

April 2005

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# ST DUNSTAN'S Review 9



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

**Cover story:****Ghosts of the trenches**

St Dunstaners Colin Williamson and David Stuttard feel the cast-iron dedication to the men of 1st Australian Tunnelling Coy who gave their lives during the defence of Hill 60 during the First World War. When Belgium was invaded again in the Second World War, the memorial was defaced by gunfire. The bullet holes remain in the dedication plate, silent testament to the indignity of war.

A group of St Dunstaners joined Anglia Battlefield Tours for an emotionally charged visit to the scene of battles that devastated Ypres during the 1914-1918 conflict. A seemingly endless sea of silent stones confronted them at each location. "Remember, each stone is a person," said guide Peter Hewlett-Smith.

**Ray Hazan reports on page 12.**

Plus Noticeboard, Balancing the Books, Poet's Corner, Pendleton's Pantry, Ten Questions, Letters to the Editor and more!

**insight**

The sixth issue of the **insight** newsletter is included with this edition of **ST DUNSTAN'S Review**. This newsletter is being sent to some 250,000 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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The Review is also available in braille, on MP3CD,  
on audio cassette, floppy disk and via e-mail.

**The verdict is in**

Those of you anxiously awaiting the results of the **Review's** annual story writing contest can breath again at last. **The winners are named on page 16.**

**Saddle up!**

Harry Beevers aims to crack the London to Brighton Bike Ride. **Cycle over to page 10.**

**World vision**

Penny Melville-Brown reports on the World Blind Union's last meeting in Capetown. **Details on page 9.**

**From the Chairman**

WHAT HAS HAPPENED to the great British winter? As any gardener will have noticed this year has carried on the habit of the last few, without any dramatic freezing. Recently we have had a cold two weeks or so, but tame stuff in comparison to the past. In many places the grass has not really stopped growing, and leaves are not yet off many branches. Is it global warming, or merely that seven-year tilt cycle of our planet that I was taught about at school? I hear that migratory salmon were caught in larger numbers last season than for many years. Perhaps the tilt back has started.

People have asked me why we are not making a bigger thing of St Dunstan's 90th Anniversary. This year also comes with the 60th celebrations for so many World War II events, so we made a positive decision to have a low key 90th concentrating on those who are St Dunstaners as a result of that war. They will be joining a very special reunion at Church Stretton for those who were there, and with the other events reported in the February **Review** I think that will be enough. For those who want more, conserve your energies for the 100th.

*Michael Gordon-Lennox*

Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN

**ST DUNSTAN'S  
Calendar**

Writers' Forum	April 2nd
Indoor Bowling	April 6th
Ex-POW Reunion	April 8th-11th
Dutch Memorial	April 11th
Sailability	April 16th
London Marathon	April 17th
Historical 'Week'	April 17th-22nd
Indoor Bowling	April 18th
Bisley Shoot	April 20th
Masonic Weekend	April 22nd-24th
Gardening 'Week'	May 1st-7th
Sportsboat/RIB Show	May 6th-8th
Army v Navy Rugby	May 7th
Writers' Forum	May 7th
VE Day	May 8th
Outdoor Bowling	May 9th
Exercise Ironman	May 11th
Handless Reunion	May 11th-17th
Sailability	May 14th
Arts Weekend	May 19th-22nd
Writers' Forum Day	May 21st
Archery(II)	May 27th-June 6th
Sailability	May 28th
Writers' Forum	June 4th
Widows' 'Week' (I)	June 6th-11th
Outdoor Bowling	June 9th
Outdoor Bowling	June 13th
L-B Bike Ride	June 19th
Outdoor Bowling	June 20th
Festival of the Sea	June 24th-27th
Writers' Forum	July 2nd
Veterans Awareness	July 3rd-10th
Walking Week	July 4th-8th
Amateur Radio (III)	July 9th-16th
VE/VJ celebrations	July 10th
Outdoor Bowling	July 15th

# Noticeboard

Dates for your diary and useful information

## EXTENDED DEADLINE FOR THE HEROES RETURN

APPLICATIONS CAN NOW BE PLACED UP TO MAY 31ST: Applications for funding under the Heroes Return scheme can now be made up to May 31st 2005. The extended deadline has been made possible by an extra £10 million worth of grants from the Big Lottery Fund. The Heroes Return initiative aims to enable Second World War veterans and widows commemorate the 60th anniversary of the events that led to the end of that conflict.

UK residents who saw active service overseas with, or alongside, the British and Allied Armed Forces in the Second World War can apply for a grant. Widows and widowers of veterans are also eligible in most cases, as are merchant service veterans. Conflicts, such as Suez, Malaya, Aden and Korea are not eligible for this programme.

As a first step, call the Veterans Agency free helpline on 0800 169 2277. They will provide detailed information on eligibility and advice on how to submit an application. Should you require further advice please contact St Dunstan Services Manager Ray Hazan at St Dunstan's HQ on 020 7723 5021.

Heroes Return has given grants totalling over £7.3 million to more than 20,000 people, enabling veteran service men and women, widows and widowers, carers and spouses to visit battlefields, war graves and other places where they or their loved ones saw action.

## PLAIN SAILING

LIFE ON THE OCEAN WAVES: Sailability provides the opportunity for St Dunstaners and other disabled persons to take part in a morning or afternoon of sailing with qualified instructors. Sailability takes place at Shoreham, transport is provided from and to St Dunstan's however participants must provide their own packed lunches where appropriate.

The dates, all on a Saturday, are as follows:

April 16th, May 14th, May 28th, July 23rd, August 6th, August 20th, September 3rd, September 24th and October 8th.

Please contact Gemma Kirkwood in the Sports & Recreation department at St Dunstan's Ovingdean on 01273 302704 for more details.

## VETERANS CALENDAR ONLINE

WWII 60TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIONS LISTED : The Veterans Agency has launched a National Calendar designed to promote hundreds of events planned to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War and the first Veterans Awareness Week on July 3rd-10th. The week aims to raise awareness of veterans issues and marks their continuing contribution to society. The calendar can be found on their website at [www.veteransagency.mod.uk](http://www.veteransagency.mod.uk). Event organisers can also submit details via an on-line template available on the same website.

## WILL ARAGORN CONFRONT MORDOR IN THE EPSOM DERBY

REVIEW DERBY SWEEPSTAKE NOW OPEN: Almost 160 horses have been put forward for the 2005 Epsom Vodafone Derby on June 4th? As usual, there are some colourful names entering the field. Can we expect a heroic run from those named after characters from *Lord of the Rings*? Or will Eeyore be first across the line? Could Jack the Giant be a killer or will Dath Vader come over from the darkside of the hedges? Surely a horse called Macduff can be expected to lead on?

Accordingly, the **Review** is once more opening its annual Derby Sweepstake. The draw is open to all St Dunstaners, beneficiaries of the Diana Gubbay Trust, widows and widowers.

Tickets are 30p each and issued consecutively to a maximum of 25 (costing £7.50). Cheques should be made payable to St Dunstan's and crossed. Loose money should not be sent unless it is registered. The closing date is May 31st and the draw will be made that day.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## VICTORY CELEBRATIONS AT HISTORIC DOCKYARD CHATHAM

DANCE, DRUMS AND A STREET PARTY: The Historic Dockyard Chatham in Kent will be celebrating the 60th Anniversary of VE Day with a two-day festival that includes Brass Band concerts, ENSA style shows, Pipe Band, displays from the Armed Forces and Home Front organisations and vehicle displays.

The evening of May 7th will have a 40s-style 'Hanger Dance' with John Miller recreating the sound of his uncle - Glenn Miller. Supper will be bangers and mash with jam roly-poly to follow. Tickets are £22.50 per person and can be booked on 01634 823826.

On May 8th, there will be a VE Day Drumhead Service followed by a parade through the Dockyard. In the afternoon there will be a Street Party with a theme of bridging the generations.

The Dockyard will also be staging nautical themed activities, music and events for the Bank Holiday Weekend, May 29th-30th. The 80-acre site includes three historic warships - HMS *Cavalier*, berthed on the site where HMS *Victory* was built, HMS *Gannet* and HMS *Ocelot* - the RNLI's national collection of lifeboats and a museum. There is also a shipbuilding exhibition, the ropery and the Kent Police Museum (variable opening times). Call 01634 823807 for details or check their website on [www.thedockyard.co.uk](http://www.thedockyard.co.uk). Guided tours can be arranged for visually impaired visitors.

### WANTED: VICTORY DAY STORIES

PEACE IN OUR TIME: This year we are celebrating 60 years since the end of the Second World War. We would like to collect photos, memorabilia and most importantly, your recollections of VE and VJ Day. To commemorate these historic events, a special newsletter mailing will be dispatched to supporters of St Dunstan's in June. If you have an interesting story to tell or would like to loan us your photos or memorabilia, then please contact Karen Mitchell in the first instance on 020 7616 7959. We'll then arrange a mini interview over the phone, to save you writing out your story!

### TALKING RADIO MAKES TUNING EVEN EASIER

DIGITAL RADIO HAS TALKING CONTROLS: DAB digital radio aims to simplify radio tuning, for example letting you tune by station name rather than frequency. Now a manufacturer has gone one step further with the introduction of a radio that 'speaks' the station name, the time and more...

PURE Digital have launched the SONUS-1XT. Similar in style terms to the Evoke-1, the SONUS makes digital radio even more accessible with its voice feedback technology. As you scroll through the available stations, the radio will speak the name of each one, so you can be sure of what you're tuning to. And with comprehensive alarm and clock features, the SONUS can also speak the current time (which automatically gets adjusted and updated) and confirm whether or not you have set any alarms. Another useful feature is the 'Volume Equalisation Technology'. Developed because there can be a difference in volume from one radio station to another, the SONUS automatically subtly adjusts the volume.

The SONUS will be on sale at around £119.

More details can be found at [www.pure-digital.com](http://www.pure-digital.com). The website has a station finder facility that uses your postcode to indicate which digital stations can be received in your area.

### RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ST DUNSTANERS AND STAFF

Ovingdean Manager Asks Visitors to Respect Professional Relationships: I recently talked to Ovingdean staff about relationships with residents and visitors to Ovingdean and feel it appropriate to present a summary of what I said then in this **Review**.

Because Ovingdean is a registered care home and because we have a clear responsibility towards those who stay here, it is essential that all staff behave appropriately and protect the professional relationship that exists for each one of us by recognising that there are boundaries. The blurring of these boundaries over things like social contact may lead to misunderstanding and possibly upset on all sides. Some issues are obvious and are laid down in staff contracts like "not accepting gifts or tips from St Dunstaners". Others are less so and, for simplicity, I have stated that contact outside of planned activities is discouraged. Such planned activities are a broad spectrum that includes a staff member acting as an escort in his/her own time for a St Dunstaner taking a holiday overseas, for example. I believe that the key to avoiding misunderstanding lies in being explicit and open. I am sure that there is nothing in this clarification that will stop us remaining the courteous and friendly staff that we are at Ovingdean but I would also ask those visiting Ovingdean to respect the limitations that staff members must operate under. If required, I am happy to provide interpretation of any of this, as is Jackie Greer as Deputy Manager/Head of Care.  
**Dick Lake, Ovingdean Manager**

# 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](mailto:ray.hazan@st-dunstans.org.uk).

## Tears for those who shall not grow old

I would like to thank St Dunstans for the privilege of escorting my husband on the tour of the Great War battlefields around Ypres in Belgium. The planning by the organisers and our guides, Peter and Emrys, and the expertise of our drivers meant that we were through the Channel Tunnel and into Belgium without a hitch.

There were many special moments throughout the day including the moving visits to

cemeteries at Brandhoek and Tyne Cot, the walk through German trenches at Bayernwald and the climb up Hill 60, scene of bitter fighting and heroic deeds.

However, the *Last Post* ceremony at the Menin Gate was the most powerful experience of all. As an escort I was proud of our party standing on parade wearing medals, with Nigel bearing the St Dunstan's Standard in front and Ray

laying the wreath. When Gerry Jones spoke the exhortation, "They shall not grow old ..." and his voice reached out to the silent crowd of spectators my tears began to flow.

It was a long and eventful day, but one filled with memories to last a lifetime.

**Joan Beevers,  
Castleford, West Yorkshire**

■ Ray Hazan reports on the pilgrimage to Ypres on page 12.

## Despite the sneezes, skiing was a great experience

We would like to say a big thank you for the skiing experience. We were the newcomers and everyone made us feel welcome. It was great making new friends and meeting other St Dunstaners. Gerry, Ray and Charlie were a big inspiration and also the encouragement from all the instructors. Also, a big thank you to Vince and Cam for looking after us in the flu sick bay. See you all next year, have a great time.

**Maria Pikulski  
and Moira Meekins**



Some skiing St Dunstaners inbetween spells on the slope.

## Do you recall St Dunstan's homes from bygone days?

I wonder if anyone remembers the house in Hampstead which Bill and I visited when he attended the toy course at Harcourt Street?

Also, does anyone recall the holiday place near Brighton where the children were accommodated while parents enjoyed a welcome break?

**Margaret Heffernan,  
Chigwell, Essex**

■ If you have memories of these old St Dunstan's houses, write to the **Review**.

## Algiers blaze started on my birthday

The obituary for St Dunstaner Howard Godfrey in the March **Review** mentions his ship being blown up in Algiers Harbour. It was July 16th 1943. I was there and it was my 21st birthday. I was serving 226 General Transport Coy and was sitting in my lorry waiting to be loaded on one of the quays.

On a nearby quay, an American built Liberty ship was on its last day of loading aviation fuel. The quay was also full of 44 gallon drums. On the other side of the ship, a coaster was loading captured German ammo.

At around 1pm, there was a terrific explosion on the coaster. I remember seeing an anchor, chains and other debris flying yards up in the air. Obviously some of this burning debris landed on the ship immediately setting alight the petrol cargo then igniting the petrol on the quayside. There were Ordnance Coy men on board, I don't know what happened to them.

The ship was eventually towed out of the harbour by a naval boat probably HMS *Arrow*. The ship stood in the bay east of Algiers where it burned for three weeks. Our unit was based at the zoological gardens which looked out onto the bay.

I had forgotten about this happening until I read the **Review** then the memories flooded back.  
**Frank Lodge,**  
**Chester-le-Street, County Durham**

## WHAT IS YOUR TOP TEN?

This might sound like a neat idea for a long running radio show! If you were marooned somewhere with no contact with the outside world, what ten records would you want with you to while away the time? Send your choice, stating why you want that record to Top Ten, **ST DUNSTAN'S Review**, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD.

## Ten questions on...

The subject of Buildings

Quizmaster Harry Beevers has some tall teasers

- 1) In his 1995 book *Notes from a Small Island*, Bill Bryson describes which building in the North-East of England as "The best cathedral on planet Earth"?
- 2) In January 2003, firemen in Tooting, London, broke their one-day strike in order to put out a fire in which type of building?
- 3) What name is given to the US President's office because of its shape?
- 4) Dating back to the year 1189, *The Trip to Jerusalem* in the city of Nottingham claims to be the oldest example in the UK of which type of establishment?
- 5) Particularly popular in the 18th Century, what name is given to a building which has no practical purpose but is constructed purely to amuse or delight the viewer?
- 6) Sharing its name with a vegetable and a royal house of France, which London theatre was the first public building to be lit by electric lighting?
- 7) Which term for a luxury apartment originally meant a separate dwelling on a roof?
- 8) A display in the lobby of which New York landmark depicts what is claimed as "The eighth wonder of the world"?
- 9) What is the name of the building on the outskirts of Washington DC which houses the HQ of the US Department of Defence and gets its name because of its shape?
- 10) Which type of building that gets its name from the French for a small house can mean an apartment of more than one level or a self-contained flat.

Answers can be found on page 21.

# Global visions

**S**EVERAL TOPICS DISCUSSED at the World Blind Union 6th General Assembly in Capetown, South Africa between December 6th to 10th may be of interest to St Dunstaners. This international forum is a group of organisations concerned with issues encountered by visually impaired people - and they endeavour to bring their knowledge and networks to the assistance of people worldwide.

Firstly, progress is being made with a new UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. After considerable discussions amongst representatives from many countries, detailed negotiations are now underway on a draft Convention. The World Blind Union is working hard to ensure that the interests of visually impaired people are included. The current forecast is that a final Convention should be ready for formal ratification by the United Nations in autumn 2006.

Computer giant Microsoft is taking more interest in the needs of visually impaired people. They hosted an international conference at the end of last year which gave them an ideal opportunity to hear first hand about the problems that we have in using computers, sharing information and the benefits of the new DAISY book format. Perhaps

St Dunstaner **Penny Melville-Brown** reports on a gathering of organisations caring for visually impaired people from all four corners of the world

we can look forward to software that will be of more use to us in the future.

Following that meeting, it looks likely that new emphasis will be given to building the capacity of organisations of visually impaired people and increasing advocacy for those whom they represent. (A full list of the Assembly resolutions is available on request from St Dunstaners Services Manager Ray Hazan).

Accessible information continues to gain high priority so that people everywhere can gain from technological developments. A key initiative is to develop the concept of a virtual global library so that different sources of accessible books can be easily available to visually impaired people. Rather than creating one massive library, the aim is for existing organisations that lend accessible books to share their resources. A major tool that will be needed to make this work is a common worldwide catalogue of available books. The reveal system could provide the blueprint - you can check it out by using the link on the National Library for the

Blind website. Consideration is also being given to how such a virtual library will interact with existing public libraries and commercial sources of accessible books. Meanwhile, copyright issues can be difficult if books are made available in accessible formats - a new model law on copyright that makes provisions for exceptions for visually impaired people has been developed and is starting to be used in some countries. International flights can sometimes be tricky if you have a disability. The European Union is developing new regulations aimed at making travel easier. Responsibility for meet and assist support is likely to be transferred from airlines to airports and carriage of guide dogs in cabins should become more possible. Meanwhile, it seems that Glasgow airport, in addition to Heathrow and Gatwick, is now catering for Pet Passports and Manchester is expected to follow soon. If you need advice about travelling with a guide dog, you can get more information from GDBA or the Department for the Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs.

# Back in the Saddle

IT WAS 9AM on Friday, July 27th 1951 and the sun was already shining brightly in Yorkshire. At Headingley, just fourteen miles from my home, four Yorkshiremen were in the England cricket test team facing South Africa and in London the Festival of Britain was in full swing. It was the first day of my five week holiday and though the prospect of seeing two of my fellow county stalwarts, Len Hutton and Frank Lowson, opening the innings for England was an attractive one I had other things on my mind. I was 22, I was single, I was fit and I had just bought my very first new bike. It was a bright green Raleigh Lenton, Sturmey Archer 5-gear and I could lift it in the air with one finger. It cost me £30/2/6d and the man at the shop even took the half crown after I had counted out the precious notes. Obviously another fellow Yorkshireman. It was a perfect day for riding and with £4 in my pocket I set off for a day's spin. For no special reason I set off south and after three miles as I approached the historic town of Pontefract I decided to extend my day's outing somewhat. I called in at the local Post Office, wrote a short telegram to my mother, "Gone on holiday, see you and Dad in Blackpool August 8th", and off I went down the A1 like the wind.

One of my school mates, then an art student, was eking out his finances by spending his

As he prepares for the London to Brighton Bike Ride, St Dunstaner **Harry Beevers** recalls touring the country by bicycle as a young man

vacation working at a fruit farm in Essex so my first plan was to surprise him, that is if I could find the farm in question. After that I thought, why not run down to Bodmin in Cornwall to see some of my old colleagues in the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry whom I had left in Mogadishu just over a year earlier. I knew that they had departed from East Africa shortly after my demob and it seemed a good idea at the time to renew old friendships.

I never made it to Cornwall. At the end of day one, I arrived in the county of Rutland. I selected a deserted area of woodland, curled up in my cycle cape and tried to get comfortable under a tree. That night it thundered and the lightning was something to behold. It actually started at 4am and that was the end of a fitful night's sleep. I was cold, wet and bedraggled when I entered the transport café two miles down the road at 7am next morning. I had a full English breakfast. Ten miles down the road I reached yet another transport café where I had a second full English breakfast.

Cycling, and three hours in torrential rain, certainly gives one a hearty appetite. At the end of day two, I finally located the fruit farm near Braintree just as the party of students were setting out for the local hostelry. We had an enjoyable evening, and that's all I'm prepared to say on the matter, and it's the only time I've spent a social get-together with a Nigerian prince. He was an Oxford University student and at 5 feet one inch I fairly towered over him by at least two inches. He was probably the first Nigerian prince in history to learn *On Ilkley Moor Baht 'at!*

Day three saw me in London, I arrived at Big Ben at 5.45am just in time to hear it striking the three-quarter hour. At this time of day I was surrounded by three pigeons and not another human was in sight. It was my first ever London visit at ground level. I had travelled on the Underground as the 146 demob group made their way home from Aldershot Barracks in May 1950 to all points North but on that occasion I was more anxious to be back home than linger in the metropolis.

Spotting a road sign pointing south I then covered the journey from London to Brighton. I was probably quite close to Ovingdean little knowing what went on there and never dreaming that one day, as a St Dunstaner myself, I would be a regular visitor. It was about 6am when I arrived in Brighton itself. I had spent the night in what had appeared to be a deserted field and awoke to find myself surrounded by a herd of cows. They were obviously more interested in me than I was in them and I was relieved when I finally managed to weave my way through them and on to the road. I was starving and there was nothing open in Brighton at 6 am I stopped a milk-delivery man, persuaded him to sell me a pint and downed it thankfully.

I explored Brighton, moved on to Worthing and along the coast road as far as the county of

Devon. The sleeping out, particularly during the rainy weather, resulted in a knee problem so I struck north, through Bridgwater, Bristol, Gloucester, Shrewsbury and finally to Blackpool. I moved into a sea-side boarding house in Coronation Street along with five other lads from Castleford and my bed was wonderful. What's more, I still had money left from the £4 I had started with despite two night's bed and breakfast on my journey north.

On Saturday, August 11th I rode the 90 odd miles home, off course it was raining until I reached the Yorkshire border. On the next day I put my bike away for the month's rest a certain part of my anatomy was craving.

And now, 54 years later I'm planning to do that London to Brighton run yet again, this time as part of "St Dunstan's Challenge", on a tandem with

an old school friend Dennis Wright. I say "old friend" advisedly as he is a good three months my senior. Although he has a pacemaker, he has two good eyes and a heart like a lion even though his legs may quake occasionally and I have every confidence that he will navigate us to Brighton rather than our finishing up in Eastbourne or Bournemouth. I had to give up cycling on being registered blind in 1955 and if asked what I have missed most of all it's my Raleigh Lenton. Dennis and I are going to do the sponsored London to Brighton cycle run, organised by the Heart Foundation in aid of charity. With assistance from St Dunstan's, and Evans Cycles, we'll be on the road on Sunday, June 19th. We'll not challenge St Dunstaner Billy the Whizz's average speed of 164 mph on a motor cycle but like my fellow St Dunstaners who are also taking part I reckon we can do it.

## Society of the Holy Cross at Ovingdean

ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 28th, it was wonderful to see St Dunstan's Chapel being used once again for a full sung Eucharistic service writes St Dunstan's Chaplain, **Father Tony Otterwell**. As chaplain to St Dunstan's, I had the honour of hosting the Spring Chapter meeting of the Society of the Holy Cross, of which I am a member. The society is made up entirely of Anglican clergy (worldwide) and brings together a great number of bishops, priests, deacons and lay assistants who, though the auspices of the society, assist and support one another in their various ministries; part of mine being the chaplaincy at St Dunstan's. There were about twelve priests who concelebrated the Eucharist and a much larger number in the congregation along with some laity. The rafters

resounded with the sound of so many male voices singing the responses and hymns, and of course, the colours of the chapel were enhanced by the vestments worn by the clergy. After the service we all adjourned to the Winter Garden for our packed lunches and then the formal chapter meeting. I would like to thank Dick Lake for all his help and permission to hold this event at St Dunstan's, Linda Barley for arranging the service sheets, PBK (Trevor and Paul) for organising the refreshments, and Bill and his team for the security, car parking etc. All the members of the society, especially myself, were most grateful and send their regards, prayers and best wishes to all at St Dunstan's. My ministry at St Dunstan's is indeed a great privilege and one which I value highly.

# St Dunstan's at the Menin Gate

**Ray Hazan** and a group of St Dunstaners visited the killing fields of Ypres to learn how the cream of a generation lost their lives, often going to their graves without leaving a sign that they existed!



Gerry Jones delivered a powerful Exhortation at the Menin Gate.

Emrys Jones explaining life in the trenches to part of St Dunstan's group.

**I**F THE CONVERSATIONS during and after the March 9th were anything to go by, then St Dunstan's visit to Flanders was a sobering and moving occasion. The tours in and around the town of Ypres, culminating with a ceremony at the Menin Gate had much impact and gave a lot of food for thought.

Following a talk about St Dunstan's at the Anglia Battlefield Tours AGM last year, the company offered to arrange a trip for us. This was taken up following a conference for a group of St Dunstaner speakers organised by Graham Footer of the Fundraising and Communications department.

The trip got off to an excellent start the evening before when we were briefed by one of the tour guides, Peter Hewlett-Smith, a former Colonel in the Royal Military Police. His knowledge of First World War history is impressive and besides describing what lay ahead on the morrow, he had First War items we could feel

including a long barrelled Lee Enfield, a bayonet, shrapnel, hand grenade and fuse cap from an artillery round.

A reporter from *Soldier* magazine joined us at the hotel and we set off for the Channel Tunnel early on Wednesday

morning, picking up a second guide, Emrys Jones, also from Anglia Battlefield Tours, en route. With a clear run we arrived at the Channel Tunnel terminal where we had to drive over cameras, which enabled immigration officials to check we were not carrying any

illegals out of the country under our coach! Shortly after, we were on our way and the coach swayed gently with the rhythm of the train as we sped through the tunnel to France.

Just over an hour later, we debussed into a bitterly cold

wind at Brandhoek Cemetery. The cemetery was laid out as an English country garden with flowers from the UK, mown lawns and lots of roses. We visited the grave of Captain Noel Chavasse, Royal Army Medical Corps, the only holder of the VC and Bar, plus the



Peter in the trench.



Moira placed a cross in memory of the Royal Irish Fusiliers who died at Tyne Cot.



The memorial at Hill 60 came under fire in WWII leaving bullet holes in the dedication.



Gerry and Harry paid tribute to the memory of Captain Noel Chavasse, VC and Bar.



St Dunstan's President Ray Hazan, with Graham Footer, laid a wreath at Menin Gate.

MC. His decorations were for repeatedly travelling into no man's land to retrieve the wounded and bring them succour. He himself was fatally injured on such a mission and died of his wounds.

Here Peter described how the Commonwealth War Graves Commission was founded by a Major Ware (later known as Sir Fabian). He explained that the headstones, mostly made of natural stone, were all of the same size, no matter what rank or importance of the body beneath and that they all faced the battlefield from which they came and are carefully registered in plots by number and letter. A Stone of Remembrance, representing those of all faiths and none,

designed by Edwin Lutyens, grace some of the cemeteries as does the Cross of Sacrifice. Many of the headstones bear the inscription 'A Soldier of the Great War' or Unknown Soldier - Known Unto God'. A tragic but moving epitaph.

Our next visit included a German trench, which had been restored to its original condition. The sides are re-vetted with willow branches to hold back the earth. It was a strange feeling as we trod the duck boards, held off the bottom of the trench by A-frames so that you were not walking through water. A sudden icy downpour was a small but bleak indicator of what conditions must have been like.

Following a brief pause for lunch, we stopped at Hill 60, which had a great effect on us all. The hill is 60 metres (200ft) above sea level and was made from earth dug from a railway cutting nearby. That small height dominates the land around and so was very important to both sides, to own and to dislodge as appropriate. Peter described vividly the actions that went on around this



Peter Hewlett-Smith explained how the War Graves Commission organised each cemetery.

small piece of land; of a British machine gunner, Cpl Adams, who, despite losing his comrades and then suffering his jaw being shot away, stayed with his gun until death, but foiled the German attack. He was not decorated for his action. But four VC's were won at Hill 60. One of these men, Pte Dwyer, had stood in the open, amidst shell and bullet, lobbing grenades into a sap the Germans had dug to try and get behind the hill, which at that stage had been taken by the British. That German attack was also foiled.

The Hill is a memorial site in itself and has been left untouched. We walked over ground pitted with craters and littered with lumps of concrete blown from bunkers when massive mines were detonated under the hill.

Our penultimate visit was to the largest military cemetery of the Commonwealth - Tyne Cot. This is short for Tyne Cottages as the bunkers on the site viewed by the Tyneside Regiment seemed to resemble cottages from a distance. There are

12,000 graves and an impressive 'missing memorial' where the names of 33,000 soldiers whose remains have never been found - who simply 'disappeared'. Many graves are unnamed and the tragedy of loved ones at home was felt by many.

A brief shopping spree (can you visit Belgium and not buy their chocolates?) was followed by a much needed supper of Flemish stew and the inevitable Belgian chips! Peter, Emrys and Chris, a loyal supporter of St Dunstan's, were presented with a St Dunstan's plaque to thank them for their thoughtful and knowledgeable presentations. And so on to the final act of remembrance and respect under the imposing arches of the Menin Gate at Ypres - the 'City of Peace'.

This ceremony was started in 1928 by The Last Post Association. Each evening at 8pm, members of the local fire brigade would play the *Last Post* and *Reveille*, to the laying of wreaths as we do annually at the Cenotaph. This ceremony was only interrupted by the Second World War and the bugles were buried to prevent the Germans getting hold of them. In 1945, as the Nazis were driven out of Ypres and before they were even 100 yards from the town, the instruments were recovered and the ceremony re-instigated that day. It has gone on daily ever since and one of the fire brigade members has never failed to attend either!

The Menin gate is one of the

original gateways in and out of the then fortified town. Today, it bears the names of 54,896 soldiers who have no known graves and who died before August 16th 1917.

The St Dunstan's contingent formed up behind our Standard bearer, Nigel Whiteley. After the *Last Post*, Gerry Jones recited the famous *Exhortation* by Laurence Binyon and we then stood in silence. Ray Hazan, escorted by Nick Ward and Graham Footer then laid a wreath on behalf of St Dunstan's. Finally *Reveille* was sounded, symbolising both a return to daily life for the living and the hope of life everlasting for the fallen.

Also attending the ceremony were English school children and some 40 Army Cadets from Bassingbourne. One lady spectator had been involved in Exercise Iron Man and knew some of the St Dunstaners present. It was a privilege to have attended such an occasion.



The members of Ypres Fire Brigade who conduct the Last Post Ceremony at Menin Gate with our St Dunstaners.

We were back at the hotel in Maidstone by 11pm, a chastened and thoughtful group. But despite the late hour, some could not dismiss the day from their minds that easily.

Several expressed their surprise at how small an area the battle had covered, yet some 250,000 Allied soldiers lost their lives in the four great battles of Ypres. The knowledge that so many lives had been lost trying to dominate such small 'Pimples' of ground, amidst a flat, unrelenting and unremarkable landscape - and for what? It really brought home the futility of it all.

But like a bombardment, when bright flashes from the gun muzzles light up the black acrid smoke, the noise and stench, so, amongst the death and devastation of war, acts of heroism, some recognised, many not known about, come shining through.

"We will remember them"



# JUDGEMENT IS SERVED

Crime and travel author picks top tales from story contest

The **Review's** 2004 Story Competition has been judged by travel and crime writer Gwen Moffat, who has the distinction of having been the first female mountaineering guide. Born in Brighton, she served in the Land Army and ATS and once worked as a ranch hand to research a book. She has written 34 books on climbing, Mountain Rescue, and American trails, plus 28 novels, mostly mysteries (14 on tape); as well as features, columns, short stories and reviews. Her latest novel, *Dying for Love*, was published in March. She lives in the Lake District with a small cat of great character.



Peak performance! Gwen's autobiography was her first published book.



Jacqueline and Nigel Whiteley at the London Eye last year.

Gwen selected three stories from this year's entries, awarding the first prize of £50 to Jacqueline Whiteley, wife of St Dunstaner Nigel Whiteley of Eastborne, East Sussex. Second prize, £30, went to Joan Beevers, wife of St Dunstaner Harry Beevers of Castleford, West Yorkshire while the third prize, £20, was won by St Dunstaner Ken Waugh of Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne & Wear.

The stories, which will be published in the **Review**, were submitted under a pseudonym. Our prospective authors were told that the story should involve an anniversary, but otherwise they were free to follow any

direction they liked. Gwen's first choice was *7 July* by Diane Nye (Jacqueline Whiteley). "This tale, *7 July* conforms to the requirements of the short story. It is an anecdote but the writer takes care to mention previous events which have led up to the current situation. There is suspense and this engages the reader; there is mystery and that is resolved in not one but two punch-lines, the first leading to the second," said Gwen. "The situation is classical, even its resolution, but originality lies in telling the story from the point of view of ..."

Whose point of view? All will be revealed as the story commences on the next page.

IT WAS FUNNY how quickly the years passed; it seemed like only yesterday that Charlie was buying flowers for Emily on 7 July last year.

He always used the same little florist, on the High Street, but it was a girl he hadn't seen before who helped him choose the bouquet of carnations, roses and lilies that Emily always adored.

Charlie carefully placed the flowers in the boot of the car, and took the now familiar route.

He'd got so much to tell her, the lottery win, and all about the new house in Spain, with its lovely swimming pool, and the brilliant views of the Mediterranean from the two terraces.

He thought he'd better not mention the new neighbour over there, her name was Beth, very friendly she had been on his last visit. She would probably be happy to be more than friendly, if he gave her any encouragement.

He got to the gate at last, pushed it open - it still squeaked, he'd do something about it one of these days, he made sure it closed fully behind him.

He reached Emily at last, sat down beside her, and chatted away. She didn't answer at all, but it had been a long time since they had really talked, so he didn't mind.

Charlie arranged the flowers very carefully for her, remembering again how she'd

# 7 JULY

by Diane Nye  
(Jacqueline Whiteley)

looked on that glorious spring day, when he'd waited for her at the altar rail of St Patrick's. Her lovely red hair glinting under the ivory lace veil, her mother's pearls round her pretty neck. She'd looked up at him with the shy little smile he would always treasure.

He had been so proud when the Father Kieran had pronounced them man and wife. How seriously he had taken those vows - "for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death us do part". He had meant every single word, and he knew that she felt the same. Their new life had begun with so much love and hope.

In the far distance, he thought

he caught the sound of children playing. They had never had children, somehow things had never happened the way they had thought they would, but he loved her so much it hadn't mattered at all, in fact, it was better in some ways, because he didn't have to share her with anyone.

He could hear the birds singing a little way away, and the drone of the honeybees, or was it the distant motorway traffic? It was difficult to be sure.

It was hard to think back to when things had started to change between them. When her soft voice had become harsh and shrill. When the pleasure in her eyes when he came home had changed to a brooding sullen gloom.

He found out about Fred because of an anonymous letter, he didn't want to believe it at first, but Emily had almost gloated when she admitted it was true.

He had still loved her, wanted so much to forgive her. Why couldn't she understand that he could have let bygones be bygones?

But again and again she had laughed at him, her voice becoming a screech as she compared him to Fred. How much better at everything he was, better gardener, better at DIY, better driver, and especially how much better he was in the "loving" department.

It went on for months. Then, in May, somebody at work told

him that Fred had gone away. Just that - "gone away". He had smiled a sad little smile, but hadn't said anything.

He thought that maybe he and Emily could start again, and for a little while things had seemed better, but it didn't last very long. The nagging and moaning seemed worse than before.

None of the neighbours had been surprised when Emily upped and left, most of them had been half expecting her to follow Fred. It was not even strange that she hadn't said "goodbye". She was probably a little ashamed of how she treated poor Charlie. It was common knowledge that he was absolutely lost without her.

For Charlie the first few months had been the worst, coming home night after night

to an empty house, but gradually he had adjusted, especially after he found the little stray cat, he'd called her "Emmy", and she was a real friend; always pleased to see him, and never stayed out at night. Her fur was almost the colour of Emily's hair, and he loved to stroke it.

After a year or so, his mates had stopped introducing him to eligible ladies. They realised that there was only one woman who could ever be right for him. The memory of the deep love he had shared with his lovely Emily brought tears to Charlie's eyes, almost blinding him.

He dried his eyes, and re-arranged the flowers for her. He wondered if she would ever forgive him for that last argument, the seemingly endless row, on that rainy

July night. It had suddenly come to a full-stop, she had just stopped screaming at him, and closed her eyes.

It was just starting to rain again now, he noticed, so he decided to leave. He got up from the ground in the lonely wooded glade, patted the now almost invisible grass mound, and said "Bye then my love, see you same time next year, I'll bring you some more flowers."

He made his way back to where he had left the car on the farm track, nobody about; that was a relief, no explaining to do.

As he drove away, he passed the motorway flyover, he looked at the third concrete support column, and wondered if Emily and Fred would ever know how close they had ended up.

# PENDLETON'S PANTRY

Blind chef **Stephen Pendleton** is serving chicken this night

## Grapefruit Chicken

This dish serves four.

### Ingredients:

**4 skinless chicken fillets.**

**Salt and pepper.**

**¼ oz butter.**

**½ a tablespoon of vegetable oil.**

**½ an onion, sliced.**

**¼ of a teaspoon of grapefruit rind.**

**4 fluid oz grapefruit juice.**

**1½ tablespoons of honey.**

**½ a grapefruit.**

### Method:

Make sure your chicken fillets are skin free. This is easily achieved by finding a loose bit of skin, then pulling it off the fillet. The skin will usually come away from the chicken quite easily. When you think the skin is off, rub your clean hands over the fillet, if it feels nice and damp all over, then it is a safe bet that all the skin has been removed. Alternatively most supermarkets sell skinless chicken filets.

Once the skin has been removed, rub the fillets all over with some salt and pepper. Melt the butter in a frying pan or wok, then fry the chicken pieces until they are golden brown, this is to seal the meat. Obviously I cannot tell if they are golden brown, so I just leave them for 3 to 4 minutes, turning them regularly.

This stops them sticking to the bottom of the wok. This will also help to make sure they do not burn in the hot butter.

Transfer the chicken to a casserole dish, then fry the onion in the remaining butter, once again for about 3 to 4 minutes. With practise you should be able to tell when the onions are done by the smell. However, until then, just use the timing method, get a timer that will ring and this will give you a clear audio reminder when you need to check a particular dish. The RNIB sell a wide range of tactile and easy to see timers.

When the onion has fried, arrange it over the chicken pieces.

Mix together the honey, grapefruit juice and rind, also the salt and pepper, 'just a pinch', in a measuring jug. Pour this sauce over the chicken.

Cover with tin foil and place in a pre-heated oven for 1¼ hours at 180C (350F) or Gas mark 4.

### To serve:

Place the chicken fillet on a bed of rice and pour the sauce over it. You can also serve this meal with vegetables of your choice. To finish this dish off, place a grapefruit segment on top of the chicken.

### Next Month:

**Steve will be cooking Lamb with Wine and Orange.**

## Book Courier upgrades for Daisy files

THIS HIGHLY PORTABLE Talking Book device and MP3 player has already been described in the April 2004 **Review**. But a recent upgrade to the transfer software has widened the range of file extensions that can be read – notably Daisy 2 format, ie RNIB digital talking books.

This means that you can download txt files, MP3 files containing either spoken word or music, TNAUK files as well as books from Audible, Bookshare, RNIB and CNIB. As the device is only about one fifth of the size of even the new



Victor player, it means you need never be without a book as you travel by on foot, by train, plane and car, whenever and wherever!

There are a couple of minor inconveniences with regard to reading Daisy books on the Book Courier; it can take an

hour to download a digital book from your PC onto the BC. Secondly, you cannot adjust the playback speed, as you can with text files.

For details of the device please call St Dunstaner Services Manager Ray Hazan at St Dunstan's Headquarters or contact any of three agents:

Techno-Vision on 01604 792777

CVIP Ltd on 020 8420 1388

Computer Room Services on 01438 742286.

## It strikes me...

with Gog and Magog



Gog draws St Dunstaners attention to the license plate of a car driven by former staff member Jon Ridge. It reads NO51 GHT or 'NOSIGHT' if you squint a bit. Somewhat appropriate since Jon and his wife Sue organise activity breaks for visually impaired people under the name Alternative Vision.



St Dunstaner Billy Baxter donned red wig, stockings and lipstick for Red Nose Day on March 11th. He raised over £85, while other red antics at Ovingdean brought the total to £367 which will be used to help poor and disadvantaged people in the UK and Africa.

# Welcome to ST DUNSTAN'S

**Graham Andrews** of Coombe Martin, Devon served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1950 to 1952.

**Richard Asprey** of Stockton Heath, Warrington, Cheshire served in the Territorial Army and then the South Lancashire Regiment, Royal Signals and Royal Army Ordnance Corps between 1939 and 1948.

**Mildred Birks** of Toftwood, Dereham served in the Women's Royal Air Force from 1952 to 1956.

**Bernard Bradnum** of Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire served in the East Kent Infantry Regiment, General Service Corps and Royal Army Medical Corps between 1945 and 1948.

**Stanley Bye** of Manuden, Bishop's Stortford, Essex served in the General Service Corps and Royal Army Corps between 1947 and 1949.

**Ronald Girling** of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1947.

**John Graham** of Corby, Northamptonshire served in the Pioneer Corps and the

Royal Army Pay Corps from 1976 to 1993.

**Frederick Hewson** of Cherry Hinton, Cambridge served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

**Harold Jarman** of Sittingbourne, Kent served as a Gunner in the Royal Artillery from 1944 to 1948.

**Marjorie Lockley** of Littleover, Derby served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

**Kenneth Mitchell** of Boston, Lancashire served in the Royal Signals and Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1946 to 1948.

**Robert Parkinson** of Burscough, Ormskirk, Lancashire served in the Territorial Army and Royal Artillery from 1938 to 1945.

**Gillian Rawson** of Fareham, Hampshire served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1942 to 1945.

**George Townsend** of Furzedown, London served as Sergeant in the Royal Artillery from 1940 to 1946.

**Irene Wilkinson** of Leyland, Lancashire served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1941 to 1945.

## BALANCING THE BOOKS

Ted Bunting on the **best** and **worst** of the Talking Books currently available

### Sole Survivor

Author: Dean R. Koontz.  
Reader: Jeff Harding.  
Duration: 12 hours, 40 minutes  
Catalogue No: TB12193

"It must be a psychological thriller," I concluded after the first few strange but intriguing chapters and my tiny brain cells tripped and stumbled in their haste to provide a possible solution to the mystery of how anyone could have survived an air crash that destroyed absolutely everything on board.

And the answer seemed more elusive as the story line proceeded and the plot thickened. There is, for instance, an extremely powerful and sinister organisation abroad, which seeks the elimination of the survivors who supposedly don't exist. The who and the why are just two more questions which reason says must have a logical explanation. And then, after hours and hours of enthralled listening the solution is provided.

A small girl with magical powers has used some of her magic to deliver herself and her companion from the plunging plane. Just like that! So much for logical deduction Sherlock Holmes style; all of a sudden we were in fantasyland. I've not been so disappointed since I first met my mother-in-law.

## POET'S CORNER

### BINTRY MILL

Oh Bintry Mill, Oh Bintry Mill,  
The sounds of your beauty I hear you still.  
Your tumbling waters down the race,  
With every drop in proper place,  
To turn your wheel that Sunday Morn,  
With no-one there to grind the corn.

Oh Bintry Mill, Oh Bintry Mill,  
The scent of your beauty I smell still,  
Of Azaleas red I could not see,  
But I hugged their breath so close to me,  
The little boys on river bank,  
Whose cheery words I could not thank,  
Against your wall with hands on face,  
To feel thee sense of that wondrous place,  
To say a prayer, come back I will,  
To you, my lovely Bintry Mill.

Frank Tinsley

## Ten answers

From the quiz on page 8.

- 1) Durham Cathedral;
- 2) Fire Station;
- 3) The Oval Office;
- 4) Pub;
- 5) Folly;
- 6) The Savoy Theatre;
- 7) Pent-house;
- 8) The Empire State Building;
- 9) The Pentagon;
- 10) Maisonette.

## FAMILY NEWS

### BIRTHS

**Congratulations to:**  
Chrystal Bowen on February 26th. She is the first great-grandchild of *Roger Williams* of Barry, South Glamorgan.

### SILVER ANNIVERSARIES

**Congratulations to:**  
*Norman and Marjorie Adams* of Blackpool, Lancashire on February 29th.

*Jack and Rita Pryor* of Newhaven, East Sussex on March 1st.

### GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

**Congratulations to:**  
*John and Kathleen Sullivan* of Peterborough, Cambridgeshire on February 26th.

*John and Elizabeth Hogan* of Bootle, Merseyside on March 5th.

### DIAMOND ANNIVERSARIES

**Congratulations to:**  
*Kenneth and Eileen Seaman* of Eccles, Manchester on March 3rd.

### SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES

**Congratulations to:**  
*Charles and Peggy Blockley* of Sileby, Leicestershire who celebrated 64 years of marriage on February 19th.

*Arthur and Doris Thomson* of Mill Hill, London who celebrated 62 years of marriage on February 21st.

*Alan and Margaret Jakeman* of Bognor Regis, West Sussex who celebrated 61 years of marriage on February 25th.

*Robert and Dee Chandler* of Peacehaven, East Sussex who celebrated 61 years of marriage on February 26th.

*Robert and Bertha Webb* of Saltdean, Brighton who celebrated 67 years of marriage on February 26th.

*Maxwell and Joan Ash* of Sidmouth, Devon who celebrated 61 years of marriage on March 4th.

*Bob and Eileen Taylor* of Loughborough, Leicester, Leicestershire who celebrated 62 years of marriage on March 6th.

*Joseph and Lilian Pecket* of Gorton, Greater Manchester who celebrated 61 years of marriage on March 14th.

*Cyril and Bett Edwards* of Nuneaton, Warwickshire who celebrated 62 years of marriage on March 15th.

## DEATHS

### We regret to announce the death of:

**Lily Wade** on March 1st. She was the wife of St Dunstaner *Robert Wade* of Hepscott, Morpeth, Northumberland.

**Alice Hartley** on March 2nd. She was the wife of *Edward Hartley* of Littlehampton, West Sussex.

**Mary Shaw** on March 4th. She was the wife of *David Shaw* of Solihull, West Midlands.

**Pauline Field** of Horsham, West Sussex on February 28th. She was the widow of RAF St Dunstaner *Douglas Field*.

**John Gomez** of Goring-by-Sea, West Sussex on March 7th. He was the widower of Auxiliary Territorial Service St Dunstaner *Eileen Gomez*.

**Beryl Fleet** of Paignton, Devon on March 9th. She was the widow of *Albert Fleet*.

## IN MEMORY

It is with deep regret that we have to record the deaths of the following St Dunstaners and we offer our heartfelt condolences to their widows, family and friends.

### Ernest Walker

Royal Army Service Corps

Ernest Percy Walker of Rustington, Worthing, West Sussex died on February 9th, aged 100. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1997. He started his working life a few weeks before his 14th birthday, joining a stockbroker in Lombard Street as an office boy. He remained with the same firm throughout his career, rising to a managerial position. Joining the Royal Army Service Corps in 1941, he was posted to Malaya and then Java – just in time to be caught by the Japanese. Initially held at Changi Gaol, he was moved around labour camps, such as Kuching in Borneo. During his years as a Far East Prisoner of War, he suffered illness, malnutrition and privation which would later cause his loss of sight. He weighed about 6

stone when liberated but did not return to the UK until 1946. Our sympathy goes to his sons Christopher, Trevor, Norman, and Lester, and all other members of the family.

### Ronald Hart

Royal Artillery

Ronald William Hugh Hart of Worcester Park, Surrey died on February 11th, aged 86. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1940 and was deployed to France as part of the British Expeditionary Force. After being evacuated from Dunkirk, he served on Bofors air defence guns in Egypt and Lybia. As the Desert Campaign progressed, he suffered gun shot wounds on June 6th 1942 at Knightsbridge, Bir Hakim and had his left arm amputated above the elbow. He was casevaced to Cairo and then South Africa. Discharged in 1943, he became an installations buyer for a property company and then office manager for a tool distribution firm. An active member of BLESMA, he founded the Croydon and Sutton branches and became Vice-President of his local branch. He was also a keen member of the local bowls club. Our sympathy goes to his sons and all other members of the family.

### Nora Hillman

Royal Air Force

Nora Hillman, nee Penfold, of Newhaven, East Sussex died on February 12th, aged 89. She had worked as a domestic in a preparatory school before joining the Royal Air Force in 1940. After training, she was deployed to RAF Ford, Thorney Island and Manchester Ringway where she was a parachute packer and safety equipment assistant. She left the service as Corporal in 1945. She then worked in a factory making vacuum flasks. Her interests included needlework, clothes making, dancing and swimming. Her husband, Bert, predeceased her. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

### Douglas Rowsell

Royal Navy

Douglas Rowsell of Gillingham, Kent died on February 15th, aged 85. He joined the Royal Navy as a 15-year-old in 1935, starting an apprenticeship as an engine room artificer. He

trained in Chatham at HMS *Fishguard* and on St Mary's Island. He sailed on HMS *Ramillies* and survived being blown up by a mine on HMS *Jersey*. He also served on HMS *Indifatigable* and spent time on the North Atlantic convoys. At the end of the war he was involved with repatriating Far East Prisoners of War to Australia. He left the service as a Chief Engineer Artificer in 1959. In civilian life, he was an Engineer Surveyor for an insurance firm. Our sympathy goes to his widow Irene, son and all other members of the family.

### Donald Morton

South Staffordshire Regiment

Donald Morton of Quedgeley, Gloucester, Gloucestershire died on February 22nd, aged 85. He joined the Royal Engineers in 1938, transferred to the Royal Artillery in 1940, but rejoined the Engineers when commissioned in 1941. He transferred to the South Staffordshire Regiment in 1944. He served in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany before being discharged as Lieutenant in 1946. In civilian life, he worked in the insurance industry. Our sympathy goes to his son Richard, daughters Tricia and Heather and all members of the family.

### Kenneth Lane

Royal Air Force

Kenneth Lane of Harborne, Birmingham died on February 26th, aged 90. He had been a St Dunstaner since 2000. He worked in a reserve occupation making railway boilers for ICI until 1943 when the factory was bombed. Joining the Royal Air Force, he trained as a wireless operator and air gunner. Flying in Halifax and Stirling Bombers, he conducted aerial photography and later trained aircrews on operations. His last tour of duty involved hunting submarines in a Wellington bomber. Discharged in 1946, he rejoined ICI in their engineering section. His interests included golf, gardening and DIY. Our sympathy goes to his son and daughter and all members of the family.

### Leonard Rogers

Royal Air Force

Leonard Rogers of Torquay, Devon died on February 27th, aged 85. He joined the Royal

Air Force as an Engineering Apprentice in 1935. From an initial posting at RAF Halton, he moved around the UK before being posted overseas. He spent two years in the Western Desert working on Blenheim bombers and Hurricane fighter planes. Further postings took him to Burma and Arakan before returning to the UK at the end of the War. He was involved with the evacuation of Cairo and was subsequently commissioned in 1950. Serving in the UK and Germany, he was mainly deployed in RAF Headquarters and retired as Squadron Leader in 1968. In civilian life, he worked in banking. His interests included sea fishing, walking on the moors and reading. Our sympathy goes to his widow, his daughter Susan and other members of the family.

### David Taylor

Royal Artillery

David Edward Taylor of Ovingdean, Brighton died on February 27th, aged 96. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1946. He worked as a lorry driver before joining the Royal Artillery in 1939. He was posted to the Far East and captured by the Japanese. Forced to work in a coal mine, he was blinded in 1943 by exploding dynamite. After the war, though still technically a serving soldier, he rejoined his old firm. Shortly after, he decided to become a shop-keeper and then ran a tobacconist and confectionery shop until 1961. Our sympathy goes to his son Arnold and all of the family.

### William Claydon

King's Own Royal Regiment (Lancaster)  
William Charles Claydon of Ovingdean, Brighton died on February 28th, aged 81. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1960. He enlisted in the King's Own Royal Regiment (Lancaster) as a 14-year-old boy soldier in 1937. He served in the UK and abroad and was promoted to Corporal. He transferred to Royal Military Academy Sandhurst as a member of the Band Corps and worked there as orderly after his discharge in 1958. After training at St Dunstan's, he worked in industry and as a joiner. His interests included organ playing and bridge. Our sympathy goes to his son Paul, daughter Nicola and all members of the family.

### **Albert Hobson**

No 6 Commando,

King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry

Albert Hobson of Hastings, East Sussex died on March 2nd, aged 87. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1944. As a 14-year-old, he began work in a Yorkshire coal mine, a day after leaving school. Four years later, in 1935, he joined the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry in 1935, serving in the UK and Overseas. After the defeat of the British Expeditionary Force, he volunteered for Commando duty as Churchill called for a series of special forces to be established. As a member of No 6 Commando, he saw action in Norway in 1941 and his unit also took part in a series of raids on France. He was later deployed to North Africa where he was injured by an exploding booby trap. Returned to the UK, he was discharged in 1943 and came to St Dunstan's at Church Stretton the following year. Reputed to be the last St Dunstaner to train as a boot repairer, he ran his own shop in Hastings until 1969. His many interests included handicrafts, woodwork, gardening, rambling, cookery and dominoes. As a member of the North Country Club he was feted for taking part in a number of one-act plays. Our sympathy goes to his housekeeper Gaynor, his sisters and all members of the family.

### **Arthur Dale**

Royal Navy

Arthur John Dale of Westminster Park, Chester died on March 3rd, aged 79. He worked in timber and steel before joining the Royal Navy in 1943. Training as a Signaller in Brecon, he served on HMS *Queen of Thanet*, a paddle steamer on minesweeping duties in Scotland. In 1943, he transferred to HMS *Fencer* and was involved with the Mulberry Harbour on D-Day. Later, his ship was part of the force keeping the port of Antwerp open. After being discharged in 1946, he studied carpentry and building, eventually becoming a local authority building inspector in Pembrokeshire. He used to enjoy singing in the Tenby Male Voice Choir and the City of Chester Male Voice Choir. Our sympathy goes to his widow Julia, son Geoffrey and all other members of the family.

### **Walter Durrant**

Royal Navy

Walter Durrant of Norwich, Norfolk died on March 8th, aged 85. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1954. He was a poultry hand on a farm before joining the Royal Navy in 1936. He served as an Able Seaman before illness caused the loss of his sight and he was discharged in 1950. After training at St Dunstan's he turned to basket making, eventually becoming manager of the basket-making department at Norwich Institute for the Blind. In his spare time, he was a keen gardener. Our sympathy goes to his widow Peggy and all members of the family.

### **Gerry Breerton**

Pioneer Corps

Gerald Breerton of East Molesey, Surrey died on March 10th, aged 83. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1945. He had worked as a plasterer and dance band musician before joining the Pioneer Corps in 1941. Injured on manoeuvres when he was hit on the head with a sledge hammer, he was discharged in 1942. He resumed work as a musician but this was short lived due to a dispute between his employers and the Musicians Union. He retrained as a telephonist, working for Barclays and other firms. A career in music remained a high objective, as he attempted to develop a band under the name Gerry Dean and his Orchestra, though it did not always sit well with telephony. His singing career began to pick up pace in 1952 with a series of broadcasts that culminated in an appearance at the Royal Command Performance. This was followed by the release of his first record *Wyoming Lullaby*, a reworking of a popular 1920's number. Working with performers such as Eddie Calvert and *ITMA* regular Lind Joyce, he released around 15 singles on Parlaphone. This included a top ten hit with *Hold Me, Thrill Me, Kiss Me* which can be found on a 1953 hits compilation CD. A keen golfer, he was a member of the Vaudeville Golfing Society which staged charity games around the country. He made headlines again in 1984 when he scored a hole-in-one during a game at Betchworth Park. He also enjoyed bridge and masonic activities. Our sympathy goes to his widow Kay, their daughters and all of the family.