible. We flew around Knaresborough, North Yorkshire. Climbing to 1,000 feet, we reached a speed of 8 knots, and covered a distance of six miles. We landed at 6mph and were dragged some 25 yards. I received every courtesy, help and care throughout the whole operation. I enjoyed the flight so much, I cannot wait to go again. Thank you all once again.

Yours truly flightfully

Eric Colman, Harrogate, North Yorkshire

Thank you for flowers!

We wish to thank the Chairman and Members of St Dunstan's Council for their good wishes and beautiful flowers sent to us on our 66th Wedding Anniversary. Such a happy day.

**Joseph and Amy Harris,
Tavistock, Devon**

We would like to send our thanks for the flowers sent on our anniversary.

**Ralph and Margaret Taylor,
Leigh, Lancashire**

Audio description opens a new world

Following your article regarding audio description I thought you may be interested in my experiences of the topic.

For many years Bristol Hippodrome had tried to get AD installed, but the owners (Apollo Leisure) in Oxford said it was too costly. My contact, Trish Hodson who is Disability Officer at the theatre, suggested I should write to the Oxford office.

This I did and after many months of negotiating we finally won the day.

The same thing applied at Bristol Old Vic although I did not need to put as much pressure on my colleague (Andrew Stocker) there.

Since 1998 now I have experienced audio description at both venues ranging from the musical *Annie* to Shakespeare's *Henry V*. This range has also covered ballet, opera and pantomime.

It really does open up a new world when a performance is described with such professionalism. The whole show comes alive and, of course one is the right environment at a live show giving the genuine ambience.

I would like further details about audio description on TV Sky channel please, i.e. what extra equipment is required to my existing large screen TV set? Also would I be able to get the information from my local TV shop?

I am, and will continue to be, a supporter of all things audio described.

**Alan Brown,
Ashton Vale, Bristol**

■ According to British Sky Broadcasting's Disability Officer Kay Allen, all that is required is the Sky set-top box or "digi-box". "The necessary software is already in the new boxes and has

been downloaded onto all the legacy boxes," she told the **Review**. "If your local TV shop is very good they should know about it, but we do recommend that people call our disability helpline on 08705 663333 where they will be able to speak to a person about the services Sky has available for blind customers. Also if you log to our website at www.sky.com/disability which is screen reader friendly, you can find tv listings for audio described programmes which are changed on Friday for the following week, alternately we can e-mail listings if requested. If a customer informs us that they are visually impaired they are entitled to receive our customer magazine on CD."

Kay added that bills could also be supplied in electronic, large print or braille formats if requested. BSkyB are also negotiating with the BBC to increase the choice of audio described programmes.

A few words from Lesley

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude and thanks to oh so many people....

My immediate thanks must go to the Rehabilitation and Training team.

It has been a tremendous privilege to work with a totally committed professional enthusiastic team - a team that I am immensely proud of... their testament is the high calibre of work they achieve with St Dunstan's which is unsurpassed in the field of rehabilitation.

My thanks also go to my Welfare Officer colleagues, who all to often, are the unsung heroes in the charity, their support and guidance has been of immense help to me over the last five years.

I would also like to thank the Fundraising team for their support and believing in what we do .

Lastly, and by no means least, my thanks and huge respect goes to the St Dunstaners, far too many to mention individually. Their tenacity, sense of humour and belief that

adversity can and will be overcome only confirms my own beliefs that disability- what ever the issue, will be beaten and with dignity.

**Lesley Styche,
Head of Rehabilitation and
Training**

Retirement thanks

David Rowe, the former Area Surveyor from the North wishes to thank those kind and generous people who sent retirement cards and donations.

In tribute to the Field Gun Crew

By courtesy of the Commanding Officer, the annual St Dunstan's camp has been held at HMS *Sultan*, following on from years at HMS *Daedalus*. During this time and despite a very hard training schedule, the Field Gun Crew still found time to plan and organise assistance and financial support to help with 'Camp Funds'. Over the years, this help with our summer camp has become a tradition that has been passed down by successive trainers to each 'Field Gunner' who were asked if they would involve themselves with the St Dunstan's week. As you read on, you will understand and, I hope appreciate how difficult it must be for the 'Crews' to give up a precious week of their leave. Particularly since the previous weeks at the Field Gun have been spent undergoing some of the most physically demanding training one could imagine.

The Field Gunners who donate their time are affectionately known as our 'Guide Dogs' for one week. Some have built lasting friendships with the

St Dunstaners, the men who served our country through two world wars and later conflicts, who have lost their sight and in some cases also their limbs. Thus, the Field Gunners are saying "There but for the Grace of God go I". The members of the Field Gun Crew, present and former, continue to act as our helpers for the week, assisting us in activities such as swimming, sports, local visits and social gatherings. The devotion of these young men is so very much appreciated. We the St Dunstaners are proud to know them and look forward to further visits to HMS *Sultan*. It is a wonderful holiday the memory of which we old hands treasure, as we do the memories of the friends we meet at the camp.

We are left to grow old but through the young 'Men of Air', with their strength of character, we re-live our lives in the branches of the Services in which we once served when we too were young - GOD BLESS YOU ALL!

Arthur Carter, Bolton, Lancashire

Who cheques your spelling? This critic's critique is fine by me

I am a stickler for correct spelling, grammar and punctuation, having been brought up in an era when those things mattered. I wonder if anyone proofreads the **ST DUNSTAN'S Review**. Here are a few of the errors I noticed while whizzing through the October 2003 issue (I select articles to record on to our monthly magazine tape for our Newbury visually-impaired folk) - Margret (Margaret), caberet (cabaret), troupes (troops), lear (leer), and "girls" and "womens" spelt without an apostrophe. I cull a lot of interesting and informative articles from the **Review**, and we have fun with the quiz each month, so thanks.

Iris Lloyd,
Newbury, Berkshire

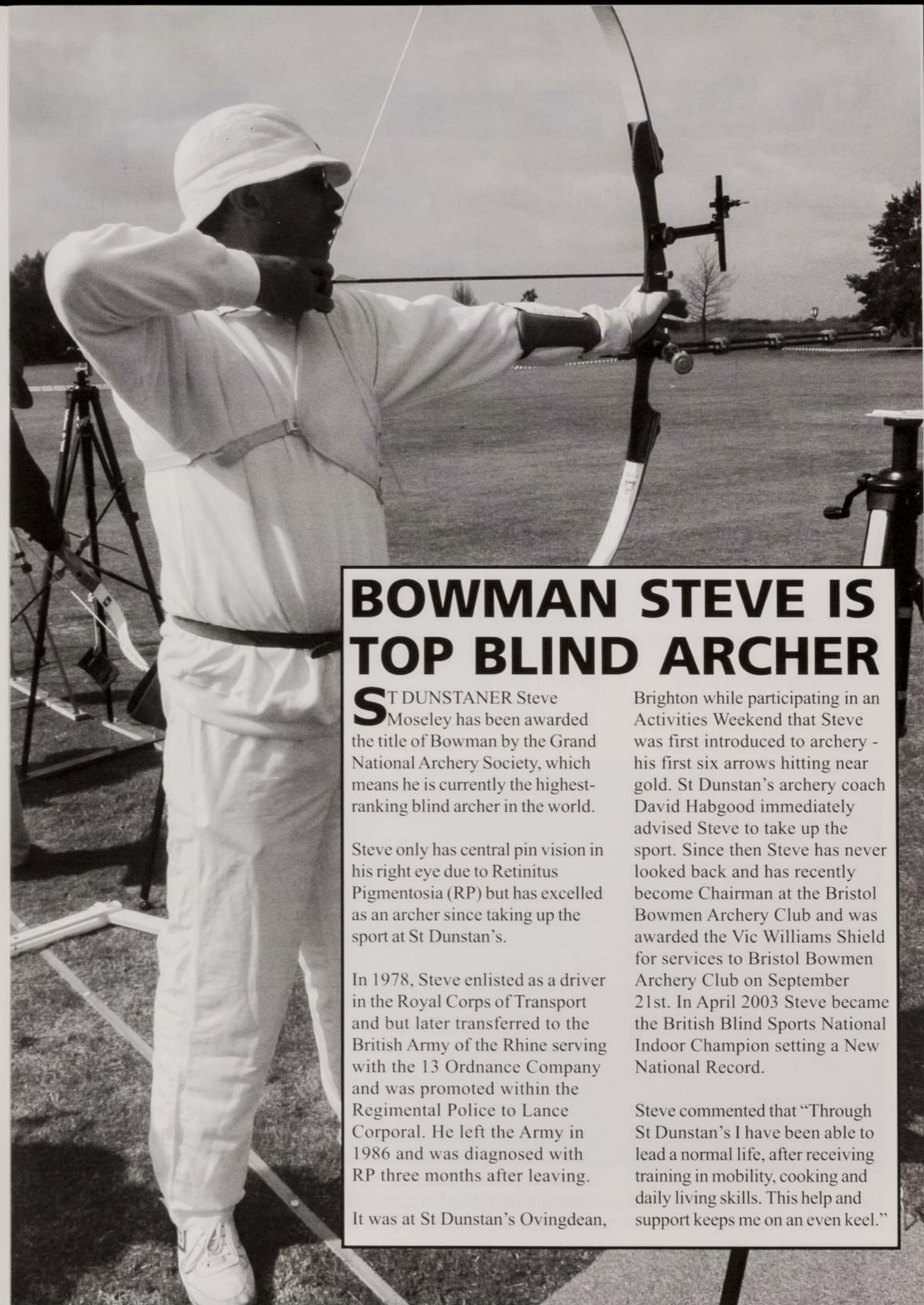
In response to Mr Youngson's letter in the October **Review**, let me say right away that the reverend gentleman has a perfect right to disagree with anything I might write in *Balancing The Books*. However, he does not have grounds to assume that I am ignorant of the life story of his heroine Catherine Cookson. As to knowledge of British political or social history I would be very surprised indeed if mine was not at least the equal of his own. I am delighted, nevertheless, to have proof positive that my little column is occasionally read, so criticise on to your heart's content, bonny lad!

Ted Bunting,
Scarborough, Yorkshire

From the peaks to the airwaves

I was in charge of the technical aspects of St Dunstan's climbs on Cader Idris in the early 1970's and have recently been reacquainted with Bill Shea (G4 AUJ). Our friendship was rekindled earlier this year when I just happened to have amateur radio coms with Ray Peart of Gloucester at 2330hrs! Since then I have been made most welcome on the St Dunstan's Net on a near daily basis (I am newly retired).

Hugh Griffith Roberts,
Barmouth, Gwynedd



BOWMAN STEVE IS TOP BLIND ARCHER

ST DUNSTANER Steve Moseley has been awarded the title of Bowman by the Grand National Archery Society, which means he is currently the highest-ranking blind archer in the world.

Steve only has central pin vision in his right eye due to Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP) but has excelled as an archer since taking up the sport at St Dunstan's.

In 1978, Steve enlisted as a driver in the Royal Corps of Transport and but later transferred to the British Army of the Rhine serving with the 13 Ordnance Company and was promoted within the Regimental Police to Lance Corporal. He left the Army in 1986 and was diagnosed with RP three months after leaving.

It was at St Dunstan's Ovingdean,

Brighton while participating in an Activities Weekend that Steve was first introduced to archery - his first six arrows hitting near gold. St Dunstan's archery coach David Habgood immediately advised Steve to take up the sport. Since then Steve has never looked back and has recently become Chairman at the Bristol Bowmen Archery Club and was awarded the Vic Williams Shield for services to Bristol Bowmen Archery Club on September 21st. In April 2003 Steve became the British Blind Sports National Indoor Champion setting a New National Record.

Steve commented that "Through St Dunstan's I have been able to lead a normal life, after receiving training in mobility, cooking and daily living skills. This help and support keeps me on an even keel."

St Dunstan's on the international stage

Ray Hazan reports on an assembly that united War Blind Organisations from around the world

THE 12TH TRIENNIAL gathering of the International Congress of War Blind Organisations (IKK) was held at Ovingdean from September 20th-24th. The blind ex-Service of ten nations were represented; Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Romania, Russia, Sri Lanka, USA and the UK. For many, it was a second visit to Ovingdean following their first occasion in 2000.

There were the usual hiccups thanks to hurricane Isabel, which nearly prevented our American colleagues from arriving and Pakistan and the Philippines were unable to obtain visas in time. Another delegation appeared with more than the predicted number, which is not helpful in a house without a bed to spare!



UK and US delegations at the Bluebell Railway.

Many delegates had endured several hours of travelling, so they were 'eased' into a concentrated programme. On Sunday, the members laid a wreath at the Old Steine in Brighton. Set amongst greenery and flowerbeds, a moving act of commemoration took place by members linked by the common bond of having lost their sight as a result of war. The two minutes of silence was preceded by *The Last Post* and followed by *Reveille* played by bugler Gary Foster in Royal Marine Association uniform, including pith helmet.

It was then a step back in time, as the party travelled to East Grinstead and back by the Bluebell steam railway. A scorching sun showed off the beauty of the English countryside and made an outing, which hopefully differed from the usual.

By Monday, it was time to get down to serious business! As one of the objectives of the meeting is to exchange ideas, experience and knowledge, the first task was to deliver reports on the activities pursued by each country during the preceding three years. This varied widely from Sri Lanka, in the process of setting up an organisation for those blinded in their civil war. Romania has only recently established a representative body. The US and UK are currently growing, whilst France and Poland are taking in virtually no new blind ex-Service people and so will eventually fade

from the scene. St Dunstan's is the only organisation with responsibility for the complete package of training and welfare. Most countries consist of associations formed by blind ex-Service people themselves putting pressure on governments to provide resources, pensions and training via civilian schools.

Listening to the reports were the Mayor of the City of Brighton and Hove, Councillor Jeane Lepper, the Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Jock Stirrup, KCB, AFC, ADC, FRAeS, FCMI, RAF, military attaches from the US, Germany, Italy and Poland, our Chairman Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN and Robert Leader, Chief Executive. The first day concluded with a discussion on pensions, again varying widely between countries. Italy appeared to be the most generous, including going to the extent of providing guides and escorts to the war blind.

Attempting to obtain agreement on the wording of a Constitution amongst several English-speaking people is a test in itself, but inject five more languages and the tower of Babel is a doddle! Finally the constitution was adopted with the use of some extra time. More importantly than just accepting the text as 'rules of procedure' is the intent to set up a fund, which might hopefully be used to the benefit of war blind individuals.

Some interesting presentations were made by Colonel Terry

English, Director of Welfare, about the work of The Royal British Legion and Lynn McDoughal, Chief Executive, described the work of the Royal Star and Garter Home and St Dunstaner Commander Penny Melville-Brown, RN, talked about the employment of blind people and the care of the elderly blind.

The second day concluded with the re-election of the Officers for a further three-year period: Ray Hazan (UK) President; Italo Frioni (Italy) 1st Vice-President, Dieter Renelt (Germany) and Dr Wladyslaw Golab (Poland) Vice Presidents.

The last evening personified the gathering. The bar echoed to strains of several languages. I sat with the Russian delegates trying to exchange jokes. But our sense of humour is very different, or something got lost in the translation or could it have been my sense of humour? But the language barrier really did not matter – we were visually handicapped people enjoying a drink and a laugh together.

St Dunstan's can be justly proud of the professional and competent way in which the conference was organised and I am indebted to many people and departments at HQ and at Ovingdean for their contributions. Indeed, the St Dunstan's touch was such, that they will most likely want to return in 2006! Thank you everyone.



The IKK delegates observe a minute of silence having laid a wreath of Remembrance at the Old Steine Memorial.



St Dunstan's Chairman Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox introduces Air Chief Marshal Sir Jock Stirrup to the delegate from Sri Lanka.

Welcome to **ST DUNSTAN'S**

Percival Barnard of Maidavale, London served in the Royal Engineers from 1940 to 1946 leaving as a Sapper. He served in the UK and West Africa. He also served in the Merchant Navy and sailed to Japan, America, China and the Far East. Later, he worked in Surrey Docks and the timber trade.

Bernard Barton of Rottingdean, Brighton served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1940 to 1942 and then transferred to the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1940 to 1946 leaving as a Staff Sergeant. He served in the UK, Sierra Leone and Germany. In civilian life, he worked in the electrical manufacturing industry.

Kenneth Beckett of Bromsgrove, Worcestershire served in the General Service Corps from 1946 to 1948 leaving as a Corporal. He served in Egypt, Palestine, Jordan and Syria. In civilian life, he was an engineer and also worked in exports.

Raymond Bedford of Dalton, Devon served in the Royal Engineers from 1950 to 1952 as a Sapper. In civilian life, he was an electrical contractor.

Peter Benmasaud of Swindon, Wiltshire served in the Army Catering Corps from 1958 to 1960 leaving as a Corporal. He served in the UK and Germany. In civilian life, he was a carpenter.

Leonard Bragg of Basingstoke, Hampshire served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1941 to 1942 leaving as a Corporal. In civilian life, he was a

shoe repairer, but changed track to run a newsagent, general store and then a restaurant.

Vera Brooks of Frinton-on-Sea, Essex served as a Wren in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1943 to 1945. She did her training in Leeds at HMS *Eaglet*, later moving to Liverpool and then HMS *Pembroke 3* in London.

Leslie Bunce of Felixstowe joined the Essex Regiment in 1938. He served at home, in Italy and Greece before being demobbed as a Sergeant in 1946. In civilian life, he worked in a blacksmith, as a welder and in the wrought iron business.

Clive Christmas of Fareham, Hampshire served in the Royal Navy from 1950 to 1976 leaving as a Warrant Officer. He served on various ships in the UK and Hong Kong. After his military service, he worked in support of the oil industry at Loch Carron and later became a Wardroom Hall Porter at HMS *Excellent* on Whale Island.

Frederick Crowe of Brighton served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946 leaving as a Leading Aircraftman. He served in the UK, Sri Lanka and India. In civilian life, he worked in stock control for the book publisher Hodder & Stoughton.

John Doherty of Guildford, Surrey served in the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, A.A.C., Lancashire Fusiliers and the Royal Engineers between 1941 and 1966. He left as a Corporal having served in the UK, Germany, Egypt, Italy and Austria.

Eric Durey of Littlehampton, West Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1947. He served in the UK, Gambia, Sierra Leone and West Africa. In civilian life, he was an engine fitter with the South Down Bus Company.

Kenneth Freeman of Rumney, Cardiff served in the General Service Corps from 1942 to 1943 and then transferred to the King's Shropshire Light Infantry until 1944. In civilian life, he was a driver, postman and Trading Standards Officer.

Thomas Forsyth of Saltdean, East Sussex served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1939 to 1946 leaving as a Major. He served at home, in France and in the Middle East. In civilian life, he worked in the motor trade.

Mary Foulkes of Rudgwick, West Sussex served in the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service from 1943 to 1946 leaving as a Lieutenant. She served in the UK, India and Burma and was involved in the treatment of FEPOWs.

Norah Goodship of Salisbury, Wiltshire served in the Women's Royal Naval Service between 1942 and 1947. She was based in the UK and left as a Leading Wren. Initially returning to the Post Office, she later joined the Ministry of Defence.

Douglas Grant of Garstang, Lancashire served in the Royal Naval Air Service between 1941 and 1946. He left as a Leading Air Mechanic having served in the Mediterranean and Pacific. In civilian life, he was a draughtsman.

Stanley Hook of Folkestone, Kent served in the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1946, leaving as a Petty Officer Motor Mechanic. He later became a lighting and electrical engineer.

William Kennaugh of Mawsley, nr Ormslirk, Lancashire served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1939 to 1944 leaving as a Corporal. He served in the UK, France, Belgium and Dunkirk. In civilian life, he worked in furniture retail.

James Lowe of Newtown, Powys served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in 1962. In civilian life, he worked in retail, plumbing and as a taxi driver. He enjoys swimming and covers 15-20 miles each weekend walking in the hills.

James Lowman of Barnet, Hertfordshire served in the Royal Artillery and Army Catering Corps from 1940 to 1946. He was mainly stationed in Gibraltar. He was an upholsterer in civilian life, later setting up his own business.

Peter McDavitt of Gartlea, Airdrie served in the Royal Army Service Corps between 1944 and

1947 in the UK and Italy. After his service, he worked in the building trade doing roofing.

Donald Morton of Wallington, Surrey served in the Royal Air Force from 1953 to 1955, training on air radar equipment. He used to enjoy darts, football, listening to music and was a keen swimmer.

Silus Morum of Cobham, Surrey served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1942. Prior to this, he was a trainee gardener, afterwards he became a munitions worker but later became a builder.

Geoffrey Nuttall of Plymouth, Devon served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1945 to 1948. In civilian life he worked for an international electric cable manufacturing company.

Ronald Pell of Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear served in the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, West Yorkshire Regiment and the Suffolk Regiment between 1940 and 1942 and the Royal Engineers between 1943 and 1948. He left the Service as a Sergeant.

Robert Simpson of Norwich, Norfolk served in the Berkshire Home Guard from 1941 to 1943 when he was transferred to the Norfolk Home Guard where he served until 1944. He later worked with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Arthur Storer of Solihul, West Midlands served in the Wiltshire Regiment from 1939 to 1946. He served in Burma, India, Germany and at the Battle of Arakan and was also involved with the victims of Belsen Concentration Camp.

Thomas Thaxter of Blackpool, Lancashire served in the Merchant Navy between 1945 and 1954. He was involved in troop movement to and from Italy, Singapore and Bombay. He sailed with P&O and Anglo Saxon line making a trips to the West Indies.

Raymond Watkinson of Horsham, West Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946. He left the Service as a Corporal having served in the UK and Canada. In civilian life, he worked for the Royal Arsenal Cooperative Society in Woolwich and in the butchers trade.

Mark Brownlow on an acoustic-rifle re-match

Close shot contest

SINCE ST DUNSTAN'S visited the Target-Sports Club in Chippenham, Wiltshire in March this year, Pat Sidnell (now a St Dunstaner himself) and his group decided to come to us. There were four people shooting for us in total, Cliff Ford, Derek Hagger, George Oliver and Pete Hammond. All in all our shooters fared well but unfortunately narrowly lost. Their spirits were high though, because the Target-Sports Club are a very accomplished side. Cliff Ford should be commended on his excellent shooting and a special well done goes to Pete Hammond (pictured right) on his fist competition. We are all looking forward to our next visit to Chippenham.



PENDLETON'S PANTRY

St Dunstaner and qualified chef **Stephen Pendleton** on kitchen tools

CHRISTMAS IS NOT far off now so I thought I might give you some ideas, with regards to what you might like to see in your stocking this year. The amount of specialised equipment that you need in your kitchen depends on how good or how bad your sight is. I am going to recommend some tools, which I find invaluable in my own kitchen.

Electric Hand Liquidisers & Whisks

I prefer to use hand held liquidisers and whisks because firstly they are a lot smaller than their free-standing cousins. This gives you a lot more control over what you are doing; for example you do not need to keep on turning off the machine to check the consistency of a particular soup or sauce. This is because the machine is in your hand, so when you become familiar with these appliances, you will be able to tell by the vibrations of the machine, just how well it is performing. Also you do not have to spend hours dismantling and reassembling them. These tools are not available from the RNIB, but you will find them in most good department stores.

Good Grips multi-purpose Scissors

These scissors are spring-loaded and they have excellent grip, for added safety. I use mine for cutting the fins of Fish. Scissors are always a handy tool to keep in the kitchen.

Good Grips apple corer and slicer

I think that this tool is the best. As the name suggests, it will cut apples

in to evenly sized wedges and even remove the core all at the same time. Sadly it does not peel the apple, but I suppose you can't have everything. I have found another use for this tool, which you might find interesting. When making Bread Rolls, you can put a fancy design on the rolls, to finish them off. When you have rolled up the dough, just before you put them in to the oven, you can press down on the dough with your apple corer and slicer, this will put a nice flower pattern on your rolls. When rolls have cooked they will look like a pretty flower coming out in bloom, 'Lovely.'

Double Spatula

Excellent tool for removing or turning burgers and Steaks, from the grill. Also great for flipping eggs whilst frying.

Boil Alert

This stainless steel disc is placed at the bottom of a pan, it rattles when water or milk has reached boiling point. This gives you an excellent audio reminder if you are busy doing other tasks in the kitchen.

Big Bold Easy-to-see Tactile Timer

Being tactile, this timer is easy to set if you are totally blind. It is also handy if you have some residual sight as the numbers are very big. Once again this tool gives you an excellent audio reminder if you are busy with other kitchen tasks.

Dycem Non-Slip Mats

These mats come in a wide range of sizes. I have found the smaller sizes very handy. However, I do not

feel the need for the larger sizes, as I tend to use a damp tea towel to keep things, such as chopping boards or mixing bowls, firmly secured in my kitchen.

Measuring Spoons (set of four)

I find measuring spoons are very handy when I am cooking some thing which requires precise measurements. You can also obtain four measuring cups, again I only use these tools if I need precise measurements.

Plastic Measuring Jug with Tactile Gauge

Excellent Jug for measuring precise quantities.

Balance Scales

You can obtain a fairly cheap and reliable set of balance scales from most department stores. I find this type of scales better because, they are more accurate than talking scales.

Twenty Talking Microwave Recipes

I am not a great fan of microwave ovens but I am sure a lot of you are. These recipes have been specially tested and recorded by renowned cookery writer Jenny Webb. It costs £6.95 and is available through Cobolt Systems and Visionaid.

Bump-on Tactile Markers

I would be totally lost in my kitchen without these magic little markers. Just get a friend or relative to stick these markers on electrical equipment you use on a regular basis and low and behold you will find yourself able to manipulate even the most technical of kitchen appliances.

All of the above equipment is used by me on a regular basis. So I can therefore highly recommend everything above. Most are available from the RNIB.

Now, I would like to talk about items found lying around the kitchen, which are in no way designed for the blind but will come in handy all the same. You could also find that you can save some money by using these items.

When working in the domestic kitchen, the need for precise measurements is not always necessary, so reasonable approximations will do very nicely, most of the time. A milk bottle measures 1 pint of fluid. If you can contrast colours, then put dark coloured tape around the bottom half of the milk bottle, to make it easier to see.

A very heaped tablespoon of flour weighs roughly 2oz. So if you do not need to be precise then remember this.

An average packet of butter weighs 8oz, so going on that, you can roughly cut away what you do not need. The average yoghurt pot, can hold 5 fluid oz. So clean them out and you have an excellent measuring cup. Cream can be purchased in 4,5,6oz containers, as above clean out and you have an excellent set of measuring cups.

If you purchase a microwave oven make sure it has a dial control, then you can get a friend or relative to place Bump-on Markers at regular intervals around the dial, also place on defrost button. The defrost button is normally situated next to the heat button so as long as the defrost switch is marked then you will be able to locate the heat button easily. You will also find that

dial controlled microwaves are a good 40 to 50 per cent cheaper than Talking Microwaves.

In some of the recipes coming up in Pendleton's Pantry, you will need to separate eggs. Do not purchase the egg separator in the RNIB catalogue. I found many times in my training that egg yokes frequently fell through the gaps at the bottom of the separator, thus making me very cross. Your hands are wonderful tools, use them for separating eggs.

I personally feel that a lot of the talking equipment is a bit of a waste of money. For example talking measuring jugs can be easily substituted by far cheaper tactile versions which are available from the RNIB (0845 7023 153). However, this is only my opinion - remember you must work with the equipment that you feel most comfortable with.

If you have sponge tins that have removable bottoms, you can use the ring out of the tin. Place the ring of the tin on a plate and then you have a very useful tactile guide. This will aid you with the presentation of food. If you are making a fancy dessert and you want to make it look pretty by making a design with a fruit coolie, you can clean out a washing-up liquid bottle. Put the sauce in the bottle replace lid, and the sauce will run out of the bottle accurately and at whatever speed you require. Please make sure bottle has been thoroughly cleaned, remember chemical contamination can seriously ruin your day.

It is important to really sit down and think, before purchasing any of the equipment mentioned above. All I can say is that "they work for me."

Next month: Basic Bread

BALANCING THE BOOKS

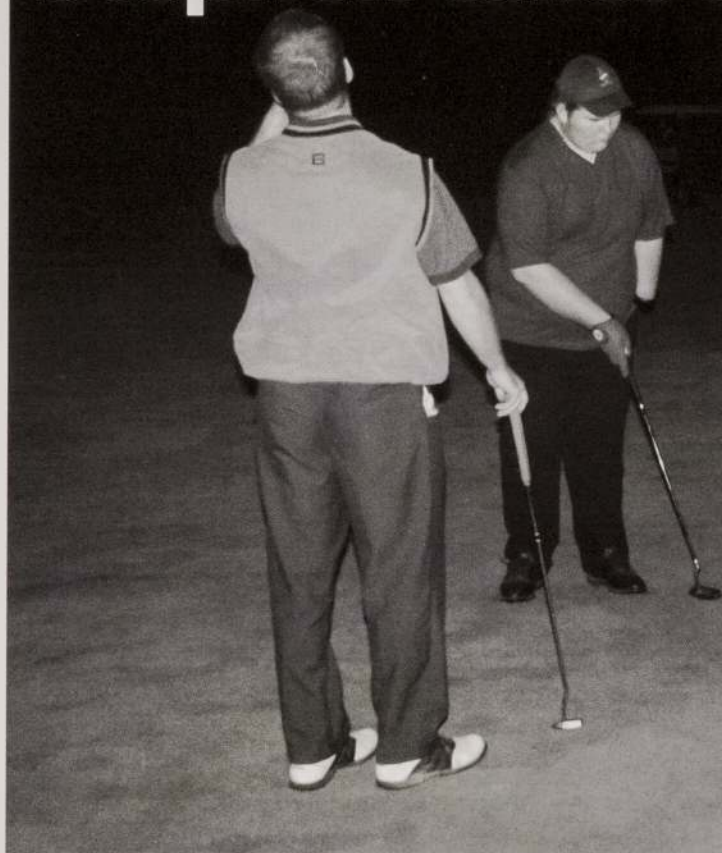
Ted Bunting on Talking Books

Alex Haley's Queen

Author: Alex Haley
Reader: William Roberts
Catalogue Number: TB11579
Duration: 29 hours 35 minutes.

LIKE A DETERMINED Olympic athlete in the marathon this novel about a "plantation child" runs and runs and runs. Beginning in 18th Century Ireland before the battle of Vinegar Hill and ending in the USA after WWI, it contains enough material for several books of conventional length: a Braille edition must weigh a ton! Nevertheless, I would hate to give the impression that the book is too long, because it is not! True enough, there are some parts, like a rape scene and several explicit bedroom episodes, which I believe, could have been excluded without detriment to the whole, but generally speaking it is an exciting work of remarkable worth. The author, already famous for his earlier book, *Roots* exhibits an extraordinary ability to comprehend the ethos of both the slave and the slave owners too, and his portrayal of all the characters is objective throughout. It is true, I'm sure, that a majority of the gentlemen and ladies of America's Deep South held the Negro slave in greater esteem than did the Bible-thumping abolitionists of the North. Although today we justly consider the idea of slavery to be abhorrent, Haley makes it clear that many slave owners genuinely believed the system was mutually beneficial as well as essential. He remembered too (as should we all) that all the states in the union were equally guilty of robbing "the Indians", the indigenous people, of their land and their human rights. Never attempting to evade the truth because of its ugliness, this excellent book holds a mirror to life. It ends, significantly, on the theme of education, the key to freedom for all the deprived; how odd that so many it could help still reject it.

Stephen takes an Aldershot in the dark



It's an old joke about the blind golf player, but for an hour or so, St Dunstaner Stephen Menary brought it to life. He had a level playing field as the game slipped through dusk into the early evening. Stephen was one of three St Dunstaners playing at the Army Golf Club in Aldershot. Also on the green were David Morris and Derek Roden, playing against teams from the Army Golf Club, The Royal Electrical & Mechanical Engineers and HMS *Sultan* flying the flag for the Navy.

Earlier in the day, St Dunstaner David Morris, who holds the World Blind Golf Championship title, had demonstrated how he plays the game, with his partner Linda setting him up for the shot. He then challenged the sighted golfers to take a few shots while blindfolded.

2003 season results

April Les Trout / Don Oliver

May Les Trout / Don Oliver

July John Stevens /

Charmaine Stevens

August Les Trout / Don Oliver

September Reg Perrin /

Denise Perrin

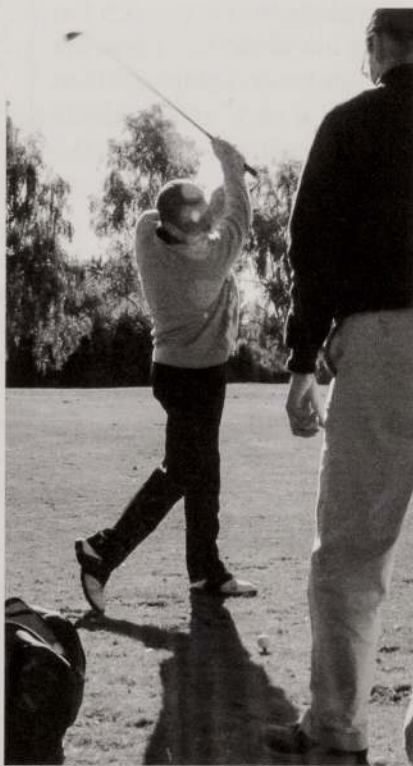
Player of the Year Les Trout

Most Improved Player

of the Year Les Trout

Guide of the Year Don Oliver

The Committee of St Dunstan's Golf Club would like to thank all of our Guides, Phil Dobson, former Team Captain and John Stevens, former Treasurer, for their help and support throughout the season. Also to Andy Alliston from Ovingdean and all the members of the Golf Club for their help and support with special thanks to Tony Blundon and Jill Thornhill and all members of Rusper Golf Club.



Did I hit the ball? A golfer from RMA Sandhurst takes the blindfold challenge.

The first golfer to take the challenge was Gary Churchill from Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. He put on the blindfold and followed Linda's guidance to the ball. She stepped away and he took a swing - and missed! Linda offered a few pointers. Another swing and the ball shot off to the right hitting an army colleague in a delicate position. "Do you want your golf ball back?" asked a squeaky voice.

Next up was Club Captain Michael Burke who seemed to pick up the knack for blind golf almost immediately. While blindfolded, he struck several balls with determined and precise direction.

At the end of the day, it was the home team that won, though HMS *Sultan* won the three-ball contest.

RUN NORTH, RUN SOUTH

St Dunstaners tackle the Great Runs with gusto!



Picture courtesy of Action Sports International



St Dunstaner Dave Powell and Activities Coordinator Lyn Mullins reach South Shields.

St Dunstaner Pete Walker, celebrating his 50th birthday, hits the home stretch in Portsmouth.

NORTH OR SOUTH, the running is great and St Dunstaners haven't backed away from the challenge.

The Great North Run on September 21st covers 13.1 miles from Newcastle to South Shields and proves a bigger pull than the London Marathon with applications nudging 50,000. On the day itself, around 37,000 completed the run.

St Dunstaner David Powell achieved a time of 2hrs 38 minutes, being the 25,336 runner to cross the line. While Maria Bullingham (29,487), wife of St Dunstaner Terry, ran it in 2hrs 34 min. Staff member Lyn Mullins (21,417) crossed the line in 2hrs 28min, though prize surely goes to her husband Andy who was the 1,515

person to cross the line. His time was 1hr 37min which is 37minutes behind race winner Hendrick Rammalla and 32 minutes behind record breaker Paula Radcliffe.

October 12th saw St Dunstan's running in the Great South in Portsmouth. St Dunstaner Pete Walker, celebrating his 50th birthday cracked the run in 1hr 29min while Iain Millard crossed the line in 1hr 35min followed by Steve Sparkes on 1hr 37min. Don Planner and his guide crossed the line in 1hr 38min. Maria Bullingham, joined by Lynda Stringer ran it in 1hr 59 min. Andy Mullins set the pace once more with a 1hr 7minute finish, while Ovingdean staff members Ian Hebborn, Mark Brownlow and Andy Alliston achieved a three way tie with 1hr 20min.



Don Planner and his guide were Great South runners.



Maria and Lynda in Portsmouth.

In his Navy days, St Dunstaner **Raymond Ball** sailed with the Russian Convoys. Since then he has made periodic returns to the former USSR, reuniting with comrades both British and Russian

RETURN TO ST PETERSBURG

Saturday July 26th

My grandson Roger and I arrived at Heathrow and met the rest of the party from the Russian Convoy Club, making 11 in all. Our flight took off about 50 minutes late, so we arrived at Pulkovo 2 airport later than expected. The new immigration form was confusing and caused further delay. The stern-faced female immigration officer was very rigid and formal – no smiles! Despite this delay, the welcome by our friends was as warm and friendly as ever – Roger being attacked by Julie and Luba, also by Anatoly all giving him a hug and kisses – in the continental manner of course – both cheeks!

The Main party departed to their hotel by coach and Roger and I were taken by chauffeur driven car to Anatoly's flat.

Sunday July 27th – Navy Day

We rose early this morning for Navy Day. An 06:30 call, breakfast and into the waiting car by 08:30. Anatoly, Roger and I arrived at the embankment where the famous cruiser *Aurora* is permanently moored. Opposite is Nakhimov's Naval School and not very far away, in a small public open grassed area, there was an imposing monument to sailors and founders of the Russian Navy.

At 09.00 the Naval Band arrived.

Then Russian war veterans, Admirals, Generals and other VIP's from the City's Administration.

At 09.30 the ceremony of placing flowers on the sailors monument started. Our delegation was the last to place flowers. During this ceremony and at later stages, the Press and TV media had many opportunities to cover the events.

The Commander of the Leningrad Naval Base Vice-Admiral Vladimir Ju. Kudrjartsev invited us to board the third cutter and take part in Naval Parade. The cutters moved away from the *Aurora* – the first carried the flag of the Vice-Admiral. The three cutters, in line-ahead, sailed along the River Neva allowing us to view the fantastic buildings on the riverbanks. We passed under several of the magnificent bridges. The Russian Navy ships were moored alongside the *Lieutenant Schmidt* and the English embankments. The ships, dressed overall with crews lining the upper decks, answered the congratulations of the Admiral with a rousing three cheers. Our cutter then went alongside the Icebreaker *Krasin* where salutes were exchanged.

We then returned to the cruiser for a guided tour of the ship and its museums. These contained an exhibition illustrating the part this battleship played in the Tsushima battle during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905. Also on

display were the revolutionary activities of the *Aurora* in the early part of the 20th century. On October 25th 1917, the cruiser fired a 'blank' shot as a signal for the storming of the Winter Palace. The ship also took part in the Great Patriotic War 1941-45. In 1948 it was anchored permanently in the River Neva and was given to the Nakhimov Naval Cadet School.

Afterwards, Anatoly took us to visit St Isaac's Cathedral. This was once principal cathedral of the city. It is one of the finest monuments of the 19th century. It was under construction for 40 years, from 1818 to 1858, using 440,000 building workers. It is 101.88m high, weighs over 300,000 tons and is graced with 112 solid granite columns, each weighing up to 112 tons. There are about 400 bronze deep relief sculptures. The observation platform on the colonnade provides a magnificent view of the city. There is room inside the cathedral for a congregation of 13,000 people. It is a geological museum, containing 43 types of minerals in its construction. One feels privileged to be allowed to enter such a magnificent building. Apart from the massive proportions of the interior, the ornate and gold furnishings are beyond description. The altars are so imposing that one needs more superlatives to adequately describe them.

Leaving the cathedral, we were hot

and thirsty due to the exceptional weather and called at a nearby roadside café for a drink of tea and a Russian type hamburger. This comprised of a tubular bread case into which a sausage had been inserted – not like we expected but it was very welcome anyway.

We left there to go to Pushkin – a small town on the outskirts of St Petersburg. The town was busy as it was Navy Day but we decided to go to the Catherine Palace, which contained the famous and recently restored Amber Room. Anatoly and I, as veterans, went in free and Roger was admitted at student's reduced rate under the guise of being Anatoly's nephew. The history of the palace is that during the Russian Northern War Peter the Great won back the territory on which the town now stands and he gave it to his wife, the future Empress, Catherine the 1st.

From 1724, Catherine's estate began to be called Tsarskoe Selo (Tsar's Village). During all the years until the revolution, it was known as the summer Royal residence.

The construction of the Catherine Palace lasted for 39 years, from 1718 until 1756. Rastrelli was the Italian architect and was the last one to be involved. The splendour of the Palace is absolutely dazzling.

When our Queen, Elizabeth II, paid a visit, it is said she stood in awe and wonder of the beauty of the palace and its interior.

In World War II, from 1941 until 1944, Pushkin was occupied by the Germans and the Palace was destroyed. The famous Amber Room was plundered, the amber presumably taken to Germany.

It was created by German master-carvers and in 1716, Fridrich-

Wilhelm, King of Prussia, gave it to Peter the Great in exchange for 248 sturdy soldiers for his own personal guard.

None of the amber has been found, so it was decided to recreate the room. After ten years hard work Russian craftsmen have done just that.

It is impossible to describe the grandeur and beauty of the many rooms and halls, such as the Great or Throne Hall, the Cavalier's Dining Room, the Picture Hall, the Green Dining Room and others.

The internal walls were covered in golden deep relief mouldings, paintings of great value and extremely rare and priceless fixtures and fittings. To be honest; I felt that this overwhelming display of wealth was not consistent with the relative poverty that existed in the surrounding areas. At the same time I also fully appreciated the major part these palaces play in Russian history.

Monday 28th July

Anatoly and I went to the Peter & Paul Fortress. This Fortress, now a Museum, was built under the instructions of Peter the Great. The work commenced on the 16th May 1703. This date is regarded as the day of foundation of St Petersburg. The Fortress was built to defend the Neva City from invasion by Sweden. In the middle of the 18th Century it housed the most awful and horrifying political prison of all Russia. The Fortress is now an historical and architectural memorial. Among its buildings of interest are the famous St. Peter and Paul Cathedral, the Museum in Trubetskoy Bastion and of course the infamous prison. There are also the Imperial Mint and a more recent Museum of Cosmonautics and missiles.

The St Peter and Paul Cathedral is within the Fortress grounds and is the highest edifice in the City with a 121.8m golden spire. Inside is the tomb of Peter the Great and other Tsars including Nicholas the 2nd plus graves of their relatives and close family.

The interior was absolutely magnificent. The burnished gold leaf was dazzling and the altars priceless in appearance.

Anatoly set off to the nearest Metro Station and on route passed a famous Sailor's memorial. The deep relief casting, almost life size, depicts the two Sailors opening the Flood Valves. This was erected in 1911 in the park adjoining the Kamennostrovsky Prospect.

It is dedicated to the heroic deeds of two sailors of the destroyer *Steregushchy* during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05. Surrounded by enemy warships, the two seamen, who were the remaining survivors, preferred death to dishonourable surrender. Descending into the hold and opening the seacocks they scuttled their ship within sight of the enemy. They perished together with their ship.

Tuesday July 29th

We caught the Metro very early to meet up with the rest of the group for a visit to Konstantinovskiy Palace. Whilst waiting for the coach we looked, out of curiosity, into a little bakery shop window. They sold so many different types of bread; we could hardly believe there could be so many types.

It was very hot on the coach and this was made worse because of the long wait, of about half an hour, to receive security clearance.

Security was also very tight in the Palace itself but this was because it is the Russian equivalent of our Chequers. A brief history of the palace is that the foundation stone was laid by Peter the Great in 1720. The work slowly came to halt due to the development of Peterhof Palace and it ceased altogether after the death of Peter the First. His daughter, Elizaveta Petrovna recommenced the work in 1750. In 1797, Paul the First handed over the property to Konstantin Pavlovich and it became the residence of the Grand Princes. In 1918 all the property, sculptures, painting and military library were removed to the official museums. In 1941 the palace interior was destroyed by the occupying German forces. In 1950 the restoration was carried out by the Lenproject Institute turning it into Educational and Administrative accommodation. In 1990, Konstantinovskiy Palace was listed by UNESCO as part of World Heritage.

In 2001, by President V.V. Putin's efforts the palace acquired the status of Governmental Complex (Congress Palace). 2003 it housed the official celebration events devoted to the 300th celebration of the founding of St Petersburg.

The complex houses hotel and small VIP Class bungalows giving accommodation of the highest standard. Many other facilities are provided, press accommodation: swimming pool, sauna, gymnasium and billiards room.

Our guide took us round the gardens, that seemed unfinished and they were not particularly special or interesting. The real treat was inside the newly restored Palace. It had only just been re-opened due to extensive renovation work, which was

necessary due to the devastation caused by the Germans during World War II. We were shown around the beautiful (and air conditioned) palace, which is believed to have been based on the design of Versailles. Having visited both, I saw a limited external similarity but in comparing the interiors, Versailles pales into insignificance against the splendour of the Russian Palace.

The interior was simply spectacular. We were shown function rooms, conference rooms and even Mr Putin's private 'cabin'. This had a wonderful view over the Gulf of Finland and was constructed of beautiful timber representing a ship's cabin. The conference room had recently been used to accommodate the World Leaders on the occasion of the 300th St Petersburg Anniversary.

The coach was unbearable on the way back, having been parked in the sun. Travelling back into St Petersburg we arrived at the Baltic Tourism College where they had laid on a lovely spread of food and drink.

On our journey home from the Metro, Anatoly took Roger around a proper Russian grocery shop. It had been agreed that Roger should, under supervision, shop for our evening meal requirements. He found it quite an experience, so different to what we are used to at home. Different counters for different goods – no evidence of any customer service skills! Whilst they were busy I noticed customers going to a counter and coming away with a glass of beer. This looked too good to miss, so I indicated I wanted a small measure and paid 8roubles (about 17pence). Just what the doctor ordered cool and thirst quenching.

We got ready for our evening at the House of Friendship, how aptly named it is! The warm, sincere and friendly greeting we always receive makes our visit there one of the highlights of coming to St Petersburg.

There was a concert taking place in our honour, a vocalist, pianist and a violinist. The violinist was so talented that it was a privilege to listen to him. After the musicians had finished and speeches were made, we made our way down stairs for a drink and light snack. This gave us the opportunity to meet Margaret Mudrak and her colleagues, hugs and kisses all round, what lovely people they are. Knowing we had a busy day on the morrow we said our goodbyes, promising to return in the not too distant future.

Wednesday July 30th

We packed in order to catch our flight from Pulkovo 1 (internal flight terminal) to Arkhangelsk. Julia and Luba came to see Roger off (and rest of us I suppose) and they presented Roger with a picture taken the last time he was there. It was very touching farewell and the girls started crying as we said our goodbyes.

At Arkhangelsk, the welcoming party included Tania and Anatoly, the Chairman of the Russian Northern Convoy Club. Quickly we booked in and went straight to our rooms for a shower and unpack, we then went down to the bar for a much needed thirst quencher – Baltika No 9 if possible (Specific Gravity of 8) the price was 25roubles (50p). Anatoly, Tania and a new interpreter, Olga, joined us, this gave us the chance to talk with the rest of our party because we had no opportunity in St Petersburg

because we were staying in Anatoly's flat. We had dinner, taking advantage of having Tania and Olga to translate the menu. Most of us settled for ham omelette, bread and butter, and coffee.

Around 21.00, we went upstairs, totally knackered! Although the room was very hot we knew from previous experience it would be unwise to open the window and allow the swarms of mosquitoes in. Some of our party did open their windows and were covered in bites. The next morning, we met in the bar for a quick drink. It was great to catch up with old shipmates like Huey and talk with the others.

Thursday July 31st – Severodvinsk

This area has a submarine construction and development yard and factory and because of the sensitive nature of this activity, lists of all our party had to be submitted weeks before our visit in order to obtain security clearance to enter Severodvinsk.

We were up early because of the heat and were soon in the shower. It really was unbearably warm already. We changed into more formal attire (This was one of the only times in Arkhangelsk Roger actually wore his blazer and tie) as we were meeting the Mayor of Severodvinsk.

On our arrival at the Severodvinsk Municipal Building (Town Hall), the local veterans met us, many of who remembered us from last time. After the usual warm and cordial greetings we were taken up to the Mayor's ante-room where we were welcomed and served lemon tea and cakes.

After speeches the programme for the day was revealed and Uri,

Solombala Deputy Mayor, was to be our guide and host for the day.

After this reception, we headed for the bus and posed for the local press. I had my photograph taken with one of the ladies who worked on the *Trinidad* whilst it was being repaired in Murmansk Rosta dry dock. The lady was only 16 years old in 1942. I had met her previously in 2001. Later we went the museum which I had visited a couple of years ago. Whilst we were here a local television crew interviewed Roger and asked him questions about me, his granddad. They also wanted to know his plans for the future. This all took place whilst the others were having a guided tour of the museum.

The tour of the museum completed, we were taken to the coast to visit three Memorials. One was to commemorate the war dead, at which we laid flowers, and another, more recent, to the 118 victims of the Russian submarine, *Kursk*. Whilst we were stood at the *Kursk* Memorial, Olga informed Roger that a lady from the local newspaper wanted to do an interview. It is really wonderful the interest that the Russians show in the reason for my grandson being with me. Roger considers it quite an honour.

We then went to the nearby Richard Chancellor memorial by the beach. This activity attracted the attention of many locals who had been basking and bathing under the very warm sunshine. One man came up to me and in broken English said he was an engineer. We managed to exchange greetings and he kindly offered me a drink of his glass of beer.

The Richard Chancellor memorial is a large part of the whole of Northern Russian history. May 11th,

1553 three British ships set out from Deptford attempting to find a new route, via a North East Passage, to China. The largest ship was captained by the experienced Richard Chancellor. The name of his ship was *Edward Bona Ventura*. The other two that were lost were *Bona Esperantsa* and *Bona Confedencia*, they were frozen in the Nokuema Bay, Kola Peninsula. In summer of that year the ship came into Nikolskoje Mouth of the North Dvina, now known as Severodvinsk). In honour of this event there was erected a large memorial stone, signifying the beginning of Britain-Russia relations. Then Chancellor went to Kholmogory with the goods he had brought, and from there he was taken to Moscow for an audience with a rather surprised Ivan the Terrible. Richard Chancellor returned to his ship the following spring laden with gifts and letters to the English King.

In spring 1554, the *Edward Bona Ventura* set sail for home, only to be boarded by Dutch pirates who looted most of the ship's cargo. Luckily, Chancellor managed to hide Ivan's letters in his clothing and soon presented them to England's new rulers - Mary Tudor and the Spanish King Phillip. Next year, as Sir Richard Chancellor, he was sent back to Russia as England's official Ambassador.

Then we began our ten-minute walk to a restaurant where the Severodvinsk authorities had arranged a large meal for us. Now was the time to start liking fish!

After an hour or so, people started making speeches. This usually does not bother me, as more often than not, these are quite amusing. However, this time one member of the party started 'twittering' on for what seemed like the good part of

20 minutes or so about the heroic action of the ship he was on. I understand that people's memories deteriorate with age, but this shipmate was talking total rubbish, although he appeared to have convinced himself it was all true. In fact, what he said upset some members of the party who had actually been on other ships bearing the brunt of the action. To be kind it may have been the excess of vodka talking.

Friday August 1st

The highlight of this day was a visit to a wooden village on the outskirts of Arkhangelsk. It had a number of perfectly kept, original Russian buildings, representing or actually from, different regions. Their sturdy construction of solid timber logs was such that it provided considerable insulation for the interiors. Inside the doors to every room was very low in height and as such provided a restriction to the flow of smoke from the cooking fire. This smoke ingeniously rose to the ceiling and was prevented from going low down by a continuous shelf around the room ultimately leading the smoke to an upward and outward vent. It could be considered to be an early form of central heating.

When I came out of this house a Russian lady, of mature years, stopped me and said thank you. This often happens to us veterans and is not unusual. She told me she had been a professor of engineering and now held the post of the Site Engineer – a most interesting lady. The village included a beautiful church with domes and spires.

The setting was a woodland area, there were quite a few midges and mosquitoes in the shade and it was too hot to stand in the sunshine, so

it was somewhat difficult at times to fully admire the buildings.

After our trip to the village we went for an excellent meal in Solombala, courtesy of Uri. It was an enjoyable meal for most, but fish is not one of Roger's favourite dishes.

After this meal the party went to a craft school, whilst the others went on a guided tour of the school. David, Eric, Gordon, Roger, and I left to meet the Mayor of Arkhangelsk. The visit in the Mayor's Parlour most interesting and the Mayor, Anatoly, we found to be a genuinely nice, quietly spoken, person. He made us feel most welcome.

Saturday August 2nd

At 10:00 we boarded the bus again and went to the British Memorial Cemetery. Roger dressed merely in shorts and a shirt, stayed on the sidelines. We had visited this Cemetery on each of our previous tours and were pleased to see that it was well kept and improved in some areas.

Once we had laid our wreath and paid our respects we visited a more recent memorial stone on the banks of the Dvina. Here we were delighted to meet Boris. He still remembered the happy times of our previous visits and wanted to know how Roger was going on. He is a lovely man, but he has lost a lot of weight and did not look too well. Whilst we were talking with Boris, a TV crew were individually carrying recorded details of our experiences on the Convoys. Yes! Our friend again reiterated how his ship alone sank the *Scharnhorst*.

After this, we visited a small Orthodox church on the outskirts of Solombala. It really was

fantastic, the walls were covered in beautiful icons – Roger had never actually been in a Russian Orthodox Church but he commented that what he saw was awe-inspiring. Whilst we were there, a multiple Christening service was being held.

Saturday evening was very different and great fun. The bar at the hotel had no beer left due to a wedding reception which was in full swing. Consequently we had been allocated one of the small banqueting rooms, just right for a party of our number. With it being the last real night we could celebrate, we were more than a little disappointed that the hotel was without beer. However, if a group of old sailors couldn't organise beer our Navy experience had been wasted. With Roger taking notes and collecting cash, it was decided that we needed a case of two dozen bottles. Reception was asked if they would contact their supplier and order a case of Baltika No. 9 for immediate delivery. Within a relatively short period the beer arrived, 80roubles for delivery but at 16roubles a bottle. Our treasurer, Roger, paid the deliveryman and I believe made a personal handsome profit for his efforts.

The case was issued according to individual orders and problem solved - we had a very pleasant evening. I think we must have over ordered because I believe one bottle found its way to Fleetwood – and it wasn't me!!

Sunday August 3rd

It had been decided earlier that a visit to a particular Monastery was an important venue, despite the distance of approximately 100 miles. We travelled for two hours to get there. On our arrival an

Orthodox Monk greeted us. He gave a talk about the history of the Monastery and how restoration work was proceeding. After this he took us on a guided tour and the work now being carried out was on a very large scale and will obviously take many years.

On arrival back at the hotel we were asked to get ready for a last night meal at the restaurant in Solombala. It was an excellent setting for a farewell dinner. The usual, formal farewells and thank you speeches were made with appropriate replies. A large party dining across the ballroom started singing *Happy Birthday* to one of its number. This singing started a competition. We gave a rendering of WWI and WWII songs, to loud cheers from the Russian party. After this the 'Birthday' boy (34) came over to our table and he said that we were his guests – his father was on the convoys in the war. Roger told me later that he had suddenly realised that in this area everyone was connected to the Navy in some way – father, sister, mother or brother and I suppose this was the reason why we always felt so welcome.

Monday August 4th

A very early start today – flight to Moscow scheduled for 0700. We arrived on time at Moscow and had time to spend our remaining roubles in the "Irish Bar" – nice Guinness!

Having landed at Heathrow and clear of immigration and customs we found my son-in-law waiting to transport us back home.

What a glorious, interesting and enjoyable ten days it had been, particularly renewing friendships, also seeing so many wonderful historic buildings and memorials.

A CALL TO ARMS!



Ted Burtonshaw still carries his father's oil can.

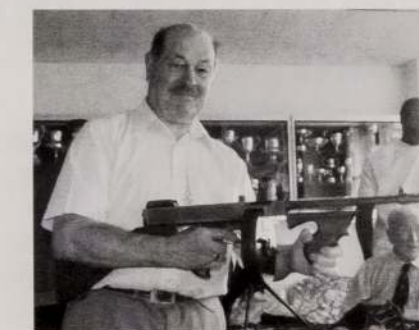


Fred Cox tries a chain mail helmet for size.

A MINI-ARSENAL was unveiled in the Blue Room at Ovingdean on September 22nd. St Dunstaners picked up rifles that brought back memories of long treks across Europe and a Bren gun mounted on the table prompted a debate on how long it took to strip one down.

The assorted weaponry was part of the collection of Count Ralph de Straet von Kollman, Master of Arms who used it to discuss the development of arms through the ages. There were medieval helmets, swords, flintlock pistols and a range of hand grenades. It seemed like St Dunstaner Alf Waters got the shock of his life when he was handed a mace. Feeling along the handle and chain, he wasn't prepared for the spiky ball that was attached to the end.

St Dunstaner Ted Burtonshaw brought his own relic to the talk. He was carrying an oil canister for lubricating guns that his father had carried through the First World War and he in turn had carried it through the Second. Ted ruminated on the state of a world that made such weapons necessary. "It's beautiful, but evil," he said. "Man is the only creature that kills his own kind in this way."



Master of Arms Ralph with part of his collection.



"I used to wear a helmet like that in the Paras."



Barbara Bell feels the grooves on a hand grenade.

75 YEARS AGO

Reports in 1928 centred on business being conducted by St Dunstaners. Some were joiners or mat makers, others were selling ice cream or other produce. J.H. Debnam of Great Barrow was doing well as a Poultry Farmer. From 75 birds, he was averaging 350 eggs per week while fruit from his orchard was producing a steady income while still leaving plenty for home consumption. However, business was not so good for T. Condon of Worthing who lost 60 nine-week old chicks. This severe set-back was compounded when his wife crushed her fingers in a mangle, an accident which incapacitated her for some weeks.

Ten Answers

Answers from page 11.

- 1) Tea; 2) *In Which We Serve*; 3) Captain Scott;
- 4) Battle-cruiser; 5) *General Belgrano*; 6) *Psalms*;
- 7) As an ice-breaker; 8) *Vanguard*;
- 9) *Admiral Graf Spee*; 10) Noah's Ark.

FAMILY NEWS

BIRTHS

Congratulations to the birth of:

Georgia on June 21st. She is the grandchild of *Bill and Carole Kennedy* of Peterborough, Cambridgeshire.

WEDDINGS

Congratulations to:

Julia and Mark Wilson who married on August 23rd. Julia is the daughter of *Tony and Joyce Parkinson* of Blackpool, Lancashire.

SILVER ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Anthony and Jean Pontet of Hastings, East Sussex on September 30th.

RUBY ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Eddie and June Gillies of Ellesmere Port, Cheshire on September 26th.

John and Diane Heath of Birmingham, West Midlands on September 28th.

Maurice and Ethel Searchfield of Thornton-Cleveleys, Lancashire on October 3rd.

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Norman and Doreen Kerslake of Winchester, Hampshire on October 3rd.

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Leonard and Joyce Hassam of Warminster, Wiltshire who celebrated 61 years of marriage on September 26th.

Leonard and Olive Smart of Redditch, Worcestershire who celebrated 62 years of marriage on September 27th.

Frederick and Florence Morgan of Bristol, Avon who celebrated 65 years of marriage on October 1st.

Dennis and Joan Brown of Linden Village, Buckinghamshire who celebrated 62 years of marriage on October 4th.

Lt-Colonel Charles and Anthea Booth-Jones of Templecombe, Somerset who celebrated 61 years of marriage on October 17th.

DEATHS

We regret to announce the death of:

Rosalyn Hopkins on September 16th. She was the wife of *Gomer Hopkins* of Epsom, Surrey.

Edna Harrison of Swansea, West Glamorgan. She was the widow of *William Harrison*.

Our sympathy goes to their family and friends.

IN MEMORY

Harold Wren

Royal Engineers

Harold Frederick Wren of Sheldon, Birmingham, West Midlands died on September 12th, aged 85. He

joined the Wiltshire Regiment as a drummer in 1930, serving in Palestine for two years before leaving the regiment in 1938. Like many men, he was called up in 1939 and initially rejoined the Wiltshire Regiment. After being evacuated from Dunkirk he transferred to the Royal Engineers Postal Unit and subsequently took part in the D-Day landings on D+7. After the war he joined Royal Mail as a postman, retiring in 1977. His interests included gardening and he played as a drummer in his own band for many years. Our sympathy goes to his widow Mary, their children, foster children and all members of the family.

Kenneth Gorham

Royal Electrical & Mechanical Engineers
Kenneth Gorham, AE, B.A.(Oxon), B.Com of Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire died on September 18th, aged 80. He joined the Queen's Royal Regiment in 1942, but transferred to the Royal Engineers as a Driver. He served with them through West Europe into Germany before being demobbed in 1947. In 1952, he enlisted with the Royal Electrical & Mechanical Engineers and was a Sergeant when discharged in 1966. In civilian life, he was a Superintendent with the London Ambulance Service. He lost his sight and suffered partial paralysis after a heart attack and a series of strokes. Our sympathy goes to his widow Stella and all the family.

Charles Shallcross

Royal Engineers

Charles Herbert Shallcross of Chester, Cheshire died on September 23rd, aged 87. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1945. Originally a carpenter, he joined the Royal Engineers in 1940. He was blinded in Belgium in 1945 when a Teller mine exploded. After training at Church Stretton, he and his wife ran a café and shop later taking up market gardening. His interests include cricket, football, cookery, gardening and amateur radio. Our sympathy goes to his daughter Pamela and all members of the family.

Kenneth Burton

Army Catering Corps

Kenneth John Burton of Sunderland died on October 2nd, aged 51. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1992. Having joined the army as a Boy Soldier in 1967 and established a reputation for his chosen sport, fencing. Training at Aldershot, he obtained City & Guilds and Higher Army Certificate of Education qualifications which allowed him to enter

the Army Catering Corps as a Lance Corporal. He served with the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment in Munster and later with 11 Field Ambulance and 3rd Royal Green Jackets. He was invalided out of the Army when it was discovered that he was suffering from Multiple Sclerosis. In civilian life, he was a Computer Operator before his condition restricted him to a wheelchair. His interests included glass engraving, music and he had recently been shooting using the acoustic rifle at Ovingdean. Our sympathy goes to his widow Sylvia, sons John and Carl and all other members of the family.

Captain Harry Blamire

Royal Electrical & Mechanical Engineers

Captain Harry Blamire of Lytham St Annes, Lancashire died on October 2nd, aged 87. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1962. He joined the Royal Electrical & Mechanical Engineers in 1940. Two years later, he lost his left eye as a result of an ammunition explosion on a firing range. He served in Normandy and Malaya and was discharged in 1957. In civilian life he worked in the Premium Bond Office. Our sympathy goes to his widow Joyce, daughter Shirene and all other members of the family.

Ted Cooper

King's Regiment (Liverpool)

John Edward Cooper, known as Ted, of Colwyn Bay, Conwy, Clwyd died on October 6th, aged 84. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1944. Originally a flour miller, he joined the 9th Battalion, King's Regiment (Liverpool) in 1939 and was serving with them as Corporal when injured in action in France in 1944. It would take several decades for shrapnel to pass out of his body. After training at St Dunstan's, he took up joinery and toymaking. Our sympathy goes to his widow Dorothy and all of the family.

Thomas Collins

Army Catering Corps

Thomas James Collins of Garforth, Leeds died on October 10th, aged 89. He had been a St Dunstaner since 2000. He served in the Pioneer Corps from 1940 to 1944 and then the Army Catering Corps until 1946. He supported units in France and Germany and was injured during a bombing raid on Coventry. After leaving the Service, he continued to cook working for hospitals such as St James and St Mary's in Leeds. Our sympathy goes to his niece Patricia and all other members of the family.

Robert leads the way!

Guide dog lets the train take the strain for Paris trip



Robert leader! RAF St Dunstaner Colin is taken to his seat on the Paris bound train.

ROBERT THE GUIDE DOG set his own canine UK land speed record on October 8th when he travelled at 186mph on Eurostar for the first time between London and Paris. Previously, blind travellers were unable to take their guide dogs on-board the service through the Channel Tunnel, as the carriage of all animals was banned. Accompanying, Robert was his master St Dunstaner Colin Davies of Peacehaven, East Sussex who raised a petition to encourage Eurostar to change their policy. As a result, Eurostar staff have been training with The Guide Dogs for the Blind

Association to put in place the procedures and facilities required to enable an efficient service. Guide dogs can now travel on Eurostar free of charge. Guide Dogs' Robin Hutchinson feted Eurostar for their decision to enable blind people the freedom to enjoy Continental trips. "They have gone the extra mile to ensure that guide dog owners can enjoy the same independence that travel offers everybody else."

Colin, for one, was impressed by the experience. "It was wonderful service on the train, the staff were absolutely perfect, so attentive, not just to me, but to everyone," he said. Arriving in Paris, he and Robert were greeted with station workers clamouring to shake hands or pat heads. Waterloo International will be the only UK reception point for the admittance of guide dogs. The number of guide dogs on each service train will be limited because of safety requirements.

"And a ticket for me too, please!" barks Robert.



Robert and Colin, followed by Gretl and Dr Mike Nussbaum arrive at the Paris terminal.

