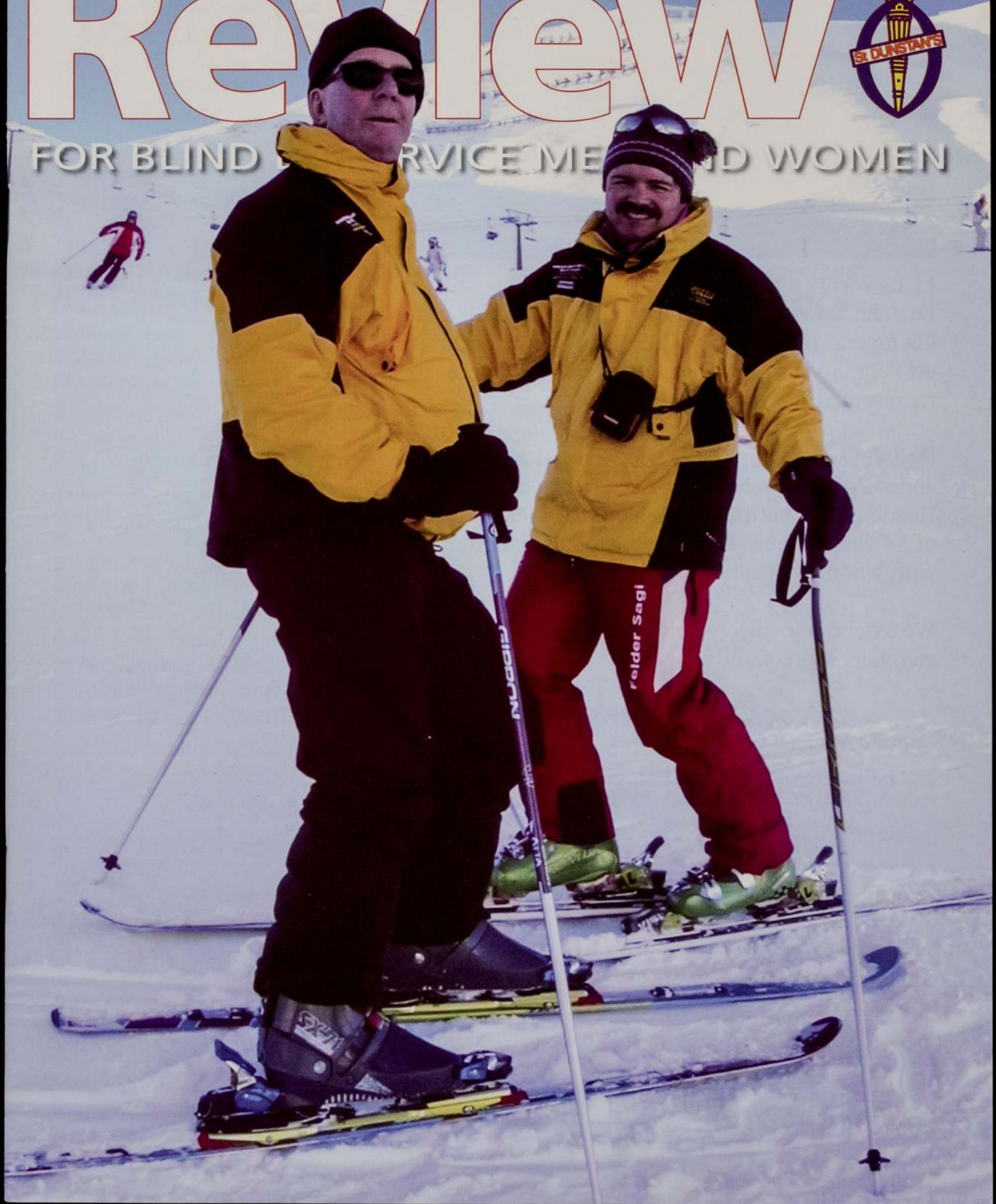


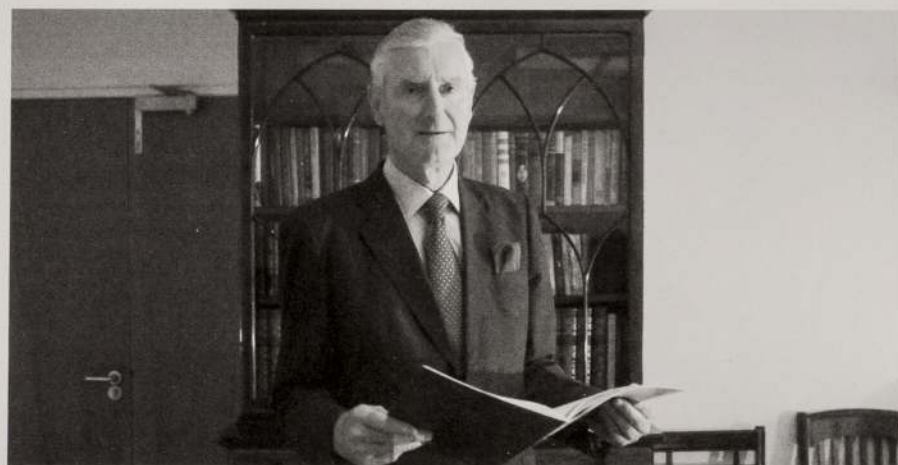
ST DUNSTAN'S Review



FOR BLIND & SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN



From the Chairman



IT IS WITH sadness I have to report that Dr John Janvrin passed away on January 27th and his funeral took place at Guildford Crematorium on February 11th. St Dunstaners and staff were represented.

Dr John saw his first St Dunstaner patient in 1949 and went on to hold surgeries at our London Headquarters until his retirement in 2003 – a total of 54 years. He was highly respected by all those with whom he dealt.

We extend our sincere condolences to all members of his family.

Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN

ST DUNSTAN'S Review March 2006 No 955

Cover Story: St Dunstaner Charlie Daly and guide Peter Zamudio go skiing in Italy.

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ST DUNSTAN'S Calendar

MARCH

Writers' Forum March 4th
History Week March 5th-11th
Indoor Bowling March 6th
Bowling(I) March 19th-April 1st

APRIL

Writers' Forum April 1st
Indoor Bowling April 5th
Ex-POWs Reunion April 7th-9th
Easter Day April 16th
Indoor Bowling April 17th
Masonic Weekend April 21st-23rd
London Marathon April 23rd
Anzac Day April 25th
Fishing Club (II) April 25th-27th
Gardening April 30th-May 6th

MAY

Writers' Forum May 6th
VE Day May 8th
Outdoor Bowling May 8th
Handless May 10th-16th (tbc)
Feast of St Dunstan May 19th

CCTV repairs | Pension leaflet | Keep volume down | Activities Week

Noticeboard

Dates for your diary and useful information

LET REHABILITATION & TRAINING DEAL WITH CCTV REPAIRS

EXTENDED WARRANTIES FOR CCTVS:
Occasionally we hear from a St Dunstaner who has received a letter offering an extension on the warranty of their Video Magnifier (CCTV), often for several hundreds of pounds.

Please do not sign up for this offer as the machines are on permanent loan to you and we will deal with any necessary repairs and subsequent costs. If you have received an offer of an extended warranty or have a machine that is either faulty or you are unable to use, please contact Alex Dugard in Rehabilitation & Training on 01273 391478 who will deal with your enquiry.

Ian Hebborn
ROVI Supervisor

WAR PENSION CHANGES

PENSIONS SUPPLEMENT NOW AVAILABLE:
Details of the War Pension rates that will come into effect on April 10th (an average increase of 2.7 per cent) can be obtained on request from St Dunstan's War Pensions Assistant Tara Hoysted. Either telephone Tara at HQ on 020 7723 5021 or e-mail her at tara.hoysted@st-dunstans.org.uk, stating if you would like to receive the document in print, braille, tape or electronic formats.

PLEASE KEEP THE VOLUME DOWN AFTER 10 O'CLOCK

BE A GOOD NEIGHBOUR WHEN STAYING IN HOUSE: We have received a number of complaints from residents and visitors about noise levels from televisions and radios at St Dunstan's Ovingdean. All rooms are now equipped with headphones so that anyone wishing to listen to either the radio or TV after 10pm can use these and prevent the sound from disturbing the occupants of other rooms. Would all visitors to Ovingdean please ensure that the headphones are left in the room when departing.

ACTIVITIES WEEK 2006

ADVENTURE ON LAND AND SEA: This year's Activities Week will run September 4th-8th. We will be revisiting Calshot Activity Centre and Priory Events for various adventurous activities. You need to fairly fit and a doctor's note will be required. There is no charge for this week except for the normal rate for accommodation at St Dunstan's Ovingdean. Please allow a day either side for arrival and departure.

If you would like to participate this year, please get in contact with Tom Hatt in the Sports department to ask for a booking form. Call Tom on 01273 391465.



When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.

Printed by Hobbs the Printer

NO CHANGE TO CHARGES

ANNUAL REVIEW OF ACCOMMODATION CHARGES: The annual review of accommodation charges at St Dunstan's Ovingdean has taken place. It has been decided to leave the charges unaltered for this year.

TROOPING THE COLOUR

DRAW ON TICKET ALLOCATION: Trooping the Colour will take place in June. It is possible that St Dunstan's will be allocated tickets. Any St Dunstaner or Gubbay Trust Beneficiary wishing to go should send their name and address to Joan Henlon, St Dunstan's, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD by May 8th. A draw will determine the final allocation of tickets. Those attending will be responsible for their own travel and accommodation expenses.

SUPER SAVER AT PALM COURT

SPECIAL DEALS FOR EASTBOURNE BREAKS: Five nights Dinner, Bed and Breakfast are available at the Palm Court Hotel, Eastbourne, East Sussex for £150 per person until March 27th. The former RNIB hotel is now privately owned, but still cater for visually handicapped people. They also offer a three-night break for £105 per person of four nights for £139 per person. All rooms are en suite with tea and coffee making facilities, CD radio alarm, television, telephone and emergency intercom. Seasonal breaks are also available and tariffs start at £37 daily depending on time of year. For more details contact the Palm Court Hotel on 01323 725811 or write to 15 Burlington Place, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN21 4AR.

KAYAKING AND ROCK CLIMBING AT ST DUNSTAN'S

ADVENTURE SPORTS AT OIVINGDEAN: The Sports and Recreation department now have two new sports for St Dunstaners to try out - kayaking and rock climbing! We are now the proud owners of two new Perception ARC kayaks. These are well proportioned intermediate kayaks designed for the river, sea and surf. They are renowned for comfort, manoeuvrability and stability. Kayaking will take place in the swimming pool under the instruction of a qualified instructor, when we have a few people with basic skills we can progress on to local lakes, rivers or the sea. There is also the option of working towards the British Canoe Union (BCU) Star test awards.

With the rock climbing we will use a number of local climbing walls to learn the basic skills and again we can progress onto the local sandstone outcrops or further a field such as the Peak District for a few weekends if we have the demand. For all enquiries please phone Tom Hatt in the Sports department on 01273 391463.

AUDIO DESCRIBED THEATRE

ON STAGE: *The Hollow* March 25th 14:30 Churchill Theatre, Bromley (0870 060 6620). Irene Richards provides audio description for Agatha Christie thriller with Kate O'Mara, Tony Britton and Susan Penhaligon.

Festen April 13th 19:45 Theatre Royal, Brighton (0870 606 650). Irene Richards provides audio description for highly praised stage reworking of DOGME movie. Dark comedy set the Danish countryside.

MALAYSIAN HONOUR FOR BRITISH SERVICE MEN

COMMEMORATIVE MEDAL: The Pingat Jasa Malaysia (PJM) is a commemorative medal which the Government of Malaysia would like to award to eligible British citizens, for their service in Malaya or Malaysia between August 31st 1957 and August 12th 1966.

St Dunstaners who served in Malaysia during that period who would like to apply for the medal should, in the first instance, contact St Dunstan Services Manager Ray Hazan at St Dunstan's, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD.

WINTER FUEL PAYMENTS

CLAIM BY MARCH 30th: The Pension Service has been making Winter Fuel and Age Related Payments to households this winter. However, the closing date for claims is March 30th. Households with someone aged 60 or over on or before September 25th 2005 could be eligible for a payment of £200 or more.

Households with someone aged 65 or over on or before September 25th 2005, and not in receipt of the guarantee credit element of Pension Credit could be eligible for a payment of £200 to help with Council Tax bills. Households with someone aged 70 or over and in receipt of the guarantee credit element of Pension Credit could be eligible for a £50 payment to help with living expenses. If you have not yet received a payment of this nature, call the Winter Fuel Payments Helpline on 08459 151515 to check if you are eligible or to ask for a claim form. Lines are open 8:30-16:30, Monday to Friday.

COUNCIL TAX REBATE

ARE YOU MISSING OUT?: The Department for Work and Pensions say that as many as three in ten people who could be entitled to Council Tax Benefit don't claim. They encourage people to contact their local council and get a claim form. There is no need to wait for a new Council Tax bill to be issued and other benefits will not be affected by Council Tax Benefit. Visually impaired people may also qualify for an additional reduction if they set aside part of their house to meet their special needs.

St Dunstan's Estates department recommend that St Dunstaners apply for The Disablement Reduction on Council Tax. The qualifying factor may be adaptations to a home to compensate for disability; a room that is mainly used by the disabled person and is need to meet their special needs; an extra bathroom or kitchen that is needed to meet special needs; or a wheelchair that a disabled person uses indoors. If you feel you need further advice call the Estates department at Headquarters.

AUDIO DESCRIPTION ON CABLE

FIVE DOWN: Cable television provider Telewest have introduced audio described channels for the five terrestrial TV stations. BBC1, BBC2, ITV1, Channel Four and Five carry audio described programmes on channels 851-855. They are also planning to make the service available where possible on other channels later this year. More details can be obtained on 0845 1420220. Audio description provides extra narrative to a programme to explain actions and describe costume or locations for blind viewers.

KEEPING THE MEMORY OF MONTE CASSINO ALIVE

NEW SOCIETY RECALLS WWII SACRIFICE: The Monte Cassino Society is aiming to further an interest in the experiences of those who took part in battles at Monte Cassino during 1944 and to remember those who died. The group is formed from sons and daughters of veterans who fought there and it hopes to establish a collection of recollections, stories and documents of the battles. Anyone wishing to offer support should contact either Judith Coote in the UK by e-mail on jude@whlooe.fsnet.co.uk or by writing to her at White Horses Meadway, East Looe PL13 1JT or Suzanne Turk in Canada on stfrigate@yahoo.ca or by writing to The Monte Cassino Society RR5 Orangeville, Ontario, Canada L9W 2Z2.

BOLD RIDER WANTED

CALLING ALL CYCLISTS: Richard Nash is seeking a St Dunstaner to join him on the Blind Outdoor Leisure Development (BOLD) Annual Tulip Tandem Marathon in Lincolnshire on April 22nd. If interested contact Andy Alliston on 01273 307811.

RNIB DROP HANDLING CHARGE

DELIVERY CHARGE ONLY IF POSTAGE COST INCURRED: The Royal National Institute of the Blind has announced that it will be removing the handling charge on its products from April. There will be a delivery charge where postage costs are incurred but this will not affect most individual customers who are sent products and leaflets without delivery charges.

YOUR STORIES ARE WANTED

STAND EASY: Having recently published Rank Humour, a collection of amusing experiences, funny stories, unusual tales, anecdotes, pranks and precious moments arising from life as a member of HM Forces, Clifford Newton is appealing for stories for another volume. Stand Easy is being planned as a more ambitious project. Sales will be donated to the Royal British Legion and Leicestershire Regimental Museum Appeal Fund. Contributors will be credited with name, rank, number and unit.

Stories can be sent to him by e-mail at thenewtons@bangonline.co.uk, faxed on 01754 610612 or posted to The Bishop Tozers Chapel, Middlemarsh Road, Burgh-le-Marsh, Skegness, Lincolnshire PE24 5AD.

CALLING POLISH ST DUNSTANERS

PLEASE GET IN TOUCH: St Dunstaner Maximilian Thom would like to get in touch with other Polish St Dunstaners. If you would like to contact Max please drop a line care of the St Dunstan's Review, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD.

CAMP OUT AT HMS SULTAN

CALLING ALL CAMPERS: The next HMS *Sultan* Summer Camp runs Friday, July 28th to Saturday, August 5th. Any St Dunstaner wishing to attend should contact Dave Burrows by May 1st. Write to him at 18 Portsmouth Road, Lee on the Solent, Hampshire PO13 9AG, or telephone on 02392 550532, or send an e-mail to DCB119399@aol.com.

RESIDENTIAL COURSES FOR BLIND STUDENTS

HIGHER LEARNING CREDIT: The University of Bristol's Centre for Access and Communications Studies runs a popular series of residential courses for visually impaired adults each year. Courses can be used to accumulate accreditation for a Certificate in Higher Learning.

Amongst the 2006 programme are:

The Colour of Sound (Ref: B05 MUS AZR) An exploration of musical features, running July 8th-14th.

Going Batty! (Ref: C06 BAT SHR) An intensive and practical opportunity to learn about the life of bats in Gloucestershire, running August 7th-9th.

A Landscape of Riches (Ref: C06 DEV SHR) An introduction to the country houses of Devon and Cornwall, including Edwin Lutyen's Castle Drogo. The course is based at the Clifden Hotel, Teignmouth from September 25th-29th.

The Art of Sculpture (Ref: G06 SCULP AZR) A practical course working with stone from October 30th-November 3rd.

Creative Collage and Textiles (Ref: C06 TEX AZR) An introduction to working with textiles from October 30th-November 3rd.

Spaces on each course may be limited. Costs vary, but more details can be obtained from Glynis Williamson on 0117 954 5710 or e-mail at g.a.williamson@bristol.ac.uk or write to CACS, University, Union Building, Queen's Road, Clifton, Bristol BS8 1LN.

WILL EPSOM DERBY BE A LUCKY RACE FOR YOU?

REVIEW DERBY SWEEPSTAKE NOW OPEN: With the 2006 Epsom Vodafone Derby scheduled for June 3rd, the **Review** has opened its annual 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. We are unable to take orders by telephone. 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..

GUIDE DOG SURVEY ON BLIND SERVICES AND SUPPORT

YOUR HELP WANTED: The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association is conducting research on the needs of blind and partially sighted people in the UK, with a view to understanding what they need most and what services must be provided to address these needs. They plan to carry out a series of interviews in March and April and are asking for support in carrying out this survey.

“We hope that information from the survey will enable us bring to the attention of the relevant authorities the types of support services required by blind people, as well as potential barriers to people’s full access to services and opportunities in society,”

they say. Interview will be by telephone and last between 45 and 60 minutes. If you would like to participate in this survey call their freephone number 0800 028 4348 and leave your details. The research agency may then call you as part of the survey, but will ensure your details and responses are kept confidential at all times.

THE NEXT STOP IS ...

TALKING BUSES: London’s 149 bus is being used to test an audio system that tells blind passengers exactly which bus stop has been reached. If successful it could be added to buses throughout the capital. To find out more visit Transport for London’s website at: www.tfl.gov.uk/tfl/.

DRC asks if Britain takes the Dis?

THE DISABILITY RIGHTS Commission launched a thought-provoking advertising campaign, called ‘Are We Taking the Dis?’ in January. The campaign set out to highlight serious levels of unfair treatment, poverty and exclusion experienced by disabled people and those with long term health conditions on a daily basis.

The £1.2 million national campaign used posters, press, radio and the internet to pinpoint the combination of society’s low expectation culture and lazy fatalism which they say condemns many disabled people

permanently to a state of poverty and life on the margins of society. It was underscored by a key-note speech from DRC chairman Bert Massie.

The campaign examined the gap between the opportunities of disabled people and non-disabled people.

“For example,” they say. “Disabled people experience greater poverty, poorer health, high numbers being forced into institutions, fewer qualifications and higher unemployment rates. For those that do work, disabled people and those with long term health conditions are

likely to be in lower paid jobs. A non-disabled person with no qualifications is more likely to have a job than a disabled person with a degree.”

The DRC has launched a dedicated website www.disabilitydebate.org to promote debate for a new agenda on disability, placing equality at the heart of public policy to tackle many of the social and economic challenges facing Britain now and in the future. The Disability Rights Commission is an independent statutory body responsible for tackling disability discrimination.

Reflex action from Iain

ST DUNSTANER IAIN Millard is taking a step in a new direction as a complementary therapist. He aims to bring a healing touch to the world after qualifying as a reflexologist. He recently completed a VTCT Level 3 Diploma in Reflexology and was similarly certified in Indian Head Massage.

Iain became a St Dunstaner in 1993 after serving in the Royal Air Force. Founder of St Dunstan’s Golf Club, he regularly represents St Dunstan’s in the London marathon and similar athletic events. In 2003, he resumed studies with a view to getting back to work, passing GCSE Maths and an OCR Level 2 Certificate for IT users (CLAIT plus).

Buoyed by this success, he looked for something else to study and decided to try his hand at reflexology. After an 18-week course he qualified with a VTCT Level 3 Certificate in Reflexology. Intrigued by holistic therapies, he added Thermal Auricular Therapy in April last year.

Iain then decided to advance his studies in reflexology, this time going for the Diploma. “There are many theories as to how reflexology works,” said Iain. “But the nervous system holds the key.

St Dunstaner offers alternative healing therapy service in Brighton area

Reflexology is a gentle therapy that relieves tension and clears blockages by stimulating sensory receptors in the nerve fibres of the foot or hand producing energy that branches to the spinal cord where it is dispersed throughout the entire nervous system.”

“It relaxes the body, thereby reducing any constriction of blood vessels and improving circulation, which helps to break up and dissolve crystal deposits caused by an excess of uric acid, which has built up in the body and settled in the feet and hands.

“Indian Head Massage is a treatment based on old Ayurvedic techniques involving work on the upper back, shoulders, neck, scalp and face.” The word Ayurvedic is derived from ‘ayus’ meaning life and ‘veda’ meaning knowledge.

“A variety of massage movements are used to relieve accumulated tension, stimulate circulation and restore joint movement. Indian Head Massage is also used to aid the condition and health of the hair, particularly when combined with the use of natural organic oils,” continued Iain.

“Indian Head Massage can help to reduce stress and fatigue, increase mental clarity, and relax and rejuvenate the receiver. A treatment will last between 20 minutes to one hour.”

Iain’s services as a complementary therapist are now available at Ovingdean with sessions starting from £10. He will also be offering thermo-auricular therapy, also known as Hopi Ear Candling. This treatment uses a shaped candle to draw unwanted debris from within the ear.

Lasting around 55 minutes, Hopi Ear Candling costs £15 per session.

“The treatments are suitable for most adults however there are certain conditions that should avoid treatment. To ensure continued well being of clients all treatments begin with a consultation. In some cases doctor’s permission may be required before commencement of treatment,” added Iain.

Anyone wishing further details or wanting to make an appointment with Iain can contact him by telephone on either 01273 302412 or 07968 740089.

BALANCING THE BOOKS

Ted Bunting enjoys fairytale qualities of Archer's incredible novel

Kane and Abel

Author: Jeffrey Archer
Reader: Christopher Slade
Duration 19 hours
Catalogue No: TB4136

far from it, but the early adventures of Abel in particular are fantastic enough to stretch ordinary credibility beyond its limits. But this is an extraordinary work of fiction; action packed and emotionally moving to a remarkable degree.

Book reviewers and critics on both sides of the Atlantic have justly applauded this powerful and compelling novel; for Jeffrey Archer is indeed a fine storyteller. One reviewer likened him to Gallsworthy but I would have thought Hans Christian Anderson was a better comparison because *Kane and Abel* is a fairy story if ever there was one. Now I don't mean this in a disparaging way,

It is a book that almost defies the reader not to enjoy it and that is a rare quality indeed. But my own pleasure (considerable though it certainly was) would have been further enhanced, I'm sure, had I not guessed at an early stage the element meant to be the final twist in the tale. Provided you do not suffer the same misfortune you are all on a certain winner.

Join our telephone book club

THE ROYAL NATIONAL Institute of the Blind is organising Telephone Book Clubs as part of its Talk and Support programme. The Book Clubs are small groups of people who get together over the telephone for a chat about reading and all kinds of books or to recommend favourite authors. A series of

six sessions costs £12. Run in six monthly cycles, the Book Clubs bring together groups of eight people who choose two books to read or listen to as a group. The choice is drawn from a list of best-sellers. These books are then discussed during a couple of sessions facilitated by a friendly volunteer. There will

also be guest speakers chatting about reading with sight loss. To find out more about the Book Clubs and other Tele Befriending groups contact the RNIB Talk and Support team on 0845 330 3723.

The pleasure of books without the problem of print

CALIBRE CASSETTE Library is a postal lending library for people who cannot use print books with a choice of 7,000 titles. For details write to Calibre at New Road, Weston Turville, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP22 5XQ. Tel: 01296 432 339. E-mail: enquiries-at-calibre.org.uk. Website: www.calibre.org.uk.

Police officers remember fallen of 9/11 attacks

POLICE OFFICERS from the United Kingdom attended the fourth commemoration of the attack on the World Trade Centre in New York. Officers from the West Yorkshire Police Force led the march to Ground Zero where the names of those who died were read out. The group included Chief Inspector Keith Gilert whose father Edgar Gilert is a Royal Air Force St Dunstaner living in Doncaster.

Exceptional Elsie is Volunteer of the Year

HORSHAM St Dunstaner Elsie Scullion has been feted for her "invaluable" voluntary work on behalf of blind and visually impaired people in West Sussex. She was one of two people to be named Volunteer of the Year.

A former sergeant in the Auxiliary Territorial Service, Elsie, aged 87, was previously made an MBE for services to the Horsham community. Although her own eyesight has been destroyed by macular degeneration, she has not stopped offering telephone support to others with similar conditions.

In October, 4sight, the West Sussex Association for the Blind, hailed Elsie for her exceptional work. "She is such a positive person and all she thinks of is 'how can we help people'," they said.

ABF visit to Brighton



Major General Evelyn Webb-Carter, Controller of the Army Benevolent Fund, visited St Dunstan's Ovingdean on January 19th accompanied by his wife, Celia. They were hosted by St Dunstan's Chairman and Mrs Gordon-Lennox. Touring the house gave the former Green Jacket the chance to witness a blind archery demonstration from Norman Perry in the McKinley Sports Hall. He also met up with FEPOW St Dunstaners Stan Grimsey and Tom Gardner.

Ten questions on...

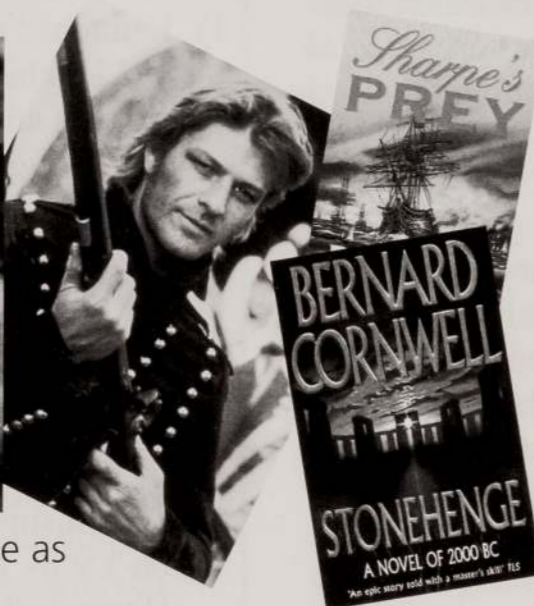
The subject of Advertising

Harry Beevers asks you to take a break

- 1) Launched on Radio Luxembourg in 1935 a children's club provided badges, slogans and code books and attracted five million members prior to World War Two. Sponsored by promoters of a milk drink, what was the club called?
- 2) Which sweet item was advertised from the 1950's onwards with the slogan, "Full of Eastern promise"?
- 3) Which supermarket has been advertised on TV by Prunella Scales and Jane Horrocks?
- 4) Who voiced the Road Safety slogan "Clunk Click every trip"?
- 5) When J.R. Hartley featured in an advert for Yellow Pages, what was the title of the book for which he was searching?
- 6) When the boxer Julius Francis fought American Mike Tyson, where on his person did he sell advertising space?
- 7) Which magazine has never run a cigarette advert in more than 80 years?
- 8) First used in 1994, what was advertised with the slogan, "It could be you"?
- 9) The slogan, "If you see Sid, tell him", appeared in an advertisement for the privatisation of which company?
- 10) With the words, "Going chepe", what was advertised for sale in the first advert printed in English by William Caxton in the year 1477?

Answers on page 28

Author Bernard gives Sharpe judgement on story contest



Bernard Cornwell and Sharpe as played by actor Sean Bean.

WE WERE VERY privileged this year to have Bernard Cornwell, author of nearly 50 novels, as the judge of the Review's annual Story Competition. Those who have followed Sharpe's progress as a private soldier in India through to the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo, via Trafalgar, will be familiar with Cornwell's interest and knowledge of military history.

Entrants were asked to write a story imbued with a theme of age. Beyond that, everything else was theirs to imagine and create.

Overall, Mr Cornwell says, "This was difficult! I've done things like this before and it's usually pretty easy to winnow out the also-rans, but that wasn't true this time.

"They were all entertaining, thoughtful and very, very interesting. I thought I'd cheat and award four joint third places, four joint

second places and three winners, but I thought you might not approve of that!

"So first - please congratulate all eleven finalists. A different judge would almost certainly have come up with three different winners because the standard was so high, but they were stuck with me and, of course, my tastes." So - in reverse order the winners are:

Third: LIFE IN THE SAS by Archie Ology (alias Harry Beevers of Castleford,

Yorkshire). "I loved the inventiveness, the wit and the nonsense," said Bernard. "This was thoroughly entertaining."

Second Place: AGE by Rentner (alias Alan Wortley of Eastbourne, East Sussex). "This is a sad story, redeemed by a wonderful optimism and an enjoyment of life. Rentner really makes us 'see' his parents, he describes them with love and, as all good short stories should, leaves us wanting more."

First Place: STAY AHEAD OF THE GAME by W. Gordon Gray (alias Martin Goodman of Camborne, Cornwall). "A lovely short story with a proper sting in its tail which I didn't see coming."

He added "They were all so good, thank you very much for giving me the opportunity of reading them. My best wishes to you all!"

The winners received £50, £30 and £20 respectively. The stories will be published in the Review, starting with Martin's entry on the next page. Thanks to everyone who took part and please try again later this year!

STAY AHEAD OF THE GAME

By W. Gordon Gray (Martin Goodman)

RUSTY WAS LYING in a dry ditch on a soft bed of dry leaves. It was mid morning by the height of the sun he reckoned. He had been awake for five minutes after sleeping off the affects of the chicken dinner the night before. There it was again. Now he knew what had awoken him. In the distance there could be heard the sound of a horn being blown, muffled cries and the baying of a pack of hounds. All he had wanted was a lie in on this particular morning. He had a date this evening with his lady friend and he needed all his strength for the long night ahead. Now he would be dashing around the countryside for the next few hours. Damn those silly creatures in pink jackets and those witless hounds. Now he would have to lead them a merry dance as usual.

He got to his feet and stretched. They were at least two fields away. Yes, he would have just time to get a drink of water before the chase began. He pushed through a gap in the hedge and ran over to the cattle trough. He knew there would be water in there. It was one of those self-refilling kinds. At one end of the trough was a water tank to which was attached a ball cock. When

the water got low the trough automatically filled again. He lapped the water up with great vigour, raise his head again, listened, shook his fur and jumped on to the ground.

They were less than a field away by now. Time to be on my way, he thought. He ran along his side of the hedge. The hunt was closing fast. The hedge was thick and high and the hounds were not yet in full cry. They still had to pick up his scent. Thankfully for him there were still plenty of hedges in this part of the country.

He knew that the hedge was too high for the horses to jump and too thick for the hounds to force a way through. The Hunt would have to turn right to find a gate leading to the field he was in and he was purposely running away from the gate to increase his lead over the hunt.

He was heading for the big wood. It was still half a mile away and it would take him several minutes to reach the comparative safety of its encircling closely growing hazel trees. As he ran he was constantly listening for the hunt behind him. Suddenly the pack gave full vent to their voices. They were on to him. One of the best noses had picked up his scent and

the rest of the pack had taken up his cry. The hunting horn sounded again and he could discern the distant rumble of horse's hooves. They must all be through the gate by now.

The hairs rose on the back of his neck and his brush stuck out stiffly behind him. It had seen better days. Ten seasons ago as a young adult male his brush had been the pride of the county. Now it was a mere shadow of its former self. All these years he had had some extremely close encounters with the hounds and the ferocious little terriers that had snapped and torn lumps from his magnificent brush but he was still alive to tell the tale. His heavily scarred face broke into a smile. He was beginning to enjoy the pursuit. For ten seasons he had successfully escaped their clutches, but not always by very much as his brush and face graphically testified.

He easily found a gap in the hazel trees big enough for him to squeeze through and he raced on towards the centre of the big wood. He could hear the hounds crying with impatience. They must be having difficulty in finding a way through the hazel trees. They would have to skirt round the edge until they found a drive or bridleway.

By now he was breathing hard. He realised that he was not quite as fit as he used to be. He came to a halt at the bank of a stream that ran through the middle of the wood. The cries of the hounds were growing louder. They must have found a way into the wood. Just pausing long enough to take a quick refreshing drink he jumped in and swam downstream for several hundred yards. He hauled himself out and shook himself vigorously. He paused again for breath and then ran for the cover of the trees. He could hear a lot of crying and shouting. The hounds must have crossed the stream and were searching the bank in either direction trying to pick up the scent. Now the cries of the pack reached a higher pitch. They must be onto him again.

He ran on through the big wood. After what seemed an age he came to the edge of the wood. After a feverish search he found a gap through the hazel Trees. He emerged onto open ground. Before him was a railway cutting. He ran under the fence and stopped at the edge. He looked down. A hundred yards to his left was the entrance to a tunnel. Suddenly above the clamour of the closing Hunt he heard the high-pitched whistle of a steam train. It was about to enter the far end of the tunnel.

He waited as long as he

dared. The leading hounds were almost upon him. He scrambled down the steep side of the cutting and ran onto the single track. It was the branch line from Exeter to a small town on the north Devon coast. Keeping in between the rails, Rusty ran on towards the entrance of the tunnel. At first the hounds had hesitated at the edge of the cutting, but when they saw the fox running towards the tunnel the pack leader made his way down the cutting in pursuit of Rusty. The rest of the pack followed him.

Rusty ran towards the tunnel. Just as he reached the entrance he saw the large steaming monster coming towards him. He stopped and lay motionless between the rails. As the train passed over him it blew its whistle again. The closely following pack were terrified and bewildered. Those who were not hit by the oncoming train ran up both sides of the cutting. It took two hours for the Hunt to round up the remains of the pack. By that time the wily fox was safely back home. The chase had taken a lot out of him. On the way home he had managed to catch a small rabbit. When he had eaten it for his lunch he slept for the rest of the afternoon. He woke up to find a full moon rising over the treetops. The evening was cold and frosty and he was now eager to see his lady friend. On his way

to her place he had to pass the Hunt kennels. When the hounds saw him they rushed towards the fence barking furiously and trying in vain to scale it. He simply smiled at them, cocked his leg. Leaving his calling card he went on his way.

In the distance he could hear the cry of a vixen. That was his lady "friend". He recognised her voice. Then it stopped dramatically. Fifteen minutes later he was at the entrance of her den. She was sitting just outside. She said nothing. As he moved nearer she began a low growl in the back of her throat. From behind a tree a young fox emerged into the moonlight. He too was growling. His growl had a much more threatening tone. He moved closer to the vixen. Rusty recognised him immediately. He was one of his many sons and he was the most magnificent four year old specimen that Rusty had ever seen. If anything his brush was even more luxurious than his had ever been. Rusty's face now wore a sad and resigned expression. Old age he finally realised had now caught up with him. He dropped his head and turned slowly away. The vixen and the young fox burst into laughter. Rusty's half length brush was between his legs. When he had lain on the track he had failed to keep it clear of the rails.

Freecom DVB-T USB Stick

St Dunstaner **Ray Hazan** explains how you can listen and record Digital television and radio on your computer!

THIS SMALL USB device can pick up 'free to air' digital radio and TV channels on your PC with the ability to record the programmes in advance, or, if interrupted by a telephone call for instance, delay listening for up to 10 minutes. Most useful of all to the screen reader user is a very accessible electronic programme guide for radio and TV channels.

Physical description: The 'stick' itself is a little bit larger than a memory stick (2 x 1 x .5 inches and plugs either directly into the USB2 port or the provided USB extension cable. No separate power supply is required. At the rear end of the stick is a hole for the digital aerial. This is a 6 inch rod mounted on either a magnetic or rubber suction base on the end of a 4ft cable. You must, therefore, obviously be in an area which receives the digital signal satisfactorily. A CD ROM contains software and manual in pdf format.

Installation was straight forward. I can only talk for the Jaws screen reader, but the programme was easy enough to follow having

received some hints from a mailing list! A set-up scan option lists all the channels and thereafter, to listen is a matter of selecting the channel number via the top row of number keys. The context menu list many options and their keyboard commands.

Most useful is 'control e', which brings up the electronic programme guide. This lists time, title and a description. Clicking on the programme time brings up a record sub menu; you must obviously leave your PC on to record!

There is an audio description channel, but unfortunately this is not combined with the sound channel.

Representation has been made to the company to see if the needs of visually handicapped users could be taken into consideration.

The unit and accessories cost around £45 and currently the two cheapest websites are www.ebuyer.co.uk or www.amazon.co.uk, which delivers free and within two days of the order being placed.

New Government office

THE GOVERNMENT launched The Office for Disability Issues (ODI) on December 1st to ensure disabled people are a priority right across Government. Its aim is to help Government Departments work together and in partnership with disabled people. Speaking at the launch, Minister for Disabled People, Anne McGuire said "The Life Chances report identified the need for a champion for disabled people within government – and we have acted quickly on their

recommendation. The new Office for Disability Issues will drive forward our overall strategy, and will play the central role in ensuring that all government departments work together more effectively on issues relevant to disabled people."

The Office for Disability Issues was launched alongside a new campaign to encourage small businesses to make themselves more accessible to their disabled customers and staff with the terms of the DDA.

Gerry Jones on the 2006 trip to Canazei in the Italian Dolomites!

Snow blind!



Roly Honour, Dick Hitchcock, Gerry Jones, Alan King, Peter Zamudio at the front of a group that includes St Dunstaners Steve Sparkes, Gary Lomas, Carl Williams, Billy Baxter Maria Pikulski, Marjorie Scott, Derek Roden, Leon Haskey, Mark Brewin, Peter Walker, Charlie Daly, their guides and blind skiers from St Agnes, Cornwall.

FORGET THE MONTHS of admin, the countless phone calls, hundreds of e-mails, suddenly they were a distant memory. I walked into the El Ciasel Hotel in Canazei and was met with the excited buzz of 30 people all talking at once and from what I could deduce, not making a lot of sense. Admittedly I was a late arrival and the remainder of the party had a six hour start on the reunion celebrations.

I was met and quickly organised by Martin Blank, my guide and mentor for the past ten years. Kit was quickly stowed, followed by an update on the situation regarding guides and who they were partnering for the next six days. Skis and boots had already been collected and lift passes given out. Excellent, let's have a drink and meet everyone, especially the new St Dunstaners and

guides. Leon Haskey and Derek Roden were both new to our group but both had skied many moons ago and Leon had been an instructor. The new guides, Jodie Wood, Arthur Bloomfield and Tom Paterson, had excellent pedigrees; the latter two I knew from another time so I introduced myself to Jodie and tried to help her get some idea of what it was going to

be like taking a blind man around the slopes of Canazei for the next few days. I need not have bothered, she did just great and survived even though she was paired with Gary Lomas.

Many of our guides have done more time with us than would qualify them for a LSGCM. Peter Zamudio, clocking in for his 25th year, had arrived from Sorenberg Switzerland; Mick Shepley, who collected his charges at Gatwick and brought them safely over, attached himself to the Big Lad Carl Williams; Vince Stone, who travelled in from Hanover, took on Mark Brewin; Bill Macdougall flew



Top left and right: St Dunstaners in action on the slopes.

Main: Derek Roden finds his ski legs.

Right: Marjorie Scott and her guide.

in from Inverness; Ewen Cameron brought along his bagpipes once again, but even they could not stop Sparky sounding off; Rick Jones, now no longer in uniform, looked after Marjorie; Nathan Jones motivated Derek; Dusty Miller reunited Leon with the slopes; and Eddie Edwards wanted to know why his special student Ray Hazan had failed to show, but was happy to take on looking after Peter Walker. Emma Covell once again got her man Billy Baxter under her wing.

Billy Baxter introduced his son Robert to the snow. It is comforting to know that Robert has not got his father's skill for causing chaos and by the end of the week guided him down the nursery slope. This was some achievement for a novice skier, so well done Robert and to Emma who must have been on tenterhooks as she kept a watchful eye on the pair of Baxters in her charge. Good grief, was she brave or just mad? Charlie Daly who skied with Peter, had once again brought along two of his lovely daughters, Kelly and Johanna, and as is the custom they joined in with all the fun and helped St Dunstaners whenever they were needed. He also brought along his mobile phone and belied his years by spending the hours before breakfast texting his Early Birds swimming club and the rest of the family, two

of which were sleeping one floor above! Also joining us this year for the first time was Alessandro Serra, an Italian Alpini soldier who joined us from HQ Germany. It was wonderful having him with us and he proved his value every single day. Alex, as most people called him, please come again - you were great company.

Missing this year was St Dunstaner Kevin Alderton and guides Vicky Stewart (nee Caress) and Neil Graham. The three of them are chasing Olympic selection for Kevin plus a down hill speed record for a blind skier. Good luck to all of them and congratulations to Vicky on her marriage.

The only formal photo shoot was at Champak on Sunday morning. We were



Emma Covell keeps Billy Baxter under control.

joined by Roly Honour, Dick Hitchcock and Alan King, the sponsors of our brand new ski jackets. The three of them were staying in another hotel with four of their friends all wearing the same yellow and black jackets, and they too joined us. Soon the slopes for miles around were covered in mobile daffodils. No escaping the critical eyes of our guides spying on us from a passing chair lift or cable car, we could be seen everywhere like a rash.

A few days of "Oooer", somersaults, slides into drifts, turning left instead of right or vice versa, falling off button bars, the agonizing rising from the snow hanging on to the helpful hand of our guide, a smiling face and a glass of glühwein soon putting things right. As usual, after a couple of days we found our ski feet, no more the involuntary human snowball, but now the cries of triumph, a snow free hat, but of course we still had the glühwein. Newcomers Derek, Leon and guest Geoff Wherry all did well, gritting their teeth and determined to succeed. Maria, having had a torrid time last year with a dreaded bug, overcame her fears and put the chairlift firmly to rest aided by Tom and Arthur. This success gave her the title of the most improved skier, which meant that she had to carry the trophy, a rather large cow bell, home with her.

It was only in the hour after our wonderful evening meals that we found out about the misdemeanours achieved by others. No quarter spared here, much denial from all parties, yet the Staveley hat was given out by the night's governing pair, accompanied with some indescribable drink. This trophy has a long history - ask anyone who has been skiing with our group to gain the secrets and how to avoid being a recipient!

The week came and went so very quickly, saunas, steam rooms to be no more. The best of company, the best instructors, comradeship of the highest standard, what more could we ask for?

The Ski Club consisted of 12 St Dunstaners, 14 guides, four family and friends, and our Italian liaison officer. We are all grateful to Mara and her wonderful staff at El Ciasel hotel who looked after us and ensured that we were made to feel welcome and nothing was too much trouble. We thank the Consortio for the donation of some lift passes for our guides, we thank our guides who just keep on returning year after year for giving up their time to teach us new tricks, keep us safe and keep us laughing, climbing 30 foot Christmas trees, the running in shorts at mid-night, but most of all we thank St Dunstan's for making



No flu this year! Maria Pikulski is back on the slopes.

it all possible by funding our guides without whom our challenge would not be possible. Long may it be so.

Two St Dunstaners' points of view

From Maria Pikulski

Well, my week started on Sunday at Champak, my instructor was Tom Paterson, a Royal Marine Capt, who was a great laugh. I was a nervous wreck to begin with and couldn't do anything right, I seemed to have forgotten everything I learned last year. When I finally got back to the hotel I could hardly walk, so off I went for an hour in the steam room.

The next day I said to myself "Come on Maria, chill out and just get on with

it." Tom was a very good instructor and I felt more relaxed and slowly built up my confidence over the course of a few days on the button lift/nursery slope. Then, on Thursday, Tom said "Come on, we will have a go on the chair lift." This was something I really hadn't been looking forward to, but, with the assistance of Arthur and Tom climbed aboard feeling very nervous but excited as well. Later, when I came down the slope to the cafe were everyone was sitting, I shouted a big "Yes, I did it!" I felt I had conquered my own personal Everest and so it was a big confidence boost. Friday, I finished off with the chair lift again, this was very hard due to a hangover, but maybe that relaxed me a little, I was just thankful for

the encouragement from the instructors and the rest of the St Dunstaners or I am sure I would have chickened out. I am already looking forward to next year, and taking the bell back that I received for being the most improved skier. Thanks to everyone, and to Gerry, keep up the good work.

From Marjorie Scott

I would like to thank everyone for making my skiing week so enjoyable. It was lovely to be back at the same hotel in Canazei and to be greeted like an old friend by the staff with hugs and kisses, I received the same welcome at the ski shop. The weather was kind to us this year with crisp dry sunny days, and the snow conditions were good so I had some excellent skiing. Once again many thanks to you all.

A Guide's point of view from Tom Paterson, Captain RM

Humbled, is in my opinion a word that is used far too often. As a 'St Dunstan's virgin' I was very honoured and thrilled to be asked to come and contribute albeit in a very small way to your annual jaunt to Italy. Having spent the last 20 years instructing Royal Marines how to ski, I never would have imagined how it was possible for a blind person

to get up the mountain let alone down it! However, having known Gerry Jones for nearly 25 years I knew that anything was possible, and indeed things that I thought were impossible were in fact achievable. Teaching a complete novice to ski (Maria did have a couple or three days on skis in between bouts of illness last year) is challenging enough, but watching you guys and girls manoeuvre your way around the hotel, the village and the ski lifts I knew that there would be no problems with determination, passion and the will to overcome the disability you all so bravely deal with. Having Maria as a partner for the week was

Carl Williams takes a poetical approach on the back page.

Mark's deepest dive at Dahab!

ST DUNSTANER MARK Threadgold is planning to go somewhere few sighted people have been. This June, he intends to dive to a 100 metre depth in the Red Sea at Dahab, Egypt. "Just because I'm blind, it doesn't stop me doing anything that anybody else does," said Mark. "We've still got ambitions - if you can do it, I can do it too."

Mark who served in the Royal Corps of Signals was an experienced diver before he lost his sight, but determined that he would

a breath of fresh air, and she soon had me wrapped around her little finger! More importantly though was her determination and her ability to do whatever I asked her to do. I had total faith in her and I'd like to think the feeling was reciprocated. Having achieved our ultimate goal, which was to take the chairlift up, and ski all the way down, Maria continued to amaze me with her progress, as did all those I was fortunate enough to meet and see on the slopes of Champak. In the words of Derek, it was an absolutely 'marvellous' week, one which I will never forget.

I am totally amazed by you all, and dare I say it, humbled.

continue with the sport. Since becoming a St Dunstaner, he has set several records driving powerboats. For his dive, Mark will be using scuba gear known as a closed-circuit rebreather which moderates the mix of nitrogen and oxygen as he descends into the water. Even so, some valves had to be adapted to give audible alarms if the mix is too great or too little. Mark and his support team have also had to develop a series of tactile signals for communicating while underwater.

Booking in at Heartbreak Hotel

RAF St Dunstaner **Ralph Vernon** on love lost in Libya!



Before his baby left him, Ralph found a new place to dwell. The young serviceman, pictured at Heartbreak Hotel.

WHEN I WAS 17, in 1957, my first true love was a young lady called Judith Clegg. She had short dark hair, dark eyes and I was madly in love with her. On the day after my 18th birthday, on October 8, 1957, a brown envelope arrived through the letterbox. It was from Her Majesty The Queen inviting me to don a uniform and help to defend the Empire. I was heart broken at having to leave Judith, but I went off to RAF Bridgnorth where I did my basic training. At the end of my training my first posting came through and it was to El Adem in Libya, but Judith promised she would be faithful and that she would wait for me.

El Adem was a desert field and it was situated 18 miles south of Tobruk. The accommodation was in tents and personnel slept in ridge tents which accommodated eight men per tent. Because of the terrific heat, 120 degrees in the shade, around the camp were dotted stand pipes so that a person did not have too far to walk to get a drink of water. Around the stand pipes would be puddles of water, which attracted wild camels, donkeys and dogs into the camp.

On my first day, following my arrival at El Adem, I was walking through the camp and saw a ridge tent and in big black paint someone

had painted down the side of it 'Heartbreak Hotel', after the Elvis Presley hit record. When I asked what this was all about, I was told that there was six airmen in that particular tent and each one had had a 'Dear John' letter from their girlfriends and fiancées back home. I got moved into that tent and, yes you have guessed it, two weeks later a 'Dear John' letter arrived from Judith, telling me that our relationship was finished and that she had met someone else.

I was inconsolable, and my mates got me a bottle of Gordon's Gin from the Sergeant's mess. I was teetotal and started sipping it neat from the bottle because I had nothing to mix with it. A little while later I remember everything spinning around and I was standing up hanging on to the tent pole. I had no idea what being drunk was and I thought the effects that I had was alcoholic poisoning. I asked my mates to help me, who were all in bed asleep, and I got politely told, in French, to go away and sleep it off. But I thought that I had alcoholic poisoning and that if I went to sleep I would never ever wake up again. So, I thought if I could get some water splashed over

me it would help keep me awake and I would be alright. I couldn't walk so I started to crawl across the sand on my hands and knees towards the showers. I was completely naked, not a stitch of clothing on. I never made it to the showers because I collapsed half way there and passed out.

I don't remember anything until the next morning, when I woke up and felt something warm snuggled up to my naked body, I opened my eyes and to my horror a wild dog was lying next to me. The dog woke up at the same time I did and was very startled, he shot off like a bolt of lightning in one direction while I was going hell for leather in the other. Needless to say, when I got back to the tent I picked up the bottle of gin which was half empty and smashed it. (For years after that, the smell of gin used to make me feel sick).

El Adem had been occupied and re-occupied many times during the Second World War by the Italians, British and Germans. As you drove into Tobruk from El Adem there was a big sweeping



Passing out at RAF Bridgnorth in 1957.

road and on the roadside a concrete wall had been painted, in vivid colours of all the regimental badges of the people who had occupied the area. They were about three foot high and were badges of the Italian Army, the Africa Corps and the 8th Army. It was an amazing sight to see.

All military personnel who were visiting Tobruk had to be out of the town by 6 o'clock because it was considered too dangerous for them to stay after that. Lorries would tour the town looking for stragglers and take them back to various camps.

On my first visit to Tobruk, I had a shock when I walked around a corner and saw a sign which said 'Salvation Army'. Inside they provided cups of tea, envelopes, writing paper and facilities for military personnel to keep in contact with their families.

It was run by four young English girls who lived there 24 hours a day, seven days a week. That is something that impressed me and I have always had great respect for the Salvation Army since then.

Together with a mate, I had the worst meal of our life in an Arab café in Tobruk. The only item on the menu was camel stew, which looked like pieces of leather floating in muddy water with butter beans. After we had started eating we both realised that the Arabs never killed healthy animals, the only ones they killed were the very old and the very sick. We didn't know whether this particular camel had died of old age or illness, so obviously we didn't finish it. It is the most disgusting thing I have ever tasted.

ENSA (Entertainments National Services Association) parties used to come out from the UK and entertain the troops in various parts of the world. This usually consisted of one very well known entertainer and a supporting cast of lesser or unknown artists. In 1958, we had an ENSA party which was headed by a lady called Nancy Whiskey. Now Nancy had a number one hit in the UK with a song called *Freight Train*. One of the supporting cast was a young girl aged about 18 who was obviously just starting off in show business. Unfortunately, she made the wrong choice of song to sing to several hundred sexed starved males in the middle of a desert. She sang the song and the chorus went, "What'll I do, What'll I do, What'll I do" and several hundred National Service

men all shouted out the same bit of advice about removing a certain piece of clothing. The singer stopped, burst into tears and ran off the stage not to appear again. I felt so sorry for her. If it happened today she would have stuck up two fingers, shouted a bit of French back and carried on, but things were so different 50 years ago.

The desert used to contain lots of nasty, lethal and poisonous things. The huge spiders were the size of your fist and were a hairy type of tarantula which had a lethal bite. I don't know what the correct name for them was, but we used to call them camel spiders. There was also a silver coloured side-winder snake and this had a lethal bite, fortunately they were fairly rare and only came out at night. Then, of course, there were the scorpions, the red ones had the bite equivalent to being bitten by an English adder, but the black and silver ones had a lethal bite. When you got up in the morning the first thing you did was to tip your boots upside down and shake them to see if something nasty had crawled inside during the night.

A national serviceman's pay, back in the late 50's, was £2 10 shillings a week, if you signed on for three years regular service and two years on the Reserves then you got an extra pound. Because the pay was so low,



Ralph as he was when stationed at the El Adem Camp in 1958.

they were always trying to find ways of increasing their earnings. Once a small group of servicemen stationed at El Adem found a novel, if not lethal, way of doing this. Educational facilities in the UK, such as universities and medical schools etc., were always on the look out for wild life specimens. This group had arrangements with one or two universities to supply them with scorpions. They would then catch them and send them off to the UK. The military authorities nor the post office ever found out about it and didn't realise that some of the packages going back to the UK held lethal contents. Some of the men had been stung so many times by the less dangerous red scorpions that they had become immune to the sting.

During the Second World War El Adem had been occupied and re-occupied by the

Italians, German and British, and there were thousands of mines that were buried there. The military were told never to walk anywhere unless it was on a well trodden path. One of the wild camels that had got onto the camp was walking past an office window when there was a terrific explosion and bits of camel went everywhere. It transpired that there had been a mine buried in that spot, and although many thousands of personnel had walked over it the weight of the human being was not sufficient to set the mine off but the weight of the camel did.

El Adem was a holding camp used to supply replacement personnel and supplies to various camps in the Middle East. There was a conflict going on in Cyprus in 1955, which ended in 1959, and the country was in a state of emergency with the EOKA terrorists who wanted the British out and union with Greece. In late 1958, I was suddenly sent out to Cyprus, as one of the personnel replacements, where the troubles were in full swing.

PS. Judith Clegg, it transpired, had met a sales assistant from a well known chain of jewellers and married him. I was cheered up many years later when I found out that she was divorced. But even 50 years later I still have fond memories and think of her.

Time to get propagating

JANUARY IS WHEN the season for propagating and growing the lovely chrysanthemum starts again. After the stools or roots have been dormant in their pots for the whole of December it is time to wake them up again for the coming season's new flowers. We have to use the following steps in order to get good new growth that will eventually turn into gorgeous flowers.

First of all, we need a place to propagate the stools, personally I use a small eight by six foot greenhouse that has been lined with bubble wrap for insulation but still light enough for the cuttings to grow sturdy and not tall and thin.

First of all I clean and disinfect the greenhouse, then I insulate it with the "large bubble" bubble wrap, this comes in two bubble sizes, small and large, the large holds in the warmth better than the small bubbles.

I then fumigate the greenhouse by using a sulphur candle or two depending on the size of the space needed to be sterilised. The greenhouse is then kept closed for 24 hours and that will ensure all living parasites are dead and cannot harm the growing future plants.

St Dunstaner **Peter Moore** prepares his greenhouse for the new roots!

With the housing sorted out we now have to put in a heating cable for the stools to sit on and get their roots warm. I use a six times three foot bench that has sides four inches high; within this I cover the bottom with one inch of sand for further insulation for the cable, which is laid on top of the sand in a zig-zag pattern with around a 4 inch spacing between the rows of cable. The cable is low voltage and so fairly cheap to run.

Another one inch of sand goes on top of the cable and first layer of sand and smoothed out. This helps to spread the temperature evenly over the whole propagating area.

On top of that I put a layer of tin foil, shiny side down, to keep the heat even all over the surface of the bench.

With this done a rod type of thermostat is put in through the outer board at the level of the top of the heated area in order to keep the temperature at a constant 55 degrees F.

Heating cables and rod thermostats can be purchased from garden or DIY centres.

With the propagating area now ready, we turn our attention to the stools that are still in their final pots after being cut down in December. I normally take out the label telling which cultivar or variety it is and tie the label to the remaining stem so that I can identify it later on the propagating bench.

I then take out the tops of any new growth that has started, this is because if the root system does not throw any new growth normally new growth will come from between the leaf and stem joints. So you will get the cuttings you need one way or the other.

Now, I knock the root ball out of the pots and cut the root ball into a four inch cube around the stem, this is the only part we need and the rest is discarded and put onto the garden.

Normally if you are growing for shows you grow more than one plant of one variety. I have some small boxes made that are 12 inches by four inches which fit three cultivars of the same variety into one box. This is done

with all the cultivars you want for the coming season.

These are then put onto the heating cable after it has had 24 hours to warm up. Once on the cable, the stools are then watered, the watering carries on until you no longer need the stools and new cuttings have been taken. During the time the stools are on the cable I also spray the tops of the plants to keep the growth soft and I also give a weak feed every ten days as well as a weak spray with anti-fungicide. If any parasites come in, a weak spray with insecticide does not go amiss either.

The plants are watered daily, not too much because you don't want them water logged and not too little as to dry out the stools.

Normally after around ten days to two weeks new growth will start to come through. It is imperative at this stage that you keep up the spraying because you need the cuttings to be soft when taken and this is done normally when the new growth is around three inches high.

The new cuttings are normally taken during February to March but sometimes this can be later or earlier. It

all depends on the type of chrysanthemum you are growing.

Next time I will let you know how to take and root the cuttings and how to look after them until rooted.

I may have some spare cuttings left over from this year's propagation and if anybody would care to have a go at growing the plants, I will only be too happy to send cuttings out on a first come first served basis.

I can also be contacted on 01594 560241 or via e-mail: pmka@lemweb.co.uk.

SYNCOATING SELECTIONS

This month Andrew "Billy" Baxter of Ely, Cambridgeshire revs up the turntable with a personal choice of tunes.

I HAVE MANY more favourites and it is hard to choose, but these all mean something to me. First, *Nimrod*, by Edward Elgar. This reminds me of the Cenotaph and the horses I ride.

Highland Cathedral, Bagpipe Lament. This reminds me of the annual ski trip with one of the guides called Cam playing in the bar, and is a lovely tune.

Brothers in Arms, by Dire Straits. This reminds me of the conflicts I have been in and fallen mates.

Mama, by Genesis, reminds me of my teenage years. It is a great song. I also enjoy *Dark Side of the Moon*, by Pink Floyd. Like my previous choice, this is a great chill-out song.

I Will Do Anything For Love (But I Won't Do That), by Meat Loaf, reminds me of when I rode my Harley with Karen pillion, racing down country roads free and wild.

Send your top five favourite tunes, with a brief explanation of why each item holds significance for you, to Syncopating Selections, **ST DUNSTAN'S Review**, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD.

Just one moment, by Shania Twain, reminds me of my wife, Karen.

Thunderstruck, by AC/DC, made times with the kids at parties in the Baxter household. *More than a feeling*, by Boston, is just a great song, while *Overkill*, by Motorhead, reminds me of my youth going to rock concerts and raising hell.

Soldier of Fortune, by Deep Purple, is a great song mellow and sums up my life.

PENDLETON'S PANTRY

Blind Chef **Stephen Pendleton** cooks a Fisherman's pie!

Fisherman's Pie

Serves four portions.

Ingredients:

1½lb (375g) of King Edward potatoes.
1lb (450g) of haddock fillets.
1 leek.
14oz (400g) of fresh spinach.
2oz (50g) of butter.
8 fluid oz (225ml) of milk.
3oz (75g) of grated cheddar cheese.
3tbs of lemon juice.
Salt and pepper to taste.
1oz (25g) of plain flour.
5 fluid oz (150ml) of sour cream.
2 tomatoes.

Method:

Wash and peel the potatoes and cut them into evenly sized chunks for boiling. Rinse the haddock and cut up into bite sized cubes. Make sure the haddock has the skin removed, you can get your fishmonger to do this or make sure you buy skinless fillets from the supermarket. Wash the leek and slice it thinly, then rinse the spinach.

Boil the potatoes in salted water for 20 minutes, or until tender. If you pierce the potatoes with a knife and the potato slips off, then it is ready to mash. When mashing, use half of the



butter and milk and also add the cheese to the mash. If you wish you can season the potatoes with some of the salt and pepper.

Sprinkle the lemon juice over the fish.

Pre-heat the oven to 200C (400F) or gas mark 6.

Melt the remaining butter in a pan. Add the flour and cook this for one minute. This is called a Roux and is basically the thickener for the sauce. It is very important that you do not let the Roux burn, or it will ruin the taste of the sauce. When the Roux is ready, then stir in the milk, sour cream and the

leek. Simmer this mixture for six minutes or until it is thick. When the mixture starts to thicken, you will feel a resistance on the wooden spoon.

When thick, add the fish and cook for a further two minutes.

Bring a pan of water to the boil and add the spinach, cover and cook over a medium heat for 30 seconds. The spinach should be wilted, drain and finely chop. Remember the spinach will be hot, so allow it to cool. Burnt fingers can seriously ruin your day!

Pour the fish sauce into a heat resistant dish and then cover with the spinach. Slice the tomatoes thickly and put them on the top of the spinach. Spread the cheesy mash evenly over the top of the pie.

Place the pie in the oven for 30 minutes until it is piping hot and golden.

Serve this dish with garden peas, but only if you want them!

BEER OF THE MONTH

by **Colin Williamson**

Innis and Gunn Oak Aged Beer. This unusual ale is aged in oak barrels traditionally used to mature malt whisky and has a unique distinctive taste. Flavoursome and refreshing, this ale has hints of toffee, vanilla and lemon, a truly inspiring ale!

Welcome to ST DUNSTAN'S

Edward Atkinson of Ulverston, Cumbria served in the Royal Artillery from 1939 to 1946.

William Barker of Darlington, County Durham served in the Royal Navy from 1939 to 1947.

Patrick Barnett of Thornton Clevelys, Lancashire served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1940 to 1946.

Mary Barry of Northampton, Northamptonshire served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1947 to 1949.

Colin Bassett of Thetford, Norfolk served in the Royal Marines from 1943 to 1946.

William Bone of Bethnal Green, London served in the Rifle Brigade and the King's Royal Rifle Corps from 1942 to 1946.

Roy Brewer of Clifton, Bristol served in the General Service Corps, Suffolk Regiment and the Cameronians between 1943 and 1947.

Michael Bullar of Kingsbridge, Devon served in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve from 1940 to 1943.

Frederick Cotton of Market Harborough,

Leicestershire served in the Royal Navy from 1939 to 1947.

Edith Curson of Gosport, Hampshire served in the Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service from 1962 to 1986.

Leonard Dunn of Eastbourne, East Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

Sidney Elliott of Crawley, West Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

George Evans of Stroud, Gloucestershire served in the Royal Signals from 1951 to 1956. In 1958, he joined the TA serving with the Royal Gloucester Hussars and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

Kenneth German of Lytham, Lancashire served in the Royal Artillery, Royal Army Ordnance Corps and Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers between 1939 and 1946.

William Hardy of Ruislip, Middlesex served in the Royal Signals from 1939 to 1946.

Vernan Hawker of High Heaton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne served in the Royal Army Service Corps and

Intelligence Corps between 1941 and 1945.

Dorothy Heath of Eastbourne, East Sussex served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1943 to 1945.

Margaret Humphries of Cambuslang, Glasgow served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

Reginald Kehoe of Colchester, Essex served in the Royal Air Force, General Service Corps and Military Police between 1944 and 1948.

Peter Lanham of Haywards Heath served first in the Royal Artillery from 1940, then the Royal Engineers from 1943 to 1946.

Herbert Lee of Aylesford, Kent served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Douglas Lindley of Kilnhurst, Rotherham served in the Royal Air Force from 1946 to 1956.

Stephen Long of Walsall, West Midlands served as a Gunner in the Royal Artillery from 1941 to 1948.

George Miller of Horsham, West Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1949.

Denis Noone of Birch Green, Sklemersdale served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1943.

Arthur Patton of Peterlee, County Durham served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1954 to 1956.

Cyril Pinfold of Doncaster, Yorkshire served in the General Service Corps, Ulster Rifles and Royal Army Veterinary Corps between 1943 and 1951.

Albert Prior of Hove, East Sussex served in the Royal Air force from 1939 to 1946.

George Readshaw of Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

Walter Roach of Norwich, Norfolk served in the Royal Air Force from 1938 to 1965.

William Rutherford of Mossley, Ashton-Under-Lyne,

Greater Manchester served in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve from 1943 to 1947.

Joseph Smith of Woodsetton, Dudley, West Midlands served in the Royal Artillery.

Joseph Tombling of Hartlepool, Cleveland served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1945.

Russell Vernon of West Dulwich, London served in the Royal Engineers from 1939 to 1949.

Donald Waite of Kilmore, Drumnadrochit, Inverness served as a Sapper in the Royal Engineers from 1956 to 1958.

James Walker of Stourport-on-Severn, Worcestershire served in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment from 1945 to 1948.

Raymond Warner of Mitcham, Surrey served in the Royal Navy from 1945 to 1948.

Norman Whicker of Hilgay, Downham Market, Norfolk served in the Royal Norfolk Regiment and the Suffolk Regiment from 1951 to 1957.

George Workman of Great Barr, West Midlands served in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment from 1940 to 1945 and then the Leicestershire Regiment until 1946.

Ten Answers

Answers to the quiz on page 11.

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1) Ovaltines; | 6) On the soles of his boots; |
| 2) Turkish Delight; | 7) <i>Reader's Digest</i> ; |
| 3) Tesco; | 8) The National Lottery; |
| 4) Jimmy Savile; | 9) British Gas; |
| 5) <i>Fly Fishing</i> ; | 10) Prayer Book. |

FAMILY NEWS

BIRTHS

Congratulations on the birth of:

Neive Lily Hook on September 15th. She is the first great-grandchild of *Tony and Lily Hook* of Dronfield, Derbyshire.

Alexander Lowe on November 15th. He is the great-grandson for of Sheila Alexander of Dymock, Gloucestershire and the late Signals St Dunstaner *Jock Alexander*.

Thomas Robert Groves on December 1st. He is the great-grandson of *Robert Beswick*, MBE of Southgate, London.

Madeleine Aoife Rose on December 9th. She is the great-granddaughter of Eva Coston of Elm, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire and the late St Dunstaner *Charles Coston*. Madeleine's middle name is the Irish form of Eva.

Harriet Rose Wilton on December 29th. She is the great-granddaughter of Ruth Bradley of Rosliston, Swadlincote, Derbyshire and the late St Dunstaner *Alf Bradley*.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Many happy returns to:

Adelaide Martyn of Amersham, Buckinghamshire on her 103rd birthday on New Year's Eve. She is the widow of WWI St Dunstaner *Herbert Martyn*.

DIAMOND ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Christopher and Doris Spellacy of West Kingsdown, Kent on January 26th.

Charles and Olive Grealy of Grange-over-Sands, Cumbria on January 28th.

Joseph and Myrtle Hirsh of Chiswick, London on February 10th.

John and Marjorie Vincent of Huddersfield, West Yorkshire on February 16th.

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Harry and Phyllis Pollitt of Leyland, Preston, Lancashire who celebrated 62 years of marriage on January 22nd.

Tom and Shelagh Owen of Amberley, Gloucestershire who celebrated 61 years of marriage on January 26th.

Bernard and Dorothy Pitcher of Okehampton, Devon who celebrated 64 years of marriage on January 26th.

Evelyn and Patrick Casey of Sanderstead, Surrey who celebrated 61 years of marriage on February 6th.

Thomas and Peggy Lukes of Old Colwyn, Clwyd who celebrated 63 years of marriage on February 8th.

Henry and Winifred Chapman of Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex who celebrated 67 years of marriage on February 11th.

George and Perl Bell of Eastbourne, East Sussex who celebrated 65 years of marriage on February 15th.

DEATHS

We regret to announce the death of:

Mary Drake on December 31st. She was the wife of Army St Dunstaner *Joseph Drake* of Blackpool, Lancashire.

Vi Chell of Westham, Pevensey on January 14th. She was the widow of *James Chell*.

Nancy Hancock of Woodbridge, Suffolk on January 27th. She was the widow of Royal Engineers St Dunstaner *James Hancock*.

Joan Turner of Addlestone, Surrey on February 2nd. She was the widow of Royal Fusiliers St Dunstaner *Mick Turner*.

Our sympathy goes to their family and friends

IN MEMORY

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

Horace Griffiths

Manchester Regiment

Horace Griffiths of Bristol, Somerset died on October 11th, aged 87. He had been an ice-cream salesman, hotelier and coal miner before joining the South Wales Borderers in 1939. He soon transferred to the Manchester Regiment, serving in France and the UK as W/Sergeant. Demobbed in 1946, he became a driver but later became involved in the manufacture of electrical goods for Creda. Our sympathy goes to his daughter Julie and all other members of the family.

Emily Milbourne**Auxiliary Territorial Service**

Emily Milbourne, nee Moulton, of Alnwick, Northumberland died on December 21st, aged 82. She had been a St Dunstaner since 2001. She joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1941, training as a driver. After being posted to Chilwell she qualified as a medical orderly serving throughout Northern England. She was stationed in Huddersfield when discharged in 1946. She was interested in handicrafts, using her spare time to knit for charitable causes. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

John Stead**Royal Navy**

John 'Jack' Stead of Kingsbridge, Devon died on January 12th, aged 91. He started working life as a trainee teacher at Chester College before joining the Royal Navy as a coder in 1942. He was commissioned and served on several ships sailing to North Africa, Mediterranean and Singapore. He was discharged as Lieutenant Commander in 1946 and resumed teaching in Middlesex. His interests included carving and gardening. Our sympathy goes to his widow Margory, daughter Jennifer and all other members of the family.

Henry Date**Royal Armoured Corps**

Henry George Date of Wendover, Buckinghamshire died on January 18th, aged 90. He had been a St Dunstaner since 2001. He joined the Royal Armoured Corps in 1940 and was commissioned into 12 Royal Tank Regiment the following year. After a successful campaign in North Africa, his unit was deployed to Italy. During the Battle of the Gothic Line by the River Po, he was wounded in both eyes by mortar shrapnel. Evacuated to Naples, he was then returned to the UK on a hospital ship where he shared a cabin with Vladimir Peniakoff otherwise known as "Popski". Discharged in 1945,

he rejoined HM Customs and Excise. Our sympathy goes to his widow Joyce, son Robert and all members of the family.

William Gaskell**The King's Regiment**

William Gaskell of Ulverston, Cumbria died on January 20th, aged 83. He joined the Royal Air Force Regiment in 1941 as a Gunner on Anti-Aircraft duties with 2818 and 2782 Squadrons in Theale and Manby. In 1945, he transferred to the King's Regiment serving in the Mediterranean and Far East. Discharged in 1947, he resumed life as a painter and decorator. Our sympathy goes to his widow Constance, their daughters and all the family.

Ernest Lloyd**Royal Artillery**

Ernest Leslie Lloyd of Kings Norton, Birmingham died on January 22nd, aged 86. He had been a St Dunstaner since 2002. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1939 and was posted to a field gun unit. He took part in the glider crossing of the Rhine with 6th Airborne but was captured and held as Prisoner of War for seven weeks. Discharged in 1946, he became a sheet metal worker for car manufacturers. His interests included athletics, cricket and snooker. Our sympathy goes to his widow Alice, their daughter and all other members of the family.

Charles Chappell**Royal Air Force**

Charles Gordon Chappell of Heald Green, Cheshire died on January 25th, aged 90. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1938 initially flying Fairey Battle planes with 52 Squadron. He moved on to Spitfires with 62 Squadron at Turnhouse before a tour of duty with 609 Squadron. He suffered injuries to his left eye after a crash during a night flight. However, he continued to fly Spitfires and Mustangs, serving as Squadron Leader in South and North Africa, the Mediterranean and Europe. He was demobbed in 1946 but joined the

Auxiliary Air Force in 1951, serving until 1965. In civilian life, he worked for Ford in their sales department. His interests included golf, cars, and gardening.

Alexander McCrae**Royal Engineers**

Alexander McCrae of Strathpeffer, Ross-shire died on January 31st, aged 87. He was training as a Quantity Surveyor when war broke out and joined the Royal Army Pay Corps. In 1942, he transferred to the Royal Engineers, subsequently landing with them on Sword Beach on D-Day. He fought through France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. Demobbed in 1946, he resumed work as a Chartered Surveyor. His interests included music. Our sympathy goes to his widow Anna, son John, and daughter Ann and all other members of the family.

Margaret Paterson**Surrey Nursing Service**

Margaret Alice Paterson of Surbiton, Surrey died on February 2nd, aged 79. She was working as a hospital nurse when injured in an air-raid in June 1944. She received telephony training at the NIB before joining St Dunstan's at Port Hall in 1949 to polish up her shorthand. Her interests included music, knitting and she was a keen brailist. Our sympathy goes to her friend Catherine, niece Margaret and all members of the family.

Ronald Utton**Royal Warwickshire Regiment**

Ronald Thomas Utton of Hailsham, East Sussex died on February 2nd, aged 90. He had been a St Dunstaner since 2002. He joined the Royal Warwickshire Regiment in 1940, training as a signaller. He served throughout the UK until deployed to Normandy on D+1. After the Battle of Caen, he was wounded in the arm, hand and ears and was casevaced back to the UK. Demobbed in 1946, he joined Prudential Insurance. His interests included gardening and cooking.

James O'Hara**Royal Artillery**

James O'Hara of Huyton, Merseyside died on February 4th, aged 85. He served in the Royal Artillery from 1940. He served on Coastal Defence in the Orkney Islands and Iceland. He later converted to field artillery serving along side US forces in the UK. He completed a tour of duty in India before being demobbed in 1946. In civilian life, he was a painter and decorator. His interests included gardening and DIY before he lost his sight. Our sympathy goes to his sons Thomas and Bernard and daughters Maureen and Irene.

James Nickson**Royal Navy**

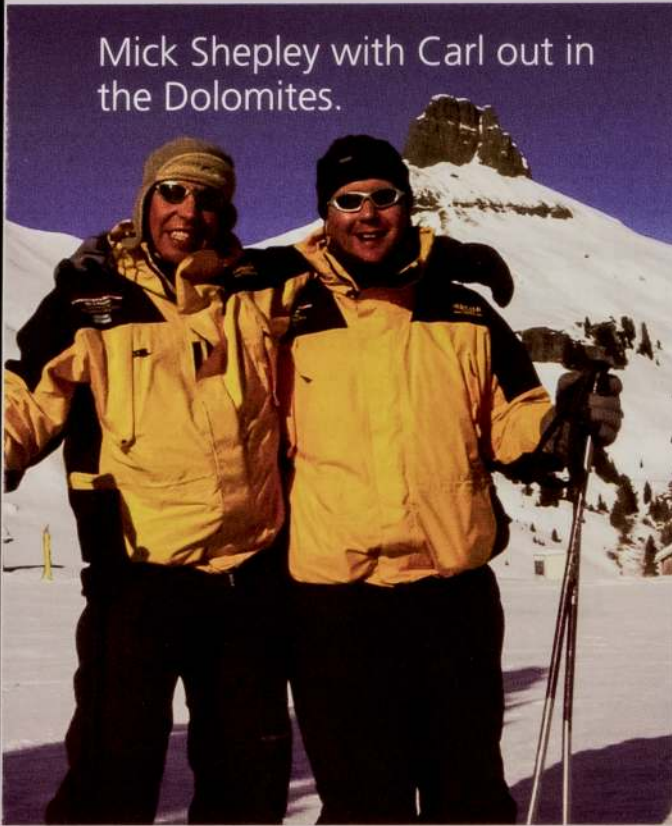
James Nickson of Widnes, Cheshire died on February 4th, aged 79. He worked as a delivery boy and crane driver before joining the Royal Navy in 1943. He served as Stoker on HMS *Barle* in the Mediterranean, Middle East, Far East and Western Australia. Discharged in 1947, he became a lorry driver, eventually becoming a transport supervisor. Our sympathy goes to his widow Joan, and daughters Susan, Christine and Valerie.

Richard Bowyer**Royal Artillery**

Richard William Bowyer of Bolton, Lancashire died on February 9th, aged 86. He had been a St Dunstaner since 2001. He joined the Sherwood Foresters in 1940 and was deployed to North Africa as part of the 8th Army. Injured during El Alamein, he was hospitalised for three months. Transferring to the Buffs, he rejoined the North Africa campaign, taking part in the Anzio landings and the advance to Rome. He returned briefly to the UK before being posted to BAOR in the Royal Artillery. Discharged in 1946, he returned to Bolton Water Works before becoming a manager in a local Bronze Powder Works. His interests included golf and walking. Our sympathy goes to his widow Claire, their daughters and son.

St Dunstaner **Carl Williams** becomes our poet on the peaks!

Mick Shepley with Carl out in the Dolomites.



Ode to Ski

Eighteen stone, blind and the world at my feet
I came over to Canazei where we would all meet.
Euros, cake and Oakleys packed
We set off on an adventure fun-packed.

With Aggies and Gerry we were a huge family for sure
On the pass to Italy we were off on tour.
Plenty of jokes and dits on the way,
Took us to Hotel El Ciasel where we would stay.

Champak and The Bowl, The Dolomites we went,
Peters, Esso bar and Currywurst wagon we did frequent.
Guides, piste and fresh mountain air,
Took us to places where we'd never dare.

On my one week vacation Mick was my mentor
Loud proud and patient, he is an ex-Sergeant Major.
Talking of loud our jackets were bright yellow and snazzy
Sponsored by Alan, Dicky and Roly, part of the group from St Aggie.

The morning glühwein was a medicinal need
Which calmed the nerves when wiping out at speed.
The friendship and banter I wish I could bottle for home
To make us smile when we're home alone.



Roly and Gerry in their snazzy yellow coats.



Can I bottle some for home? Carl enjoying some friendship and banter with Mick and Charlie.

Tom, Arthur and Jodie were virgin guides
Who on their last day met a terrible surprise
Day became night with the use of a scarf
They were led down the slope with fear and a laugh

The usual suspects received the Staveley hat
For daft crazy behaviour and being a prat!
Dusty Maria, Sparkio and Old Bill, to shame and name
Must look forward to next year to receive it again.

Fellow skiers lest us never forget
The week can't exist without our own guide pet
It just leaves me to relay one final thanks
To Babs and Brian, Gerry and sponsors - Salute and respect!