

ST DUNSTAN'S Review



FOR BLIND EX-SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN



TALKING TO THE WORLD!
30 YEARS OF ST DUNSTAN'S
AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY



From the Chairman



THE 2006 AREA REUNION season has just started. In order to create additional capacity one new venue has been organised and new hotels with larger capacity sought. A total of 23 gatherings will take place from Edinburgh to Penzance .

Most importantly, we feel the reunions are a unique opportunity for St Dunstaners to meet up with others and provide an occasion for you to bend the ears of staff! It is also a welcome chance for the staff and Trustees to meet and get to know new St Dunstaners.

A working party is currently under way, looking at the 2007 season, to see how best to accommodate increasing numbers. Some of you will be asked for your opinions and feedback will be greatly appreciated.

Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN

ST DUNSTAN'S Review April 2006 No 956

Cover Story: St Dunstan's Amateur Radio Society celebrate 30 years on the air.

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Available in braille, on MP3CD, on audio cassette, floppy disk and via e-mail.

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

ST DUNSTAN'S Calendar

APRIL

Writers' Forum	April 1st
Indoor Bowling	April 5th
Golf	April 8th-9th
Sailability	April 15th
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
Sailability	April 29th
Gardening	April 30th-May 6th

MAY

Writers' Forum	May 6th
VE Day	May 8th
Outdoor Bowling	May 8th
Handless May	10th-16th (tbc)
Golf	May 13th-14th
Feast of St Dunstan	May 19th
Sailability	May 20th
Archery (II)	May 26th-June 3rd

Sail away | New look for HQ | More holes at Rusper | Fundraising help

Noticeboard

Dates for your diary and useful information

SATURDAY SAILING

SESSIONS FOR ALL ABILITIES: St Dunstaners wishing to try their hand at sailing may like to take advantage on the Saturday sessions organised by Sailability in forthcoming months.

Dates available are April 15th, April 29th, May 20th, July 1st, July 29th, August 12th, August 26th, September 9th, September 23rd and October 8th.

Sailability takes place at Shoreham, transport is provided from and to St Dunstan's, however participants must provide their own packed lunch where appropriate. For more details contact Gemma Kirkwood in the Sports and Recreation department at St Dunstan's Ovingdean on 01273 391465.

UPDATING HEADQUARTERS

HARCOURT STREET RENOVATIONS: St Dunstan's is about to commence a programme of building works at Headquarters, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London. The works will create additional clinic areas for applicants attending their initial vision assessment and the outdated offices will undergo a programme of renovations. A small extension on floors two and three is also proposed to create space for additional St Dunstan's staff working in the Welfare department.

GOLF DATES AT RUSPER

TIME FOR TEE: St Dunstan's Golf Club will hold their training and medal meetings at Rusper Golf Club on the following dates:

April 8th-9th
May 13th-14th (Captain's Cup)
June 17th-18th
July 22nd-23rd
August 12th-13th
September 16th-17th

For more details contact the Club Secretary Mike Tumilson on 024 7646 0113.

POST WWII STORIES WANTED

FUNDRAISING NEED YOUR HELP: As you may know, we have a great number of supporters of the Charity, who love reading stories about St Dunstaners – their service history and their achievements.

In a forthcoming newsletter, that will be sent to some 120,000 supporters in June, we would like to feature around seven-to-ten non-war blind St Dunstaners who have served in conflicts post World War II.

If you'd like to help us, give Marketing Coordinator Karen Mitchell a call in the Fundraising department on 020 7616 7959.



LAST CALL FOR SULTAN 2006

SIGN UP FOR CAMP: HMS *Sultan* Summer Camp runs July 28th to August 5th. Anyone wishing to attend should contact Dave Burrows by May 1st. Write to him at 18 Portsmouth Road, Lee on the Solent, Hampshire PO13 9AG. Tel: 02392 550532, or e-mail DCB119399@aol.com.

RBL PARADE IN ORPINGTON

THANKSGIVING IN PRIORY GARDENS: Orpington and District Royal British Legion have extended an invitation to St Dunstaners to join them on Sunday, July 9th at 10:00am for a Parade marking Her Majesty The Queen's 80th birthday and the dedication of a new Standard for the RBL's Women's Section which is celebrating its 70th anniversary. Participants will gather at the junction of Felstead Road and Spur Road and march from the War Memorial at 10:30am through the town to Priory Gardens (which historians will know as the home of Sir Richard Spencer). A Drumhead Service and Thanksgiving Service will then be conducted at 11:00am. For more details contact Barry George on 01689 830467 or e-mail him on barrypgeorge@hotmail.com.

BOLD TANDEM MARATHON DISRUPTED BY ROAD WORKS

BACK ON THE ROAD NEXT YEAR: Further to the item in last month's **Review**, Blind Outdoor Leisure Development (BOLD) have had to cancel their annual Tulip Tandem Marathon which was due to take place in Lincolnshire on April 22nd. It is hoped the challenge will resume as normal on April 21st next year.

NELSON FOR DERBY WIN?

REVIEW DERBY SWEEPSTAKE NOW OPEN: Horses currently in training for the 2006 Epsom Vodafone Derby on June 3rd include Horatio Nelson, Biggin Hill, and Septimus. In the meantime, 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..

AUDIO DESCRIBED THEATRE

HIGH DRAMA, MODERN AND MUSICAL: *Hamlet* April 4th 19:30 New Ambassadors, West Street, London (0207 395 5405 or e-mail nabox@theambassadors.com). Starring Ed Stoppard and Anita Dobson.

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 and disturbing comedy.

The Harder They Come April 18th 19:30 Theatre Royal, Stratford East (0800 183 1188, www.stratfordeast.com). Bridget Crowley audio describes stage version of cult Jimmy Cliff movie. The performance is followed by a post show discussion with the creative team and cast.

The Hollow April 20th 14:00 Cheltenham Everyman (01242 572573). Possible touch-tour at noon. Agatha Christie thriller.

Beauty and The Beast May 6th 14:30 Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury (01227 7877787).

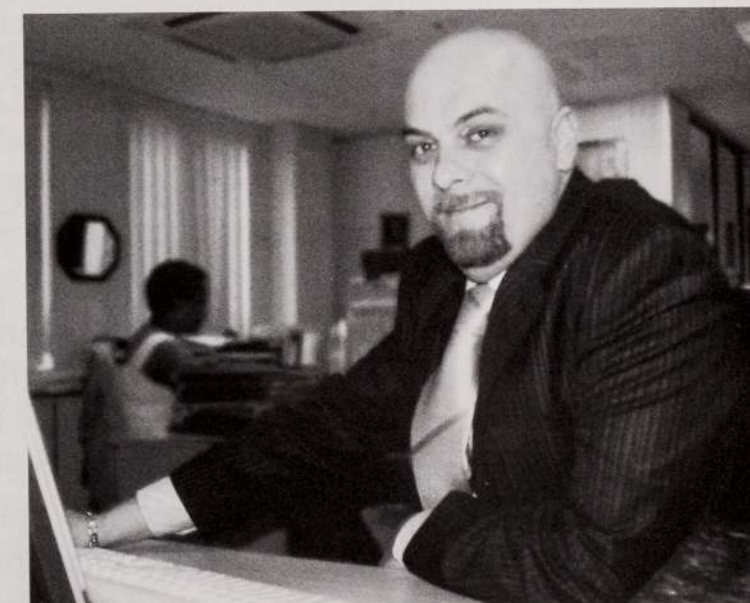
Jerry Springer The Opera May 13th 14:30 Theatre Royal, Norwich (01603 63 00 00). Contains strong language and adult content.

Guys & Dolls May 31st 19:30, August 12th 14:30, Piccadilly Theatre, London (0870 060 0123 or e-mail ticketcentre@theambassadors.com). Irene Richards describes Runyon show.

Please let theatre managers know if you have any trouble booking and remember to reserve headsets in advance. There is always an at-seat intro to the show over headsets for 15 minutes prior to the start.

NEW STAFF AT ST DUNSTAN'S

FIONA TROLLEY
Fiona Trolley joined St Dunstan's as a Welfare Officer in March, succeeding Christine Stevens in the South West. She will be covering Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Bristol and much of Wales. She has previously worked in Social Services and is a reiki practitioner. She has a "partner, two kids and a dog."



DAN GREEN
Dan Green joined St Dunstan's in March as an Employment Adviser, based at Headquarters. He will be supporting St Dunstaners wishing to make a return to the workplace. Previously, Dan worked in the New Deal programme and was once a Club 18-30 rep. His interests include archery, fishing and golf.

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.

We know every anniversary is a special time after anguish of FEPOW separation

Charles and I wish to thank all at St Dunstan's most sincerely for the beautiful flowers and the very good wishes for our 65th wedding anniversary.

As you know, Charles was a prisoner of war, courtesy of the Japanese. This is how it began: We were married by special license on his embarkation leave before sailing for Singapore. His 21st birthday was spent on the boat. I was not quite 19. We wrote many letters until on December 22nd 1941 he was reported missing. For two whole years I waited for news. Then on Christmas Eve, I had my first two cards – "I am well and working for pay." Of course these were printed by the Japanese. Although they were a year old, it was wonderful to receive some news at last. I had a further four cards at six monthly intervals, all old but at least something. By now his health had suffered.

In all it was four-and-a-half years before I was to see him again.

He was put to work on the Burma Railway throughout its construction. Many lives were lost. In the end, every man but one was flat out in his camp. That man, Mr Bill White has since died, but he helped all his fellow prisoners in that pitiful state.

Then the war ended. Charles and his fellow prisoners were brought through the jungle to the waiting planes on bullock carts. He came through India

in various hospitals (meeting Lord Louis Mountbatten) before arriving and being transported to an English hospital where we were finally reunited after those weary long years.

What a wonderful occasion for his mother and I when we first met with our cards and flowers.

**Peggy and Charles Blockley,
Sileby, Leicestershire**

Putting on a face for phone

I consider my white stick to be an essential visual aid not only for myself but also to warn others to give me a wide berth. Nevertheless, the other day, a young woman, mobile telephone glued to her ear and obviously oblivious to anyone else's presence, walked into me and knocked me over.

It reminded me that in 1936, for business reasons, my father had a telephone installed in our family home. Ours must have been one of the first residential

properties in Liverpool to have such an installation.

At the time, my mother was ill and her sister stayed with us to act as housekeeper. Whenever the telephone rang, my Aunt Alice would rush to the mirror, brush her hair, powder her nose and remove her pinafore before picking up the handset.

How times have changed!

**John Lappin
Wakefield, West Yorkshire**

An extraordinary and exhilarating week

I have had an extraordinarily exhilarating and useful week at the main centre of St Dunstan's at Ovingdean near Brighton.

On our first full day we were met by a 6 foot 5 inch ex-Marine. It was a little while before I realised he was completely blind. He took us on a tour of the building and before he had finished he knew us all by our voices. There were 16 of us. As this review of our stay at the St Dunstan's at Ovingdean unfolds you will realise how big a place it is and the skill of our guide.

We heard of the history of St Dunstan's, the aims of St Dunstan's, the funding of St Dunstan's and all the ins and outs of St Dunstan's in a lounge the size of a badminton court. There was a second lounge the size of two tennis-courts and a dining room every bit as large. There was an eighteen metre swimming pool, a ballroom, a gym, a bar and sundry other meeting rooms. That is by no means all but you will see what a comprehensive place it is.

There were loads of people on courses, permanently resident or on holiday there. We mingled as well as we could. Not easy when being



St Dunstan's Ovingdean, a unique establishment.

unable to see who is sat next to you.

The result was to hear some interesting tales of service-life on many fronts and of coping with blindness: During the week we were kept busy and I will list some of the things I did. I had my blood pressure checked and the checker said it was unusual for someone of my age to have normal blood pressure without medication. So I was clear to tread the tread mill and to ride the static bike. I was introduced to the IT instructor and she asked me to see her again later that day. I expected that to be a follow up of the visit I had had to the IT training at Sheffield. It was not. She and an associate wanted me to help them

investigate methods of hearing audio screen reading by deaf people. Basically we eliminated some useless ones.

Later that day I shot some arrows into the air. Most hit the target and one hit the gold.

On another day we played bowls. The most delightful thing of all was the ethos of the place. There was no hint of patronising.

Everybody was an old friend you had met umpteen times before. Those who waited at table or serviced the rooms, or drove the lift the top brass, department heads, all were really lovely.

**Fred May,
Sheffield, South Yorkshire**

BALANCING THE BOOKS

Ted Bunting joins Gervase Phinn on a tour of Yorkshire schools

The Other Side of the Dale

Author: Gervase Phinn

Reader: Neil Boorman

Duration 7 hours 38 minutes

Catalogue No. TB 12046

Schools and schoolchildren have provided a rich harvest for the humorist writer for many years. In Dickens, for example, Whackford Squeers' explanation of his teaching method to Nicholas Nichollby is extremely funny, though tinged with the melancholy which the vulnerability of the young frequently invokes.

The same combination is evident in many of the stories related here by Gervase Phinn with the extra diminution that his visits as a school inspector take him to remote

North Yorkshire locations where the stranger, the "offcumden" is viewed with considerable suspicion if not outright hostility. Being able to distinguish a sheep from a goat but not much more, his ignorance of county life is often exposed by the very children whose knowledge he has come to test. But, if we take his words at face value, he accepts these reveres with good grace and even with pleasure. A sense of humour is clearly an absolute must for a school inspector.

I laughed out loud at his descriptions of the nativity plays he had attended, but least you should think the book is only a collection

of amusing anecdotes, let me say there are thought-provoking passages too. How, for example, does the village teacher meet the needs of the potentially brilliant and the educationally sub normal under the same roof? It is a problem, which will live in small communities until the politicians have crested Utopia. A little of the book (bit not too much) is taken up by the author's personal life. Right at the end, for instance he hints at a romance that might blossom. Because of the good impression he creates in the preceding chapters, I wish him well. Should the other side of the Dale have a sequel I would certainly ask for it.

Right to Read still not recognised

A YEAR AFTER they presented 10 Downing Street with the Right to Read Charter - a manifesto signed by 32,000 individuals that calls for action to make books readily available in formats accessible to blind and partially sighted people - the Royal National Institute of the Blind bemoans the lack of action from the Government. While the RNIB says it has been working with major publishers, trade organisations and the Department of Trade and Industry to develop a pilot project to test new ways of making books available in accessible formats, it is still campaigning for the Government to provide £200,000 funding to launch the

project. They are asking people to lobby their MP. Draft letters can be obtained from the RNIB either by e-mail from campaign@rnib.org.uk or by telephone on 020 7391 2123.

The RNIB recently launched "Chapter and Verse" on World Book Day, March 2nd to encourage authors and publishers to make books available in accessible formats at the same time as the standard print version.

CALIBRE CASSETTE LIBRARY

Last month, the e-mail for Calibre Cassette Library should have read as follows: enquiries@calibre.org.uk.

Irene Newbold

We are sad to report the death of Irene Newbold on March 7th after a long illness. Irene was our Welfare Officer for the Midlands, retiring in August 1996 after 35 years service. Irene, who was a trained nurse and also had experience in social welfare and pension spheres, joined St Dunstan's on October 30th, 1961 visiting St Dunstaners and their families in the Midlands and South Wales. With the passage of time, her area extended to take in adjacent counties and then East Anglia. So for a considerable number of years, she covered the country from West to East Coast, travelling thousands of miles in all kinds of weather. Irene was a staunch friend and adviser to so many, especially in times of difficulty. St Dunstaners and their widows always spoke of the great affection and high regard in which she was held. Her funeral was held at Coventry Crematorium on March 16th. We extend sincere sympathy to her daughter and all of the family.

Ruth Thompson

Ruth passed away last November. She joined St Dunstan's in 1943 to work for the late Mr N. Macauley in the Belfast office dealing with welfare and appeals. On her retirement, she recalled, "I remember my first day in the office. Mr Macauley showed me my desk, my typewriter and the stamp money box. It was a tobacco box, 'G. & P. Bell, Glasgow. Three Nuns Tobacco.' I have the box to this day. The typing chair was too low but this was war-time and furniture was hard to come by so Mr Macauley gave me the Belfast Street Directory to sit on. I sat on that for three years! It was very hard and was a bit awkward when you had to check an address!" In 1954, Ruth Thompson took over appeals and welfare visiting until appeals were centralised in London in 1960. She would visit about 60 or 70 St Dunstaners both sides of the border, mostly First War men. Ruth retired in 1988 after 45 years service.

We extend belated sympathies to her husband, Ken.

Ten questions on...

The subject of letters of the alphabet

Harry Beevers with some A-Z teasers

- A) The Roman numeral C represents which number?
- B) Which gas is represented by the chemical symbol N, Nitrogen or Neon?
- C) Sir Maurice Oldfield who died in 1980 is said to have been the model for which James Bond character played by actress Judy Dench in films such as *GoldenEye* and *The World is Not Enough*?
- D) Which award introduced in 1974 entitles the wearer to add the letters QGM to their name?
- E) Which first-class cricket county has most letters in its name?
- F) Fish oil, egg yolks and carrots are rich sources of which vitamin?
- G) Which letter of the alphabet appears in the names of seven of the planets in the solar system?
- H) Which is the only vowel which is not on the top row of letters on a typewriter or computer keyboard?
- I) Which is the only letter of the alphabet of two syllables?
- J) The names of which four English race-courses do not contain any of the letters R, A, C, E, or S?

Answers can be found on page 23 along with a few handy exercises to keep those typing fingers nimble.

Bernard Cornwell, author of nearly 50 novels including the adventures of Sharpe, was the judge of the Review's annual Story Competition. Entrants were asked to write a story imbued with a theme of age. Beyond that, everything else was theirs to imagine and create. Bernard's choice for second prize was AGE by Rentner. "This is a sad story, redeemed by a wonderful optimism and an enjoyment of life," he said. "Rentner really makes us 'see' his parents, he describes them with love and, as all good short stories should, leaves us wanting more." Rentner, otherwise known as St Dunstaner Alan Wortley of Eastbourne, East Sussex, won the £30 prize and his story follows:

AGE

by Rentner (Alan Wortley)

WHEN DAD RETIRED, he was able to pamper to his wanderlust. He had no occupational pension but his needs were few. His brother Alex had wandered the byways of England for many years, pushing his few possessions in a modified handcart, which could be made long enough to give shelter from the elements in bad weather. Alex would find work where he could: mostly seasonal labouring. He was too restless to tarry long in one place, but some employers were

pleased to see him each year, at harvest time. The story of Alex's itinerant way of life appeared in a Sunday newspaper, after he was found lying dead by his cart, in the Yorkshire countryside. A landowner who had given Alex work from time to time, supplied what facts he knew.

The journalist wrote in a sympathetic way, perhaps with a slight twinge of envy at the freedom; and lack of responsibility. Alex had no family and had been 'knocked about a bit' in the war. It might be known as 'battle-stress' today. Even when old, Alex continued

with his nomadic way of life; maybe not trudging as far, but still keeping on the move.

So, my Dad, at age 65 took his savings from the biscuit tin under his bed and bought a boat. He left the name 'Veronica' painted on the stem, as great pains had been taken with the lettering: but, did build a plywood cabin, covering the forward two thirds of the little vessel. He had a talent for carpentry and it was a pity he had not earned his living by such creative work. But, as a bus-driver, he claimed he was his 'own boss' in a way. Like his brother Alex, he was

invalided from the Army; and driving his bus suited his frame of mind.

So, with the cabin varnished and the small engine 'popping well', he took to the rivers and canals. A small bag of clothes was all he needed. It was a pity that the engine unselfishly shared its exhaust fumes with the cabin. But, with window and door open; life was preserved.

It was also a pity that my mother wasn't consulted about the change to a maritime way of life. For sure, Dad talked 'at her' about it. About how she

would love the life. So, Mum joined her spouse in the tiny cabin with her little bag of necessities and a few packets of cigarettes. If the engine fumes didn't 'get' her; then the tobacco smoke was small beer by comparison!

Even with Dad adding his 'two-pennorth' of burned 'woodbines'.

Dad's waterway wanderlust took them far and wide. Cruising right down to Wales from York in that first year. Their age of retirement brought a massive change to their former way of life. Maps, they didn't have. Dad didn't seem to need them. He had an instinct, he claimed, for how to get where he desired to be. And anyway he would talk to travellers along the way.

Whenever he caught edible fish, the wriggling catch would end up in his pressure cooker. Eels were often the protein on their platters. Occasionally, clothes could be washed at a washeteria, if fate took them into pastures 'urbanised'. Otherwise, their apparel would be laundered in a bucket of canal water.

When the engine failed in a tunnel, over a mile in length, Dad worked the boat along just like the old bargeman did: lying atop the cabin, pedalling with his feet. Mother would sit and stare at his antics, always a cigarette

between lips or fingers. She was never without a cigarette Dad explained, unless she was asleep!

He told of the time when Mum had toppled into the river after a glancing collision with a larger boat. When he was able to give Mum help, after the more pressing task of shouting abuse at the helmsman of the other vessel, he was amazed to see, that Mum's cigarette was still alight between her lips, but she had let go of her handbag, which was floating away in the current.

I never knew that Mother was able to swim. She had never owned a swimming costume, that's for sure. Dad just took it for granted that she would do the right thing with arms and legs, until she could be hauled back on board!

Time passed. Several years of boat-life went by. Sadly 'age' doesn't come alone for most people. It was so with mother.

She was becoming confused. Uncaring about hygiene. She would wander off and not know where she was. Frustration began to make her aggressive. Dad did what he could in his way. She was better company than NO company, he insisted. Mum took to stealing things. Accumulating 'bibs and bobs' like a magpie. Items of no use to her: such as yet

another ashtray from a pub table. Or the half-full packet of cigarettes from a stranger, seated nearby, while his attention was diverted.

The doctor prescribed medication. She filled herself with tablets. It was suggested that 'losing her role' in life might be to blame for her condition. Having nothing meaningful to do. If it wasn't the cause, then, it might have accelerated her decline; for her road to helplessness was not a long one.

There were acts of aggression towards Dad who took it stoically. He didn't seem to notice the 'side-effects' of the drugs. The constant 'sucking' of dry lips and tongue. The awful scratching of limbs, until they bled. They were going through a bad patch in Boston, Lincolnshire. Dad had been enjoying trips out to sea; fishing in the shallow waters of 'Roger Sands'. There was only a short window of opportunity, when the tide was just right for making it back to the safety of the river, through lock gates; which only remain open for a short time, at full tide.

Mum had one of her 'naughty' periods, causing them to miss their opportunity. It was a long time in the dark and the freshening wind for Dad to 'ride it out' in his cockleshell of a boat. But, little Veronica

was still somehow afloat when dawn, and a change of tide came at last.

Back in safety at the riverbank, they took a taxi to a big supermarket being in need of provisions. Mum was still being troublesome and anti-social, even though 'worn-out' with the night on the high seas! She couldn't be left alone at the boat, as she would have come to harm, so far had she deteriorated with her dementia. Being at his wit's end, with Mum's behaviour, Dad took his opportunity while far away from an entrance, or an exit.

He 'skedaddled' dodging down one of the long alleys between displayed goods. A few twists and turns and he was out in the street.

He enjoyed a few hours of quiet respite. He was taking his ease, reading a newspaper back on the boat when a police car rolled up to the jetty. He was expecting it really, he admitted; but it was good while it lasted!

"If you are George," called the driver, "We have a parcel for you! And it was a tough case finding out where your 'parcel' belonged!"

I visited Mum in an institution a short time later, just before she died. A tiny room containing only a bed and a small locker. I don't know that she knew who I was. She couldn't really communicate. I felt guilty and miserable at taking my leave.

As the door closed behind us, my wife told me that my mother's locker top had not been quite empty. There had been a photograph. Only one, though she did have other children and a husband.

The photograph was of me: her blind son.

High Sheriff visits Ovingdean



St Dunstan's Eric Church discusses his latest mosaic with High Sheriff David Tate and Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox.

THE HIGH SHERIFF of East Sussex David Tate, accompanied by his wife, Jennifer, visited St Dunstan's National Centre at Ovingdean on March 14th.

Touring the building they were introduced to a wide range of the organisation's activities. A distinctive impression was made by the various aspects of the Craft workshop with creations such as the Leaves project (which has won a Drawing Inspiration award, more on the back page) and the Beach Ball (which has successfully reached the final round of the Blind Art Sense and Sensibility competition) and seeing our archers in action.

Harry Beevers logs on to the Computer Club meeting Defenders and digital Daisys

A PLEASING FEATURE of our first Computer Club meeting of 2006 on February 22nd-23rd was the number of new members attending. Allan and Lorraine Acutt of South Africa, Eric and Maddy Powell of Devon, Roger Williams of Wales and local St Dunstan's Ernie Bignell joined old-stagers Harry Smith, Bob Alty and Harry Beevers in what proved a very enjoyable and informative get-together. Ably led by Janis and Mike from the IT department we had a varied programme.

Our first morning was spent with Mike who tackled members' problems including how to block spam messages and the benefits of Windows Defender (Beta 2), a free program that helps you stay productive by protecting your computer against pop-ups, slow performance and security threats caused by spyware and other potentially unwanted software. Ernie informed our newcomers of Tapesense and the Talking Computers monthly tapes and Harry Beevers demonstrated the talking video recorder hand-set. Our afternoon session was taken up by the not-too-serious computer quiz and

the first day was rounded off with a really enjoyable meal together in the Winter Garden.

On our second day in the IT department we were able to try out the benefits of the free programme Webbie, a web browser for blind and visually-impaired people, especially those using screen readers. The Accessible programmes let you access news and audio on the Internet in a simple and accessible way, allowing you to use podcasts, listen to the radio and read RSS and news with your screen reader or other access solution.

One of the highlights of was the visit of Graham Thomas of Portset who demonstrated the newly designed talking digital television receiver and radio combined with CD player and Daisy Reader. This very informative demo took us to our final session when it was decided that members should exchange e-mail addresses in order to keep in contact with each other and swap information between our two yearly meetings. All in all these were two very enjoyable, entertaining and worthwhile days and we look forward to our next meeting on October 11th and 12th.

In Flanders Fields



Peter Folwell laid a St Dunstan's Wreath at Ypres Reservoir Cemetery (left) and also at the Menin Gate on Remembrance Sunday last year. Peter teamed up with Paul Chapman of Armistice Tours to support St Dunstan's during a tour of WWI battlefields. Selling merchandise, they raised £762 with assistance from staff at Cafe Oud V'Laenderen, Cafe Du Tram, Restaurant de Trompet, Cafe De Ranke and others.

Ted John reports on the 30th Anniversary Meeting of the dedicated radio hams in St Dunstan's Amateur Radio Society

THREE DECADES TALKING TO THE WORLD!

FOLLOWING THE ANNUAL General Meeting of the St Dunstan's Amateur Radio Society on February 25th 2006, members and guests made their way to the Winter Garden at Ovingdean. Sixty-five radio enthusiasts sat down to a superb meal, the atmosphere was very friendly and convivial, and there was a beautiful celebration cake made by Jane Taylor.

It was a little over 30 years since nine St Dunstaners at held the inaugural meeting of the Society at Old Marylebone Road, London on January 17th 1976.

For our 2006 gathering, we had two Presidents present - Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, the Society's President, and Captain (rtd) Ray Hazan, President of St Dunstan's. Representatives of the Societies of the Navy, Army and Air Force Amateur Radio Societies, many supporters and friends, old and new, including Don and Jacqui Ward from Yorkshire, were also present. We were also delighted that a number of our ladies, widows of our 'Silent Key' members were able to be with us.



Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN presented Don Ward (GOMDO) with the G3MOW Memorial Trophy for his work developing the White Stick Log.

Don Ward (GOMDO) was awarded the G3MOW Memorial Trophy for his outstanding service to the Society. He had devoted many hours to writing a Morse Tutor and the White Stick Log, from which blind and partially sighted amateurs had benefited and were grateful for.

On the Sunday, serious operating using the special

call-sign GB30STD, went on in the Shack! Ray Hazan (GOPQQ) started filling up the log with his many contacts. Ray Peart (GOFHK) was congratulated on his prowess on the morse key by many of his contacts, and we were grateful to Alec Higgins (G8GF) for coming in from Eastbourne on Tuesday and Thursday to assist on the morse key. During the week we had a total of some 275



Tom Hart and Alec Higgins.



Thirty years in the baking? A lovingly crafted cake.



Ted John and Bill Shea cut the anniversary cake made by Jane Taylor for the Amateur Radio Society.



The Radio Society and friends gathered in the Winter Garden for their celebration.



Rose Shed, Elsie Cole and Joyce Morgan with Pat and Barbara celebrate 30 years of SDARS.

contacts around the world and this was very satisfying.

The Society is very grateful to all those who contributed in any way to the success of our meeting, and we look forward to the next with anticipation and pleasure – October 13th to 20th.

Unfortunately, Bill Shea (G4AUJ), our Chairman, has been unwell for some time and was unable to take part in the meetings, but was able to come to the luncheon with Jane, his daughter, and it was so good to see them. He is recovering slowly and we hope and pray that he makes continued progress.

Brian Freeman (G3ITF), of Freeman, Hardy and Willis fame, was unable to attend and we wish him a speedy recovery from his illness.

Sadly, just before writing this article we heard that Tom Frankland (G4INM) had gone 'Silent Key', and we extend our deepest sympathies to his family. His presence will be missed greatly.



Bill Holland and Geoff Owen.



Bill Shea and Ray Peart.



Ted and Beryl John greet Susan Davis of the Mid-Sussex ARS.



Ray Hazan and Jane Taylor in good humour.

Alan Brown is in tune with bells, bowls and big bands!

MUSIC HATH CHARM TO...

WHEN I RECEIVED my copy of the programme for the Music Week at Ovingdean I sensed we were in for an excellent time.

The old adage of variety being the spice of life was certainly true in this instance as we were to start on the afternoon of February 13th in the Winter Garden with a first class demonstration of Hand Bell ringing performed by the Anne Manwick team.

In the evening it was back to the Winter Garden for an hour of Musical Reminiscence with Shirley Jaffee. We covered a range of music from Opera to the Musicals.

Tuesday afternoon we spent an hour in the Winter Garden again with Louise Beckermann and her team. The programme covered soothing and healing music. It certainly worked for me as, apart from the occasional song by us, we were to hear items played on an object rather like a metallic mixing bowl played by a small baton.

For two hours in the Lounge we were to share a wonderful evening of pure classical music performed by Rachel



Rachel Fryer covered Bach to Brahms on her piano.

Fryer and Friends. Rachel is an accomplished concert pianist with a string of concert appearances and audio recordings to her name. Another Rachel played the cello while Jeremy Truscott treated us to some violin solos and Emma sang the songs from Grand Opera to the Musicals.

Wednesday, late morning to 5:00pm, we had a day trip to Eastbourne. Cool and breezy though it was, we all had a great time meeting friends old and new. Boarding the coaches, it was back to the Winter Gardens on our return

to Ovingdean where we had a Classical CD session which ran until 9:00pm.

An afternoon quiz was held in the Ballroom on Thursday. The team I was in came last, but it was a fun afternoon.

The Worthing Pavilion was the venue for an evening with the Mike James Orchestra and Singers. Music in the style of James Last was accompanied by audience participation. Much to the fore was almost continuous hand clapping from the opening number. I am sure many sore throats greeted us on Friday morning as we ended the programme with some of the old Wartime songs.

Our last day's schedule was an afternoon tea drive to nearby Paradise Gardens before going back to our House on the Hill where the weeks activities were brought to a close by a favourite at St Dunstan's in the form of Andrew Varley and his Music. Song and dance were the order of the evening.

At nine o'clock our week ended and, thanks to Lyn Mullins and her team, we all felt that a great week was had by everyone.

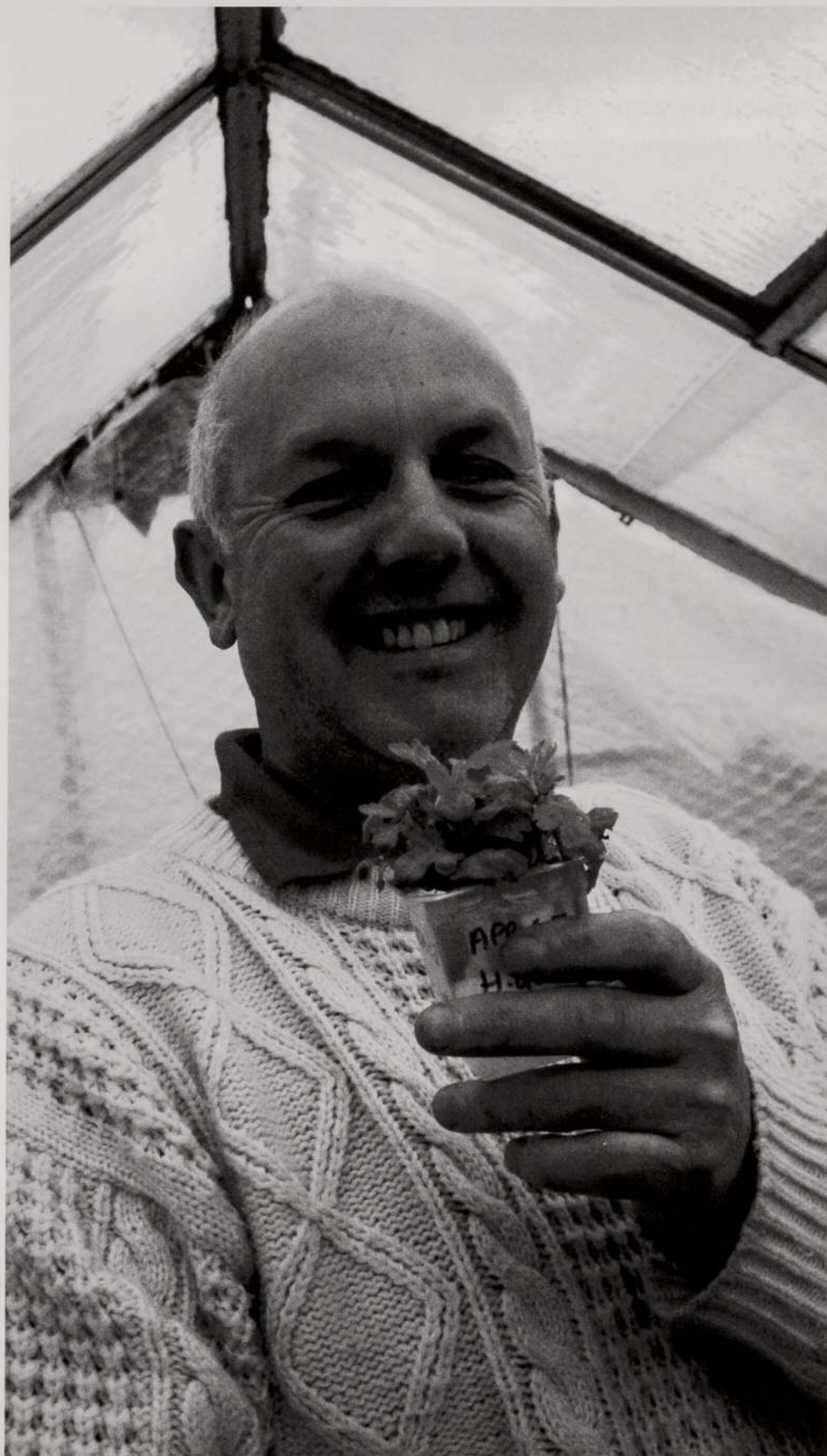
Taking Chrysanth cuttings

DO YOU REMEMBER my mate "Bob" from a previous article? Well he has been my mentor with growing chrysanth's for the past three years, he actually packed up and re-started growing after a year without them. Anyway we were talking about taking cuttings and he was telling me that the seasons are getting warmer and nowadays instead of taking cuttings in February, March might do for some of the cultivars.

With this in mind I thought that I would pay him a visit to see how his stools were coming on for throwing cuttings and on entering his greenhouse in the second week in February, I noticed he had around 40 plants already rooted and potted up. On enquiring about this he told me "I am just experimenting to see if the flowers come early or on time for the shows" with a glint in his eye and a giggle.

Now down to the serious stuff of taking cuttings in February and March. Recapping slightly, we put our heating cable to work on the stools in January, after three to four weeks with keeping the stools damp we should have a crop of cuttings to take. Some

St Dunstaner **Peter Moore** stays on the quest for prize-winning blooms!



stools will not throw any at all and so these are thrown out as being useless but those that are producing are also sprayed over daily to keep the cuttings in a turgid or soft state so that it is easier to take the necessary stock.

The cuttings are around two and a half inches to three inches long when you take them. This is an easy method and all you do is break off the cutting at the point you decide is either 2.5 to 3 inches away from the growing tip of the cutting. If they are soft they snap easily and this method also helps with not getting cross infections and viruses on your stock as you would if a sharp instrument was used such as scissors or a knife.

Now it is time to take off any bottom leaves if there are any near the break and dip the end into some hormone rooting powder to help make roots.

You can do several things now with regard to types of rooting trays, you can put the cuttings into individual cells in a tray, these come in many sizes and it is personal preference, or you can put them into trays say six inches by six inches and put one type of cultivar per tray.

Use a proper seed and cutting compost for rooting as this does not have any feed in it and it helps tremendously with rooting.

Once the trays or cells are filled with the compost I put up to ten plants at one inch deep in the trays and mark them with the cultivar name.

In the type of trays where you have individual cells you can put in what you want providing that you make labels showing which cultivar is which and then you won't be confused when taking out the rooted cuttings in three to four weeks time.

Once potted up into the rooting trays these now go back onto the heating cable at around sixty degrees.

Some people do water them in initially others do not, personal choice, but the reason for putting them back on the cable is to promote roots, this has to be done with the compost "dry" and we all know that plants need water and so we spray overhead about three times per day. The cuttings will take up moisture through the leaves leaving the bottom of the plant to throw roots in dry conditions.

After a while you will see the plants start to droop and sag as if dying, do not concern yourself with this phenomenon as all this is happening is that a scab or callous is forming where the cuttings were broken off, this is prior to roots forming. After a while with the continuous spraying regime

the roots will start to appear and the plants will pick up again. Magic.

The odd one will suffer too much stress and die but all in all most get through this stage.

The plants are kept on the cable until really well rooted, in the individual cells that is until you can take out the plug and see the roots all around the outside of the compost and in trays you have to dig them out and ensure a good root system.

As an after thought when you are spraying the cuttings about every two weeks also spray with a very weak solution of both a fungicide and insecticide to keep pests and viruses at bay.

Potting up

With chrysanth's the potting up has to go through three stages, this is first into 3" pots, then 5" pots and last of all either 9" or 10" pots depending on the cultivar or variety.

After the cuttings are rooted and have been off the cable for about a week and cooled down you can now pot into 3" pots and this is where for growing large amounts of plants it starts to get hard work.

We have to make a mixture of different ingredients up for the first potting mixture,

make sure all pots are clean and disinfected and that you have plenty of labels handy.

The pots are normally washed in hot water and Jeyes thick disinfectant, making sure they are totally clean otherwise you can pass on infections from one year to the next without realising it until it is too late.

Before going any further it must be said that if a person is only going to grow a couple of plants then all purpose compost will suffice but if a person wants to grow a lot and up to show standard then it is best to follow the potting up routine that follows.

The potting up mixture varies from person to person as well as ingredients; here is the mixture, quantities and ingredients that I use for

batches of plants on initial potting into three inch pots.

The mixture is normally calculated by the bushel (eight gallons), or as a conversion two buckets full equals one bushel. I use an old cement mixer and into this I put one bushel, two buckets of loam (soil), the pH of the soil is then checked, and if it is over 6.8 I start to add peat to bring the pH down to a starting point of 6.5. This is because as the season goes on the pH will creep up the scale because of the feed used for the plants to grow.

Once the pH is the right level I add: 4oz of Vitax Q4 per bushel of mix, this is a base fertilizer, also added is 2oz of calcified seaweed as a slow release fertilizer and growth promoter and 2oz of blood,

fish and bone, again as a slow release fertilizer. Finally to this mix I add one to one and a quarter buckets of pea gravel for drainage. Roots can then get around the pot quicker than they would if no gravel was introduced. This will give me a good root system necessary for these plants.

Each rooted cutting is then put into a three inch pot and again kept as dry as possible and not watered until really necessary to get the roots to the outside of the pot in a good root system, this takes around six weeks.

I am at present carrying out a trial between the traditional way of rooting the plants and using a gel rooting medium, I will report on this next month and give the next mixture for the five inch potting stage.

Archers back on target

THE FIRST INDOOR Archery Club competition of 2006 took place in the McKinnley Sports Hall at St Dunstan's Ovingdean during January 21st-28th. We were all pleased to welcome our Club President Wendy le Gassick who chaired her first club AGM.

During the week all the archers achieved a good standard of shooting. Peter Hammond was awarded the GNAS Handicap medal.

Pat Sidnell reports

Steve Moseley was awarded the Gaygan Gold.

Peter Hammond was awarded the Tactile Archers Gold.

Keith Lanchester-Harding, a new St Dunstan's archer, who last picked up a bow seven years ago, walked off with several medals. Ron Jones and Noel Caulfield also won annual trophies.

The Ditchling Archery Club visited for an inter-club match. With both teams shooting well, it was a keenly fought contest. However, it ended with Ditchling winning by a 150 point lead over St Dunstan's. Congratulations Ditchling Archery.

The archers would like to thank the organisers and volunteers who made the week a complete success. The next shoot is scheduled for May 26th-June 3rd.

St Dunstaner Alan Brown savours life as our man in Bristol

AN AMBASSADOR FOR ST DUNSTAN'S

IN MY WORLD of very limited vision I, with more than a little help from St Dunstan's, go to cities and towns countrywide which, as a sighted person, I would possibly not have visited.

Since my sight loss forced me into early retirement when working on the railway as a Telephone Sales Clerk, life has not stopped for me. Now I would not have it any other way for such is the pleasure and privilege I find in doing the work of promoting St Dunstan's.

Finishing full-time employment on March 26th 1994 at Bristol Temple Meads, at the age of 57, I was determined not to let life pass me by. Taking into consideration the few talents I possessed I realised they could be put to good use by becoming an ambassador of the charity which has helped me so much into being independent and forming an interesting, challenging lifestyle.

When I look back on my initial two weeks training at Ovingdean where I was told

I would be doing archery and rifle shooting plus the customary, invaluable training on the computer with Janis, Gaye and the team, I have never had cause to doubt that if you want something badly enough it was going to be up to me to make it happen.

Never having heard of St Dunstan's before, my introduction was while at a Coffee morning at the local RNIB when a Steve Moseley asked me how I was getting on with computer studies at South Bristol College.

"Not very well," was my answer. Just two hours on a Tuesday morning was no use to me as I didn't have my own PC at home to maintain my studies. Wearing my Royal Air Force Association blazer at the time, Steve informed me about the work of St Dunstan's.

An application form was sent for, duly filled in and posted then before the dust had time to settle I was at our House on the Hill. What a transformation it has made to my life!

Apart from the sporting aspect I am now able to do picture framing again just as I used to as a sighted person.

In the Armed Forces we were taught never to volunteer for anything, but this went by the board for me when I decided to become a Public Speaker, then more recently, volunteering to take part in the Schools Programme.

You see, I feel a great sense of pride, pleasure and privilege when I can tell so many people about the most invaluable work carried out at Headquarters in London and our National Centre near Brighton.

Making many friends within the St Dunstan's family and those I meet at various speaking venues to which I and my colleagues get invited to seems to be an opportunity to promote such a worthy cause for future blinded Service and ex-Service men and women.

I will be 69 next August (no cards please) and propose continuing doing this area of work for as long as possible.

Welcome to ST DUNSTAN'S

Leonard Andrews of Luton, Bedfordshire served in the Royal Mechanical and Electrical Engineers from 1943 to 1947.

Sidney Bowden of Bognor Regis, Sussex served in the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment from 1938 to 1946.

Charles Brookfield of Sheffield, South Yorkshire served in the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1946.

Howard Cutter of Westerhope, Newcastle upon Tyne served in the Royal Air Force from 1948 to 1950.

Brian Elliott of Amesbury, Wiltshire served in the Royal Artillery from 1961 to 1985.

Kenneth Elsdon of Worthing, West Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1953 to 1955.

Archibald English of Shirley, Southampton, Hampshire served in the Royal Engineers from 1926 to 1945.

David Eyton-Jones of Chichester, West Sussex served in the Royal Sussex Regiment from 1942 to 1953.

Thomas Gannon of Lewes, East Sussex served in the Royal Fusiliers from 1940 to 1946.

Barrie Hathaway of Almwch, Ynys Mon served in the Royal Navy from 1970 to 1971 and also in the Royal Signals (TA) from 1981 to 82.

Edna Holford of Camborne, Cornwall served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1942 to 1946.

Evelyn Howarth of Brighton served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1942 to 1948.

Gary Largan of Gosport, Hampshire served in the Royal Navy from 1961 to 1985.

Alan Larkin of Horsham, West Sussex served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1947 to 1952.

Joseph Macfarlane of Felixstowe, Suffolk served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

Paul Meredith of Stafford, Staffordshire served in the Royal Marines from 1978 to 1982.

William Niles of Washington, Tyne and Wear served in the Lancashire Fusiliers and Border Regiment between 1946 and 1948.

George Pears of Norton Lees, Sheffield, Yorkshire served in the Duke of

Wellington Regiment from 1942 to 1945.

Rowland Peel of Norwich, Norfolk served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1946.

Jeffrey Staines of Swaffham, Norfolk served in the Royal Air Force from 1945 to 1948.

Henry Sweet of Thetford, Norfolk served in the Welch Regiment and Sherwood Foresters from 1940 to 1946.

Matilda Taylor of Glasgow served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1944 to 1945.

Ronald Topping of Taunton, Somerset served in the Royal Engineers, the Royal Artillery and Royal Warwickshire Regiment between 1938 and 1946.

Brian Turner of Hull, East Yorkshire served in the Royal Army Veterinary Corps from 1951 to 1964.

Kenneth Williams of Stroud, Gloucestershire served in the Royal Signals from 1939 to 1946.

Marie Wootten of Shepton Mallet, Somerset served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1942 to 1944.

BEER OF THE MONTH

by Colin Williamson

Newcastle Brown Ale. Perhaps the most popular bottled ale in England, this beer is surprisingly complex with a nutty flavour and a distinct malty taste to it. It must be served chilled or it loses some of its crispness but can in fact be over chilled to the point where the flavours and complexities are lost. Alcohol content is 4.7 abv. Pour slowly into a half glass, topping up frequently to preserve the head.



Ten Answers

Answers to the quiz on page 9.

- A) 100.
- B) Nitrogen.
- C) "M".
- D) Queen's Gallantry Medal.
- E) Northamptonshire.
- F) Vitamin A.
- G) U.
- H) A.
- I) W.
- J) Goodwood, Plumpton, Ludlow and Huntingdon.

Note:

Most people know the sentence "The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog" which contains all 26 letters of the alphabet. Such a sentence is known as a Pangram and here are one or two interesting ones which make good typing exercises for students mastering a typewriter or computer keyboard:

Five or six jet planes zoomed quickly by the tower.

Fred specialized in the job of making very quaint wax toys.

I have quickly spotted the four women dozing in the jury box.

Pack my box with five dozen liquor jugs.

Six big juicy steaks sizzled in a pan as five workmen left the quarry.

Uphill jogging will tax pounding heart muscle very quickly, better to be lazy.

FAMILY NEWS

BIRTHS

Congratulations on the birth of:

George Andrew Bill on February 4th James John Pugh on February 25th. They are both great-grandsons of Rose Haskey of Pinner, Middlesex, widow of *Henry Haskey*.

Rowan Kerrian Gladstone on December 7th. He is the great-grandson of *Kenneth and Win Williams* of Stroud, Gloucestershire.

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

George and Irene Oliver of Woodingdean, Brighton on February 18th.

DIAMOND ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Samuel and Kitty Wrest of Barnsley, South Yorkshire on February 28th.

John and Millie Boagey of Durham, County Durham on March 2nd.

Henry and Sybil Gerard of Woodbridge, Suffolk on March 2nd.

Jim and Valerie Lile of Newton Abbot, Devon on March 7th.

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Charles and Peggy Blockley of Sileby, Leicestershire who celebrated 65 years of marriage on February 19th.

Robert and Dee Chandler of Peacehaven, East Sussex who celebrated 62 years of marriage on February 26th.

Robert and Bertha Webb of Saltdean, Brighton who celebrated 68 years of marriage on February 26th.

Kenneth and Eileen Seaman of Eccles Manchester who celebrated 61 years of marriage on March 3rd.

Maxwell and Joan Ash of Sidmouth, Devon who celebrated 62 years of marriage on March 4th.

Joseph and Lilian Pecket of Gorton, Greater Manchester who celebrated 62 years of marriage on March 14th.

Cyril and Bett Edwards of Nuneaton, Warwickshire who celebrated 63 years of marriage on March 15th.

Hugh and Mary Hartley of Southampton, Hampshire who celebrated 64 years of marriage on March 24th.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to:

Gwyneira Henry of Gosport Hampshire who has earned the following IT qualifications: Computers in The Community (Level one, six credits), Introduction to Digital Photography (Level one, three credits), Introduction to DTP using Microsoft Publisher (Level one, three credits), Introduction to Using Computers (Entry Level, one credit) and Introduction to the Internet and e-mail (Entry Level, one credit). She is currently pursuing another course, Computer Knowledge, Understanding How They Work at Southampton University. She attributes her success to St Dunstan's encouraging her later husband *David Tudor Henry* to take up IT.

St Dunstaner *Iain Millard* of Saltdean,

Brighton on completing the Sussex Beacon Half Marathon in two hours and 38 minutes.

DEATHS

We regret to announce the death of:

Ernest Obern on February 19th. He was the husband of St Dunstaner *Gwen Obern* of Aberdare, Mid Glamorgan.

Rose Glover of Pontardawe, Swansea, West Glamorgan on January 28th. She was the widow of *William Glover*.

Ruby Andrew of Welbourn, Lincoln, Lincolnshire on February 24th. She was the widow of *Geoffrey Andrew*.

Joan Hale of Stourbridge, West Midlands on March 2nd. She was the widow of *Eric Hale*.

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.

Fredrick Dunsdon National Fire Service

Fredrick Dunsdon of Ashford, Kent died on February 11th, aged 93. He had worked for a coal merchant, tailor, leather processor and cabinet maker before joining the National Fire Service in 1941. He and his colleagues followed American and British Forces into Europe, landing in Ostend and providing support in Belgium, Holland and Germany. As local fire services re-established themselves, he became a fire-fighter at Southwark and later at Erith, Kent. After retiring in 1968, he became a school caretaker. His interests included woodworking. Our sympathy goes to his son Raymond, daughters Angela and Theresa and all members of the family.

George Pickard Royal Engineers

George Pickard of Rednal, Birmingham, West Midlands died on February 15th, aged 86. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1994. As a young man, he was a keen boxer, contending as a heavyweight in Birmingham amateur championships. This interest continued when he joined the Royal Engineers in 1940. He was evacuated from Dunkirk on the Fall of France and posted to North Africa. Having fought through to Sicily, he was taken prisoner in Italy. He was injured during an escape attempt, losing one eye and suffering piercing wounds to the other. Discharged in 1946, he worked as a labourer. His interests included music. Our sympathy goes to his daughters and all members of the family.

Herbert Johnson Suffolk Regiment

Herbert Frank Bradnam Johnson of Poringland, Norwich, Norfolk died on February 15th, aged 93. Originally a farm labourer, he joined the Suffolk Regiment in 1931. After six months in Bury St Edmunds, he was posted to India as a part-time machine gunner in Madras and Mhow. In 1939, he was deployed to France but returned home after being wounded. He returned to the depot to train recruits and was stationed in Wales when he lost his eye in an explosion. He was later deployed into Europe before being discharged in 1946. In civilian life he was alternately, a gardener and tractor driver before servicing sewage pumps for Anglian Water. Our sympathy goes to his daughters and all members of the family.

Władysław Scigała Polish Resettlement Corps

Władysław Ścigała of Thetford, Norfolk died on February 14th, aged 86. Originally an apprentice locksmith in Święcica Mała, Wołkowysk, Białystok, Poland, he was deported to the USSR after their invasion in 1939. He was released in 1941 for the

purpose of joining the Polish Armed Forces. Posted to 10 Infantry Division, he was moved into Iran where they came under British Command in 1942. Passing through Iraq and Palestine, he transferred to 3 Carpathian Rifle Division in Palestine. He subsequently saw action on the rivers Sangro, Rapido and Senio, the Battle for Monte Cassino and the Gustav Line. After the Battle for Bologna and Lombardy Plain he was posted to the UK and enlisted in the Polish Resettlement Corps in 1946. Discharged in 1948, he turned to motor car repair and manufacture, remaining in light engineering until retirement. Our sympathy goes to his daughters and all of the family.

Richard Asprey Royal Army Ordnance Corps

Richard Asprey of Stockton Heath, Warrington, Cheshire died on February 18th, aged 86. He worked for British Aluminium before joining the South Lancashire Regiment in 1939. He served in Norway before being posted to Sandwich, Kent in anticipation of a German invasion. He transferred to the Royal Signals in 1941 and then the Royal Army Ordnance Corps in 1944. He lost an eye to a shrapnel wound received during the Dieppe raid. Discharged in 1948, he returned to British Aluminium but later joined a clothing manufacturer. Our sympathy goes to his granddaughters and all of the family.

David Paterson Royal Air Force

David Paterson of East Ogwell, Newton Abbot died on February 20th, aged 81. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1942, training in Canada as a pilot and radar operator. He later became a glider specialist, flying supplies into the Burma jungle where landing strips were too short for powered aircraft. He was a warrant Officer when discharged in 1948. His interests included making working models and other engineering projects such as static steam engines. Our sympathy goes to his daughters and all members of the family.

Leonard Verrier**Royal Air Force**

Leonard Cecil Verrier of Ruislip, Middlesex died on February 21st, aged 78. He was an apprentice engineer when called up to join the Royal Air Force in 1945. He served as a driver at airfields around the UK before being posted to Burma. Demobbed in 1948, he returned to engineering, later concentrating on administration. Our sympathy goes to his widow Pamela, daughter Lyn, and all members of the family.

Franciszek Drzewicki**Polish Resettlement Corps**

Franciszek Drzewicki of Downend, Bristol, Avon died on February 22nd, aged 92. He had been a St Dunstaner since 2001. Originally a policeman in Kołomyja, Poland, he escaped to France after the 1939 invasion. Initially, he joined Polish Forces under French command at Coëtquidan, but was evacuated to the UK in 1940. He was then posted to 1 Rifle Brigade and later 9 Rifle Battalion, 1 Polish Armoured Division. In 1944, during the push back into Europe, he was blown up between Caen and Falaise, suffering wounds to both legs. He was awarded the Polish Cross for Valour. In 1947, he transferred to the Polish Resettlement Corps. After discharge in 1949, he moved to Bristol and worked for Remploi. In his spare time, he kept pigeons, rabbits and budgies. Our sympathy goes to his widow Jill, their son and all members of the family.

Dr Michael Connell**Royal Navy Voluntary Reserve**

Dr Michael Charles Connell, MB, BCh, MRCS, LRCP of Carlisle, Cumbria died on February 25th, aged 88. He had been a St Dunstaner since 2001. He studied at Cambridge and then trained at the Middlesex Hospital before joining the Royal Naval Voluntary Reserve in 1943. He served as Surgeon Lieutenant on HMS *Forester* and HMS *Manners* which was torpedoed twice by

U1051, the second blast tearing off the ship's stern. He was Mentioned in Despatches and was commended for bravery, great endurance and devotion to duty. Discharged in 1945, he returned to the Middlesex, specialising in Radiology. He then moved to Carlisle and then as a Consultant to Northampton where he retired as Director of Radiology in 1980. His interests included fishing, shot, gardening and carpentry. Our sympathy goes to his daughters and all of the family.

Ronald Powell**Corps of Military Police**

Ronald George Powell of Hove, East Sussex died on February 27th, aged 92. He was an apprentice electrician before joining the Royal Sussex Regiment in 1940. A year later he transferred to the Corps of Military Police serving in Chichester and Westerham. Discharged in 1942, he worked for SEEBord as an emergency electrician and was a union shop steward. Our sympathy goes to his sons, daughter and all of the family.

Keith Bruce**Royal Air Force**

Keith Bruce of Bishops Waltham, Southampton died on March 1st, aged 93. He was a radio repair engineer before joining the Royal Air Force in 1940. He then served as a radar mechanic in the UK, Egypt and Crete. After being demobbed in 1946, he became a television repair engineer, later becoming service manager. He and his wife also ran a guest house on the Isle of Wight. Our sympathy goes to his widow Elsie, son Ian and all other members of the family.

Clifford Turner**Royal Navy**

Clifford Turner of Ryde, Isle of Wight died on March 1st, aged 80. He joined the Royal Navy in 1946 and served in Cyprus, Gibraltar, Italy, Malta, Palestine and Saudi Arabia. He was discharged in 1954. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

Thomas Frankland**Royal Air Force**

Thomas Frankland of Chelmsford, Essex died on March 6th, aged 89. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1940 and trained as a wireless technician, deploying throughout the UK. After D-Day, he was posted into France with a refuelling and re-arming unit moving forward in support of the army. His team entered Germany before the end of the war. He then served in a repair workshop in Leopoldville until he was demobbed in 1946. Back in the UK, he worked in television repairs for HMV but later joined the civil service as a wireless technician supporting the Police radio system. He was a member of St Dunstan's Amateur Radio Society, callsign G41NM. Our sympathy goes to his daughter Patricia, son Thomas and all other members of the family.

Harry Stockall**Corps of Military Police**

Harry Frederick Stockall of Oldbury, West Midlands died on March 5th, aged 89. He had worked for a decorator and in a gearbox factory before joining the Coldstream Guards in 1935. After training at Caterham, he was posted to Welling Barracks which was followed by public duties at Windsor. He was released to the reserve in 1939, but immediately called up for duty with the Corps of Military Police. He served in Egypt, Palestine and Greece. Taken prisoner in Greece, he was taken to Germany via Yugoslavia. Demobbed in 1946, he began work for the General Post Office. Our sympathy goes to his son Raymond and all other members of the family.

Norman Killick**London Irish Rifles**

Norman John Killick of Weybridge, Surrey died on March 8th, aged 82. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1982. He joined the London Irish Rifles in 1942, serving with them in Sicily, Italy and Iraq. He lost his left

eye and suffered gunshot wounds to his arms and legs at Anzio in 1944. Discharged soon after, he returned to the UK, working as a window dresser for Messers Alexandrines. His interests included gardening and DIY. Our sympathy goes to his widow Eileen, sons Paul and Nigel and all members of the family.

Walter Fuller**Royal Engineers**

Walter Amos Fuller of Burgess Hill, West Sussex died on March 9th, aged 96. Originally a gardener in Henfield, he joined the Royal Engineers in 1940. He took part in the Normandy landings, Vimy Ridge and fought through to Germany. After his discharge in 1947, he resumed work as a gardener but later worked for a building company. His interests included sports. Our sympathy goes to his daughters Patricia and Bridget and all members of the family.

Guy Bilcliff**Royal Northumberland Fusiliers**

Guy Bilcliff, born Billclough, of Lichfield, Staffordshire died on March 13th, aged 87. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1943. He was a miner before joining the 1st Battalion, Royal Northumberland Fusiliers in 1940. In 1942, he was wounded by shell fragments during action in Libya, losing his right eye. Taken prisoner, he was transferred to a camp in Italy where his brother was also being held. (A second brother had also been taken prisoner). St Dunstan's were advised of his situation by the Red Cross, though sending out an initial aid package was complicated by a ban on Braille in Italy. Repatriated the following year, he came to Church Stretton. An operation restored some vision in his left eye and he took up a position in a timber yard. However, his sight deteriorated and he retrained in boot-repairs and later as a capstan lathe operator. His interests included gardening and toymaking. Our sympathy goes to his sons David, Brian and Robert, daughter Pamela and all of the family.

St Dunstaners art is an inspiration



The tactile artwork of St Dunstaners from all around the country was highly commended in the Drawing Inspiration Awards 2005. The collective clay creations, a multitude of individually crafted leaves, assembled into an Autumnal frieze for October's Big Draw event, and also Art Beyond Sight Awareness Month and World Sight Day. A certificate of merit congratulating St Dunstan's was presented by Roald Dahl illustrator Quinten Blake at the British Museum on March 30th.



Congratulations to 20-mile hikers



St Dunstaner Steve Pendleton congratulated cadets at Sutton Valence School near Maidstone, Kent on March 1st. Julian Rodriguez, George Elliott, Elliot Hawkins, Joshua Stanford, Daniel Love, James Allington, Luke Clements, Finlay Simpson, and Thomas Newman walked 20 miles along the Greensand Way from Ashford last year, responding to the St Dunstan's Cadet Challenge. They raised £300 to benefit blind ex-service men and women. Steve also presented Headmaster Joe Davies with a St Dunstan's plaque as a token of appreciation.