

May 2006

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ST DUNSTAN'S Review



FOR BLIND EX-SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN



From the Chairman



As I write this, the wonderful snowdrops and crocuses have gone; the early daffodils are in full bloom, so perhaps Spring has at last arrived? It is unfortunate that, having suffered the worst two winter droughts for many years, hose pipe bans are putting gardens in the South under threat. The wise virgins will have stocked up with rain water butts.

I met Sue Elliot from the National Memorial Arboretum (now under RBL management) and she reported, with excellent photographs, that the 'St Dunstan's Way', that prime slot between the Centre and the Chapel, is mature, in full flower and smells wonderful. It also appealed to a pair of Mallard ducks who brought up a family of twelve ducklings oblivious of all the activity around them. When old enough they were marched to the river. What a gutsy performance and very appropriate for St Dunstan's Way. Good luck to all you keen gardeners.

Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN

ST DUNSTAN'S Review May 2006 No 957

Cover Story: St Dunstaners Matthew Rhodes and Gerry Jones join with General Sir Peter de la Billiere to present Cadet Gunner Robert Peowrie whose unit, 97 Detachment RA, won the St Dunstan's Cadet Challenge Trophy. More on page 13.

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ST DUNSTAN'S Calendar

MAY

Gardening April 30th-May 6th
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

JUNE

Writers' Forum June 3rd
Fishing (III) June 5th-9th
Outdoor Bowling June 8th
50YearBadgeHolders June 9th-12th
Outdoor Bowling June 12th
Golf June 17th-18th
Widows' Week (I) June 18th-24th
Outdoor Bowling June 19th
Veterans Day June 27th

London celebration leads UK for Veterans Day

Noticeboard

Dates for your diary and useful information

YOUNG AND OLD UNITE FOR BRITAIN'S FIRST VETERANS DAY

NATION SAYS THANK YOU: Under Secretary of State for Defence, Don Touhig, MP, recently announced a national 'Veterans Day' to honour and unite all who have served in our armed forces. Veterans Day will be held on June 27th, coinciding with the 150th anniversary of the bestowing of the first Victoria Cross and the 50th anniversary of the Victoria Cross and George Cross Association.

An inaugural event is being hosted in London at Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park, adjacent to the Imperial War Museum (nearest tube, Lambeth North on the Bakerloo line) on Tuesday June 27th from 10:00-19:00. The event is family friendly and free admission. Visitors will be able to see displays from Army Physical Training Instructors and their ever popular un-armed combat displays. The Royal Logistics Corps are demonstrating field cookery through the ages from Crimean War to modern healthy foods. A Military Band will perform throughout the day playing some old favourites. Visitors will also be able to enter the educational marquee and the Confederation of British Service and Ex-Service Organisations (COBSEO) will have a marquee uniting organisations such as St Dunstan's, BLESMA and Combat Stress. Some of the youngest members of the Service communities will display their art collections.

The Pegasus Collection are bringing some of their memorabilia and recruiting teams and displays will also be on show. The St Dunstan's hot air balloon will be there, weather permitting, as well as other displays, re-enactors and enthusiasts.

Mr Touhig said: "I am truly excited about the celebrations in London. But I am also keen that Veterans Day should be a genuinely national occasion. So, I am calling on communities across Britain to organise their own local celebrations for Veterans Day."

He added: "This follows the great success of last year's Veterans Awareness Week. Every year, June 27th will be our chance to thank our veterans for the sacrifices they have made for us. It will also let us honour the serving men and women of our Armed Forces. In Britain we can vote, learn, speak and live freely because our armed forces have defended our values. Our message is simple: if you enjoy your freedom, thank our veterans."

"Veterans come in all ages, shapes and sizes. They may be old or young but they have the same distinction. They have worn their country's uniform with pride and have honoured their promise to defend their country."

Everyone is welcome and more information can be found on www.veteransagency.mod.uk/veteransday.



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BLIND GARDENERS CLUB

SEEDS OF INSPIRATION: Gardeners with sight loss will be reaping the benefits of a new club launched by Thrive on March 21st. The National Blind Gardeners Club (NBGC) will offer gardening advice, advance information on special events for gardeners with sight loss, access to a specialist library, a range of gardening booklets all in accessible formats and affiliation of local gardening clubs. It will also provide a national voice for gardeners with sight loss.

March also saw the announcement of the NBGC's annual competition to find the Blind Gardeners of the Year 2006 with a prestigious panel of judges including Pippa Greenwood, the garden writer and broadcaster. The categories are Inspirational (nominated), Wildlife, Small Space, Inventive and Young Blind Gardener of the Year. St Dunstan's is supporting the Inspirational Blind Gardener of the Year category.

Prizes in the competition include hampers, seed vouchers and specially adapted tools to help visually impaired gardeners. Each winner will also receive a wood-turned trophy from St. Dunstan's. For further information, entry forms or additional leaflets please contact the project coordinator Lucy Morrell at Thrive on 0118 988 5688 or e-mail bgoty@thrive.org.uk. Membership of the Club starts at £8 a year to those on benefits, the normal cost is £20 a year. The first thousand new subscribers will receive special offers from supporters Suttons Seeds.

With Spring in the air, Harry Beevers has some questions on gardeners and gardening on page 9 while Peter Moore moves his Crysanthus to larger pots on page 14.

HOTEL DISCOUNTS WITH DISABLED PERSONS RAILCARD

HOLDERS BOOK WITH TOURISMFORALL: Holders of a Disabled Persons Railcard can currently take advantage of a 25 per cent discount at participating hotels in the InterContinental Hotels Group (including Holiday Inn, Express by Holiday Inn, Crowne Plaza and Intercontinental). Bookings should be made via Tourismforall. Telephone 08451 249 973 or e-mail info@tourismforall.org.uk. Please quote your Disabled Persons Railcard number when claiming your discount.

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 be 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. For more information on the Activities Week contact Tom Hatt in the Sports department to ask for a booking form. Call Tom on 01273 391465.

WINDOW REPLACEMENT UPDATE

APOLOGY FOR DISRUPTION: Work recently started to replace weather-worn bricks and windows at St Dunstan's Ovingdean. Some adjustments have been made to the original schedule because of Ovingdean's status as a listed building and also to prepare rooms for occupants. We hope to keep disruption to a minimum and beg your forbearance if some rooms are unavailable while work proceeds.

PATIENTLINE CONCESSIONS

FREE TELEPHONE FOR PATIENTS SUBJECT TO APPROVAL: Many hospitals provide a Patientline service, providing telephone, television, radio and computer at each hospital bed. Patients normally pre-pay for use of the TV and phone facility. However, patients who are over 60 or long stay are usually able to claim the service, or at least some of it, free for the duration of their admission. The free service usually has to be authorised by ward nursing staff. The level of service may vary area to area.

STAY ON TRACK WITH METRO

ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS: The 30th annual Metro/LSF Athletics Championships will be held at Waltham Forest Track, North London on June 24th. Open to blind and visually impaired males and females of all ages, all competitors will receive either a medal or a performance certificate. Guide Runners may be arranged with advance notice. The closing date for entries, evening event places and accommodation is June 1st. B1 athletes are advised that they will need to supply their own shades.

For more details and entry forms, contact Alan Whetherly, LSF, Ground Floor, Leroy House, 436 Essex Rd, London N1 3QP. Tel: 020 7354 8666. Fax: 020 7354 8787. E-mail: alan@londonforumsportsforum.org.uk.

CALLING ESSEX ST DUNSTANERS

THE ILFORD CHAPTER: St Dunstaner John Wilson of Ilford, Essex would like to get in touch with St Dunstaners in his area. He can be contacted on 020 8220 0406.

LAST CHANCE TO ENTER REVIEW DERBY SWEEPSTAKE

CLOSING DATE MAY 31: With the 2006 Epsom Vodafone Derby scheduled for June 3rd, final tickets are being issued in the **Review** Derby Sweepstake. The draw is open to all St Dunstaners, beneficiaries of the Diana Gubbay Trust, widows and widowers. The closing date is May 31st and the draw will be made that day.

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. 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.

Details of prize distribution were published last issue. No prize won in the sweepstake will be paid to any person other than the person to whom the winning ticket was sold.

LET'S DANCE AGAIN

GET READY TO RUMBA: The Dance Week will be held at Ovingdean November 12th-18th. "We owe Dick Lake a great vote of thanks for giving us the opportunity to go ahead with this event," said St Dunstaner David Schofield. "Booking commences in the middle of May and I hope those who did not manage to get there last year will do so this year. I look forward to seeing you all, old friends and new." Bookings should be placed through Jackie Castle on 01273 391422.

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.

Perils of using CCTV for embroidering

During the ten years before I became blind I enjoyed embroidering at quite a high level. Blindness put an end to it!

On my St Dunstan's induction course in November, I was shown a CCTV with a moveable camera. I suggested that it might be an aid for blind embroiderers. In March this year I was invited back to follow up my idea.

Phil, the craft instructor, had set up a similar CCTV and between us we tried

out my idea. After a great deal of manoeuvring of the camera and the piece of embroidery we were working on it was obvious that the machine would not focus fast enough to keep pace with a reasonable speed of working.

We moved to a more versatile CCTV and after more experiments I came to the conclusion that we might reduce the focussing problem by mounting the camera and the fabric we were embroidering on a frame so

that the distance between them remained constant. This unit could be attached to a CCTV reader by a cable as an accessory.

Unfortunately I do not think the idea would be all that clever. However, a Durham St Dunstaner I discussed this with told me he had seen blind people at a college for the blind near St Andrews using a CCTV for embroidering in the 1980s.

**Fred May,
Sheffield, South Yorkshire**

Derby day to remember

I wish to report on the most wonderful day I have had for many years. St Dunstan's Derby Reunion on March 23rd at the Midland Hotel was such a special occasion.

Thank you, especially Dianne Wye, for organising this event and to the Chief Executive who I was sat beside during the dinner. It was a wonderful experience. We exchanged pleasantries and experiences and I learnt that he originally came from my home town of Sheffield. It was a most wonderful gathering,

thoroughly enjoyable. I can't see them, but I met many people, especially those at table number two - greetings to you all!

It was such a wonderful thing for people such as I who are blind to have their carers with them and to meet other people. It was extremely well organised and the proceedings went according to plan. The service was extremely good. Top class! Well done, the Midland Hotel.

**Jack Morley,
Sheffield, South Yorkshire**

Archers dominate BBS Championships

THE BRITISH BLIND Sports Archery Indoor Championship took place at the National Sport Centre Lilleshall on April 1st.

St Dunstan's archers were well represented on the field that day and ultimately amongst the winners.

Four Gold medals were won by St Dunstaners Harry Docherty of Lancaster, Peter Hammond of Rottingdean, David Poyner of Sale, Manchester and Patrick Sidnell of Chipenham. Harry Docherty and David Poyner broke National records in the process.

Pat Sidnell reports

Four Silver medals were claimed by St Dunstaners Norman Perry of Ovingdean, Terry Ottewell of Brecon, Marjorie Scott of Peacehaven and Tom Roddy of Darlington.

A Bronze medal was won by Clive Jones of Market Drayton who also won The David Chrissie Trophy, for the highest reduction in his handicap over the past year.

This success is due to the coaching staff and spotters of the club who worked hard to ensure the archers were fit and ready for the competition.



New padre

St Dunstan's new padre is already a familiar figure to those in Rottingdean. Father Martin Morgan of St Margaret's Church recently accepted the role of Chaplain to St Dunstan's. His first official duty was the conduct the Service at the St Dunstan's Ex-Prisoners of War Reunion on April 9th.

BALANCING THE BOOKS

Comedy classic? **Ted Bunting** finds that he doesn't believe it!

One Foot in the Grave
Author: David Renwick
Reader: Richard Wilson
Catalogue Number TB 11560
Duration: 8 hours, 20 minutes

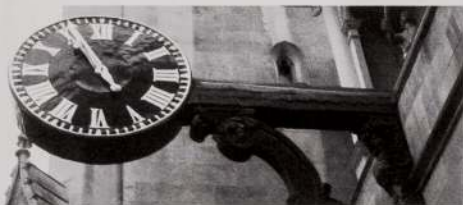
I am reliably informed that *One Foot in the Grave* is, or was, a TV comedy programme and that the star of the show reads this recording. He does it with undeniable enthusiasm

too, following the irascible Victor Meldrew from one improbable and even impossible situation to its ludicrous sequel. And then he goes on again in a ridiculous progression that I'm sure would be laughable were it not so very silly. "Too daft to laugh at" is the phrase they use around here and there are several chapters in the

book where the expression fits like a Saville Row suit. Surely the television series must have been vastly superior to this codswallop or it wouldn't have survived the first pathetic episode. Or is it possibly the case, I wonder, that I, like Mr Meldrew himself, am just too demanding and that henceforth I should be satisfied with mediocrity?

It strikes me...

with Gog and Magog



Gog recalls a little excursion to Babylon a few years or so ago. He didn't really mean to lean against that tower so forcefully, and who would expect it to be so fragile, but over it went and as for the communication problems that followed, well ...

Magog meanwhile, hears of a Tommy who having survived the devastation of Ypres, found love with a French girl and settled on the Continent to raise a family. Their son grows to manhood speaking fluent French and English and gains an active grasp of several other European languages. Unpleasant rumblings from the direction of Berlin encourage the family to cross the Channel, though the prospect of a new war is fairly obvious. Enlisting with the Army, the son points out his Euro-linguistic skills. "So what do they do?" he asks. "They post me to India!" Bore da, it is!

Gog hears that Trudi speaks! In the helium hail of Lina Lamont "Don't we all?" Still Magog is concerned that *The Archers* will never withstand the SAS assault envisaged by a St Dunstaner on page 16.

Dutch memorial statue is liberated from erosion



Maureen Lovering, right, and her conservation team work on the statue of a British Tommy liberating a Dutch girl.

THE DUTCH MEMORIAL statue is back on display at St Dunstan's Ovingdean having undergone a period of restoration by conservationist Maureen Lovering and her team. It has been relocated in the fourth floor bullnose.

A gift from the people of Holland, the statue was created from two six foot high blocks of elm wood by local sculptor Trevor Roberts. Having cut the basic shape of a Tommy being greeted by a Dutch girl, he carved the finer details on site in the garden. The finished work was unveiled by the Dutch ambassador on April 11th in 1996. Apart from ten years of

coastal elements, the statue has recently come under attack from hornets who saw the base as the perfect location for their hive. Maureen and her co-workers took steps to counter erosion and the damage caused by the hornets. They have restored the lettering and reinforced parts of the two figures.

The restored statue was taken up in the lift to its new location by the Maintenance Team at Ovingdean.

St Dunstaner Ray Sheriff, who took part in the Dutch liberation, and his wife Betty laid a selection of tulips on the statue on April 11th.

Celia Pease

CELIA PEASE PASSED away on March 5th. Many St Dunstaners will know her from nearly six decades supporting Far East Prisoners of War. Over those years, she assisted many FEPOWs with war pension enquiries, holidays for widows and activities of the London FEPOW Association. Celia met her husband Alec, a returned FEPOW, while working for the Royal Air Force Association. She soon became a strident campaigner for the welfare of the Far Eastern returnees and was involved in the foundation of several organisations dedicated to their care.

In the midst of a frantic schedule, she also served as governor for two primary schools and acted as Election Agent for future Prime Minister Edward Heath. She later canvassed for Heath's successor in Bexleyheath Cyril Townsend. Our sympathy goes to her husband Alec and son Edward.

Happy retirement



Richard Glenday retired on March 21st. St Dunstaners may recall him joining PBK in 1995, though he later transferred to St Dunstan's Housekeeping.

Ten questions on...

Gardens, Gardeners and Gardening

Dig up those answers, says Harry Beevers

- 1) Featured in the 1977 film *A Bridge too Far*, Operation "Market Garden" in September 1944 was the code-name for the Allied airborne attack on towns in which country?
- 2) What is the name of the tool designed to be used by gardeners for making holes in the soil where cuttings, seedlings or small plants are to be set out?
- 3) The parklands around Blenheim Palace, Harewood House and Burley were designed by which landscape gardener born in 1716?
- 4) What name is used for a glass or plastic cup, originally bell-shaped, under which plants are protected from frost?
- 5) Which colourful beetles are well-known for controlling aphids and scaled insects around the garden?
- 6) For what purpose would a gardener normally use Sodium Chlorate?
- 7) Which English county has been given the name "Garden of England"?
- 8) In Botany what term is used to describe plants which normally live for more than two years?
- 9) Which TV horticulturalist designed and tended the *Blue Peter* garden from 1974 until his death in 1988?
- 10) What is the name of the sporting venue in the city of New York, the scene of many heavyweight boxing world title fights and where basketball and ice-hockey were televised for the first time?

Answers have been planted on page 20.

Chrysanthemum growing tips are on page 14.

SYNCOPATING SELECTIONS

RAF St Dunstaner Dave Simmonds of Stourbridge, West Midlands introduces his choice of music

I STILL HAVE, in working order, the family 'Wireless Set' on which I well recall hearing, between my Mother's sobs, Chamberlain announcing "...we are at war with Germany."

In those days, radio apart, our entertainment came from a wind up gramophone. Yes, I still have that as well, plus a collection of '78' records!

Fold your wings of love around me from the master of romantic melody Ivor Novello, encapsulates that era, and puts into words what Mom unfailingly did during our lives together.

Basic training at RAF Padgate in the ice and snow of January 1956 was no picnic; but there was good humour and fellowship in between the sweating and swearing. I left there fitter and heavier than I've ever been, and our passing out parade to Walford Davis's *Royal Air Force March Past*. with all those heels coming down as one round the icy square, was such an experience, though few admitted it at the time, that many now remember it with pride.

Up to the onset of blindness amateur photography was always a most rewarding part of my life. As well as processing and darkroom work, I enjoyed compiling audio-visual 'shows' by coupling colour slides with appropriate music.

Accordingly my third choice is the *Intermezzo* from *Cavalleria Rusticana* by Mascagni, used in a sequence capturing the magic of morning sunlight stealing through autumn woodland and transforming it's chill dawn mists into glowing warmth and colour.

Moving to a Saturday evening in the 1970's - or at least before multi-screen cinemas had reached our area. Our son had talked us into seeing *Abba - the movie*,

and walking home afterwards I was suffused with the joie-de-vivre radiated by that wonderful group. *Thank you for the music* by Abba will always bring back the spirit of that special night.

My final choice takes us to Worcester's ornate Guildhall, where we had lunch one chilly and cheerless day last autumn. Whispy sleet was falling as we came out into Foregate Street, there to be greeted by the most beautiful violin solo I've ever heard. It was Elgar's *Salut D'Amour* played by a girl, probably in her late teens. Neither the foul weather or the indifference of the passers by disturbed her calm serenity, or the lovely expression on her face which told me that she, as I, was totally lost in the music.

And my favourite of the five? *Thank you for the music!* Says it all!

BEER OF THE MONTH

by Colin Williamson

Weihenstephaner Kristall Weissbier. A superb white beer, brewed by Bayerische Staatsbrauerei Weihenstephan of Freising, Germany, who claim to be the oldest brewery in the world, having been established in 1040. It is full of rich fresh aromas, slight hints of banana and blackcurrant with a wonderful clear look and palate to it. Go on, give it a swirl and sniff the freshness, a pleasant reminder of what's to come. Available from most large supermarkets. ABV 5.4 per cent.

We cried at Tyne Cot Cemetery

St Dunstaner Dennis Mills visits the scene of WWI horror!

ON MARCH 13th, my wife and I went on a five-day holiday to Ostend which included visits to Bruges, Ypres, Flanders and Passendale. The journey by coach was uneventful except for a hold up at the Euro Tunnel where we were delayed because the train scheduled was over weight. However we arrived at Ostend in good time late afternoon – the Bar was still open.

The next day we visited Bruges, a very picturesque city with a lovely square surrounded by shops mainly displaying chocolate and lace, made your mouth water just to look. They also say there are more canals in Bruges than Venice, so we decided to go on a trip on the main canal sight seeing, the weather was glorious at the start but Murphy's law applied and the weather turned and the wind became very chilly so on leaving the boat we found a little "pub" where we had a hot chocolate with a dollop of whipped fresh cream on top together with a large brandy – this soon warmed us up.

The third day was the 'The big one' we travelled by coach to Ypres where we picked up a guide, a lady named Simone. She was a

very knowledgeable lady who described the journey through Flanders Fields telling us of the battles which took place and showing the smaller cemeteries – French, Belgium etc. The guide was very interesting and descriptive and by the time we arrived at Passendale-Tyne Cot Cemetery a gentle hush had settled over the party. Everyone was amazed at the number of headstones, row upon row as far as the eye could see, it made one feel very humble and sad. On reading some of the inscriptions several people were showing some emotion and many were openly crying. Some of our party had relatives buried there and others – like my wife had relatives who had taken part in the battles (her father was taken prisoner). We continued the tour with Simone personally escorting me to the Great Wall where 35,000 names are inscribed with their respective regiments.

We returned to the coach then visited the Hooze Crater Museum, full of World War I memorabilia. During the return journey to Ypres and the Menin Gate, Simone recited *Flanders Fields* - there wasn't a dry eye in the party. The Menin Gate is a

beautiful structure inscribed with 25,000 names of soldiers missing in action. All very moving, particularly as the *Last Post* is played every evening at 20:00hrs.

On our return to Ypres we visited the Cathedral and lit a candle in remembrance and ... yes, we went to a restaurant had a good lunch washed down with a carafe of wine! A very happy day, but sad in some ways.

All who attended were very satisfied with the way the trip was organised, the consideration, compassion shown was first class. The Belgium people were also very kind going out of their way to help when required. Thank you to G Lines for arranging a wonderful trip.

RAF COLTISHALL BID FAREWELL TO LAST LADY OF WWI AIR

A 107-year-old woman believed to be the last female veteran of the First World War died on March 2nd. Alice Baker of Norfolk served in the Royal Flying Corps on aircraft maintenance. She kept in touch with RAF Coltishall which was represented at her funeral on March 9th.

Blinded Indian Soldier aims to become master of economics

A BLINDED INDIAN soldier who had to endure 18-months of reconstructive surgery after being injured by a landmine explosion has embarked on a one-year Master's degree at the London School of Economics. Major Gopal Mitra, who served in 15 Mahar Regiment, has already claimed academic success by becoming the first blind student to complete a post-graduate course at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) in Mumbai, India. He qualified as a social worker with an MA in Social Welfare and is hoping to gain further experience working in an African conflict zone.

Major Mitra used JAWS screenreading software to prepare for his exams at TISS after training at the National Institute for the Visually Handicapped (NIVH) in Dehra Dun. He also went through a programme of rehabilitation at NIVH. "Travelling to the Institute on my own, using public transport and negotiating my way around the narrow slum lanes during field work have been great teachers of mobility," he told *The Times of India* in May last year. He also emerged as best student out of a 200-strong intake.



Gopal and Sreerupa.

NIVH started life in 1942, when the Indian Government approached St Dunstan's Chairman Ian Fraser to sequester the services of New Zealand's Sir Clutha Mackenzie. He set up a St Dunstan's outpost in a former internment camp at Dehra Dun, offering rehabilitation and vocational training for blinded Indian soldiers and sailors. Management of the centre was assumed by the Government of India in 1950 and it has continued to develop as an establishment dedicated to provision of rehabilitation services for the visually impaired.

The rehabilitation course was not Major Mitra's first visit to Dehra Dun. He trained at the Indian Military Academy there when preparing for life as an army officer. Commissioned into 15 Mahar in 1995, he was decorated with the Sena

Medal for gallantry after counter-terrorist operations in Assam in January 2000. Eight months after that, he was injured when a landmine exploded during a search-and-destroy operation in Kupwara, Jammu and Kashmir.

Major Gopal Mitra and his wife, Sreerupa, visited St Dunstan's Ovingdean on March 22nd. Sreerupa is also a social worker having graduated from TISS. Her father, Captain (Retd) J.K. Sengupta also lost his sight when his tank was hit by anti-tank shells in the 1965 Indo-Pakistan War. An alumni of Dehra Dun, he subsequently underwent six weeks of rehabilitation training at St Dunstan's Ovingdean in 1966. "I met a lot of Britishers with a similar disability," he said. "Seeing them go about their work inspired me a lot."

The Calcutta-born soldier moved to Siliguri in 1972 where the Government allotted him a gas agency. He married and in 1990 set up the Prerona Educational Centre with the North Bengal Council for the Disabled. The centre currently has over 100 physically disabled pupils and also operates an outreach programme for 300 villages.

SAS chief presents St Dunstaner with Bosnia Peacekeeping medal



St Dunstaner Gerry Jones stands to attention as Sir Peter pins the UN medal on Matthew Rhodes' lapel.

A ST DUNSTANER'S SERVICE during peacekeeping operations in Bosnia was feted by the officer who commanded British forces during the liberation of Kuwait in the 1990s.

Matthew Rhodes of Peachaven was presented with his United Nations Bosnia medal by General Sir Peter de la Billiere on March 16th. They were both attending a presentations night at the South East London Army Cadet Force Headquarters in Blackheath.

Cadets and instructors were presented with vocational certificates achieved during the last year. Several cadets had completed the Duke of

The 9 Regiment South East London Army Cadet Force received further recognition when presented with the Cadet Challenge Cup by General de la Billiere, for demonstrating very high levels of commitment and enthusiasm towards their challenge activities. They had completed a 13 mile walk as a unit, accompanied by St Dunstaners Matthew Rhodes, Gerry Jones and Steve Finlay.

Graham Footer, Service Awareness Coordinator said: "It's a great way for young people to learn about both St Dunstan's and wider disability issues affecting people within their communities. Taking part in the challenge not only helps the cadets' personal development, but also inspires a real sense of citizenship."



Sir Peter, Matthew and Graham thank the South East London cadets for supporting St Dunstan's.

Moving to five inch pots

JUST TO RECAP on what has happened so far with propagating and growing chrysanthemums.

From November onwards the stools were cut into four inch cubes and then watered and put onto a heating cable to encourage new growth for cuttings.

In January, February and March cuttings were taken from the stools and put into trays, labelled and put onto a heating cable to encourage rooting to take place, whilst in this state they were seldom watered and only lightly sprayed over several times a day.

Once the cuttings had rooted and had a decent root system they were taken from the heat and left to cool down before being transplanted into three-and-a-half inch pots using a loam, peat and gravel mixture with added fertilizers and growth enhancers such as sea weed and blood fish and bone.

The newly rooted plants are left in their three-and-a-half inch pots for anywhere between six and eight weeks or until a good mass of roots is around the outside of the earth the plants are in. You can see this by tipping the plants out of their pots and having a look.

Peter Moore on advancing roots!



Once in this state it is time to move them on into five inch pots with a slightly different mixture of composts and additives.

For the five inch pots I use the same mixture for the three-and-a-half inch pots with regards to loam and peat, but the amount of soluble fertilizer is upgraded to four ounces of Vitax Q4, plus four ounces of blood, fish and bonemeal. To this I add eight ounces of calcified seaweed to act as a slow release fertilizer.

In the bottom of the five inch pots, put in about half-an-inch of sphagnum moss peat and on top of that about half-an-inch of well-rotted manure then half-an-inch of the potting mixture. Knock the plant out of the three-and-a-half inch pots making sure

that there are plenty of roots around the outside of the mixture, do not pot on until this is seen, pop the plant into the five inch pot and top up the pot with the potting mixture. Finally if they are required put in a split cane flower stick and gently tie the plant to the cane for support.

Again do not water unless it is absolutely necessary, just spray lightly as and when needed, if the lower leaves begin to droop and a spray will not lift them it is time for a water but do not add any soluble fertilizer to the water.

You can add soluble fertilizer if the plants do not seem to be growing properly at this stage but only after a few days or weeks in the five inch pots. This should only be a weak mixture to act as a tonic.

Now you can store the plants in a cold frame. Make sure that the frame is frost free at all times and that the plants have plenty of space between them. Personally, I do not have a cold frame, so this part takes place in my large greenhouse. It is surprising how much room plants take up doing it this way. My large greenhouse is 19 feet by 19 feet and this will accommodate 200 plants spaced out properly.

It is at this stage that I will discard some more plants that do not seem to be good enough to make the grade. They will be thrown away.

The small initial pots are or should be placed in a barrel and washed with a good disinfectant and then left to dry and then put away.

Any plants that do not have the root system properly running on the outside of the mixture are returned to their three-and-a-half inch pots and left to make more root before moving on.

Some of the larger exhibition plants or Jap 1's as they are known will want stopping either at this stage or just before. This is to do with timing for the shows to get the flower out on time otherwise it will be a waste of time.

Some plants will want stopping only once while others will need two stops,

which is supposed to give a better flower.

The art of stopping is to get the right dates to stop a plant to produce side shoots on which the flowers will appear. To do this all you have to do is find the growing centre of the plant, peel back a couple of leaves and pinch out the growing tip, this will stop the plant growing and will make it produce the side shoots needed for the flowers.

The timing can be critical and this can take up to two or three years to get right for

your particular piece of land that you are growing on. For instance, my friend Bob lives just 300 yards up the road from me. According to the ordnance survey map we are on the same height above sea level and both our gardens face the same way. However, for some unexplained reason he has to stop his plants between a week and ten days before I do to get the flowers on the same date as I do. This is the same nationwide and can't really be explained.

Next month: More on stopping and feeding.

REUNION ROUND-UP

THE 2006 REUNION season started in high spirits in Derby on March 23rd. Forty-five St Dunstaners and five widows met up at the Midlands Hotel, Derby. St Dunstaner Jamie Weller was the Member of St Dunstan's Council presiding and spoke of how he had come to terms with blindness, training and qualifying as an accountant. St Dunstaner David Schofield responded on behalf of those present. The Derby Reunion also held a double birthday celebration – FEPOW St Dunstaner Charles Blockley celebrated his 85th birthday, while WAAF St Dunstaner Marjorie Lockley celebrated her 83rd.

Chairman Michael Gordon-

Lennox presided over a gathering of 30 St Dunstaners and nine widows at the first of the Brighton Reunions, held at St Dunstan's Ovingdean on March 29th. St Dunstaner Paul Walker replied on behalf of those present. Guests included Jenny Hickmott of the Veterans Agency and Bill Daley of SSAFA.

The first Middlesbrough Reunion united 35 St Dunstaners and two widows at the Thistle Middlesbrough on April 5th, with St Dunstan's President Raymond Hazan presiding. The Revd David Youngson said grace while St Dunstaner Cecil Green responded on behalf of those present.

Bernard Cornwell, author of nearly 50 historical and adventurous novels, was the judge of the Review's annual Story Competition. Those who have followed Sharpe's progress as a private soldier in the days of Waterloo will be familiar with Cornwell's interest in 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. Bernard's third choice was Life in the SAS by Archie Ology. Passing judgment, Bernard feted the inventiveness, the wit and the nonsense "This was thoroughly entertaining," he said. Archie, alias St Dunstaner Harry Beevers of Castleford, Yorkshire, won £20.

LIFE IN THE SAS

OR THE ARCHERS - AN EVERYDAY STORY OF ANCIENT COUNTRY FOLK

By Archie Ology
(Harry Beevers)

Have you ever wondered how certain phrases and expressions found their way into the English language? The origins of many of these old sayings used in the modern age have been lost in the mists of time. However, reading the story "Life in the SAS" may explain why we use some of these sayings many of which were coined thousands of years ago.

The SAS referred to stands of course for the Stone Age Settlement of Hog-in-Green. The year is 2,500 BE, (Before Euros). The small circle of mud and wattle huts known collectively as Hog-in-Green was situated on the south-eastern corner of an island which had broken away from the large continental mass to its east almost a thousand years earlier at the end of the last great Ice Age. Only a few hours march would take the visitor to the neighbouring hamlets of Rot-in-Green and Wud-in-Green. All three were named after the head men or chieftains of

these small collections of homesteads. Thus, Hog, Rot and Wud were the three men in question and the complete names of the hamlets were derived from the local custom whereby the leading men wore a cloak bedecked in the feathers of the green woodpecker, which was abundant in the area at the time. The language of these ancient people was a very simple one with a total vocabulary of only 178 words, most of which were made up of just three letters.

A little to the west of Hog-in-Green was a large inlet where dugout canoes were tied up to

the shore and a little further west was the larger settlement of Brig-Tun with its large, circular-shaped, imposing but rather sombre-looking mud-brick edifice appropriately known as the Brig Tun Doom. The area to the east of Hog-in-Green was the area settled by the raiders from the northern islands, Hengist and his brother Hoarser, so-named because of his persistent troublesome cough.

On the day of our visit to Hog-in-Green the inhabitants were in a high state of excitement. Tomorrow they would be celebrating Hog-man-ay which was a periodic festival to honour or commemorate some significant event. The term Hog-man-ay could be freely translated as "May our leader man Hog rule for ever" and centuries later the term was stolen by the Picts and Scots for their annual new

year festival. Tomorrow there would be dancing and drinking in honour of the fifth wedding anniversary of their leader Hog and his wife Heg.

Hog was thinking of that day five years ago when he and his wife were joined in matrimony. It was the local custom for a bride to take the name of her husband and simply change the vowel sound in the name. Hog's wife had disdained the choice of Hag and despite Hog's protests had plumped for the alternative Heg. Hog who had become aware of his future wife's romantic nature had favoured Hug. The marriage itself had been set up by Hog's closest companion Nog. He was asked by Hog to act as his Nab-gal or wife-catcher, later to become known as Optimus Homo by the Romans and simply as the best man in the modern era. One dark night Nog had crept into the Hamlet of Rot-in-Green, clubbed the first available female and dragged her off for nuptials the following week. Hog had reciprocated the following year this time entering the hamlet led by Wud taking an appropriate bride for his friend Nog. She chose the name Neg although Nog later grumbled to Hog that she should have chosen Nag.

As was the usual practice in those days all the young men of the community

had a riotous party on the nights before Hog and Nog's weddings. These were known as Stagger Nights because of the effect of the local drink made from distilled Horsechestnut juice. Medical science was in its infancy in those days and it would be another hundred years or so before the local lads realised that there was a direct connection between the firewater they drank and the effects it had on the sense of balance in their middle ear. This custom of course has continued to the present day under a slightly different name.

Meanwhile, whilst the men were celebrating Stagger Night, the maidens of Hog-in-Green were holding their own celebration known as Henna Night. Traders from the orient were regular visitors along this coastal area and one of their products was a seductive colouring substance and on Henna Night all the girls would bedeck themselves in their finery and become redheads. The hems of their rough sheepskin skirts would be highered and the necklines of their cow-leather blouses plunged and they usually acted in a most un-maidenly fashion.

Hog was not the leader of his community because of his military prowess. His contemporary Goliath back in the land of the Philistines was constantly putting

the wind up the Israelites because of his mighty stature. At five cubits and a span Goliath would have been an awe-inspiring figure but Hog at five spans and a cubit owed his top place in the hierarchy to his brains and ingenuity rather than his ability to throw a javelin. It's a little known fact that it was Hog who first invented the skill at arms known as archery. He spent some hours trying to devise a new percussion instrument for his hamlet's performance in the annual Brig Tun Music Festival. He had discovered that bending a supple tree bough and connecting the two ends with sheep gut produced a most satisfying twang sound. A short bough gave a high-pitched twang, a long bough a lower and more melodious twang. Thus a short bow and a long bow were born when Hog discovered that a sharpened twig could be propelled by his new invention with devastating effect. Archery was born and it became a popular pastime in the region from the days of Hog to the 21st century.

But Hog was more than an inventor and a man of ideas, he was also a dreamer. Like another of his contemporaries, a pharaoh in distant Egypt he was convinced that many of his dreams were of a prophetic nature. The day after the

Hog-man-ay celebrations and still nursing rather a painful head, Hog made his way towards the seventy-eight roughly hewn steps which led down the chalk cliff to the boulder-strewn and pebbly beach. At the top of the steps he paused and gazed back to the summit of the hill he had just descended. The dream he had last night was slowly coming back to him and it was his recurring dream which he usually experienced after a night on the horsechestnut spirit. He closed his eyes and the visions which had been haunting him for years gradually returned. He could see a UFO. It appeared to be a large dragon about to take flight and though the term was not to be used until thousands of years hence Hog found himself looking at an unidentified flying object, or rather one that was about to fly. What could it be? What is more he could see men and women slowly emerging from the belly of the giant dragon. Could they be warlocks and witches he pondered? They walked tall, some of them had dark shades over their eyes and some were carrying long white wands. He had seen these folk before and he felt sure that they possessed magical qualities. He had often seen them in his dream waving their wands in front of them from side to side and behold, the heavens opened and precious rain fell from

the sky. He remembered how they would scurry back to their dragon as the raindrops fell, their wizardry apparently achieved. As Hog continued to stare into the middle distance he remembered the large flat board adjacent to the dragon. It was covered with hieroglyphics, which Hog could not understand. What could they mean? Words began to form in his mind, Dun's Town, that was it. He had heard about Dun, a famous religious leader of the past; a man of such distinction that he had been sanctified after his death. Slowly the truth dawned on Hog. This was St Dun's Town of years to come and those figures were future inhabitants. Hog

felt suddenly inspired, the future was being revealed to him. The tall, erect folk walking so confidently with their heads held high were men and women of the town of St Dun. Hog knew that what he saw was not a dragon but a strange, magnificent edifice where men and women would be offered opportunities beyond their wildest dreams at some time in the future. He smiled, the vision disappeared and he began to trudge slowly back up the hill. He knew that this future he saw was a revelation promising deeds of self-achievement, and feelings of hope, happiness and contentment therein in years to come.

Last flight from Coltishall

ONE OF THE last active Battle of Britain stations, RAF Coltishall closed as an operational base on April 1st. It coincided with the 88th Anniversary of the foundation of the Royal Air Force. No.6 Squadron Jaguars have been relocated to RAF Coningsby.

Planned as a Bomber Station, it was pressed into use as a Fighter Station and provided a base for an individual determined that his disability would not bar him from any activity. Squadron Leader Douglas Bader arrived at Coltishall having lost both his legs. The station was home to

the Spitfires of 66 Squadron, the Hurricanes of 242 Squadron and Mosquitos of 141 Squadron, amongst others. It claimed the first kill of the Battle of Britain.

The base marked that history with a flypast that reflected its colourful legacy. A Spitfire set the tone, followed by a squad of Jaguars in diamond nine formation. Then a Hurricane flew through, ahead of a Harrier whose arrival coincided with the transfer of the Standard to Coningsby. After a general salute, four Jaguars closed the flypast in missing man formation.

Welcome to ST DUNSTAN'S

Terence Bottomley of Leeds, West Yorkshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1964 to 1967.

Howard Buck of Epsom, Surrey served in the Royal Engineers from 1945 to 1948.

John Burrige of Plymstock, Plymouth, Devon served in the Royal Navy from 1968 to 1996.

Colin Campbell of Middlesbrough, Cleveland served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

Peter Coker of Stevenage, Hertfordshire served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1939 to 1946.

Eric Cotton of Diss, Norfolk served in the Royal Norfolk Regiment from 1939 to 1946.

Peter Deavin of Norwich, Norfolk served in the Royal Engineers from 1939 to 1946.

Henry Glass of Scowles, Coleford, Gloucestershire served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1944.

Margaret Goodworth of Borehamwood, Hertfordshire served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1941 to 1943.

John Grove of Birmingham, West Midlands served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1939

to 1942, then the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers until 1945.

Douglas Hawley of Shalford Hill, Gloucestershire served in the Royal Air Force from 1945 to 1959.

James Hill of Maeshafn, Mold, Clwyd served in the Royal Air Force from 1956 to 1958.

Brian Holmes of Leeds, West Yorkshire served in the Fleet Air Arm from 1945 to 1947.

William Hughes of Over, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire served in the TA, then Royal Artillery from 1961 to 1970.

Alexander Jamieson of Elgin, Morayshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1946.

William Jenkins of Cambridge, Cambridgeshire served in the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1946.

Percy Kirby of Fakenham, Norfolk served in the Royal Signals from 1942 to 1946.

John MacDonald of Canterbury, Kent served in the Parachute Regiment from 1958 to 1980 and then in the Queen's Regiment(TA) from 1985 to 1988.

Wilfred Meadows of Solihull, West Midlands served in the Royal Engineers from 1947 to 1949.

James O'Grady of Shirley, Solihull, Warwickshire served in the Royal Engineers from 1949 to 1971.

Charles Parsons of Bromley, Kent served in the Life Guards from 1952 to 1955 and then the Royal Fusiliers from 1960 to 1972.

William Poulson of Harwich, Essex served in the Suffolk Regiment and Royal Armoured Corps between 1940 and 1946.

Thomas Ratcliff of Hunstanton, Norfolk served in the Royal Engineers from 1950 to 1952.

Edward Roberts of Broadway, Worcestershire served in the Royal Signals from 1940 to 1946.

Margaret Rodgers of Midhurst, West Sussex served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1940 to 1955.

Alan Simper of Dunstable, Bedfordshire served in the Royal Navy from 1940 to 1946.

George Smith of Bolton, Lancashire served in the Lancashire Regiment and the Parachute Regiment between 1944 and 1948.

Ronald Stevens of Ashford, Middlesex served in the Royal Army Service Corps and Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

between 1936 and 1948. He served in the REME again between 1952 and 1958.

Mollie Stroud of Obaston, Monmouthshire served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1942 to 1945.

Joseph Tapper of Thornton Cleveleys, Lancashire served in the Royal Engineers and Royal Army Ordnance Corps between 1945 to 1948.

Kenneth Thomas of Braunton, Devon served in the Royal Air Force from 1950 to 1972.

Joseph Tonna of Exeter, Devon served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1962 to 1971.

Lewis Weedon of Northchurch, Berkhamstead served in the Hertfordshire Regiment and Indian Army between 1939 and 1946.

Azel Whipps of Lightwater, Surrey served in the Royal Horse Artillery from 1936 to 1946.

Margaret Winney of Reigate, Surrey served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1943 to 1946.

George Worden of Seaham, County Durham served as a Corporal in the Durham Light Infantry from 1944 to 1948.

Harry and Dorothy Leonard of Billingham on Tees, Cleveland who celebrated 66 years of marriage on April 13th.

Douglas and Gwen White-Howles of East Bergholt, Colchester, Essex who celebrated 65 years of marriage on April 14th.

Hildegarde and Sydney Spring of Amersham, Buckinghamshire who celebrated 66 years of marriage on April 16th.

Charles and Gladys Pay of Maidstone, Kent who celebrated 63 years of marriage on April 17th.

Gordon and Eileen Aston of Buckingham, Buckinghamshire who celebrated 61 years of marriage on April 19th.

Ron and Cynthia Murray of Saltburn-by-Sea, Cleveland who celebrated 61 years of marriage on April 23rd.

DEATHS

We regret to announce the death of: **Doreen Humphrey** on March 15th. She was the wife of *Dave Humphrey* of North Woodingdean, Brighton.

Mona Appleton on March 26th. She was the wife of *John Appleton* of Little Bispham, Blackpool, Lancashire.

Rita Pryor, lately of Newton, Powys, on March 14th. She was the widow of *Jack Pryor* of Peacehaven, East Sussex.

Cora McKay of Dagenham, Essex on March 27th. She was the widow of *George McKay*.

Johanna Kirkby of West Kirby, Wirral on March 28th. She was the widow of *John Kirkby*.

Sylvia Knight of Wheldrake, North Yorkshire on March 30th. She was the widow of *Wilfred Knight*.

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.

John Doherty Royal Engineers

John Doherty of Guildford, Surrey died on December 12th 2005, aged 82. He had been a St Dunstaner since 2003. Having worked in a draper's shop since the age of 14, he volunteered for the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers in 1941. After training at Omagh, he was posted to Cornwall and then onto Egypt. He took part in the invasion of Sicily and was then stationed in Italy, followed by a tour of duty in Austria. In 1947, he transferred to the Lancashire Fusiliers, serving with them in Germany. Discharged in 1953, he became a labourer in Trowbridge. In 1958, he joined the Royal Engineers in a TA Field Squadron remaining with them until 1966. His interests included walking. Our sympathy goes to his sister Margaret, his daughters and all members of the family.

Major Ron Bridges, OBE 7th Gurkha Rifles

Major David Ronald Bridges, OBE of Honolulu, Hawaii died on January 13th, aged 89. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1945. He enlisted in the army in 1935 and entered RMA Sandhurst. He was commissioned from the Academy in 1937 and joined his regiment in the Indian Army two years later. He was serving with 7th Gurkha Rifles when wounded during the Burma Campaign. After initial training at Church Stretton, he moved on to Dehra Dun – St Dunstan's in India – and subsequently joined Sir Clutha Mackenzie's staff training other blind servicemen. He married Mackenzie's daughter and moved to Singapore where he helped set up the Singapore Institute for the Blind. He then became Blind Welfare Officer

Ten answers...

Answers to the quiz on page 9.

- 1) The Netherlands or Holland, the attack on Arnhem and Eindhoven;
- 2) Dibble;
- 3) Capability (Lancelot) Brown;
- 4) Cloche;
- 5) Ladybirds;
- 6) As a weed-killer;
- 7) Kent;
- 8) Perennials;
- 9) Percy Thrower;
- 10) Madison Square Garden.

FAMILY NEWS

ENGAGEMENT

Congratulations to:

Army St Dunstaner *Ian Graham* of Irvine, Ayrshire who became engaged to *Patricia Fotheringham*, appropriately enough on February 14th – St Valentine's Day!

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Horace and Elsie Male of Dudley, West Midlands on March 31st.

DIAMOND ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Leonard and Violet Barber of Ipswich, Suffolk on April 20th.

Andrew and Muriel Goodall of Dereham, Norfolk on April 20th.

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Trevor and Joan Phillips of Paignton, Devon who celebrated 63 years of marriage on March 20th.

Leslie and Doreen Thompson of Puerto de la Cruz, Tenerife who celebrated 63 years of marriage on March 22nd.

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

Betty and Bill Nairn of High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire who celebrated 62 years of marriage on March 25th.

Arthur and Mabel Porter of Bognor Regis, West Sussex who celebrated 64 years of marriage on April 4th.

Howard and Joyce Edgar of Carlisle, Cumbria who celebrated 67 years of marriage on April 8th.

Eric and Grace Beck of Clacton-on-Sea, Essex who celebrated 63 years of marriage on April 10th.

Thomas and Edith McLoughlin of Wirral, Merseyside who celebrated 63 years of marriage on April 10th.

with the Department of Social Welfare in Malaya and was founder and first director of the Malayan Association for the Blind. It was in recognition of his work with blind people in Malaya that he was awarded the OBE in Her Majesty The Queen's Birthday Honours list of 1957. He was further feted by the Institute for the Blind of Taiwan at their 50th anniversary celebration in 2001. Our sympathy goes to his sons David, Ian and Peter, and all other members of the family.

Leslie Robinson

Surrey Army Cadet Force

Leslie Harold Robinson of Byfleet, Surrey died on March 20th, aged 92. He had been a St Dunstaner since 2001. He initially joined the TA in 1930, but then joined the Durham Light Infantry as a bugler in 1932. Training with the Lewis gun as part of an air defence platoon, he completed tours of duty in the UK, Bombay and Khartoum before being released to the reserve in 1939. Barely five months had passed before he was recalled to colours and deployed to France. After evacuation from Dunkirk, his unit was sent to India and then Burma. In 1946, he transferred to the Corps of Military Police, serving with them until 1949 when he re-enlisted with the TA, this time with the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment. He also became an instructor with the Surrey Army Cadet Force and was commissioned in 1966 and promoted to Lieutenant in 1968. He resigned his commission in 1976. In civilian life, he worked for BAE. Our sympathy goes to his grandson Mark, sons and daughter and all other members of the family.

Harold Morgan

Royal Air Force

Harold Lawton Morgan of Leicester, Leicestershire died on March 21st, aged 84. Having worked in a hairdressers, steel works and iron works, he joined the Royal Air Force in 1941. He served in the UK, France, Belgium and Holland. Discharged in 1946, he

became a tinsmith but later worked in a dairy on bottling machines. In 1951, he joined the police force, working in their driving school. His interests included bowling and tropical fish. Our sympathy goes to his widow Frances, sons, brother Robert and all the family.

Louis Rowberry

Royal Marines

August Albert Louis Ronald Rowberry, known as Louis or Bill, of Exeter, Devon died on March 24th, aged 87. He worked for a sheet metal company in Coventry, a firm that dealt with aluminium and then GEC before joining the Royal Marines in 1936. He was posted to the Mediterranean and was off the coast of Spain during the Civil War. He later served in Palestine, the Far East, Holland, Middle East, West Africa, China, South Africa and Korea. He was serving as Quartermaster Sergeant when discharged in 1963. In civilian life, he worked with employment services in Davenport and was later Disablement Resettlement Officer in Somerset. His interests included golf, driving and reading. Our sympathy goes to his son Ronald, daughter Anne and all of the family.

Jean Curnow

Women's Auxiliary Air Force

Jean Mc Donald Curnow nee McIntyre of Aberlady, East Lothian died on March 25th, aged 85. She had been a St Dunstaner since 2004. She entered higher education with the Scottish National Academy of Music at the Glasgow Athenaeum. Excelling as a coloratura soprano, she took on roles characterised by dramatic flexibility and embellishment. Her roles included that of Wotan's daughter, the Valkyrie Brünnhilde in Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. In 1941, she joined the Women's Auxiliary Air Force, initially training in Yatesbury. She then trained as a Radio Location Operator on nascent radar systems. In 1942, she received an Emergency Commission as Assistant Section Officer and was posted to a Bomber

Station. Promoted to Substantive Section Officer in 1944, she was placed in charge of welfare and administration. She was discharged in 1946 and married the following year. Later she returned to University for a teaching degree. A keen landscape photographer, her images of Aberlady are published on local postcards. Her interests also included painting. Our sympathy goes to her son Euan, daughters Catrina, Morag and Fiona and all other members of the family.

George Turner

Royal Marines

George Frederick Turner of Bexleyheath, Kent died on March 25th, aged 88. He joined the Royal Marines in 1940. He suffered shrapnel wounds twice, the first time to the neck as a result of enemy aircraft action, the second as effects of bomb blast damaging his right hand and arm. He was discharged in 1942. In civilian life, he worked as an engineer in a kitchen equipment factory and then in a bottling plant. He later worked as a maintenance fitter for the Wellcome Foundation. Our sympathy goes to his brother Eric, sister-in-law Barbara and all the family.

Henry Chapman

Fleet Air Arm

Henry Chapman of Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex died April 2nd, aged 88. He had been a St Dunstaner since 2004. He worked in a factory manufacturing aircraft components before joining the Fleet Air Arm in 1940. He sailed on HMS *Attacker* which provided cover for the Salerno invasion, sending out 132 sorties in four days. It also saw action in Egypt, Malta, Gibraltar and was part of the task force that mounted the invasion of Southern France. It was also part of the task force that accepted the Japanese surrender of Malaya in 1945 and was present for the ceremony of surrender in Singapore Road. Discharged in 1946, he joined his father in the haulage business. His interests included painting. Our sympathy goes to his widow

Winifred, their son and daughters and all members of the family.

Stan Mackiewicz

Polish Resettlement Corps

Stanisław Mackiewicz of Hook, Hampshire died on April 3rd, aged 88. He worked on his family's farm in Orzeliszki, Lida, Poland until the age of 21 when he was arrested by invading Russian forces. He was then deported to the USSR in 1940 and held until his release was secured under the Sikorski-Maisyki Agreement. In 1941, he enlisted with 16 Infantry Battalion, Polish Armed Forces on Soviet territory and then crossed the border into Iran where he came under British Command. He was then posted to 16 Lwowski Rifle Battalion, 5 Kresowa Infantry Division, 2 Polish Corps, part of the 8th Army. He served with them in Iran, Iraq, Palestine, Egypt. He took part in the Italian Campaign, seeing action on the Sangro and Rapido, Monte Cassino, The Gustav-Hitler Line, Adriatic Coast and others. In 1946, he was posted to the UK and the following year transferred to the Polish Resettlement Corps prior to discharge in 1948. In civilian life, he was a gardener, driver and worked for the Ministry of Works and a telephone company in Aldershot. His interest in gardening remained constant and last year he won prizes for "Best Kept Garden". Our sympathy goes to his son Colin, daughter Jean and all other members of the family.

Banks Rees

Royal Artillery

Banks Price Rees of Swansea, West Glamorgan, died on April 9th, aged 87. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1939, initially stationed in Bristol with 6th Maritime Regiment. He served as a Gunner in France, the Indian Ocean and Mediterranean. After being discharged in 1946, he became a clerk in local government. Our sympathy goes to his widow Rowena, son and daughters and all other members of the family.

Mark unveils plans to diving legend!



TWO UNIQUE DENIZENS of the deep met up at the London International Dive Show in the Capital's Docklands on April 1st. St Dunstaner Mark Threadgold, who is planning to make a record-breaking 100 metre dive in Egypt next month, met up with conservationist and explorer Jean-Michel Cousteau. Mark demonstrated a braille slate which he will use to chart his decompression routine in conjunction with a talking depth computer. "We've already gone as deep as 71m," said Mark. "We found that the only problem with the computer is that it cuts out at 65m." Cousteau, who was at the show to talk about conservation projects in the British Virgin Islands spoke about the sounds of marine life that he had recorded. He seemed surprised when Mark said that his experience of diving tended to be tactile rather than audible. Mark also visited one of his sponsors. Kevin Parry of O'Three took a few measurements for the dry-suit that will be protecting the former Signalman when he makes his record breaking dive which will place him amongst the world's elite.

Eastbourne honours Ron for civic service



Aubrey Vickers, Janet Grist, Brian Higgins and Ron Parsons were named Honorary Aldermen on March 28th.

ST DUNSTANER RON PARSONS was made Honorary Alderman as part of a Civic Ceremony at Eastbourne's Town Hall March 28th. The Mayor of Eastbourne, Councillor Graham Marsden feted Ron and three other former councillors for many years of excellent service to the town and its residents. Ron was a Councillor for 12 years, representing Ocklynge Ward until 2002. He was also Mayor of Eastbourne from 1994 to 1996. He took an active role in planning, sports, tourism and economic development in the area.