

June 2004

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# ST DUNSTAN'S Review



**FOR BLIND EX-SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN**

# June 2004

**Cover story:**

## Blinded to the dangers!

His vision blacked out, a Fire Fighter carries a hose upstairs to deal with a blaze. With a high probability that they will be called upon to enter hazardous areas obscured by smoke, what better way to prepare for the possibility of dealing with a blaze you cannot see than to hold a fire drill at St Dunstan's. **Full report on page 24.**

## David is still King of the Course

St Dunstaner David Morris retained his title as the best blind golfer in the world, while Mike Mayo excelled in the B3 category during a championship tournament in Australia in April. **Tee off on page 7.**

## Old Boot wins

Horror author Peter James reveals his top choice from the entries to our Story Contest. **Find out who won on page 16!**

## Run Nurse run

Their feet were barely through the door, when two medical students found themselves on a 17 mile run to St Dunstan's. **Race to the back page for more details!**

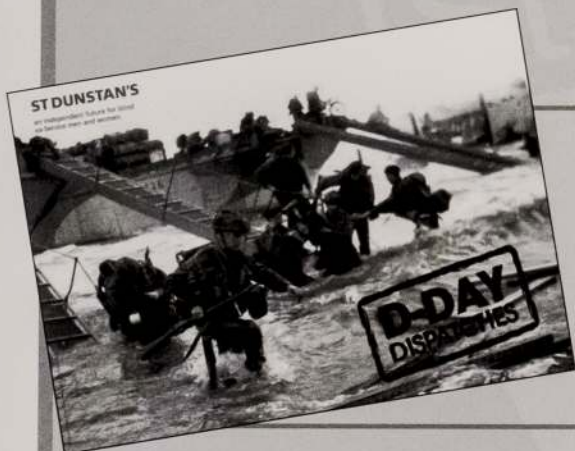
## Still special

St Dunstan's Blind and Handless Group met up for their Annual Reunion. **Details on page 8!**

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

### D-DAY DISPATCHES

The special edition newsletter, which has been inserted with this edition of **ST DUNSTAN'S Review**, is being sent to some 160,000 donors who continue to support the work of St Dunstan's, creating an independent future for blind ex-servicemen and women.



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## From the Chairman

THIS IS NOT the first time I have expressed our gratitude to the supporters of St Dunstan's. This help takes many forms and without their generosity, we would not be able to carry out our work. I give just three of many such examples:

I very much admire all those who took part in the London Marathon. My warmest congratulations to St Dunstaners Don Planner, Iain Millard, Steve Sparkes, and their escorts, who successfully completed the 26 miles on a wet and gloomy day, in very creditable times. I also extend grateful thanks to all those who ran in St Dunstan's colours, raising sponsorship donations.

To quote Andrew Marr, the BBC TV Chief Political Correspondent, in describing his efforts:

"Kind friends said I wouldn't get through the London Marathon – that I hadn't the staying power or the grit. Well I stuck it. Despite the rain, despite the twinges in old muscles, despite the long stretches of dull east London streets, I refused to give up. Only after two-and-a-half hours did a numb bottom and an empty stomach drive me away from the sofa and television for what I felt was a well earned lunch."

The British Medical Association made St Dunstan's their charity for the year and raised over £4,200 through quizzes, raffles and other events.

You will read elsewhere in these pages, of the fantastic success of the "Celebrity Soccer Sunday", in which so many people were involved - players, celebrities, and parachutists, to name but a few. The stadium was a total sell out.

On behalf of us all, I thank donors, volunteers, the back-up staff et al, who contribute so invaluable to our work within St Dunstan's, not only raising funds but keeping the image of St Dunstan's so prominently in the public eye.

Keep at it, all of you!

Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN

## ST DUNSTAN'S Calendar

D-Day Commemoration	June 2nd
Archery Club(II)	June 5th-12th
D-Day 60th Anniversary	June 6th
Chichester Reunion	June 9th
Outdoor Bowling	June 10th
Outdoor Bowling	June 14th
Annual Shoot, Bisley	June 14th
Fishing Club (IV)	June 14th-19th
Widows' Week(II)	June 14th-21st
Cardiff Reunion	June 15th
Walking (Austria)	June 16th-23rd
Outdoor Bowling	June 21st
Brighton Reunion (III)	June 23rd
Writers' Weekend	June 25th-27th
Metro Games	June 26th
Bristol Reunion	June 30th
Writers' Forum	July 3rd
Outdoor Bowling	July 10th
Outdoor Bowling	July 16th
Ladies' Reunion	July 18th-25th
Royal Marines Band	July 21st
HMS Sultan	July 30th-Aug 7th
Outdoor Bowling	Aug 5th
Outdoor Bowling	Aug 16th
Activity Week	Aug 16th-20th
Archery Week	Aug 28th-Sept 4th
Outdoor Bowling	Aug 31st
Kent Reunion	Sept 15th
Cornwall Reunion	Sept 22nd
Outdoor Bowling	Sept 23rd
Cornwall Reunion	Sept 22nd
Physio Weekend	Sept 24th-26th
Aylesbury Reunion	Sept 29th
Computer Club (II)	Oct 6th-7th
Amateur Radio	Oct 8th-15th
Widows' Week (III)	Oct 18th-25th
Bowling Club(II)	Oct 28th-Nov 11th

# Noticeboard

Dates for your diary and useful information

## RELOCATION OF IT TRAINING

**LESSONS MOVE ROOM:** It has become necessary, because of the continued increase in trainee and staff numbers, to relocate the computer training. Over the past couple of years, the first floor annexe teaching area has become congested, often noisy and therefore impractical.

Finding a suitable alternative location will not be easy, but for the time being the training will be delivered in the room next to Housekeeping, and sometimes in the Trainees' Lounge on the 4th Floor. Hopefully this move will achieve a less hectic, more comfortable and uninterrupted teaching environment.

As you will appreciate this may possibly create some element of disruption, particularly initially, and we apologise for this, and ask for your patience and understanding.

**Janis Sharp**  
IT Training Supervisor

## "INVISIBLE EXHIBITION" AT V&A

**SONIC JOURNEY THROUGH MUSEUM:** Artists and musicians have created "unique responses" to objects and spaces in London's V&A Museum. Shhh ... is an "invisible" exhibition covering the Raphael Gallery to Victorian stairwells. Lauren Parker will conduct a talk and tour on July 14th (14:00-15:30). For details call 020 7942 2211 or log on at [www.vam.ac.uk](http://www.vam.ac.uk).

## CANCELLATION OF ATTENDANCE AT REUNIONS

**HELP US PLAN AHEAD:** At most of the reunions so far this year, there have been many empty places. This results in wasted hotel bills and last minute reorganisation of seating plans.

We understand there are many valid reasons as to why guests may have to cancel. But we do ask, please, that at whatever stage you decide you are unable to attend, you telephone your Welfare Officer, even to leave a message on the answer phone.

## D-DAY BEER FROM LEGION

**ALE AND HEARTY:** In honour of the 60th anniversary of D-Day, The Royal British Legion and Daniel Thwaites Brewery have joined forces to produce Liberation Ale. A premium bottled brand, (5.2 per cent abv) said to be "a superbly balanced beer with an initial malty burst on the tongue with a subtle sweet overtone derived from the blend of Maris Otter and Pearl malts."

Liberation Ale, priced £1.69, can be found in most supermarkets and cash-and carry stores across the UK and will remain on sale until Christmas.

Proceeds from the sale of the beer will be dedicated to answering the 300,000 calls that The Royal British Legion receives each year from ex-Service men and women.

# ST DUNSTAN'S Contacts

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PA to Ovingdean Manager  
Cashier/ War Pensions Coordinator  
Care Clerical Assistant  
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Deputy Residential Care Supervisor  
2nd Floor, Ward Manager  
Housekeeping Supervisor  
Rehabilitation & Training Coordinator  
Deputy Ovingdean Manager/Head of Care  
Social Worker  
Rehabilitation Officer  
Rehabilitation Officer  
Rehabilitation Officer Supervisor  
3rd Floor, Ward Manager  
Head of Housekeeping  
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PBK Catering  
Craft Supervisor  
Ovingdean Manager  
Head of Security  
Practice Development Nurse  
Wills & Trusts Coordinator  
Deputy Head of Transport  
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PBK Catering  
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IT Supervisor  
Rehabilitation Officer  
Sports Supervisor  
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Housekeeping Supervisor  
Head of Transport  
Rehabilitation Officer

**ST DUNSTAN'S** an independent future for blind ex-Service men and women

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Please cut out and keep this handy guide to staff at Headquarters and the National Centre.

# Golf win Down Under keeps blind David on top!

## Two St Dunstaners overcome painful injury to excel in International Blind Golf Association tournament

**TWO ST DUNSTANERS** from Cornwall suffered injuries before they entered into a contest with the best blind golfers the world has to offer. Although they were hampered by this additional handicap, they completed the event with distinction.

**S**T DUNSTANER David Morris was named as the best blind golfer in the world for the second time in April when he held onto his title in a tightly contested game in Australia. His victory was achieved despite a shoulder injury.

David, from Newquay, originally won the title in Canada in the International Blind Golf Association's 2002 World Blind and Golf Championships. In March, he declared that he was aiming to win the title again in the 2004 Championship held at Rosebud Country Club on the Mornington Peninsula near Melbourne.

He flew out in March to acclimatise though this was complicated by a shoulder injury. Enconced at Hope Island Golf Club in Queensland, David was practising everyday but his shoulder problems added a level of discomfort to the routine he had defined with Pro player Ian Marshall from Staddon Heights.

Over two days in April, David, who has a handicap of 17, played four games in the B1 category. On the first day he grossed 108, on the second 111. As ever, he was escorted over the 72 holes by Linda Charlton. She had the responsibility of setting David up for each shot, describing the lie of the land and making suggestions on his approach to the game.

David, a former RAF sergeant, brought his trophy back to England on May 12th, but soon flew off to Japan for another golf competition.

Second in B1 class was Zohar Sharon from Israel, while Jim Gales from Scotland came third.

Also competing in the event was St Dunstaner Mike Mayo from Saltash. He was playing in the B3 category.

Since losing his sight, Mike, who served in the Royal Navy, has taken golf to heart. In short succession, he has won the English Stroke Play Championship, the Lawrence

Levy British Blind Golf Masters and regularly tops the English Blind Golf Association's Merit Table.

Shortly before leaving for Australia he suffered a hernia injury in the gym. "I'm a stocky fellow, and I had been working flat out in the gym. I'd lost a stone-and-a-half and obviously did too much."

Despite the pain, Mike carried on with the challenge and came fourth in the B3 category, though he was a mere two points away from the second place. He achieved a gross score of 187 for his games.

One particular moment stood out. "I had a nice drive off the first, it was 225 yards to the green. There was a hill in the way, so the caddy couldn't see the green. I used my No 2 rescue club and hit the ball. Everyone cheered so I thought I had done well. When we got over the hill it turned out that I was 8ft from the pin. That was a fantastic moment."

Mike praised David for his support during the championship and added that he hoped to be back on form for the next tournament in 2006.

# Like brothers and sister

St Dunstan's Blind and Handless Group are reunited

**A** VERY SPECIAL group were reunited at Ovingdean last month. St Dunstan's Blind and Handless Group held their Annual Reunion during the week of May 5th-11th.

Starting with the now traditional scampi supper, the group, who Chairman Gwen Obern compared to "three brothers and a sister" used the reunion to catch up on news. During the week, Gwen was reunited with Bill Griffiths, Ted Miller and Wally Lethbridge. All four suffered the loss of, or serious damage to, their hands when they were blinded.

At their Reunion Dinner, St Dunstan's Chief Executive Robert Leader delivered a 'State of the Nation' address.

"When I came to St Dunstan's in the year 2000, we had 89 more admissions," he said. "Last year in 2004, that's the year ended 31st of March just gone, we had 319 new admissions and I won 50 pence off Jeremy Hinton as a result. He said it would be less than 300, I said it would be more than 300. He paid his debt very promptly, so I was grateful to him for that.

"But I think the interesting thing is, if what we think is going to happen, happens, by the year 2010 we shall have 700 new applicants per annum and the



Bill Griffiths greets Gwen Obern during the Reunion.

total beneficiary numbers will actually peak a few years later. In 2016 we think we shall have about five-and-a-half-thousand beneficiaries, and by beneficiaries I mean primary beneficiaries; I mean St Dunstaners and Widows. So that's five-and-a-half-thousand of those and if you include wives and children it could be eight thousand beneficiaries.

"Now I think that's really, really good news because I think St Dunstan's is a thriving and growing organisation and I'm quite sure that's what Sir Arthur Pearson and Lord Fraser would have wanted to happen."

Mr Leader continued with a personal tribute to the group. "Even as St Dunstan's grows and thrives and develops, I think the eight of you, Gwen and Ernie, Ted and Iris, Billy and Alice, Wally and Pam,

epitomise everything that St Dunstan's stand for. It was a real privilege to be with you this afternoon. I salute you all. I said this afternoon that you will always be special, well I renew that promise here tonight, that you will always be a special group within St Dunstan's and however many of you there are, even if there is only one of you, there will always be a reunion. Bless you all."



Wally Lethbridge with Jock Carnochan at the reunion.

# CARING UNDER FIRE

**B** RIGADIER PETER LASSEN, who passed away in April was posted to the War Office during the Second World War. There he took on the training of Field Medical Units and in 1942, this evolved into specialised training which would culminate in the medical provision for the men taking part in the Normandy landings.

Lassen landed in Normandy on Sword Beach (the left flank of the invasion force) on D-Day June 6th 1944 under heavy shell-fire. He nearly drowned in the process but set up No 21 Field Dressing Station, which he commanded. This was one of two medical units allocated to No 5 Beach Group but was soon also receiving casualties from the adjoining No 6 Beach Group. They were under such persistent fire from an enemy strongpoint that medical work was impossible.

Casualties which had been held in divisional advanced dressing stations, pending the establishment of field dressing stations on the beach, now began to arrive in a steady stream, and the dressing stations were soon at full stretch.

Wounds were re-dressed where necessary and essential emergency surgery was undertaken, after which casualties were evacuated by amphibious vehicles which crossed the beaches, entered

the water directly, and drove out to the waiting landing ships.

"Over the first 48 hours," Lassen recalled, "We were overwhelmed with casualties and there was no rest for anyone; I remember that on the first night, sometime towards midnight, I counted 60 priority casualties awaiting or receiving plasma transfusions both inside the department set aside for this purpose, and also outside, lying stretcher-to-stretcher around the main medical centre vehicle circuit, and in considerable danger of being run over by the amphibious vehicles collecting casualties. These numbers, of course, were dwarfed by the far larger numbers of walking wounded and less seriously injured. The reason for the large influx of casualties was due to the release of the backlog, which had been held in divisional field ambulances and advance dressing stations, against the time of our surgical centre opening up to receive them."

Two days after the landings, a lone German bomber eluded the RAF in broad daylight and, despite intense anti-aircraft fire, pressed home a low-level attack on the overcrowded beach. Its bombs hit the petrol dump which had been built up over the past 48 hours, and the enormous explosion and fire that resulted also set off the adjacent ammunition dump. The result was devastating, and

no fewer than 55 casualties were brought into the medical unit resulting from that incident alone. "All at once the plight of casualties lying immobilised on stretchers above ground was fully appreciated," he added. "And within a very short space of time two bulldozers reported to us with orders to dig us in. We struck the tents in turn and the bulldozers got to work. Very soon each tent and marquee had a high surround of sandy soil, and the floor had been dug down to a depth of some four feet. The surgical teams worked with a much greater sense of security."

After ten days of this intense beach work, Lassen was promoted to Command No 9 Field Ambulance of the 3rd British (Assault) Division, with which he remained through the subsequent advance through France and the Low Countries and across the Rhine to the division's final objective of Bremen. The task of establishing ambulance units behind attacking infantry and armour was greatly complicated by the fact that the Germans had sown mines liberally in fields adjoining the roadside. Their presence in forward areas meant that they were also exposed to enemy shellfire, bombing or counterattacks.

**A full obituary is featured In Memory on page 26.**

## It strikes me... Syd is a literary icon

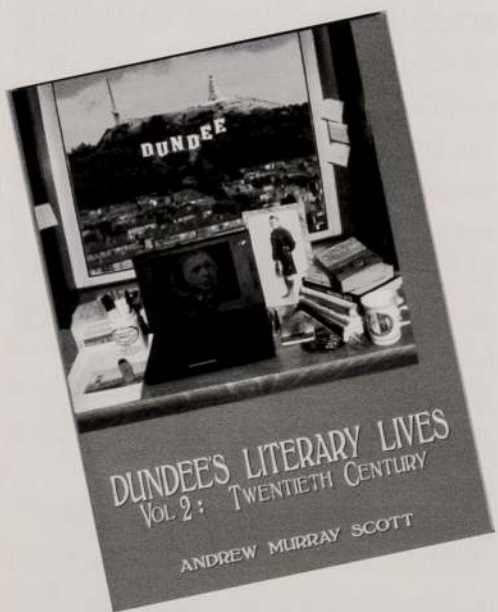
with Gog and Magog

Gog hears that the favoured feast of a one-eyed sailor may hold the key to a cure for some forms of blindness. Scientists propose using light-absorbing spinach cells to make nerve cells in the retina fire when struck by light. "Well blow me down!" as Popeye might say. "Liposomes would be used to add photosystem I proteins from spinach to bipolar and ganglia cells in the retina. The plant proteins should make these nerve cells fire when struck by light," said a report in the *New Scientist*. This technique would only restore limited vision at best, but researchers feel it could provide better resolution than electronic retinal implants that are being developed. Other hurdles to overcome concern possible damage to nerve cells and problems with immune rejection. Results from experiments in Tennessee were discussed by an international gathering of ophthalmologists at the Biosensors 2004 conference in Spain last month.

Magog suggests that anyone familiar with the game of Five Degrees of Separation (where you take a famous person and through association, link them to someone from a different walk of life, hopefully in five moves) may like to fathom the link between Popeye and St Dunstan's. Magog will try and find something better than spinach for the most rational connection suggested.

**A** ST DUNSTANER has been identified as one of Dundee's 20th Century literary figures. A new book which examines the culture of Dundee through the work of its writers contains a passage on the poetry of Sydney Scroggie.

*Dundee's Literary Lives Vol 2: Twentieth Century* by Andrew Murray Scott covers 100 years of creativity. Although Syd is known for a wide range of writings, the book concentrates on his poetry "Syd Scroggie is a well-known and well-loved local character with a deep love for nature and the hills.



During the Sicily landings, he lost a leg and his sight but this did not stop him from taking to the hills at every opportunity," says Murray Scott. "The clarity of the observation here, the striking visual element, is in poignant contrast to the blindness of its author."

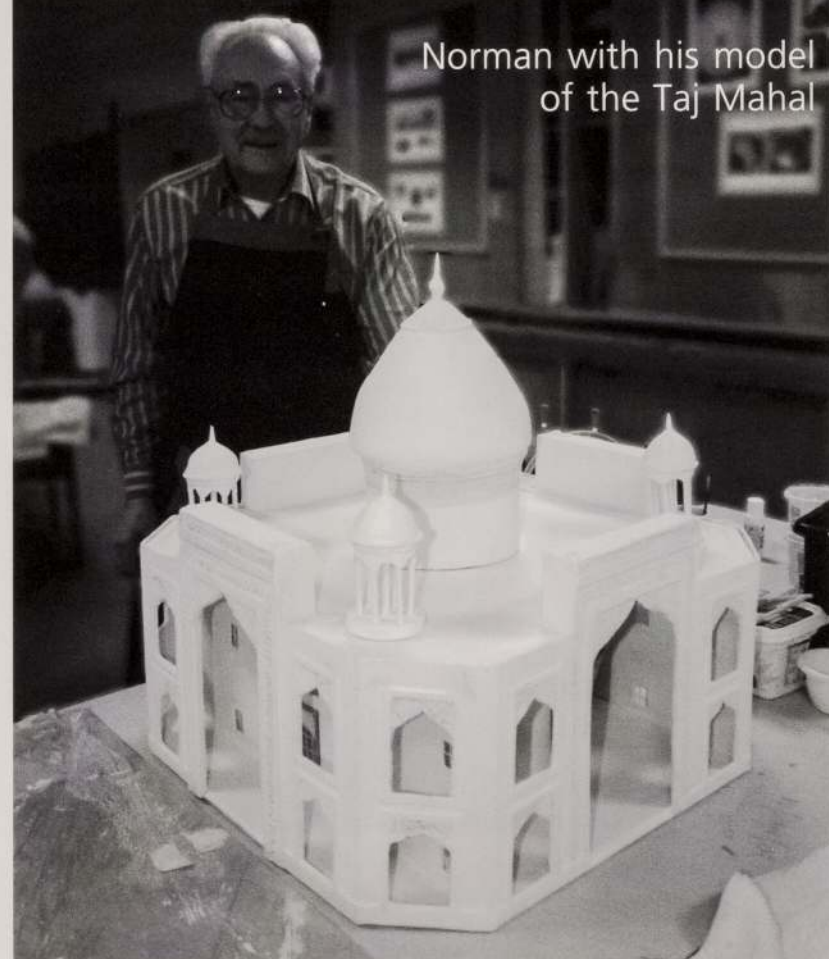
The book features two poems by Syd, one of which is his own epitaph - *On My Burial Cairn*:

Alaw these steens lies a lad  
Pech't oot an' fairly deen  
He gae'd his ain gait a' his life  
But whiles wi' ithers' een.

## Dinner cancelled for winning match

Last issue, the **Review** jumped the gun when it carried a report stating that St Dunstaner Mark Threadgold made a speech at a testimonial dinner for England Rugby player Lawrence Dallaglio on April 23rd. The item was prepared in anticipation and we received news of a change in plans too late to respond accordingly. The dinner was cancelled because the Wasps got into the semi-finals and Dallaglio could not be released to attend the dinner as it was close to the semi-final game. Obviously a smart move, since the Wasps won 37-32 against Munster on April 25th.

## A labour of love



THE ORIGINAL WAS a tribute to a beautiful woman and took nearly 20 years to build. This replica took several months, but is no less impressive. However, some people might think that Ex-Far East Prisoner of War St Dunstaner Norman Wagstaff was possessed by the same kind of passion that drove Shah Jehan to build the white marble spires of the Taj Mahal in memory of his wife Mumtaz Mahal. Norman spent many hours in the Craft Workshop dedicated to constructing his own version of the famous tomb. The completed model has been on display in the reception area at St Dunstan's Ovingdean.

## Martin's uplifting movie

MOVIE GOERS AT the Brighton Festival had an elevating experience in May. The Arts and Music event included the premiere screening of a short film profiling St Dunstaner Martin Shail. The 13-minute documentary, titled *Insight*, was filmed entirely in the lift at St Dunstan's Ovingdean and relates how the former Royal Marine lost his sight in a car crash.

## Ten questions on...

Crime and Punishment

Harry Beevers in Mikado mood

- 1) What form of punishment was abolished in the UK in the year 1902 but can still be enjoyed in the gym at Ovingdean?
- 2) According to the American gangster Al Capone's business card, his occupation was that of a second-hand dealer in what?
- 3) In Australia, which law-breaker used old ploughshares to make armour for himself and his men?
- 4) Which work of art disappeared from the Louvre in Paris in 1911, re-appearing in Italy in 1913?
- 5) For how many years was Norman Stanley Fletcher (played by Ronnie Barker) sentenced in the TV series *Porridge*?
- 6) In the year 1810, what was the usual punishment for forging a birth certificate, stealing a pocket handkerchief and impersonating a Chelsea Pensioner?
- 7) Sarah Pipes in 1809 was the last woman in this country to suffer which undignified form of punishment?
- 8) From a film with the same name, what was the title of Elvis Presley's second No.1 hit in the UK charts on January 24th 1958?
- 9) What did Irishman Colonel Thomas Blood unsuccessfully attempt to steal in London in the 17th Century?
- 10) By re-arranging the letters of "Men administer punch", what is the three-word title of a famous novel by the Russian author Dostoyevsky?

Answers on page 20.

# 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.

## Cassino and Anzio still invoke memories



Further to the article in May's **Review**, I took this photo of my husband Reg and Bill Shea in the square at Cassino 15 years ago. Reg and I hired a car and a driver who took us over the mountains to find the cemetery where members of Reg's regiment, the Royal Fusiliers, were buried. Until that 45th

anniversary, Reg had never been back to Italy. It was a very emotional visit, especially the miles of Polish graves - all those young men! The regiment are travelling out again this year for the 60th anniversary but without the veterans.

**Eileen Goding,  
Rottingdean, East Sussex**

I was disappointed that there was no mention of the Army Commandos, but the article brought back many memories. I was there with No 9 Army Commando and the American Rangers. We had no option but to hold the bridgehead and lost many comrades while doing so.

**W.H. Warren, Truro, Cornwall**

## We need a new word to describe you

It is difficult to find the superlative that does justice to an holiday experience at St Dunstan's Ovingdean. We have used them all among our friends, and we now begin to realise that we must be boring them by repeating words over again.

It was our first experience of the most lovely and caring place in Britain. There is nothing that deserves a complaint. So we will not make any. The level of care, forethought and generosity we received was far above anything you might expect. The room was comfortable

and the staff in every department were generous, willing and protective.

We will have to invent our own superlative to express how grateful we feel about the St Dunstan's understanding of being there - Scrumptiwonderfullupandelicioimpressive!

St Dunstan's is a red letter day in our diary from now on. Thank you everybody very much. You have expanded our experience of friendships.

**Colin and Jennifer Gibbs, Ruabon, Wrexham**

Albert Hobson digs into St Dunstan's Gardening Week

## From little seeds...

**O**UR WEEK STARTED off with a meeting in the Blue Room, where we introduced ourselves and chatted to friends old and new. Tuesday's weather wasn't in our favour so there was a quick change of plan. Instead of going out we stayed in-house and spent the morning in the Winter Garden where we enjoyed a quiz and tasty indoor picnic. During the afternoon we visited a garden centre at Hailsham where we also made time for tea and cakes.

I think we all looked forward to Wednesday for the practical activities day where we were joined by Lucy Morrell from Thrive, the charity that enables disabled and older people to carry on gardening. It was a very interesting day and I'm sure everyone picked up a few hints and exchanged ideas too. Lucy explained how to use a self-watering propagator, sow seeds and take cuttings, and later in the day hosted an open forum. Some of our group spent time working in the greenhouse, planting the hanging baskets which are now in their rightful places around the patio area, waiting to be admired during the summer.

On Thursday we went out for the day to Groombridge Gardens. The peacocks kept us all amused by strutting around



Vincent "Robbie" Robins with Bernard Cribbins on the new garden patio.

showing off their colourful plumage. After a delicious lunch of fish and chips, we boarded the barge for a short trip to the enchanted forest. There were a lot of weird and wonderful sights to be seen. The evening was rounded off by a demonstration of flower arranging by Linda Barley.

During Friday morning we gathered in the Blue Room to read our poems and have them judged. There were some very good entries too, and the winners received garden centre vouchers. Thankfully the weather remained fair for the official opening of the newly

designed garden at Ovingdean. We started the afternoon off with a glass of Pimms, before welcoming Bernard Cribbins. After a short speech, he cut the ribbon and declared the garden open. There had been a great deal of work done in the garden and I'm sure everyone will agree that those involved deserve a very big thank you from us all.

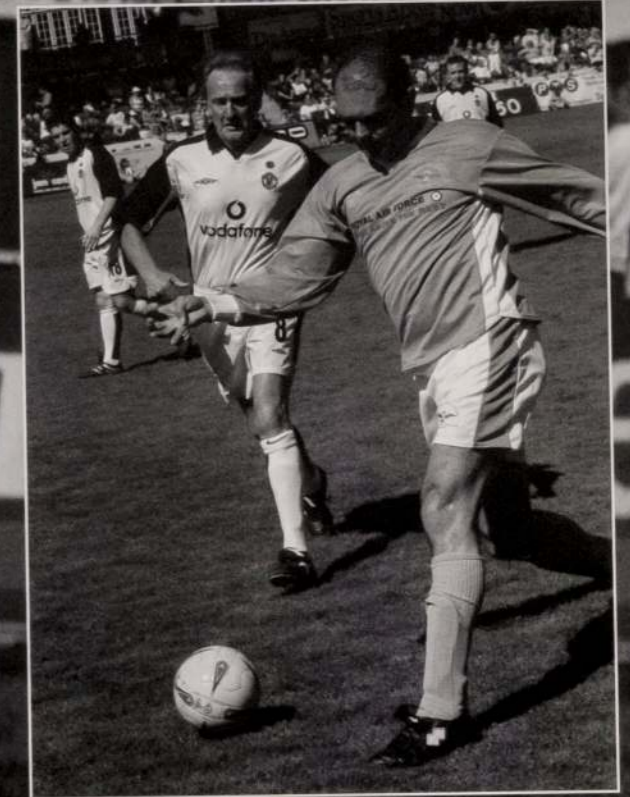
The weather wasn't too good Saturday, but it didn't stop us going out for a visit to Sheffield Park. The gardens are beautifully laid out with lakes and plenty of azaleas and rhododendrons to be admired. As it was none too bright, we headed back to the coach and tucked into our packed lunches followed by a leisurely drive back to the house. The week was rounded off by a visit to Highdown Gardens on Sunday afternoon. Unfortunately it wasn't suitable for wheelchairs, but I understand the gardens were very impressive, with a lot of tree peonies in various colours, plenty of heliobores and many more trees and shrubs of interest. It is hard to believe that the area was once a chalk pit. It just goes to show what can be done. Grateful thanks to everyone for organising a very enjoyable gardening week, and also to the drivers who took us out and about.

ALL-STARS 6 - RAF 1 RAF team are left looking to the All-Stars during Celebrity Soccer Sunday benefit football match

# THE WINGS GET CLIPPED!

**T**HE ROYAL AIR FORCE motto is 'look to the stars' and during a football match that pitted them against a celebrity squad of actors, local DJs and sportsmen they certainly did! A team from the RAF Recruiting Division entered into the game on behalf of St Dunstan's and Southern FM's Help a Local Child fund. The soccer showdown took place at Brighton and Hove Albion's Withdean Stadium on May 2nd. The day started with a series of demonstrations from a Police Dog Team, RAF Unarmed Combat Team and Brighton & Hove Albion's Women's & Girls Football Club. The match ball was dropped in - from 10,000ft - by the Black

Knights, the Royal Artillery parachute team. A good game was to be expected from Player/Manager Viv Anderson, but *Royle Family* actor Ralph Little also kept the RAF on their toes while Alan Halsall from *Coronation Street* pulled off a hat-trick. The RAF were aided by Ivor Caplin, MP, Minister for Veterans and two Brighton players Dean Wilkins and John Byrne, but were unable to hold back the onslaught from the All-Star team. It was two-nil at half-time and a pacey second half saw the All-Stars achieve a very decisive 6-1 win. Halsall, Little and Flight Sergeant Neil Paylor were named 'Men of the Match'.



Will this RAF player hold onto the ball?

Merseybeat's Chris Walker with Len Radwell and Ted Tibbitt.

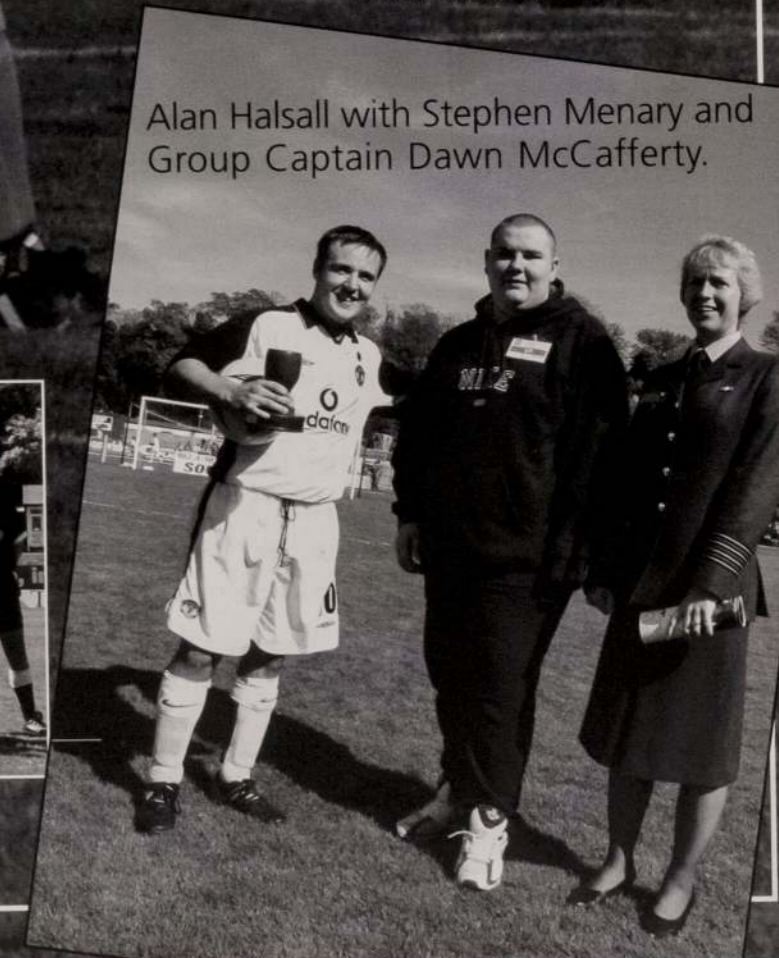


Royle Family member Ralph Little on the ball!



MORE IMPORTANT THAN LIFE AND DEATH: The RAF team, the All-Stars, Match Officials and mascots ready themselves for the first half of the game.

Alan Halsall with Stephen Menary and Group Captain Dawn McCafferty.





# ST DUNSTAN'S

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ex-Service men and women



**D-DAY  
DISPATCHES**

## D-Day – Tuesday 6th June 1944 – the first hours

### 00:20:

British 6th Airborne Division dropped east of Caen. US 28th and 101st Airborne Divisions parachute into Cherbourg peninsula.

### 02:30:

US landing forces in Western Task Force anchor off Normandy coast.

### 05:00:

British and Canadian troops in Eastern Task Force anchor off Normandy coast.

### 06:00:

Allied Naval bombardment ceases, in preparation for landings.

### 06:30:

American troops land on Utah and Omaha beaches. Heavy opposition pins US troops to Omaha beach for around 5 hours.

### 07:35:

British and Canadian troops land on Gold and Sword beaches and Canadians land on Juno beach. All beach objectives taken by 10:00.



# D-Day

The turning point  
in our battle for freedom

Photograph courtesy of the Imperial War Museum, London (B5207)

### Planning for D-Day

60 years ago, the Allies prepared to roll back the Nazi domination of mainland Europe with the largest amphibious assault in history.

Two years of meticulous planning preceded D-Day and, in 1943, General Eisenhower was given overall command of the invasion of north-west Europe, codenamed Operation 'Overlord'. General Montgomery was chosen as his commander for all Allied ground forces in the battle for Normandy.

The Allies needed calm seas, a full moon and low water at first light to launch the attack. Bad weather cancelled the chosen invasion date of Monday 5th June and despite less than ideal conditions, D-Day went ahead on June 6th.

### Controlling the air and the Channel seaways

The invasion was supported by more than 13,000 fighter, bomber and transport aircraft. Against these, the German air force was able to deploy fewer than 400 aircraft on D-Day. Overwhelming air superiority gave the Allies a critical advantage. Naval support secured the Channel for invasion craft and provided the massive shoreline bombardment that preceded the Normandy landings.

A massive deception operation pointing to an attack on Calais also helped to keep the German focus away from the Normandy beaches.

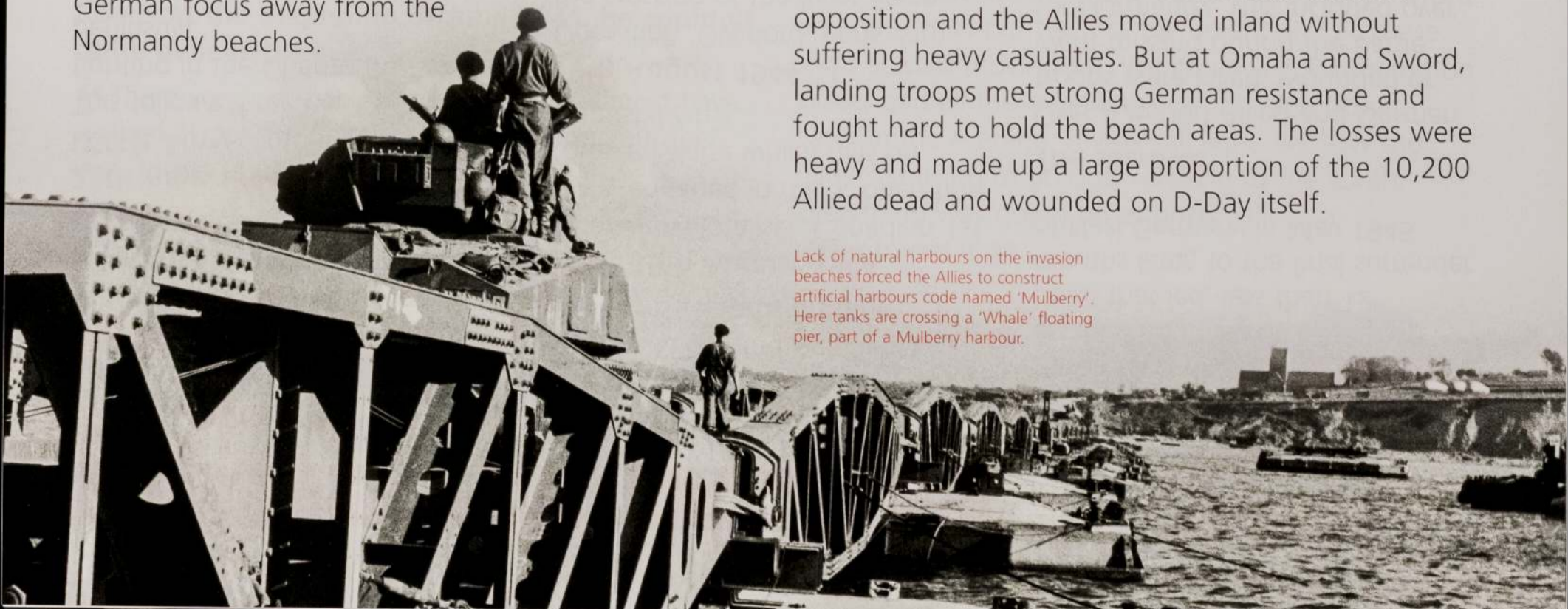
### Utah to Sword – the landings

Rather than attacking the heavily defended Calais beaches, the coastline chosen for the invasion ran from Carentan in the west to Caen in the east and was divided into 5 beaches. From east to west these were Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword.

D-Day itself was a remarkable logistical operation. By the end of 6th June, about 156,000 Allied troops and over 10,000 vehicles had landed on the Normandy coast.

At Juno, Gold and Utah there was little German opposition and the Allies moved inland without suffering heavy casualties. But at Omaha and Sword, landing troops met strong German resistance and fought hard to hold the beach areas. The losses were heavy and made up a large proportion of the 10,200 Allied dead and wounded on D-Day itself.

Lack of natural harbours on the invasion beaches forced the Allies to construct artificial harbours code named 'Mulberry'. Here tanks are crossing a 'Whale' floating pier, part of a Mulberry harbour.





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# ST DUNSTAN'S

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## Operation 'Overlord': timelines

### D-Day: 6th June 1944

**The Allies land in Normandy.**

### 12th June 1944

**Allies complete link up of**

**5 beaches.** Consolidated beachhead 80km (50 miles) long.

### 27th June 1944

US 1st Army capture Cherbourg. This follows three weeks' hard fighting in the Cherbourg peninsula.

### 7th – 9th July 1944

Allies bomb Caen. British and Canadians enter city.

### 18th – 20th July 1944

Operation 'Goodwood'. British 2nd Army advance secures rest of Caen and part of road to Falaise. 4,000 British casualties and 500 tanks lost.

### 25th – 30th July 1944

Operation 'Cobra'. US 1st Army capture St. Lo and Avranches, and turns towards Brittany.

### 7th – 10th August 1944

Operation 'Totalise'. Canadian 1st Army engaged in major operation to take Falaise which falls on August 17th.

### 19th August 1944

Operation 'Overlord' ends with the crossing of the River Seine by Allied forces.

### 20th August 1944

Falaise gap sealed, ending the Battle for Normandy. American and Canadian forces meet at Chambois.

### The turning point

Despite setbacks, D-Day went largely as planned and by the evening of June 6th it was clear that a foothold had been established. It was the turning point that led, less than 12 months later, to the final surrender of Nazi Germany in May 1945.

### The sacrifice

Over 425,000 Allied and German troops were killed, wounded or went missing during the Battle for Normandy. This included over 209,000 Allied casualties. Today, twenty seven war cemeteries hold the remains of over 110,000 dead from both sides: 77,866 German, 9,386 American, 17,769 British, 5,002 Canadian and 650 Poles.

Photograph courtesy of the Imperial War Museum, London (EA25486)



**60 years ago many of those who waited to play their part were young men and women, some barely in their 20s.**

**Here are the stories and recollections of some of those Service men and women who witnessed D-Day at first hand and who were to become St Dunstaners.**

**When Seaman David Stack sailed into the Cowes Roads at the beginning of June 1944, he couldn't quite believe his eyes.**

“There were so many ships, you could almost have walked across the Solent without getting your feet wet. It was an incredible sight.”

Aged just 19, he was on board the 'Ulster Monarch', an Irish Sea ferry commandeered by the Navy for use as a D-Day troop carrier. They had fitted new derricks to take 6 Landing Craft Assault (LCA) boats and were practising landings with troops near Penarth on the Welsh coast.

In the days just before D-Day, the 'Ulster Monarch' received orders to sail to Southampton to prepare for troop embarkation.

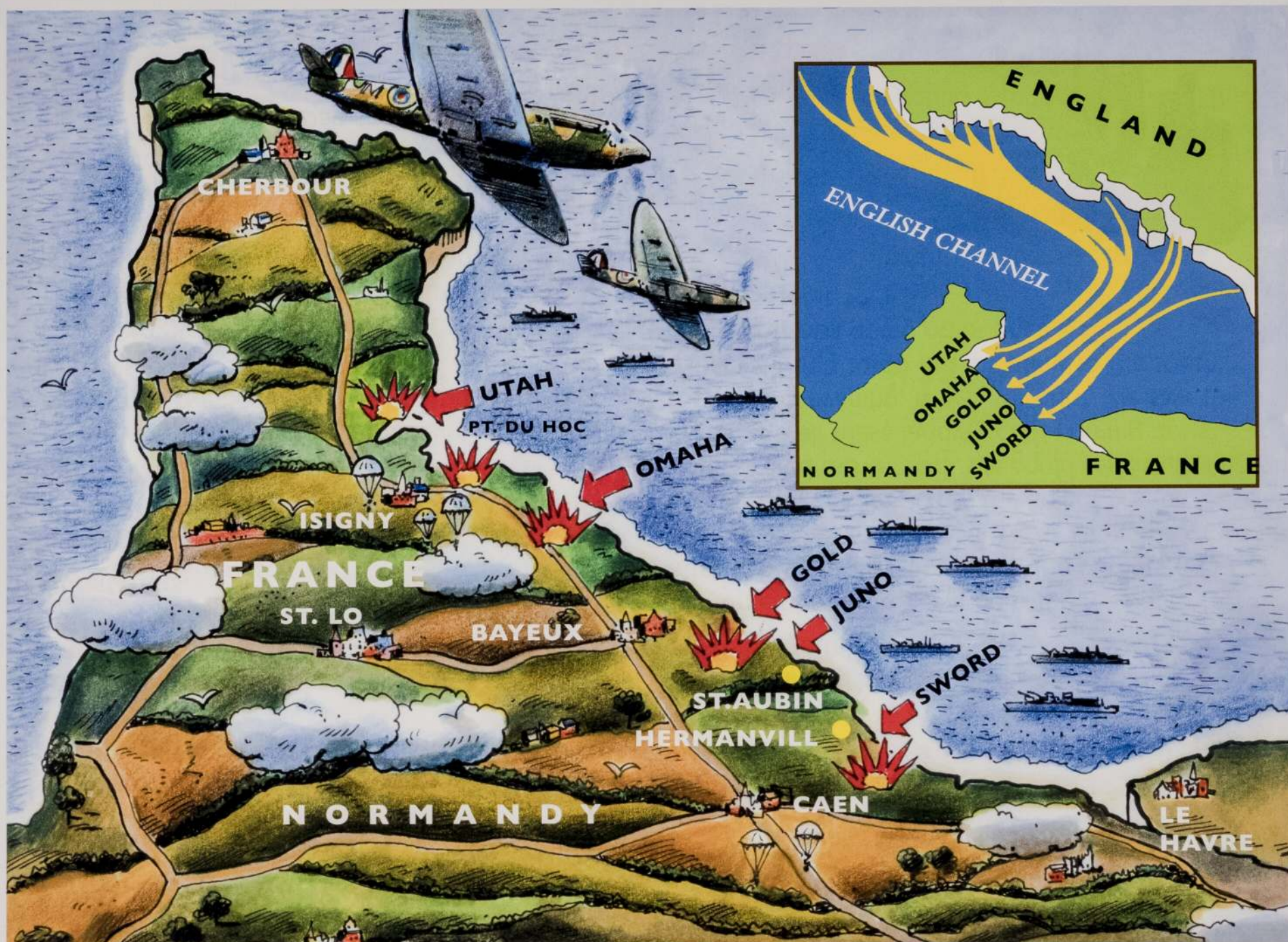
**As WREN Petty Officer Evelyn Duggan looked out over the Solent from her base on the Isle of Wight, the 'Ulster Monarch' was one of the landing ships she watched pass by on its way to Normandy.**

For Evelyn, watching the armada leave was unforgettable.

“I remember on that Monday night after I finished duty, I sat up in the garden in our quarters opposite the Royal Yacht Squadron. It was a beautiful view right across the Solent and all these ships started moving off. We could see Southampton Water and all these landing craft coming down. Later in the evening, it was still light, we saw the gliders starting to go out, heading to the south. Everything was going on at once – I'll never forget it.”



Photograph courtesy of the Imperial War Museum, London (B5003)



**David Stack continues the story.**

“On the Monday night at about 10.00pm we set sail. All these ships moving together. We were coming from different positions along the South Coast and we met up at a spot in the English Channel that got the code name ‘Piccadilly Circus’.”

Around 7.30am on D-Day, David was off Juno beach helping to board troops in the LCAs and ferry them to the shore.

“We’d been working in the dark since about 4.00am getting everything ready. I mean in the dark because you couldn’t show lights. As dawn broke and the Germans looked out they would have seen this huge fleet of ships – I don’t know how many for sure, perhaps around 1200 of them. It must have really spoiled their breakfast.”

**Aboard another troop carrier, Fred Bentley, aged 20 – a private in the 6th battalion Durham Light Infantry – was preparing for the landing.**

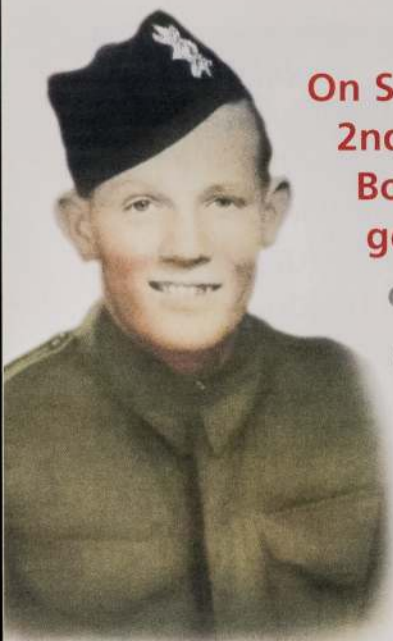
“The Americans gave us a huge breakfast. I’ve never had so much bacon in all my life. Of course, what we didn’t realise was there’d be no more food, except what you carried yourself, for two days.”

“I said to one of the American sailors, ‘How long are you waiting here for?’ He says ‘We’ll drop the food, pick up the first casualties and then scam’. So I said ‘What happens if we don’t hold the beach?’ And he says ‘You’ll hold it, because we won’t be here to take you home’.”

**Further up the Normandy coast, Noel Cowley was about to take his tank ashore on Gold Beach.**

“Approaching an enemy shore, one is naturally a little apprehensive” recalls Lt Colonel Noel Cowley, then a Major in the Regiment of the 24th Lancers. Noel Cowley was the military commander of one of the landing ships carrying four of the tanks from his regiment. These were spread through different landing craft to help minimize losses as they landed on Gold Beach.

“Once we got ashore, we had to catch up with the rest of the regiment and regroup. Naturally we hoped D-Day would be the turning point... but at the time it was a matter of routine. Everything was planned to the last detail. We just did what we had to.”



**On Sword Beach, Bob Osborne in the 2nd Battalion of the South Wales Borderers was wasting no time getting inland.**

“We didn’t have an easy time going in, men were getting hit in the water and there were a lot of wounded. Strangely, I remember looking in to the shore and seeing low hills covered with poppies. Once we got ashore, I went up that beach like I was doing a 4-minute mile. We were

being mortared and shot at but you just had to keep going.”

For the next few weeks, Bob’s battalion fought its way inland from village to village as the beachhead was established and held.

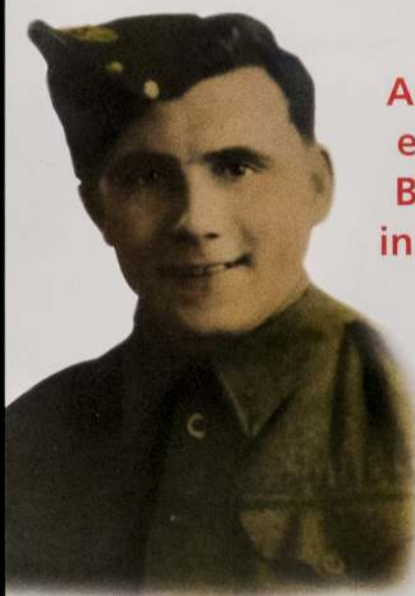


Photograph courtesy of the Imperial War Museum, London (B5070)

**Fred Bentley remembers going ashore all too well.**

“If you can imagine it – the 88mm artillery shells, the German spandau machine guns and the mortars – everything was directed on to the beach because that’s where they tried to stop us. You run like bloody hell. You don’t have to be told to get forward when you’re being shot at. There’s only the sea behind you and the land in front so there’s only one way to go. And you go like the clappers.”

Covered in the oil and petrol floating on the water, Fred crossed the beach safely and headed inland with his brigade towards Bayeux. The fighting continued all day and the town was taken in hand-to-hand combat, and then held against a German counter attack.



**As the bridgehead was established and consolidated, Bob Osborne was wounded in the fighting around Hill 112.**

“We had to take these guns out, 75s and 88s, and we went in and eventually we took them. Another section came up and we dropped back and we stopped for a rest. We sheltered behind some tanks

which stopped for us. I heard gunfire in the distance and that was it. I don’t remember any more, a shell must have dropped right in front of me.”

In that instant, Bob lost his arm, a leg and his sight.

“I didn’t feel a lot, you know. I just disappeared. I’m lucky to be alive. Absolutely!”

**In the weeks that followed, fighting raged along the front as the Allies pressed inland towards Caen.**

**On July 17th, Fred Collingwood, a Lance Corporal in the 7th Battalion Black Watch, was pushing towards the German front.**

Fred’s brigade and division were attached to the Canadian 30 Corps and on July 17th, at around 8.00pm, Fred was part of a push towards the German front, now a mile or so away.

“All around us there were 25 pounders, machine guns and mortars firing towards the Germans. If you get a shell coming towards you, you can hear it from a good way off. But a mortar bomb, coming straight down, all you get is a bang and that’s what hit me on my left side. I felt no pain from the injury but I was blind as a bat. I lost both my eyes and my nose. The last thing I saw in front of me about 20 yards away was three ambulances.”



Photograph courtesy of the Imperial War Museum, London (B5963)

**Fred Bentley's D-Day campaign continued well into the battle for Caen, a protracted struggle against heavy German resistance. It was in this fighting that Fred Bentley lost his sight.**

“Confronting our battalion was a spandau machine gun and a mortar. We were very exposed going forward so they decided to try and take them out with a patrol. I led the patrol and it was some distance, about a thousand

metres. A Jerry spotted me, he put up a grenade and it exploded in front of me. And that was me out of the war.”

While the attack continued, Fred had to crawl back to the Allied trenches. While he waited for his wounds to be dressed, someone offered him a cigarette and lit a match. When he couldn't see the flame, Fred realised that he had been blinded.

After returning to England, Fred came into contact with St Dunstan's at Stoke Mandeville hospital.

“St Dunstan's gave me confidence. And we got strength from each other as well. We were all in the same boat. You gather strength from what you've got and forget about what you haven't got.”



Photograph courtesy of the Imperial War Museum, London (B5114)

## Remembered in Dispatches

**By returning the card we have enclosed, you can contribute your gratitude and memories as a tribute to all those who played a part in the Battle for Normandy and elsewhere in World War II.**

**All the cards we receive will form part of the memorial display we will arrange at St Dunstan's National Centre in Ovingdean and in a memorial book to be placed in the D-Day Museum, Portsmouth. Please use your card to include any D-Day recollections of your own.**

## St Dunstan's – helping to win the battle for independence then...

**Blinded in the Battle for Normandy, Fred Collingwood found lifelong support at St Dunstan's.**

Severely wounded by a mortar explosion in the fighting around

Caen, Fred was flown back to England in a Dakota and was taken to St Mary's Hospital in Swindon. Following reconstructive surgery on his face, Fred spent nearly a year at Stoke Mandeville Hospital where St Dunstan's had three wards. While he was there he learnt Braille and typewriting.

Fred had decided his future lay as a physiotherapist and in September 1945, he joined St Dunstan's in Church Stretton for his training. Once this was complete, he soon moved up to Stoke where he remained with the Hospital as a physiotherapist for 35 years, until his retirement.

“Being a St Dunstaner is like having a second family. In fact we always refer to the family of St Dunstan's... I'm still in contact with some of the physios I trained with.”





## ... and now

**When she started to lose her sight, St Dunstan's came to Evelyn Duggan's aid.**

It was only in recent years that Evelyn Duggan's sight began to fail through macular degeneration.

In need of help, Evelyn was visited by a Hampshire Social Services Officer who noticed a photograph of Evelyn in a WREN's uniform. He recommended that she get in touch with St Dunstan's at once.

"I went to Ovingdean for assessments and I thought it was the most wonderful place. Everyone seemed to know your name and you were made so welcome."

Finding St Dunstan's has been hugely reassuring to Evelyn.

"Several people from St Dunstan's have been to see me and I've got a CCTV magnifier so I can read things when I have to. It's wonderful to know that someone's there to



help. I think they're absolutely marvellous."

**St Dunstan's is there for David Stack, too.**

"St Dunstan's has been kind to me in very many ways. As my eyesight has degenerated more and more, they've given me the information I need, they send me tapes from time to time and they've helped with equipment and improvements to my home. I also go to St Dunstan's reunions each year and when I get a visit from my welfare officer she always asks if there is anything I need."

St Dunstan's will continue to be there for David in the future. As his eyesight deteriorates further, he will receive any training he

needs to give him the confidence to maintain the independence he has shown throughout his life.

**This year, St Dunstan's has had its highest intake of blind ex-Service men and women since the end of WWII.**

**Fred, Evelyn and David are just a few of the hundreds of St Dunstaners who benefit from the training, rehabilitation, nursing and welfare support St Dunstan's is able to offer.**

**With your continued help, we can honour our promise to do all we can to provide independence to St Dunstaners, giving them the support they deserve throughout their lives.**

# ST DUNSTAN'S

an independent future for blind ex-Service men and women

Patron: Her Majesty the Queen  
Charity Registration Number: 216227

## HORROR AUTHOR PICKS STORY WINNERS

LAST OCTOBER, we challenged you all to write a short story. The only caveat was that the title should include the word "RECORD" – otherwise the choice of subject was a matter of free will. Author Peter James was this year's judge and his verdict follows:

"Having had a chance to carefully read all the entries in your story writing competition, I want to say just how much I have enjoyed them all, and what a very tough choice it is to have to select just three winners," said Peter.

"My choice of the winner is *Record Of An Old Boot* by Irene Mobbatt (Edith Barton, wife of St Dunstaner Harold Barton, of Walton on Thames, Surrey). This is a truly wonderful story, I loved in particular its originality, its conciseness, its poignancy -to me it is everything that fine writing should be, richly rewarding and a most deserved winner.

"I am awarding second prize to *The Scratched Record* by Roy (St Dunstaner Nancy Chadwick of Royton, Lancs). The most important thing of all in writing, in my opinion, is to create engaging characters, and I think the character here of Dennis is quite brilliant. I was drawn into this story instantly by the quality of writing and totally gripped by Dennis. And like all good stories, it has a very neat end.

"Third prize goes to *Little by Little - The Autobiography Of A Record Football Pools Prize-Winner* - by George G. Little (St Dunstaner Harry Beevers of Castleford, West Yorkshire). I was instantly drawn into this story by the first line, and the writer never let me go. I thought it was fine, quality writing and a very compelling read, and a great, unexpected ending.

"Please convey my congratulations to the winners and my thanks to all the contestants -I enjoyed every story very much, and it was a great privilege to have been asked to judge them."

Edith wins £50, Nancy £30 and Harry wins £20. Edith's prize winning story appears this issue with the others to follow over the next two months.

# RECORD OF AN OLD BOOT

By Irene Mobbatt  
(Edith Barton)

**T**HE OLD BOOT lives under the shrubbery a left foot, black and not much of its sole remains intact. The upper is green with mould the eyelets half closed. It has been there for years. It is an old army boot. It is many years since it lost its partner. The pair of them had a good time together while it lasted. Each Sunday before church parade they would be polished with great care. How they enjoyed the brisk polishing brush to be followed up by the soft caress of the yellow duster. Then it was LEFT RIGHT LEFT RIGHT marching to the music of the Grenadiers band along Birdcage Walk to the Guards

Chapel. The Sunday morning crowd would be there as usual admiring and listening to the music. It was strange and exciting that they so enjoyed the spectacle week after week.

There were some Sundays in the Summertime which were very special. Those were the afternoons when they played on the terrace at Windsor Castle. There they had seen kings and queens and potentates from all over the world. Their greatest pleasure was to be on the Horseguards Parade marching and counter marching with all their shiny comrades. Alas, sometimes it rained and they became dull and dejected but

mostly life was bright.

This happiness couldn't last. One day unusual commands rang out. It was WAR. There were to be no more lovely dress uniforms above them, only harsh khaki with coarse puttees wrapped around the legs above.

Soon, they embarked for France. They didn't like the roughness of the sea or the smell of sea-sickness with which they were often splashed. This was only the beginning. Once on the other side of the Channel, everything was different. The roads were very long and the marching tough on the soles. The only music the fife and solitary drum and the bugle for reveille. They were not here for the music, only for wading in deep ditches and getting wet through when it rained and muddy and dirty.

It was called the battlefield and it was there that it lost its other half. Alone, it was sent back to Blighty. No more war, just the darkness of a cupboard to grow old and decrepit with no companions but the mice and spiders.

Then, at last, some fresh air; it was not pleasant on that bonfire but fortunately it rained at night. It was then the new friend came along. It was the fox. He sniffed, paused and played with the old boot and at daylight carried it over to the shrubbery where they have lived companionably ever since.

## BALANCING THE BOOKS

Ted Bunting reviews a Ruth Rendell mystery

### No More Dying Then

Author: Ruth Rendell

Reader: John Richmond

Catalogue Number: TB 1920

Duration: 8 hours 30 minutes

A LITTLE BOY goes missing and in next-to-no-time the detective on the case is in bed with the distraught mother. Giving her comfort or taking advantage of a vulnerable female? Either way it's unprofessional, sordid, and highly distasteful to anyone who prefers to imagine British police officers as honourable. If that wasn't enough, parts of the story are ridiculous and absurd. In one episode in which two improbable old lags, Mr Casabon and "Monkey" Mathews, try to obtain money for information, apart from introducing a red herring,

it is difficult to know why they were included at all. Surely not to be able to use the line, "A monkey," said Monkey"; that would be unworthy of a moderate writer, let alone a celebrated one. Unfortunately, the fact that this is not one of Ruth Rendell's greatest triumphs is underlined by the ponderous style of the reader who gave me the distinct impression that he would much rather have a lie down. Admittedly, with the new talking book you can speed him up as much as you like but you'll never find any enthusiasm in his voice. As to the mystery of the missing boy, (if anyone is still interested by then) well it wasn't solved by dogged police work or brilliant deduction, but by accident. It's the only part of the story that actually rings true.

## REUNION ROUND-UP

### THE REUNION SEASON

continued with a gathering of 36 St Dunstaners and 13 widows at the London Reunion on April 28th. St Dunstan's Chairman Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox presided at the RAF Club, Piccadilly, welcoming guests such as Sultan Camp's Elspeth Grant. St Dunstaner Mike Tetley, who was blinded during a Mau-Mau attack in 1954, was presented with his 50-year St Dunstan's badge.

Major General Andrew Keeling was the Member of Council presiding at the Exter

Reunion on May 5th. A group of 29 St Dunstaners and widows met at the Southgate Hotel, Southernhay East, Exeter, Devon.

There were 26 St Dunstaners and eight Widows united at the Gladstone Hotel, Liverpool on May 11th. Tim Bacon was the Member of St Dunstan's Council presiding at the Liverpool Reunion.

Mr Bacon also presided at the Blackpool Reunion on May 12th. A group of 27 St Dunstaners and nine widows met at the Imperial Hotel, Blackpool.

# TIES THAT UNBIND!

Alf Lockhart reports on the Ex-Prisoners of War Reunion

**S**T DUNSTAN'S EX-PRISONERS of War gathered at Ovingdean on Friday April 23rd for their Annual Reunion. The group numbered less than last year owing to a significant number being too ill to make the journey. We all wish them a full and speedy recovery.

We assembled in the Blue Room to partake of a magnificent buffet provided by PBK. We did our best to polish it off and stayed in the bar until closing time. We then went our various ways.

On Saturday we opened our Annual General Meeting at 10.30am with our Chairman



Billy Orr tries his tie for size.

Bill Griffiths presiding. We went through the usual formalities of the meeting and the subject of "Heroes Return" was brought up. I must say that the idea of returning to any place where I was stationed during the war does not appeal to me. However, for anyone who is interested in this scheme, full details can be obtained from the Veterans Agency. The Veterans Agency is "New-Speak" for the old War Pensions Department, Norcross, Blackpool.

After Reports from the Chairman, Honorary Secretary and the Treasurer, we had the Election for the Officers of the Committee. The current team were re-elected "en bloc".

The date for next year was proposed and we decided to ask Headquarters to confirm the date of April 8th-11th 2005 to be our reunion Weekend. The meeting closed with a vote of thanks to our helpers and Honorary Members.

As President of St Dunstan's Ex-Prisoner of War Group, Sir John Gingell led proceedings at our Reunion dinner that evening. He introduced our Guest Speaker, the Baroness Cumberlege, CBE, DL.

The Baroness Cumberlege has a wide knowledge of Public

Health matters and she speaks on these subjects in the Upper House. In her talk to us she gave us a few insights into the House of Lords. It seems to be quite jovial to belong to. I think that I would like to join a club like that as a Member.

Baroness Cumberlege added that her family came to live in Sussex. "As a child I used to see these two enormous buildings that crowned the cliffs between Brighton and Rottingdean and I learnt that one was a girls' school and one was called St Dunstan's," she said.

"And I thought that St Dunstan's was by far the most interesting because I was told that there was a tunnel that led from St Dunstan's to the beach. I remember thinking 'these people must be very special people because we have to scramble to find a car park space and pick our way through the beach to get to the waterfront, but St Dunstan's people have their own access.'

"Having been round this afternoon, and it was a fascinating afternoon, I now absolutely know that St Dunstan's is a very special place. It's a place of compassion, it's a place of comradeship, it's a place of learning, a place of skills and there is a tremendous amount

going on here. I do congratulate all of you who are involved with this very special place, but one thing is missing!

"It's one thing that I do find very absent - and that is pity and self pity! And I think that is just great because St Dunstan's is about independence, it's about making friends and it's about getting on with life. I think that is a tremendous tribute to this place and to all of you. And it shuns the world's stereotyping of partially sighted and blind people."

Tom Hart had been thinking for some time that we, the St Dunstan's Ex-POWs, should have a Club tie. He persuaded his granddaughter, who has some skill in these matters, to design a motif for the tie. After about year, his efforts came to fruition, and all the St Dunstan's Ex-POWs were presented with a Club tie at the Dinner. The tie is of an excellent quality and the motif, largely based on St Dunstan's



Mary Firth hands a tie to Ex-FEPOW Jim Fraser.

badge, is most tastefully portrayed. It features a dove of peace with a laurel. I did know that we were going to get a tie, but I was most pleased when I saw the style and quality of the eventual result. We all wore our new ties to the Sunday morning Church Service in St Dunstan's Chapel.

If any St Dunstan's Ex-POW is interested in obtaining one of these new Club ties, please contact Tom Hart by telephoning 01304 612771.

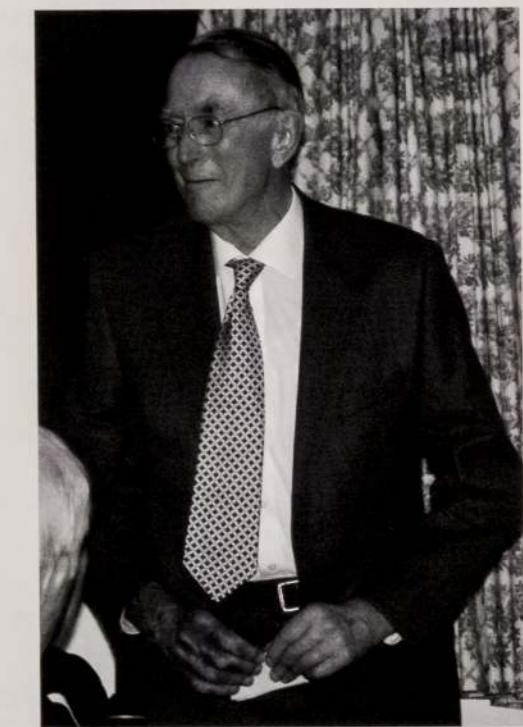
On Sunday we had a concert in the Lounge. The entertainment was provided by the Music Makers. These are singers who specialise in the songs of the late Victorian Era. A group of about a dozen men and women. They not only sang the songs of the Victorian era, but they dressed for the part also. How lovely to see women dressed like women, singing the old songs as sung by the likes of Florrie Ford, Marie Lloyd, Kate Carney and Vesta Tilley. I loved it!

The weekend was very successful, The catering of PBK is excellent, they have always provided us with the best of menus. Paul and Trevor know exactly what we like and always the best service for which we are ever grateful. Thank you Paul and Trevor for your expertise and professionalism. The girls, Linda Barley and Lyn Mullins, are always coming to our aid when we try to get things organised. Always helpful, always with a smile, always efficient.



Baroness Cumberlege talking about the House of Lords and special people.

A special thanks to Linda Barley and Lyn Mullins for their valued assistance. Many thanks to all the other Staff at Ovingdean for making us so comfortable during our stay there.



Sir John Gingell addresses the Ex-POW group.

# PENDLETON'S PANTRY

Blind chef **Stephen Pendleton** cooks up an easy dinner!

## Poached Eggs with Minced Chicken

THIS DISH IS traditionally served as a starter in many restaurants. I have chosen this recipe because it makes a cracking light lunch and it is also very quick and easy to prepare.

Before I start this recipe, I would like to tell you how to poach an egg properly.

Firstly you need the best quality eggs, this is because they have a large quantity of thick white, so they have less tendency to spread in the simmering water. Use of a little vinegar in your water helps to set the egg, preventing spreading. This also helps the white to be more tender and a lot brighter. Be warned! Too much vinegar in the water will discolour the egg and give it a strong taste of vinegar. "Which is not very nice."

### Method:

Carefully break the eggs, one by one, into a shallow pan containing no more than three inches of gently boiling water, to which one teaspoon of vinegar has been added. You will hear the bubbles bursting on the surface of the water when it is boiling.

Simmer until the eggs have lightly set. This takes roughly 2½ to 3 minutes. Using

approximate timings works for me. It is just a matter of practise to find a method that you are comfortable with.

Remove them carefully using a perforated spoon, then place the eggs into a bowl of cold water.

If the cooked egg feels a bit scruffy, trim up the egg white. Reheat when required, by placing the eggs into a pan of hot salted water, for approximately ½ to 1 minute.

Remove carefully using a perforated spoon, drying them on a cloth. Use the poached eggs when required.

Alternatively, you can use an egg poacher, but the above gives a more professional effect.

## Ingredients for the Poached Eggs with Minced Chicken:

4oz (100g) minced chicken.  
½ pint of sauce supreme.  
4 shortcrust pastry tartlets.  
4 poached eggs.

### Method:

Fry the chicken until cooked. Because the chicken has been minced, it should not take long for this to happen. The small size of the mince quickens the cooking time. I just taste a bit of chicken after a couple of minutes of frying. If it tastes good, then it is good! When it tastes okay leave it to one side to cool.

Mix the chicken with half the sauce supreme, then add salt and pepper to your own taste.

Lay out your tartlets. You can purchase packs of individual pastry tartlets from most supermarkets. It is probably more cost effective and it will also save you a lot of time rather than making the pastry cases by hand.

Add a spoonful of the chicken which has been mixed with the sauce to the pastry cases. Then place your hot poached egg on top of the chicken. Coat the eggs with the remaining sauce supreme. You can garnish this dish with a nice colourful salad.

This recipe serves four portions and is not suitable for freezing. It can be made quite quickly and simply for one person.

**Next Month:**  
**Cappuccino Mousse.**

## Ten answers

From page 11.

- 1) Treadmill; 2) Furniture;
- 3) Ned Kelly; 4) The famous painting *The Mona Lisa* by Leonardo da Vinci;
- 5) Five years; 6) Hanging;
- 7) Ducking stool;
- 8) *Jailhouse Rock*;
- 9) The Crown Jewels;
- 10) *Crime and Punishment*.

# POETS' CORNER

## ATS - AUXILIARY TERRITORIAL SERVICE WORLD WAR II

ATS. Oh! ATS. Such memories we can share  
Once trained we were on duty, no time to stand and stare  
We were attached to Southern Command Ack-Ack  
Those who protected our towns from air attack  
In a Gunnery Operations Room we worked at night  
For we were the ATS Plotters that was our plight  
Such companionable ladies assembled in our crew  
Vera Taylor, Jean Wilkinson, Ethel Moreton, but a few  
How great it would be to hear from them now  
Surnames changed, of course, I vow  
And now in this fast moving age other memories we can still share  
So let's give three cheers for the khaki clad girls.  
The ATS - all of whom were there!

**Edna D. Thomas**

## END OF AN ERA

The grey steel giants stand idle in a line.  
Their working life is over, now rusting on the Tyne.  
The crane is made redundant, the yard has lost its spark,  
The emptiness is absolute, the future in the dark.  
The wind blows silent through the dock,  
Where once, skilled men worked round the clock,  
Their dreams and hopes their pride,  
Now drifting on an ebbing tide.  
The last man out turned off the lights and put away his tools,  
With heavy heart and empty eyes, the politics of fools.  
The winter sun is setting, the shadows growing long,  
Just the gulls to listen to the shipyard mens swansong.

**Colin Williamson**

## WAR

Wars are bloody, stupid things  
I know, I've fought in one  
The pointless bloodshed that I saw  
I wish to see no more  
Young men, like me, without a hope  
In Hell  
And they were buried where they fell.

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM.

**Dennis W. Busby**



Edna as she was between 1943 and 1946 - W/262900, Cox, E.D. (Eddie) of 449 & 559 HAA Batteries, "somewhere in Dorset".

## THE PASSING YEARS

Age is just a number  
That grows with passing years,  
Each one contained much happiness  
Shared with grief and fears.  
Wars to disrupt our youth  
Treasured moments of a child's first tooth,  
Family weddings as the children grow,  
All these happenings of so long ago.

The past is the past  
The present is NOW  
Enjoy the future, I know just how.  
I've sailed seven seas  
Trode many lands  
Guided by love and God's caring hands  
I've shouldered the rough  
Enjoyed the smooth,  
Many more things I've yet to prove.

I've loved, I've laughed  
And also cried.  
Wore a smile when I hurt inside.  
Now it's another year,  
Another page.  
Please permit me centre stage  
To you all I take a bow,  
On account that I'm eighty now.  
**John E. Ellson**

# Welcome to ST DUNSTAN'S

**Mary Ackland** of Solihull, West Midlands served in the Royal Artillery in Scotland from 1942 to 1946.

**Frederick Baker** of Liverpool, Merseyside served in the Royal Army Pay Corps from 1947 to 1949.

**Geoffrey Baker** of Braintree, Essex served in the Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Regiment from 1944 to 1945 then transferred to the Royal Welsh Fusiliers until 1948, leaving as a Corporal.

**Norman Biwer** of Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland served in the Royal Navy from 1941 to 1946 as a Chief Petty Officer.

**Ernest Bignell** of Lancing, West Sussex served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1943 to 1947.

**Olive Bushell** of King's Lynn, Norfolk served in the Royal Corps of Signals from 1941 to 1954 leaving as a Corporal.

**James Byrne** of Sale, Cheshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1947.

**John Cameron** of Fleetwood, Lancashire served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946. He served in Egypt and Palestine.

**Matthew Carroll** of Ipswich, Suffolk served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1968 leaving as a Flight Sergeant.

**Raymond Davies** of Rednal, Birmingham served in the South Staffordshire Regiment from 1942 to 1946.

**Arthur Davis** of Erdington, Birmingham, West Midlands served in the General Service Corps in 1944 and then with the Royal Army Service Corps until 1946.

**Dennis Fleckney** of Basingstoke, Hampshire served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1948 to 1953.

**David Goddard** of St Albans, Hertfordshire served in the Royal Artillery from 1986 to 1989 leaving as a Lieutenant.

**Albert Harris** of Thurleigh, Bedfordshire served in the Royal Engineers from 1938 to 1946 in North Africa and Italy.

**Humphrey Hoare** of Waterlooville, Portsmouth, Hampshire joined the General Service Corps in 1946 but then transferred to the Royal Army Medical Corps until 1948.

**Jack John** of Wimbledon Park, London served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1939 to 1946. He served in France, Egypt, Israel, Iran and Iraq.

**Roland Knape** of Little Hulton, Salford served in the Royal Signals from 1942 to 1947 leaving as Lance Corporal. He served in North Africa, Italy and Palestine.

**Sidney Lockley** of King's Lynn, Norfolk served in the Royal Navy from 1941 to 1946. He sailed in the Middle East, Far East and Home Waters.

**Dennis Mills** of Chorley, Lancashire served in the Royal Armoured Corps from 1946 to 1948. He served in Germany.

**Rodney Pamphilon** of Thornton Cleveleys, Lancashire served in the Royal Navy from 1960 to 1983 leaving as a Chief Petty Officer MEA(P).

**James Parke** of Birmingham, West Midlands served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1945 to 1948. He served in East Africa as a driver.

**Laurence Sadler** of Polegate, East Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946 leaving as a Sergeant. He served in the UK and South East Asia.

**Wladyslaw Scigala** of Thetford, Norfolk served in the 8th Army Polish Forces from 1942 to 1946 and then with the Polish Resettlement Corps until 1948. He served in North Africa, Palestine, Italy and Russia.

**Harold Slatter** of Stroud, Gloucestershire served in the Royal Armoured Corps, 13/18 Hussars from 1957 to 1959.

**Phillip Soord** of Basingstoke, Hampshire served in the Royal Electrical and

Mechanical Engineers from 1979 to 1988.

**Robert Strickland** of Fareham, Hampshire served in the Royal Artillery from 1955 to 1958 in Cyprus and Suez.

**Joan Styles** of Taunton, Somerset served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

**Joan Thompson** of Barnsley, South Yorkshire served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1942 to 1945.

**Leonard Tomlinson** of Preston, Lancashire served in the Royal Artillery from 1939 to 1942 as a Gunner.

**Gilbert Waite** of Accrington, Lancashire served in the Cavalry of the Line from 1934 to 1939 then transferred to the Royal Armoured Corps – Queens Royal Lancers until 1942. He served in India.

**Graham Watts** of Roundhay, Leeds, West Yorkshire served in the Somerset Light Infantry, Royal Norfolk Regiment, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Regiment, the Hampshire Regiment, the Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and the Somerset Light Infantry between 1945 and 1948.

**Leslie Wiley** of Hornchurch, Essex served in the Royal Signals from 1940 to 1946.

**Percy Woods** of Banstead, Surrey served in the Royal Sussex Regiment from 1930 to 1931 and then with the Royal Artillery until 1946.

Over the next six months, we will be looking at the events that led up to the foundation of St Dunstan's. We start with an assassination that occurred 90 years ago this month.

## COUNTDOWN TO DARKNESS

ARCHDUKE FRANZ FERDINAND, Inspector of the Austro-Hungarian Army was invited by General Oskar Potiorek, Governor of the Austrian provinces of Bosnia-Herzegovina to watch his troops on manoeuvres in June 1914.

Heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, the Archduke knew that the visit would be dangerous. A large number of people living in Bosnia-Herzegovina were unhappy with Austrian rule and favoured union with Serbia. However on June 28th, 1914, he arrived in Sarajevo by train and transferred to cars provided by Potiorek to take the royal party to the City Hall.

Unknown to the Sarajevo police force, seven members of the Black Hand group also lined the route, each one instructed to try and kill the Archduke. The first conspirator lost his nerve and let the car pass, the second hurled his bomb but

wounded the occupants of the car behind and spectators.

The remaining conspirators abandoned their plans. The Archduke insisted on visiting those injured by the bomb. As his party drove to the hospital they took a wrong turn. The driver began to back up. In doing so he moved slowly past waiting Gavrilo Princip. The assassin stepped forward, drew his gun, and at a distance of about five feet, fired several times into the car. The Archduke was hit in the neck, his wife in the abdomen. They died from their wounds soon afterwards.

When Princip and some of his co-conspirators were arrested they escaped the death penalty because they were under the age of 20. They were sentenced to 20 years though within four they would die in prison from tuberculosis. However, there would be other repercussions from their actions...

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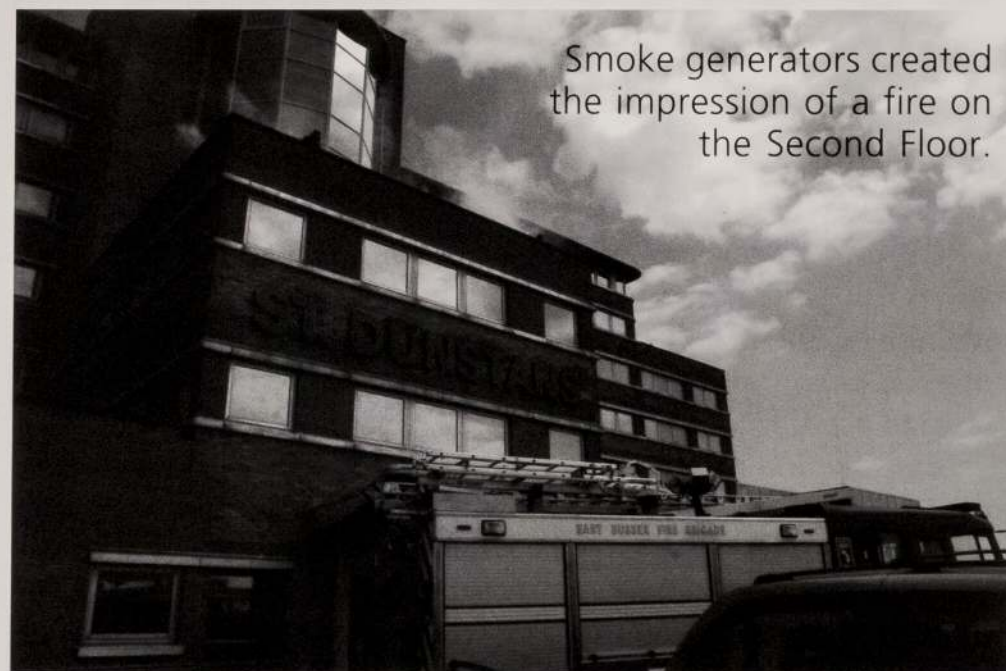
## Last Crimean War Veteran dies

PROBABLY THE LAST veteran of the Crimean War died in April 2004, aged 160. Timmy the Tortoise was found on a Portuguese vessel in 1854. He spent the next 40 years at sea

as a Royal Navy mascot before being given a shore posting. Since 1935, he had been living at Powderham Castle, Exeter, owned by relatives of the Captain who found him.

# BLIND TO THE BLAZE

Fire Fighters practise fire control with no sight at St Dunstan's



Smoke generators created the impression of a fire on the Second Floor.

could be seen on the balcony. It was at this point, the Fire Fighters realised that they were on a training exercise – but they still had to act as if dealing with a real blaze!

Steve Janering of St Dunstan's Security department met them with details of the building layout and the news that a fire in a First Floor boot cupboard has spread to the Second Floor. Casualties were reported on both floors.

A control point was quickly established on the main floor. Fire Fighters Daniels and Morley were kitted out with breathing apparatus and directed to tackle the root of the fire. To simulate the presence of thick smoke, their masks were covered by blindfolds. Hose pipe in hand, they started to climb the stairs, checking their position as they went – a slap to the head, a slap to the wall, a kick to the step. In this fashion, they navigated blindly to the supposed heart of the fire. Later, another crew headed up to the Second Floor in similar manner to locate two casualties – dummies – who were carried out.

Meanwhile outside, the ladies on the roof, Fire Fighters Moira Saunders and Geraldine Thurston were rescued from the second floor by cage elevator.

## Simon Rogers reports

**F**IRE FIGHTERS REACTING to an emergency call at St Dunstan's Ovingdean on May 13th had to enact a rescue operation blindfolded! A shrill alarm bell broke the peace that afternoon and as Care Assistants and Nursing Staff led St Dunstaners to designated areas, Receptionist Barbara Price dialled 999 to request assistance. "Hello, Fire Service? There is a fire at St Dunstan's Ovingdean. There is a fire on the first floor and people in the building not accounted for," she said.

Soon the siren of a fire engine was heard and an engine from Hove Fire Station arrived. Smoke was billowing from the Second Floor and two ladies



Barbara Price summons the Fire Service to St Dunstan's.

Dave Thurston, Sub-Officer at the East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service Training School, with special responsibility for the use of Breathing Apparatus, declared that in his opinion the operation was a success.

"We expected the call to be answered by Roedean, the officers who carry out fire inspections at St Dunstan's and have the local knowledge," he said. "However, the initial crew were dealing with an actual fire, so it was Hove who got here first."

The Hove Fire Fighters were soon up to speed though. "The information provided by St Dunstan's staff was first class, they were very professional," said David. "I have every confidence that we could carry out a rescue operation if it was real."

The exercise involved Fire Fighters from Hove, Roedean and Brighton. One of them, Matthew King proved to be familiar to some St Dunstaners – he previously worked as a Care Assistant at Ovingdean.



Above: Fire Fighters Daniels and Morley find their way back to the main floor after "containing the source of the fire."

Below: The Senior Fire Fighter advises the ladies on the roof that help will be with them soon.



## FAMILY NEWS

### BIRTHS

#### Congratulations on the birth of:

Samuel Robert Alderton on May 11th. He is the son of St Dunstaner *Kevin Alderton* of London and his partner Susan.

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY

#### Many happy returns to:

*Anne Phillips* of Southampton, Hampshire who was 100 on April 30th.

Celebrations and salutations from the world of St Dunstan's Family

*Bert Brantingham* of Ovingdean who was 95 on April 17th.

### WEDDINGS

#### Congratulations to:

Natasha Razavi and Paul Cartwright who married on May 6th. Natasha is the daughter of *Val and Iain Millard* of Saltdean, Brighton.

## **GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES**

### **Congratulations to:**

*Thomas and Mary Thaxter* of Blackpool, Lancashire on May 1st.

*David and Mary Shaw* of Solihull, West Midlands on May 16th.

## **DIAMOND ANNIVERSARIES**

### **Congratulations to:**

*Robert and Marjorie Coupland* of Hessle, North Humberside on May 13th.

## **SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES**

### **Congratulations to:**

*Roy and Myra Edgar* of Winchester, Hampshire who celebrated 63 years of marriage on April 19th.

*Silas and Agnes Morum* of Cobham, Surrey who celebrated 61 years of marriage on April 28th.

*Ronald and Rita Hitchcock* of Wheathampstead, Hertfordshire who celebrated 61 years of marriage on May 2nd.

*Ben and Pat Waters* of Bridgwater, Somerset who celebrated 65 years of marriage on May 6th.

*George and Majorie Allan* of Grundisburgh, Suffolk who celebrated 62 years of marriage on May 16th.

*Dick and Bett Hall* of Hassocks, West Sussex who celebrated 62 years of marriage on May 16th.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS**

### **Congratulations to:**

*Iain Millard* of Saltdean, Brighton who was awarded an OCR Level 2 Certificate for IT Users (CLAIT Class). His course covered file management, spreadsheets, databases and presentation graphics.

*David Stuttard* of Biddulph, Staffordshire on achieving a First Class pass in Pitman's Essential Word Processing exam.

*Daniel Peers* who has just earned his pilot's license. He is the grandson of *Cliff and Irene Gower* of Westbury, Wiltshire.

# **IN MEMORY**

**We regret to announce the passing of the following St Dunstaners and send our condolences to their family and friends.**

### **Charles Plumley**

The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment) Charles Plumley of Brighton, Sussex died on April 13th, aged 91. He joined the Leicester Regiment in 1940, later transferring to The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment). He served as Captain in the Western Desert, Alamein, Tunisia, Egypt, Italy and France until 1946. In civilian life, he was a journalist with *The Stage*, the trade newspaper for actors and theatrical trades. Our sympathy goes to all of his family.

### **Joseph Dwyer**

King's Regiment (Liverpool) Joseph Matthew Dwyer of Knotty Ash, Liverpool, Merseyside died on April 14th, aged 73. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1994. Originally apprenticed as a cabinet maker, he joined the King's Regiment (Liverpool) in 1948. Qualifying as a first class infantryman, he rapidly made the rank of Sergeant and served in the UK and Germany. In 1952, he was deployed in Malaya on an anti-terrorist patrol. His unit was ambushed and he was caught in the crossfire, suffering the loss of his left eye and perforating wounds to the right. He was discharged in 1955. While in the Service, he boxed for his Regiment and after being injured continued as a trainer. This interest continued into civilian life as he worked with youth clubs in Liverpool. On leaving the army, he worked as an upholsterer. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

### **Brigadier Peter Lassen, DSO, CBE**

Royal Army Medical Corps Brigadier Edric Henry Peter Lassen, DSO, of Camberley, Surrey died on April 16th, aged 95. He joined the Royal Army Medical Corps in 1934 and was initially posted to a 200-bed military hospital at Rawalpindi, India. Deployed in the North West Frontier Province, he was Regimental Medical Officer to the 2nd

Battalion, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders during the Mohmand Campaign of 1935, then spent the next year, with 4th (Indian) Field Ambulance for the Khaisora operation. After tours of duty in military hospitals at Campbellpore and Nowshera, he returned to the UK in 1940. He was awarded a DSO for his work during the Normandy landings and was mentioned in Dispatches in the North West Europe campaign of 1944-45. At the end of hostilities, he was promoted to Assistant Director of Medical Services in the Guard Armoured Division at Bonn. After the war, he served in various medical administrative appointments and became Deputy Director of Medical Services, 17 Division, Malaya District in 1964, and finally was DDMS, Northern Command, in 1967. He was appointed CBE on retirement in 1969. In addition to his DSO, he was awarded the Order of Leopold II with Palm and the Croix de Guerre with Palm. He was Honorary Physician to the Queen in 1963. In his younger days, he represented King's College Hospital and the United Hospital at rugby, and played cricket, tennis and golf. He was a keen bridge player. Our sympathy goes to his son Nigel, daughter Joanna and all of his family.

### **Nancy Nimmins**

Royal Air Force

"Nancy" Anne Nimmins of Consett, County Durham died on April 27th, aged 81. She served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1946. During that time she was posted to several locations in England and Wales, serving on Balloons in Tyneside and later as a telephonist. She left the service as a Leading Aircraftwoman. In civilian life, she and her sister ran a hairdressers for 30 years. Her interests included sewing and knitting. Our sympathy goes to her daughter Annette and all other members of her family.

### **Arthur Storer**

Wiltshire Regiment

Arthur Storer of Solihull, West Midlands died on April 27th, aged 84. Having worked in the building trade as a plumber and plasterer, he was called up in 1939 and joined the Wiltshire Regiment. His first tour was in Madras, India

and he was then deployed to Burma in time for the Battle of Arakan. He returned to the UK where his Battalion re-grouped for deployment in Germany. His time on the continent included a tour of duty at Belsen Concentration Camp before he was demobbed in 1946. In civilian life, he returned to the building trade. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

### **Norman Salmon**

Royal Hampshire Regiment

Norman Leslie Salmon of Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire died on May 1st, aged 88. He served as Corporal with the Royal Hampshire Regiment from 1940 to 1946. In civilian life, he was a greengrocer and landscape gardener. Our sympathy goes to his widow Eileen and all other members of the family.

### **Gerald Jackson**

Royal Scots Fusiliers

Gerald Jackson of Poynton, Cheshire died on May 3rd, aged 83. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1986. He joined the Royal Scots Fusiliers in 1942 and was serving with them in Italy when he suffered a gun shot wound to the face in January 1944. He was discharged several months later while rehabilitating at St Dunstan's Church Stretton. In civilian life, he trained as a physiotherapist and eventually became Senior Physiotherapist at Devonshire Hospital, Buxton. He served as a local Councillor for six years, on the Committee of the local Royal British Legion and took interest in local history. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

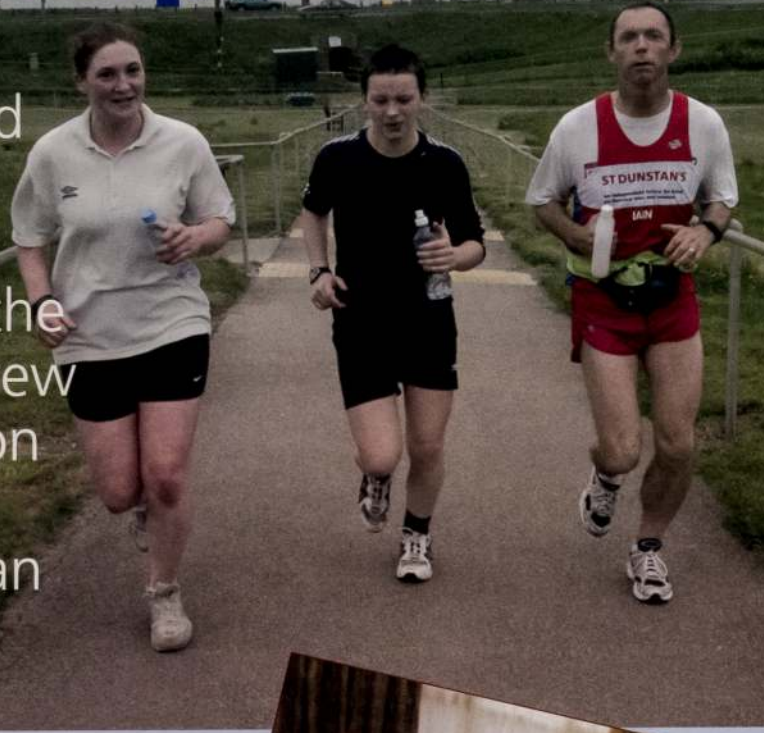
### **Shahriar Beck**

Iran Infantry

Shahriar "Shahri" Beck of Oxford, Oxfordshire died on May 12th, aged 88. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1948. He joined the Persian Army as an 18 year old and was commissioned in 1938. While serving as Captain with the Iran Infantry, he was wounded by a hand grenade while on manoeuvres with the Army and Air Force. After rehabilitation at St Dunstan's, he trained as a telephonist. His interests included handicrafts, braille and radio. Our sympathy goes to his son Bahrami, daughter Shahin and all other members of his family.

# An unexpected exercise!

Two days at St Dunstan's and nurses found themselves on 17-mile run as the Infrastructure crew from RAF Benson return with Exercise Iron Man

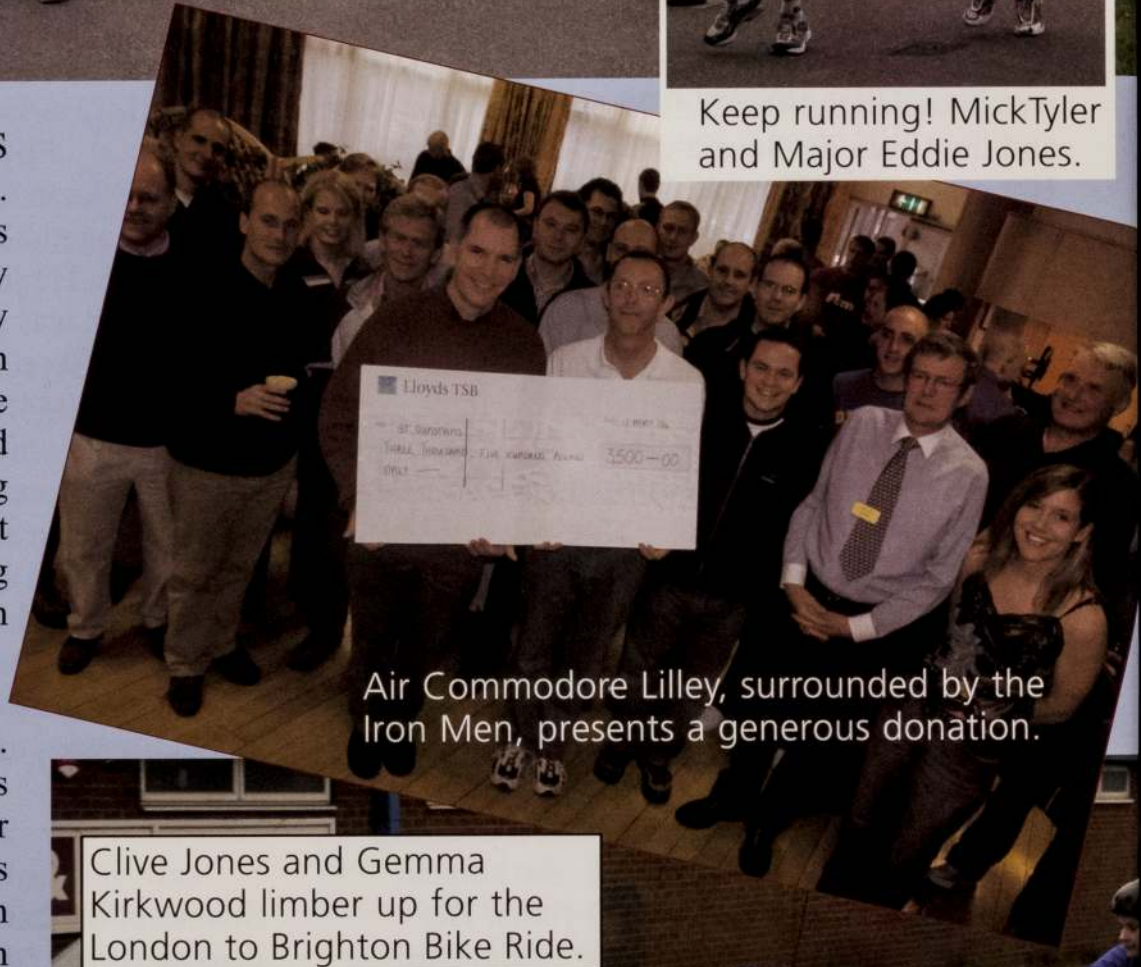


Kim and Holly with Iain make their final approach to St Dunstan's.



Keep running! Mick Tyler and Major Eddie Jones.

**T**HEY KEEP THE NURSES on the run at St Dunstan's. Royal Army Medical Corps students Kim Sissions and Holly "Percy" Percival were barely through the door on May 10th, when they were signed up for a 17-mile run on May 12th. The two girls had come to join the Ovingdean nursing staff as part of their training, but were "press-ganged" into running with St Dunstan's Iain Millard on the final leg of Exercise Iron Man 2004. Very gamely, they ran from Worthing Pier to St Dunstan's. As in previous years, 97 Sappers and RAF crew set out at 5.30am for a unique triathlon. In various combinations, they cycled and ran their way from RAF Benson in Oxfordshire to St Dunstan's where they were able to finish off with a swim. As a result of their efforts, Air Commodore Steve Lilley (who made part of the run himself) was able to present a cheque for £3,500 towards the Activity Fund. St Dunstan's Clive Jones and Cliff Ford joined staff members Gemma Kirkwood and Mark Brownlow on tandem for the home leg.



Air Commodore Lilley, surrounded by the Iron Men, presents a generous donation.

Clive Jones and Gemma Kirkwood limber up for the London to Brighton Bike Ride.

