

St Dunstan's Review



St Dunstan's
An independent future for blind
ex-Service men and women

March 2007

www.st-dunstans.org.uk

From **the Chairman** St Dunstan's Calendar



ON BEHALF of St Dunstaners, widows and fellow Trustees, I would like to welcome Major-General Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter to the Council of St Dunstan's. He has been a career soldier, finishing as the General Officer Commanding London District where he was responsible for the momentous events of the 2000 Millennium, the Royal Military Tattoo and the wonderful Nation's Tribute to the Queen Mother for her 100th Birthday, after which he received a well deserved KCVO. He is a highly knowledgeable army historian and is now the Controller of the Army Benevolent Fund. We are fortunate indeed that he has agreed to join us.

Michael Gordon-Lennox

Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN

MARCH

2nd-9th Amateur Radio (I)
3rd Writers Forum
5th Indoor Bowling
11th-24th Bowling Club (I)
25th-31st Dancing Week (I)

APRIL

4th Indoor Bowling
4th-11th Widows' Week (I)
7th Writers Forum
9th-13th Fishing Club (II)
13th-16th Ex-POW Reunion
14th-15th Golf
16th Indoor Bowling
19th ABF Big Curry Day
21st Sailability
22nd London Marathon
25th ANZAC Day
27-30th Masonic Weekend

MAY

5th Writers Forum
6th-12th Gardening Week

St Dunstan's Review

March 2007 No 966

Cover Story: St Dunstaners Ron Jones and Colin Williamson witness the struggle of Army recruits pulling a ten-tonne tank to raise funds for blind ex-Service men and women.

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

Published monthly by **St Dunstan's**
an independent future for blind ex-Service men and women
12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD.

Patron: Her Majesty The Queen Charity Reg. no 216227. Printed by Hobbs the Printer



Noticeboard

Dates for your diary and useful information

PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU CANNOT ATTEND A FUNCTION

CANCELLATIONS: Often, with genuine reason, such as illness or unanticipated emergency appointments, St Dunstaners are unable to attend functions. These may be reunions or events at Ovingdean.

Because many such events are free of charge to St Dunstaners, participants are unaware that St Dunstan's still has to pay for previously ordered meals if they are not cancelled. This can be the cause of quite unnecessary expense to our charity.

Would you please help us by telephoning as far ahead as circumstances permit, your Welfare Officer, in the case of a reunion, or lounge desk at Ovingdean, if you are unable to attend, whatever the reason.

WAR PENSION CHANGES

PENSIONS SUPPLEMENT: Details of the War Pension rates that will come into effect on 9 April this year (an average increase of 3.6 per cent) can be obtained on request from Inderpal Kallah. Telephone him at Headquarters on 020 7723 5021 or e-mail inderpal.kallah@st-dunstans.org.uk, stating if you would like to receive the document in print, braille, tape or electronic formats.

ACCOMMODATION CHARGES

REVISED CHARGES APPLY FROM 1 APRIL: St Dunstan's Ovingdean is to raise its accommodation charges for the first time since 2005. There will be no increase for war-blinded St Dunstaners for the second year running. However, charges for non-war-blinded St Dunstaners will be increased from 1 April, averaging two per cent. The rates listed include not only accommodation, food provision and services at Ovingdean but also in the majority of cases, door-to-door transport.

Holiday

Weekly £164.50 (inc 17.5 per cent VAT)
Daily £23.50

Residential

Weekly £257.25
Daily £36.75

Nursing

Weekly £357
Daily £51

Residential nursing

Weekly £458.50
Daily £65.60

Accommodation at our annexes Port Hall and Beacon Hill, and at St Dunstan's Sheffield, will be £18.50 a day.

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. Dates available are 21 April, 19 May, 2 June, 21 July, 4 August, 1 September, and 13 October. 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 Mandi Fermer in the Sports and Recreation department at St Dunstan's Ovingdean on 01273 391465.

THE ST DUNSTAN'S WALKING CLUB

STEPPING DOWN: The Club was 'founded' in 1989 and met for one week a year. Walks took place in Brighton, Stratford-on-Avon, Oxford, Bournemouth, France and Austria. We have tramped through mud and over sun baked earth, borne wind and rain, sun and snow, up Down and down dale! We have enjoyed a ploughman's in an English country pub, French 3-course 'pique-niques', and Tyrolean 'bratwurst mit chips!' Regrettably, whilst appetites remain unchanged, both numbers and distances covered have reduced over the years! It has been decided, therefore, to put the club in abeyance for the time being.

Rambling groups and walking festivals take place all over the country and can be enjoyed on a weekly, rather than annual basis. If you are interested in the social aspect, fresh air and exercise, then please consider joining a local group.

Ray Hazan

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 during 2007:

14-15 April
12-13 May
16-17 June
30 June - Wildwoods Golf Club
28-29 July
18-19 August
22-23 September
24-25 November

New members are welcome Please contact the Hon Secretary Mike Tumilson on 024 7671 4922 or the club Captain, Geoff Collins on 01273 771812.

EASY READING ON CD

AS EASY AS MP3: St Dunstan's Review is also available on MP3CD. Standing for MPEG Audio Layer 3, MP3 is an audio compression technology common in many computers which can compress CD quality sound while retaining much of the fidelity. In this fashion, three-hours of recording can fit on a single compact disc. Using the MP3CD on Daisy format players such as the Talking Books Victor Classic allows readers to insert bookmarks where they want or easily jump back and forward between items at the touch of a button. The CD will also play on CD players that have been designed with MP3 in mind, though not on regular audio players. which are increasingly available from high street outlets.

TROOPING THE COLOUR

DRAW ON TICKET ALLOCATION: Trooping the Colour will take place on 16 June. It is possible that St Dunstan's will be allocated tickets. Any St Dunstaner or Gubbay Trust Beneficiary wishing to go should send their name and address to Lisa Coyle, St Dunstan's, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD by 8 May. A draw will determine the final allocation of tickets. Those attending will be responsible for their own travel and accommodation expenses.

VETERANS AWARENESS WEEK AT THE NATIONAL ARBORETUM

EVENTS IN STAFFORDSHIRE: The National Memorial Arboretum in Alrewas, Staffordshire will be hosting a series of events during Veterans Awareness Week which runs 23-30 June. Starting on 23 June they have Forces Sweethearts. The SwingCats and West Midlands Police Band with Netherstowe School Swing Band present an evening of nostalgia and Proms music. Starting at 19:00, tickets are £5 each. Call 01283 792333 for more details.

Sunday, 24 June will see the National Service Veterans' Association Service and Parade. Starting at 13:00 with The Light Infantry Band. On Monday, 25 June The Falklands Service of Remembrance will take place at the newly planted Antelope azalea garden. On Thursday, 28 June will be the 65th Anniversary of the RAF Regiment's foundation will be celebrated with a Service of Remembrance and Re-Dedication of the RAF Regiment Memorial Air display. The week closes with a tea dance on 29 June.

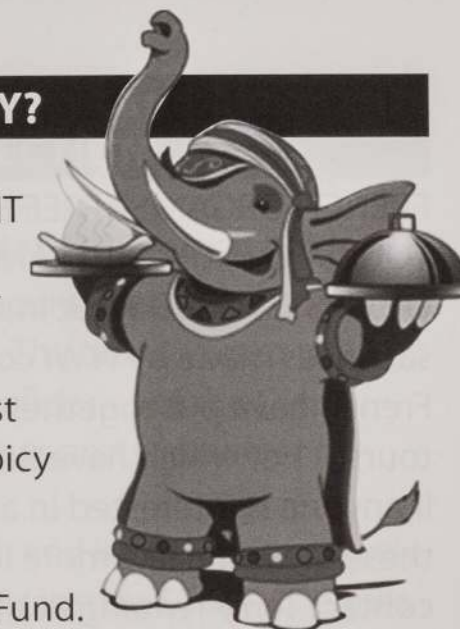
FANCY A CURRY?

ARMY BENEVOLENT FUND PLAN THE WORLD'S BIGGEST CURRY LUNCH: The World's Biggest Curry Lunch is a spicy new fundraising initiative from the Army Benevolent Fund. The history of curry and its introduction to the homes and restaurants of Britain is inextricably linked with the Army and they hope to capitalise on the Army's and the Great British public's love of curry to encourage support for the ABF in 2007. People all over the UK are taking part and the Army is joining in, in Garrisons and messes all over the world.

They are asking supporters to invite friends, family and colleagues round, cook them a curry in return for a donation for the ABF!

They have designated the week commencing 16 April as Big Curry Week with Big Curry Day on 19 April. A free fundraising pack can be obtained by calling 0845 8737156 or e-mailing bigcurry@armybenfund.org. Their website www.armybenfund.org also has recipes, invitations, place cards, posters and donation forms that can be downloaded by anyone planning to take part.

The website also details some of the history of Army influence on the development of the modern curry. It harks back to the 18th and 19th centuries when as many as 20,000 British troops were stationed at India. Many of today's curry recipes were adapted from the local cuisine.



GREAT WAR BATTLEFIELD TOURS

FRENCH ORGANISE FREE BATTLEFIELD TOURS TO MARK 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF FIRST WORLD WAR: In memory of the sacrifices made by WWI combatants, the French have put together 40 free battlefield tours, 11 of which have British involvement. If anyone is interested in attending any of these or would like more information please contact Terry Twining at the British Embassy Paris. E-mail terry.twining@fco.gov.uk. Telephone: 0033 144 513 399.

The tours are: 31 March The Canadians retake Vimy Neuville Saint-Vaast; 19 May Arras – British Town Arras; 11-15 September Death of Guynemer French Airforce Base, Cambrai; 13 October- 20 November The Tanks Attack Flesquieres; 19-26 April 2008 The Counter Attack April 1918 Villers-Bretonneux; 24 May 2008 on the Chemin des Dames Oeuilly; 31 May 2008 French and British in Retreat Cauroy-les-hermonville; 16 July 2008 Mountains of Reims Ville-en-Tardenois; 26 July 2008 The Battle of l'Ourcq Oulchy-le-Chateau; August 2008 A Surprise Attack on Picardie Montdidier; and then in November 2008, the final tour is The Germans Clairiere de l'Amistice.

If you would like to take part in these free tours, but cannot get to France yourself, then Poppy Direct Travel Services may be able to help you book individual travel and accommodation packages. If you would like to organise a group visit to these locations please contact Remembrance Travel on 01622 716 729 or visit www.remembrancetravel.com Their website also carries a range of Pilgrimages and Battlefield Tours throughout the year.

STAFF CHANGES

JO GRAY

Jo Gray joined St Dunstan's last month as Welfare Officer in the South East. She previously worked for the Royal Borough of Kingston Social Services and enjoys walking and indie rock music.



MARK MORRIS

Mark Morris joined St Dunstan's as Head of Information Services on 15 January. Formally an IT Consultant, he is responsible for the business use of the

Charity's computer systems. Married with two children, he plays and coaches hockey. Currently, he coaches Guildford Ladies.

GARY NORMAN

Gary Norman (pictured with Colin Williamson and tandem) will already be familiar as a driver to many St Dunstaners.

However, he now joins Head of

Transport David Vinall and his Deputy Neil Morgan as Transport Operations Supervisor.

MALCOLM SCALES

Malcolm Scales who has previously worked as a locum for St Dunstan's, will be working as a Welfare Officer in the West Country. He is a keen canoeist and married to Amanda Scales.



COMIC RELIEF IS NO JOKE

CD FUN: Help the Craft Workshop do their bit for Comic Relief and let us help you to smile on Red Nose Day on 16 March. Red Nose Day is a UK wide fundraising event organised by Comic Relief which runs every two years and culminates in a night of TV treats on BBC One. There is always a lovely jovial atmosphere within the Craft Workshop and this year they have put together a CD of jokes told by St Dunstaners attending the department. The CD will be sold for £1 each from the receptions at Ovingdean, Headquarters and Sheffield.

Thanks to the money raised by Comic Relief in the past, thousands of poor and disadvantaged people across the UK and Africa are getting the help they need to turn their lives around. Forty per cent of the money raised is spent within the UK and 60 per cent works hard to improve lives in Africa.

The CD of jokes will be on sale from 12 March, so that they can be listened to on Red Nose Day. All sorts of mischief and merriment will be going on throughout the nation. BBC TV, Radio, and www.rednoseday.com will be awash with Red Nose capers from 31 January.

CAMP OUT AT HMS SULTAN

CALLING ALL CAMPERS: The next HMS *Sultan* Summer Camp runs Friday, 27 July to Saturday, 4 August. Any St Dunstaner wishing to attend should contact Dave Burrows by 7 April. Write to him at 18 Portsmouth Road, Lee on the Solent, Hampshire PO13 9AG, or telephone on 02392 550532, or send an e-mail to DCB119399@aol.com.

WILL VODAFONE DERBY GIVE YOU A PRIZE CONNECTION

REVIEW DERBY SWEEPSTAKE NOW OPEN: The **Review** has opened its annual Derby Sweepstake. The draw is open to all St Dunstaners, beneficiaries of the Diana Gubbay Trust, widows and widowers.

Tickets are 30p each and issued consecutively to a maximum of 25 (costing £7.50). Cheques should be made payable to St Dunstan's. Loose money should not be sent unless it is registered. We are unable to take orders by telephone. The closing date is May 30th and the draw will be made that day. The Derby is scheduled to run on 2 June.

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. Prize money will be distributed amongst the winners 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.

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.

Surprise ski slope reunion

Thank you Gerry Jones for a most memorable week skiing in Italy. I laughed and laughed from day one to the day we returned home. It was great to be a part of such an amazing and friendly group.

A big thank you to Vince who helped me achieve so much in such a short time. On the first day I could hardly stand up on my skis, by the time we left I had managed to come down the slope blindfolded.

This was very daunting but I put my trust in Vince and lived to tell the tale. I have the greatest admiration for all the St Dunstaners who almost fly down the slopes, they are an inspiration. Don't they have any fear?

The hotel was splendid, great food, lots to drink and many late nights. We even had our own cabaret with Scotsmen Neil and



Back in the old days! Army girls Wendy and Win in 1971. With Wendy on the left, Win is on the right with the ringlets.

Cam wearing their kilts and playing the bagpipes. Not forgetting Colin Williamson wearing his own Geordie kilt.

A big highlight of the week was spending time talking with St Dunstaner Wendy Kane. It was only after a few glühwein aperitifs that we realised we were friends in the Army 35 years ago.

Fingers crossed that I am invited back on next year's skiing holiday.

**Win Jordan,
Brighton**

• Skiing reports start on page 22, while the modern Wendy and Win can be found on page 29. Write to the **Review** if you have a surprise reunion with an old comrade.

Quick march, but not that fast!

Ernie's been silly again. When I received the February edition of the **Review**. I hastened to place it into my "Plextor" and was not really surprised to hear Ray's band start up with a Light Infantry step march.

Yes, of course I had been listening to a book at a faster speed and had forgotten. This was hilarious when

I heard the title, it was the St Dunstan's March. I could imagine a line of us following Martin at that pace. Listen again at a slightly faster speed and you will see what I mean.

What was extra nice as far as I was concerned was the letter from Bill Mackintosh. I met and spoke to him while he and I were at Ovingdean.

I think it's great to hear letters from our occasional comradely contacts. Go on, write and let your friends know that you are well and enjoying life because apart from these letters and an occasional meeting at Ovingdean or Sheffield, we may never meet again.

**Ernie Bignell,
Lancing, West Sussex**

Feeling a part of St Dunstan's Family!

We wish to express our appreciation to St Dunstan's for sending us a copy of the **Review** for the past 20 years. Although we are so far from the UK, we look forward to receiving each edition with pleasure as we feel so much a part of the St Dunstan's Family. Our only regret is not visiting the UK and meeting up with the folk who have been featured in the **Review** over the years as they have become part of our family. Ovingdean sounds fantastic.

Sadly, the years are catching up with us and we are afraid that it will never become a reality.

Recently, we celebrated our Diamond Wedding (on the same day as Henry and Ray Sheridan) and the number of congratulatory cards was mind blowing.

Apart from family and friends, we received letters or cards from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, His Excellency Governor-General of Australia, Major-General Michael Jeffrey and Mrs Marlena Jeffrey, His Excellency Governor of Western Australia, Dr Ken Michael and Mrs Julie Michael, The Prime Minister of Australia, Rt Hon John Howard and Mrs Janette

Howard, The Premier of Western Australia, Mr Alan Carpenter, The Leader of the Opposition, Mr Paul Omodei, The Federal Member for Brand, Mr Kim Beazley, and The Federal Member for Mandurah, Mr David Templeton.

It was an amazing experience to be recognized by so many of the Nation's Leaders and one which we shall remember always. Once again, thank you just for being there for us, Yours in Remembrance,

**Max and Yvonne Almond,
Mandurah,
Western Australia**

I need to carry on learning!

It is three in the morning and I cannot sleep until I've got this out of my head and onto paper. I am setting out my revised, perhaps enlightened views on writing.

Perhaps writing to you now as President I would say that though I had never heard it expressed in those terms, I thought that I had accepted my blindness, adapted my methods and continued to achieve, five years ago. At Ovingdean, surrounded by so many disadvantaged people, I think I accepted for the first time that I was one of them. I took it very hard. I have, temporarily I hope, partially lost control of my emotions when talking about it. (This letter is an attempt to get my head back together).

At Ovingdean I met people who I believe have had their 'Will to live,' restored by the help and support they have received from the St Dunstan's organisation and staff. It was very humbling to hear their stories. For myself, I have made a long list of things I can do to help myself prepare for further training. The list includes trying to get some sleep.

There is none so blind as he who will not see. - Anon.

On my induction course I was told I relied on the mouse too much. No one said, 'If you lose your remaining bit of sight you won't be able to use the mouse, so you'd better learn to use the keyboard.' I think it dawned on me on the Friday.

Last month, I extolled the virtues of rewriting. At Ovingdean I explained that my method of working was to wallop the story down, then go through it looking for too much 'telling,' and altering some of it to 'showing.' I explained that when working on a piece in third person past tense, after quoting a line of dialogue in present tense, I sometimes continued to write in present tense, which had to be corrected. In addition I would find better language for some of the text, look for errors in grammar and punctuation, insert little bits of alliteration, and add a simile or metaphor or two. No one said, "Without the use of a mouse this would be more difficult, if not impossible, so you'd better

work harder at getting it right first time."

Again this didn't dawn on me till the Friday. As I said previously I must be a slow learner. Having packed my bags, I am penning this at 5:30 on the morning of departure. I might submit it unaltered.

**Roy Ramsay,
Harrow-Weald, Middlesex**

Ship launch was amazing

With the help of David Habershon myself and a fellow shipmate from Stourbridge RNA, Barry Billingham, were invited to the launch of the 2nd Daring class type 45 destroyer HMS Dauntless at the Govan yard on the Clyde. With the Royal Marine band playing and the 8,000 strong crowd cheering she was launched and saluted by ship's sirens, exhilarating! I served on an earlier Daring class HMS Duchess from 1961-1963 but what a difference to today. Thanks to all concerned for a memorable occasion.

**Bryan Durber,
Halesowen, West Midlands**

Balancing the Books

Ted Bunting on an important record of dark days in the East

The Way of a Boy: A Memoir of Java

Author: Ernest Hillen
Reader: Garard Green
Catalogue Number: 11873
Duration: 6 hours, 15 minutes

Born in the Dutch East Indies to a Canadian mother and a Dutch father, Ernest Hillen was just six years old when the Japanese arrived and took them all prisoner. From that point on he tells how first his father was taken away, then his older brother too, and how he and his mother were moved from one place to another, the next always worse than the one before. It is a story of man's inhumanity to women and little children, and it is told with a childish simplicity, which does not attempt to philosophise or ask the question why. It tells of beatings and torture, and of enforced hours under the tropical sun. But, somewhat surprisingly for books that describe the brutal and sadistic methods of the victorious sons of Nippon, this one betrays no hatred nor rancour, but it

does demonstrate the fact that children are often very observant and sensitive to the emotions of others.

So young Ernest is fully aware of the misery of the other prisoners, of the anxieties troubling his mother, and he also recognises that the Japanese are afraid of their captives. It is all extremely well done. It is now over sixty years since the end of the Second World

War and perhaps Japanese society no longer accepts cruelty as once it did, but the crimes committed in the name of the Emperor are still fresh in some memories and people should continue to read books like this one for some time yet.

• This book is also available, complete and unabridged, on Isis Series audio cassette. Priced around £28 it is read by the author.

RNIB Talking Books

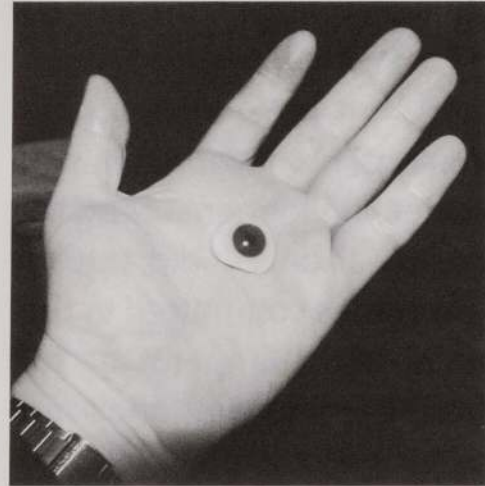
The books reviewed each month by St Dunstan's Ted Bunting are drawn from the RNIB Talking Book Service. They operate a library of professionally recorded audio books, delivered through the post. Last year they sent two million books to visually impaired people and added 450 titles to the library. They have the largest collection of unabridged audio books in the UK.

RNIB works with professional actors, narrators and authors

to bring audio books to life, so that almost 41,000 people can continue to enjoy reading. Using DAISY technology, readers can skip to a new chapter or insert a bookmark, in the same way a print reader can.

More details can be obtained on www.rnib.co.uk or by telephoning 0845 762 6843. Many local authorities support people with sight problems in their area through subscription to RNIB's Talking Book Service.

It strikes me...
with Gog and Magog



Gog hears that the old St Dunstan's sport of leaving a glass eyeball for some unsuspecting soul to find is alive and well. Drop your eye in the Sergeant's pint and you are sure of a scream. It causes no end of merriment. However, the joke ran dry for our St Dunstaner when asked to repeat the trick in the Gents. Time to retreat!

Magog hears that the spirit of education lives on as a member of staff attends a lecture by evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins. The Oxford Don was joined by his wife, the actress Lala Ward, to read from his new epistle *The God Delusion*. But how to put this into context? Name some of Professor Dawkins' previous books, perhaps? Which provokes the exclamation "There's a blind watchmaker?!"

Warminster celebrates its veterans and youth



Community groups centred around the army camp and town of Warminster came together for an event celebrating 'Veterans and Youth'. Scouts, Guides, Brownies, Army Cadets, a children's reading group were represented alongside veterans organisations at HQ Warminster Garrison on 17 January. St Dunstaner Eric Powell accepted a donation on behalf of the charity which was presented by the Mayor of Warminster Councillor Dorothea Sultana de Maria.

New Dauntless launched

THE ROYAL NAVY'S newest warship, HMS Dauntless was launched on the Clyde River on 23 January. Amongst the spectators on the dock was Royal Navy St Dunstaner Bryan Durber. He served on an earlier Daring class ship and was impressed by the new 5,600 tonne Type-45. The Dauntless is able to sail 600 miles in one day and will operate around the globe on global offensive and peacekeeping operations as well as tackling drug



smuggling and delivering humanitarian aid.



Snow bunny hops along to Sheffield

WHILE PARTS OF the country ground to a halt under layers of snow last month, at St Dunstan's Sheffield it was an opportunity to indulge in some creative sculpture. St Dunstaners Billy Baxter and Chris Bennett, aided by Support Workers Claire Heard and Robert Blackburn, crafted an early Easter Bunny out of snow. The frosty flopsy was finished off with a long cane for a spot of mobility training. While Billy might harbour a desire to star in a remake of James Stewart's Harvey, it is unknown if the bunny had any Donnie Darko style advice for him.

In London, the Admissions girls at Headquarters broke out of the office to create their own Pob Stumpy on Paddington Green.



Ten questions on

The subject of Yorkshire

Harry Beevers stays close to home

- 1) The Yorkshire Terrier was originally bred to kill which creatures?
- 2) In the 19th century the brothers John and Samuel Smith operated rival businesses in the town of Tadcaster, producing what?
- 3) Which Royal Navy ship's company was given the Freedom of Leeds with a parade through the city in September 1994, 45 years after over £9 million had been raised to provide a replacement?
- 4) Which Yorkshire east coast resort is associated with Bram Stoker's Dracula?
- 5) Which Yorkshire town gives its name to a double lamb or mutton chop?
- 6) The official name of which Yorkshire Regiment incorporated a colour?
- 7) A famous choral society was founded in which Yorkshire town in the year 1836?
- 8) Which was the first Yorkshire club to win the FA Cup?
- 9) Opened in Halifax in 1992, Eureka was the first museum designed specifically for whom?
- 10) Which Yorkshireman was named Sports Writers Sportsman of the Year 1977 and was the last cricketer born in Yorkshire to captain England in a test match?

Answers are on page 33.

A signal of good wishes!

By Jennifer Shannon

LAST JULY, WHEN St Dunstan's Service Awareness and Fundraising Team attended the Aldershot Army Show, they met up with Richard Geall of 63 (SAS) Signal Squadron (R). Richard was running a communications stand, inviting people to guide a blindfolded person around an obstacle course with the help of two-way radios.

Ron Jones chatted to him about the work of St Dunstan's and Richard saw how his stand could link very well into ours to promote awareness and



Dick Lake accepts the Signals plaque from Ron.

when the Show finished he offered to continue raising funds for us at other events during the summer.

As a result, we offered members of 18 (UKSF) Signal

Regiment a visit from one of our public speakers. Last December, Ron gave a talk at their Cross Brief day at the base in Thorney Island. He was met by Richard, made very welcome by all at Baker Barracks and shown into the Officers' Mess where he gave his presentation that evening. He explained the history of the charity and his own experiences.

Ron was presented with a beautifully carved plaque, a medal, lapel badge and wooden key ring by the Brigadier in thanks, and Ron was delighted to hand over the plaque to Dick Lake during a recent visit to St Dunstan's Ovingdean. The plaque has been mounted with the regimental shields in the Lounge.



St Dunstaner Moira McGrath at the Royal Signals stand where they ran a blindfold obstacle course last summer.

Major General Webb-Carter

Major General Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter, who has joined St Dunstan's Council, was born just after the Second World War. Raised in Hampshire, he is the son of an Army officer who was the 6th generation of his family to have served in the British Army. So it was inevitable that young Evelyn would join as well, which he did in 1964 as a recruit in the Rifle Brigade. He joined them because the Rifle Brigade depot in Winchester was nearest to home but his so called friends say this has accounted for a great deal in his subsequent career and not all of it good! In due course Sandhurst followed and he was commissioned into the Grenadier Guards. A glittering career and much fun in bearskin and tunic followed. He was married in 1973 to Celia Wigram, also a soldier's daughter, and they had three children. All grown up but to date unmarried, one is in horse racing, another in fashion and the third hopes to go into aid work.

His interests are many but horses and history are the most prominent and

he loves to combine the two by riding in far off lands following military campaigns. He has so far been to France, Spain, South Africa, Pakistan, Ethiopia and Jordan. He hopes to go to Tibet and South America in the future. He is involved in several historical organisations and notably the Waterloo Committee of which he is chairman.

Currently he is planning the bicentenary of the Battle of Waterloo. He is a member of

the Worshipful Company of Farriers. He and his wife live in Gloucestershire.

His most notable moments in his career include operations in Northern Ireland and Bosnia, commanding the battalion that brought the Warrior armoured vehicle into service and being in charge of the Queen Mother's 100th Birthday parade in 2000. His day job is the Controller of the Army Benevolent Fund, which keeps him very busy.



On 7 February St Dunstaners Gerry Jones and Colin Williamson congratulated Sutton Valence pupils on their effort in completing the St Dunstan's Cadet Challenge last year. Gerry spoke of the helicopter crash that cost him his sight and how St Dunstan's helped him forge a new life. The two St Dunstaners presented the pupils with certificates of achievement and Ed Howey was feted for special achievement.

Forest MP visits Ovingdean



St Dunstaner Arthur Lowe and Mark Harper, MP.



St Dunstaner Billy Orr with the visiting MP.

THE SHADOW DEFENCE Minister visited Ovingdean for a fact-finding tour on 30 January. Mark Harper, Member of Parliament for the Forest of Dean met with St Dunstaners such as Stan Grimsey, Arthur Lowe, Billy Orr and Roy King and was given a tour of facilities by Chief Executive Robert Leader and Ovingdean Manager Dick Lake.



Norman Perry recalled his Physio days.



St Dunstaner Roy King in political debate.

Last salute for convoy veterans

SEAMEN WHO BRAVED the chill of the Arctic will be remembered when members of the North Russia Club meet for their final function later this month. St Dunstaner Percy Price will join his comrades for their final meetings in Reading and at HMS President on the north bank of the Thames.

Percy joined the Royal Navy as a boy in 1935. He later trained as a gunner and served on HMS Hood and HMS Javelin as a Petty Officer. He sailed Norway to Narvik and carried the King of Norway to England. was involved with Dunkirk.

His ship was one of those deployed on the Russian Convoy, taking supplies to the beleaguered Russian army in Murmansk between 1941 and 1945. Avoiding ice and u-boats, they started with 38 ships and ended with four.

"We carried ammo, aircraft, food, petrol and diesel," said Percy. "I remember them putting petrol in railway carriages because there was no where else to put it." "It was desolate out there. We ran out of food at one point.



Percy carried the North Russia Club's standard at a Service of Remembrance when he returned to Russia in 2001.

The Russians built a jetty for us and we had to go round and ask for food. They didn't have much themselves but they gave us some yak meat."

Percy has returned to Russia several times since those days, visiting historic sights and memorials in Moscow, Murmansk and Archangel.

Parade of the Haggis!

Did St Dunstaners at Ovingdean observe a traditional Burns Night? Is there an Ode to Baileys?



Alan Mars moves in for the inevitable cutting of the Haggis.

ON THE FACE of it, St Dunstaners at Ovingdean celebrated Burns Night on 25 January in traditional fashion. There was a Parade of the Haggis, followed by an Address to the Haggis from Alan Mars, the only man licensed to play the pipes on London Underground.

Robbie Burns died in 1796 at the age of 37 in direst poverty. However, his poetic work articulated the rich and strange wonder of life

in everything he wrote, from the fun of Tam O'Shanter to the tender love song A Red, Red Rose.

Burns honoured the haggis with a poem, celebrating its sense and worth, which was about using the odds and ends (lungs, liver and heart) of the sheep, seasoned with onions and oatmeal stuffed into the stomach bag. Making the plea not to judge anything by appearances, he provided Scots with a strong national mascot.

As he said: "Fair fa' your honest, sonsie face, Great chieftain o the puddin'-race! Aboon them a' ye tak your place, Painch, tripe, or thairm: Weel are ye wordy of a grace As lang's my arm."

The first gatherings to celebrate the life and works of Robert Burns were held by friends on the anniversary of his death on 21 July. Nowadays Burns Night is on 25 January, the anniversary of his birth, and is a time to link people of all colours, creeds and nations in a common bond of friendship

The haggis was brought out with neeps and chappit tatties. But was there something missing? Alan Mars followed through with the cutting of the haggis.

He delivered a speech and toasted the immortal memory of Robbie Burns. It fell upon St Dunstaner Ron Jones to make the Toast to the Lassies. "I said they are like a haggis," recalled Ron with a smile. "They are round

warm and soft with places that need exploring." Sue Lilley, wife of St Dunstaner John, made the Reply to the Laddies. Delivered with grace, charm and wit, this is a savaging of the lads' crude dispositions and social inferiority, accepted with good humour by the menfolk present.

Alan Mars continued to entertain by playing the harp and dancing the Tam O'Shanter which drew people out onto the floor. The evening ended with a cheery rendition of Auld Lang Syne. What more could you want from a Burns Night celebration? But hang on, shouldn't there be a wee dram served with the evening's haggis?

This was the joker in the pack, instead of a single malt whisky, the haggis, taties and neeps had been served with a Baileys based punch. Very nice by all accounts, but did the Bard of Ayr write an Ode to Baileys?

"Ye Pow'rs, wha mak mankind your care, And dish them out their bill o fare, Auld Scotland wants nae skinking ware, That jaups in luggies: But, if ye wish her gratefu prayer, Gie her a Haggis!"

Make it yourself!

MOST SUPERMARKETS stock ready made haggis that can be microwaved, there are even veggie versions, but if you are feeling adventurous, this is a traditional recipe for haggis. The quantities of suet, onions, oatmeal and salt vary according to the size of the pluck or lights as it is often known.

Ingredients

1 sheep's stomach bag and pluck (heart, liver, lungs and windpipe)
 ½lb-2lb/250g-1kg pinhead oatmeal, or a mixture of medium and pinhead
 4oz-1lb/125g-500g suet, finely chopped
 4 onions, finely chopped
 2-4 tbsps salt

1 tsp ground black pepper
 1 tsp dried mixed herbs, or 2 tsp chopped fresh herbs

Method

Begin the day before you want to cook the haggis. Wash the stomach bag in cold water, scrape and clean well. Place into a large bowl of clean, cold water. Wash the pluck and place it into a pan of boiling water. Let the windpipe lie over the side of the pan and place a small jar underneath to catch the drips. Simmer gently until all parts are tender - usually between one and two hours.

Place the cooked pluck into a large basin, cover with the cooking liquid and leave it all overnight.



Colwyn Lloyd joins Ron Jones and Sue Lilley.

Next day, preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas mark 4.

For the stuffing, spread the oatmeal out on a baking sheet. Transfer to the oven and toast for around ten minutes, or until thoroughly dried out but not browned.

Drain the pluck, reserving the cooking liquid. Cut the windpipe off and discard, along with any skin and black parts. Chop or mince the heart and lungs and grate the liver. Place into a large bowl and mix well.

Add the toasted oatmeal, suet, onions, salt, pepper, herbs and about 1 pint of the liquid the pluck was boiled in. Mix well.

Drain the stomach bag. Fill the bag to just over half full with the stuffing mixture. Press out the air, sew up the top of the bag and prick with a long needle.

Place the haggis into boiling water and simmer for three hours, pricking again when it swells. Alternatively, the bag may be cut into several pieces to make smaller haggis, which cook for only 1½-2 hours.

Serve hot with 'neeps', 'tatties' and, of course, a glass of good whisky.

Haggis bullseye!

LISS & DISTRICT RNA (Royal Naval Association) invited members of St Dunstan's Archery Club to a Haggis Supper on Burns Night. The branch secretary came across some serving Royal Marines who are on a mechanics course at nearby Bordon on Remembrance Sunday. They could not believe that ex-servicemen who had become blind could lead a normal life, let alone do a sport like archery.

So Clive Jones, David Poyner (who is a long distance member of Liss RNA), Keith Lanchester-Harding and Patrick Sidnell made their own way, one evening during Archery Week, from

Ovingdean to Liss RNA to meet up with the Marines.

The four archers made the journey on foot, taxi and train and were made most welcome by the hosts. A very enjoyable evening took place with superbly cooked food and pleasant company. At the end of the evening, Archery Club Chairman David Poyner was presented with a cheque by Mr Bob Bean, Chairman of Liss RNA, for the Archery Club's funds as a thank you for their members making such an effort for the evening. The evening was such a success that the archers have been invited back again later this year.



St Dunstaner David Poyner and Liss RNA Chairman Bob Bean.

Friendly break in Croatia

Penny Melville-Brown finds Premantura in Croatia provides a relaxing and VIP friendly environment

THE CROATIAN NATIONAL Association for the Blind welcomes visually impaired people, their families and those who work to support them, to their specially designed education, rehabilitation and holiday facility in Premantura on the popular Istrian peninsula, in the north of the country.

The holiday accommodation that I used was a good sized twin room with balcony and an en suite shower room. There is a bar, dining room, well shaded patio and pleasant garden.

The sea is just a short walk away: a rocky coast with a large terrace, again designed for those who do not see too well. There are guard rails to stop you falling in and steps with hand rails leading in to the water. In the sea, there are buoys and a rope so that you can swim independently and not end up somewhere out in the Adriatic, but do remember to take your own swimming towel.

Just a few minutes walk in the other direction is the small village of Premantura. This has a central square, shops, cafes and a tourist information point. Many excursions can be booked from here including a full day tour to Venice.

The historic town of Pula is about 20 minutes away by road and the fabulous amphitheatre is a wonderful monument and the venue for many summer concerts.

Again, not far away is the port of Fazana from where you can take a ferry to the island of Veliki Brijun, part of the Brijuni National Park, which has provided the venue for many international summits from the time President Tito established a palace there. The safari park houses the collection of animals presented to him by many foreign dignitaries and leaders - including two elephants.

There are also the ruins of a roman palace and temple, a

delightful fifteenth century church, an exhibition and museum, plus many sporting activities. A little train provides a tour of the island - we had a running commentary in excellent English.

To get to Premantura, you can fly to Zagreb, Pula, Trieste (in Italy) and even Ljubljana (in Slovenia) and then take local transport, hire a car or even ask the holiday centre to help - for an appropriate charge.

To find out more, you can ring Mladen on +385-1-4812503 or e-mail him at hrvatski-savez-slijepih@zg.t-com.hr or visit their website www.savez-slijepih.hr.

And I forgot to tell you the most important thing, the cost. All of this, room and full board, is 29 Euros per person per night (current rates which might go up a little next year), so around £20 per night - an absolute bargain and somewhere completely different.

Big ski in the Dolomites!

St Dunstaners are back in action on the Canazei slopes



THIS YEAR WAS probably the largest group that has ventured onto the ski slopes. We had three new St Dunstaners, Kelly Hart, Wendy Kane and Jamie Weller. Our guides had all been blooded in previous years, but it was good to see the return of Vicky Stewart and Neil Graham. Our old friend Peter Zamudio making, what I think was his 27th appearance, arrived from Switzerland and graced us all by bringing along his daughter Lisa. Lisa now 16, has grown up with St Dunstan's in her blood and for several years accompanied her mother Maya and Peter on their annual trips helping St Dunstaners with their annual battle against those icy slopes. Maya for many years guided Alan Wortley. Maybe we shall get a third Zamudio wearing a Guides jacket. Vince Stone drove in from Germany and Bill MacDougal flew in from

Gerry Jones reports on the 2007 ski trip

Inverness. Many of our guides are now earning a living in civilian life, they think they are old, but they should ask Charley Daly, Marjorie Scott, Derek Roden and Gerry Jones what it is like to draw the OAP!

Old hands Peter Walker, Steve Sparkes, Mark

Brewin, Carl Williams, Colin Williamson, Gary Lomas and last year's most improved skier Maria Pikulski were soon matched up with their guides. Jodie Wood, Tom Paterson and Arthur Bloomfield returned for a second year of guiding and Emma Covell on her fifth trip knew that she would not end up a nervous wreck as Billy Baxter was not able to make it. Reunions started with much hand shaking and back slapping, however, the most remarkable reunion, materialised later in the week when Win Jordon, wife of St Dunstaner Chris Jordan, suddenly surprised Wendy Kane by saying that she was sure that she knew Wendy prior to the trip. They

talked away over several glasses of glühwein and to their amazement they had served together 35 years ago when they were both based at Wilton at HQs Command.

Also in the resort at the same time were old friends Tony Savage and some of his family who were the remains of the St Agnes party who had been there the week before. His young niece Rebecca understudied Vicky Stewart and Kelly as part of her work experience and she loved it.

Roly Honour Dick Hitchcock and Alan King, our friends who sponsored our jackets plus two old friends Dick and Michael O'Leary were also staying in Canasei, so the grand total was 47 people. It must have been a little overwhelming for our newcomers and their families to adjust to this friendly group, everyone seeming to know everyone else.

Louise Timms from the Sports and Recreation department, Win Jordan, Ian, Wendy's husband, James, Marjorie's son, Geoff Wherry and the partners of guides Dusty Miller and Arthur Bloomfield, Vanessa and Helen had no option other than to join in.

After the first day at Champac the party split into several groups. Beginners and those who valued their own skin stayed on the forgiving slopes of this tranquil resort. It does have though, the best Black run in the whole of the area. Steve Sparkes managed to break his wrist on this run on the first day right at the bottom on a large patch of ice, but as he says he always skis on the limit. He carried on throughout the week with his forearm in a splint supplied by Dusty and only had trouble with it when he and three St Dunstaners completed the Sella Ronda, a 28 mile circuit. This is no mean achievement and the gallant five were Steve, Peter Walker, Gary Lomas, Jamie

Weller and Mark Brewin, the latter two for the first time on this arduous course. The guides who nobly escorted them round were Ewen Cameron, Eddie Edwards, Rick Jones, Nathan Jones and Jodie Wood. Sooner them than me.

The third party spent their time at the top of the Gondle lift, small cabins carrying 10 people, to an area known as The Bowl at 7,100ft. There are some good runs leading from higher up into the bowl and then one can ski right to the bottom of the mountain, luckily passing several restaurants on route. These were visited on a regular basis by Carl Williams, Colin Williamson and Gerry Jones forced protesting, into



St Dunstaners slide out on the slopes in Canazei.

them by their guides Mick Shepley, Bill MacDougal and old hand Martin Blank.

The slopes were covered completely on day one and two, if not a little thinly, but Tuesday saw snow fall, as did Wednesday and on Thursday we had the most beautiful day; blue skies, crisp snow and everyone was able to ski to their best. More snow fell on Thursday evening and Friday the snow was light on top and the conditions forgiving until late afternoon when things got a little heavy. All in all an excellent weeks skiing especially when nearby Austria had no snow at all.

Vicky coached Kelly to a high standard, the latter was unable to join us last year due to illness, but as the youngest member of our group she rose to the occasion, started from nothing and finished the week by going to the top at Champac, conquering button and chairlifts in the process. Undoubtedly a well deserved winner of the Cow Bell signifying the most improved skier for the week. Well done to both of them, especially as they seemed to party well into the night.

Blindfold skiing, what's all this about? Tradition

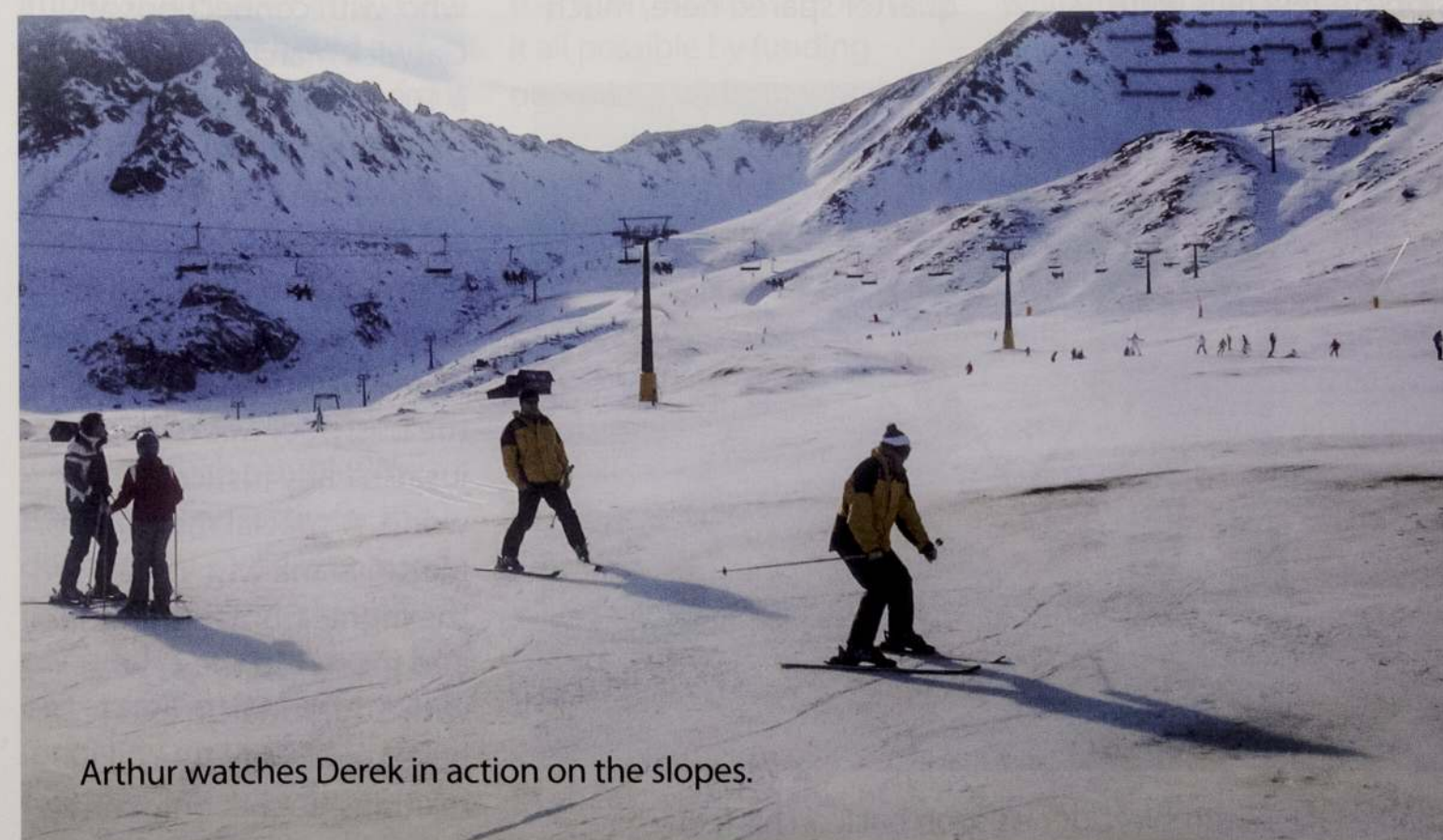


St Dunstaner Derek Roden and his guide Arthur Bloomfield.



Charlie Daly and Peter Zamudio head out on their skis.

Peter and Charlie with the mountains behind them.



Arthur watches Derek in action on the slopes.

states that new guides are expected to be blindfolded on the last day and complete a run down the ski slopes blindfolded, guided by one of their fellow guides. As stated earlier there were no new guides this year. Somehow or other Peter Zamudio persuaded that all the families present, plus his own daughter should attempt this unusual and scary exercise. I can understand Louise had to do this as part of her job, but the remainder had obviously lost the plot. Even Roly decided that he would have a go. Everyone completed the little course extremely well, having succeeded in going up the button bar and coming down the beginners slope. A few falls were

par for the course, some found it emotional, some got disorientated when the blindfold was removed but all were unanimous in stating "never again"! They were all applauded on completion, especially by the St Dunstaners. Many a Stavely could have been nominated during this taking place, as the writer spent half of the goings on by facing totally the wrong way, but at the same time being commentated to by several guides. You just can't get the staff!

It was only in the hour after our wonderful evening meals that we found out about the misdemeanours achieved by others. No quarter spared here, much

denial from all parties yet the Stavely hat was given out by the nights governing pair accompanied with some indescribable drink. This trophy has a long history, ask anyone who has been skiing with our group to gain the secrets and how to avoid being a recipient!

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

Now it is time for the Thank Yous. I thank the guides who had to travel huge distances to be with us, to Mick Shepley who, with connections at Gatwick marched us past a 100 yard long queue for passport and security at Gatwick; he did much the same thing at Venice on the return only to be pulled in for an extra check just as we were leaving departure for the bus, poor Mick, there just isn't any justice in the world. A special mention for Martin Blank who organised the flights from Birmingham and mustered the crew with Eddie. Martin and I have that lovely special relationship that only comes



Charlie takes a tumble, but he's soon back on his feet.



St Dunstaner Carl Williams and guide Mick Shepley.

after completing the most marvellous of somersaults, pirouettes, turning without any commands and generally falling about laughing. Next year we promise to improve, well after a 10 year partnership we should and the mini-Sella Ronda beckons once more. We are all grateful to Anna and daughter Maya and her wonderful staff at El Ciasel hotel who looked after us and ensured that we were made to feel welcome on this our sixth visit and nothing was too much trouble. We thank the Consortio for the donation of some lift passes for our guides, we thank our guides who just keep on returning year after year for giving up their time to teach us new tricks, keep us

safe and keep us laughing. St Dunstaners on this trip also owe a huge debt of gratitude to Babs and Brian Druce who help us in a most specific way. Most of all we thank St Dunstan's for making it all possible by funding our guides without whom our challenge would not be possible. Long may it be so!

Mark Brewin writes:

"Great Christmas is over, now I've got something to look forward too!" You can imagine the rebuke I received from my wife when she read those words that I'd written in an e-mail to a friend. The words of course were written tongue in cheek as the magic of

Christmas has been restored to our house as I've got a lively four year old boy. But the 'something to look forward too' - well I was referring to my annual week long dose of an emotional roller coaster ride that is the St Dunstan's ski trip!

I was part of the contingent flying from Birmingham this year. We Northerners like to fly at a slightly more civilised time of the day. So after a full English, a spot of packing and a soak in the bath, I left for the airport around 06:30. I think the Gatwick lot were probably just about boarding their flight at this time, shame! I met up with the familiar faces of Gary Lomas, Colin Williamson, Maria P, and our guides Eddie and Martin. This year we were joined by two new faces St Dunstaner Wendy and her partner Ian. Tiredness was soon removed from our faces and replaced with smiles and laughter as we caught up with each other and of course Gaz's latest chapter from the Lomas book of bizarre jokes.

This year I discovered for the first time that the Italians have a bit of a weird sense of humour. After our flight and eventual tracking down of the

transport that would take us to the hotel we left the airport complex to discover the Italians had camouflaged the snow with green and brown stuff - those crazy guys! As we proceeded the banter on the bus soon turned to a hushed quiet as disbelief, dismay and disappointment started to become apparent. The rumours and weather reports are true then. There really is no snow!

We checked into the hotel and caught up with the advanced party from Gatwick. Soon Canazei was filled with the sound of laughter. We did our admin, got our rooms squared away and collected ski's and boots whilst whispering silent prayers for snow. On the Sunday, our first day for skiing, we went off to the Champex slopes to get our ski legs back and take group photographs. In addition, of course, to perform the annual ritual to scare the locals and fellow tourists into passing the word as we donned our bright yellow jackets. "Take cover, those crazy blind Anglais are back!"

During the day, the obligatory smiles, laughter and wipe outs took place, the ski legs returned and the bug started to bite for those new to the

sport trip, clouds started to loom and the guides forecast that a good dump of snow was imminent.

We went down town that night all full of high spirits or was that full of spirits; not quite sure which? However, just to be on the safe side, Mick Shepley asked me to perform a snow dance to help those looming clouds produce the goods, as if the locals hadn't been given enough of a fright through those jackets! Anyway I decided to please the gods and danced my speciality and local favourite *2000 voltio through el bodyo*; sure enough, flakes of snow appeared accompanied by whoops and cheers.

After that initial dump of snow and one poor days skiing due to near blizzard conditions and poor visibility that hampered the guides, the conditions became fantastic! We broke off into various skiing groups for the week. Mine consisted of St Dunstaners (myself), Pete Walker, Gary 'Gadmin' Lomas, Steve 'Stephanie Sparkles' Sparkes and Jamie 'Ginge' Weller; (being an ex-Matelot and ginger you can imagine the trouble and special dispensations we

had to get him a ski pass!). We were accompanied by a cracking bunch of guides Nathan, Ed, Rick, Cam and Jodi respectively.

We would tackle the slopes in a sort of mini battalion snake which by all accounts looked the business as we swooshed down the slopes in formation. Apparently skiers would stop and look in awe and disbelief as we snaked past them. The only sounds to be heard were those of our skis cutting through the snow, and our shouts of 'how cool is this' and big girly wahoos from Jamie.

We did the Sella Rhonda one day. This is about 40k long and a right beasting on the old legs as your thighs burned, but it's an achievement in itself. All those of us on it at the end were absolutely cream crackered, but all beaming with great big smiles. I'm happy to report that there were no serious injuries from the week. There were a couple of near death experiences for out of control snow boarders who received a good old fashioned squaddie rollocking. I attempted my James Bond impression as I hurtled through the air

when I didn't get off a chair lift when ordered too!

It is difficult for me to try and sum up and encapsulate what the St Dunstan's ski trip means to me and, I guess, the others. It's the camaraderie, the constant laughter, the mickey taking, the challenges, achievements and the personal goals we hit, the freedom that you feel on the slopes, the absolute trust and utmost respect that you have for the guides and fellow St Dunstaners, the adrenaline rush and exhilaration, the competitive spirit and determination not to let a little thing like a slope full of snow beat you just because you've got a visual impairment.

I guess it is all these things plus a whole stack more. When I got through my front door on my return to the UK, my wife said to me, "I love it when I see you return from this trip, you look different in some way." My response was "Yeah knackered." Her reply was simply, "No, refreshed and confident..."

Eleven months to go!

Wendy Kane describes her first experiences with the St Dunstan's ski party:

After the best holiday I have had in years, I would like to thank everyone who made it possible for me to learn to ski at the ripe old age of 54! My grateful thanks to Emma, my *oooh-so-patient* guide, who never lost her head, (even when I nearly did!) trying to beat Kev Alderton's downhill speed record for the first time on skis!!

Thanks also to Martin who looked after us, especially wimpish me who got travel sick up "them thar hills."

The best surprise was meeting someone for the first time in 35 years. She remembered me from when we served together in UKLF Wilton. (Fred) Win Jordan; what a memory she has! We never shut up about the time we spent together in the 70s.



Wendy and Win reunited!

Her husband Chris Jordan is a St Dunstaner resident in Ovingdean and Fred works on the reception there. She told me of a photograph we had taken together in 1971 at a Christmas ball. I couldn't remember it at all. But Fred, the incredible memory woman, did! Even when she sent it to me I still don't recall the event. (See Letters on page 8).

So to keep the photos up to date, we had one taken in Canazei which I will never forget. Hopefully, we will stay good friends for the next 35 years, God willing.

I must say a few words about the young St Dunstaner whom we all adopted as our 'little lass'; Kelly. What a star! And didn't she do well!

Our Maria, who came home with a trophy, a whopping black eye! (It only hurts when I larf, ha ha!)

So to all the St Dunstan's skiing club, it was a pleasure meeting you all, and look forward to being with you next year, (if you'll have me).

PS My answer machine is full of messages from Eddie the Eagle begging me to give him a few tips, no way I say, ha ha!

The Show Must Go On!

DID YOU MEET Sir Laurence Olivier, Anthony Hopkins, Marlene Dietrich, Dame Judy Dench?" and so the list went on, naming many top actors and actresses. The answer to each one was "Yes." Richard had met them all in his position as a stage manager and master carpenter.

Richard 'Dick' Tavener became a St Dunstaner in 2005. I met him and Sue, his wife and former dancer, at their home in New Malden, Surrey. Richard is a quietly spoken man but with a twinkle in his voice! "I was born in Ramsgate on 10 August, 1917 during a zeppelin raid on the town. My mother always told me that I popped out to see what all the noise was about. Also that day saw the outbreak of the Russian revolution!"

There was not much money in the family, so Richard left school at 14 and did a series of jobs to help with family finances. On 17 January 1940, Dick, aged 22, was called up into the East Kent Regiment (The Buffs), defying family tradition as his father had served in

Richard Tavener talks to Ray Hazan



Richard Tavener in the Army.

the Royal Navy into which his brother had also been called up. In true military fashion, Richard had traveled all the way from Ramsgate to Sussex and back again, all in aid of one signature. He eventually ended up in barracks at Canterbury, all of 16 miles from Ramsgate!

He had arrived in time for a German measles epidemic and woke one morning to

see a coffin being carried away on a sledge; "That didn't make me feel very happy."

In 1940, Richard found himself in France as part of the British Expeditionary Force. In an incident, where his Company holed up in a signal box, they defended themselves until ammunition ran out. Only eight men out of 60 emerged alive.

Sergeant Harwood, who was on a stretcher, told Dick he had been made a corporal and that all the paperwork had been done. That was the last time anyone ever saw the sergeant. Later on Johnny Jacobs (the company clerk) met Dick in Stalag 20B and verified that all paperwork had been done and posted, but it must have been lost in transit. So Dick was never recognised and remained a private, and likewise, never received a higher pension.

Dick was taken prisoner and so began a long trudge back to Germany and Poland. This included marching

across the "Siegfried Line" on a glorious sunny day. "We were then packed into cattle trucks for three days without food or water and ended up in Poland, where we were set to work in local forts."

Based in the Marienburg area, Richard was employed on different jobs, including the building of a prisoner of war camp. "Conditions were pretty basic. We had a large bucket, which served as an overnight chamber pot, and was then used by 26 hut members for washing and shaving in the morning." There followed five years of working in various areas – including 12 hour stints in a sugar factory, sometimes up to his waist in water for the entire shift.

In October 1944, Richard embarked on the "Death March" from Poland to Germany. There was snow for much of the time and he went down with pleurisy. Luckily for him a very decent German soldier took him to the hospital based in the Fort in Neu Bradenburg. He met a captured tank Sergeant Major, SSM Martin, who also came from Ramsgate and had been having a pint with Richard's father a short while before the invasion

of Europe by the Allies. Dick said he would meet SSM Martin in the Beresford Inn, Westcliffe Road, Ramsgate on the first Whit Sunday after the war. Dick was there, but SSM Martin never turned up. Had he died? He now wishes he had tried to find him; just knowing that this man had had a drink with his dad was enough to keep him pushing on.

Dick went back on the march after a couple of weeks. He was always quite a leader of men but began to get bored of leading so he started gradually working his way backwards in the line of marching men. They were walking along the River Elbe, when they entered Torgau. There was an enormous explosion next to them; bodies were flying through the air. When things had settled down everyone had disappeared except for four men. There was a terrible battle raging so they rolled down the banks of the river and laid flat. Down below there was a sugar barge, which they hid on that night. They ate the sugar. This was at the beginning of April. They were stuck on the banks for two days with the battle going on over the top of them with mortar bombs etc going

off around them. This was where Dick was deafened. All the trees around them were alight. Eventually they decided to try to move away and came across two Americans who were on reconnoitre. He nearly mistook them for Germans due to the similar shape of their helmets in the dark.

The Americans took them back to their base, where they were eventually given a blanket and put in a jeep. This took them to Hildesheim (about six to seven hours away) through the German lines which they watched retreating.

An officer promised them that if they had only been prisoners for a short while, they would be returned to their regiments. "How long have you been a POW?" Richard was asked. "Five years," he replied. His long incarceration meant he was leaving shortly afterwards by truck to the nearest airfield in Hildesheim for return to the UK. They landed in Belgium to refuel and then on to Leighton Buzzard. Richard was home exactly five years after leaving. "I was back six weeks before anyone else, and was there for the Armistice.



Richard and Sue Tavener.

"I remember when I did get home, there was a series of visitors knocking at the door, each with a photograph of a loved one; 'Have you seen him?'; 'Do you know him?'"

Dick had always been interested in the theatre, though not as an actor. "From the age of 12, I had been selling programmes in the theatre. I became a projectionist's assistant in the cinema where we showed black and white 'talkies.'" Dick worked all his life in the theatre business – it was his total love in life.

Whilst in a POW camp in Elbing he got together with some others, and through the kindness of the Germans he was able to build a stage and seating for shows to be put on. Dick designed and built all the sets and another comrade read books then adapted them to make a show. Apart from the shows

they also started a band called 'The Blue Champagne'. The Germans used to come in and watch the shows. It was probably this love of building the sets, etc, that kept Dick going through the years of imprisonment.

"They were building a theatre in my home town. I attended one interview for a backstage job where the comment was made about 'what a good war' we chaps had enjoyed. I stood to attention and walked out of the room.

"But I did get a job as stage manager. He is responsible for everything backstage. When that curtain goes up, you are vulnerable. Anything can happen and you have to deal with it. There was one incident, not in my theatre, where a stage prop fell and cut somebody in two!"

Richard left Ramsgate for Scotland, where he managed a much larger theatre, which also put on operas. "I moved to Glasgow, where I met and married Sue, who was a dancer. Then on to Liverpool, where the children were born."

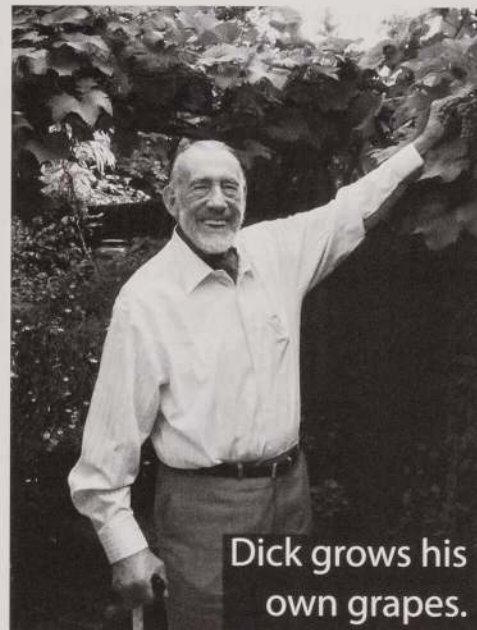
Richard then joined a company with a franchise on several theatres and became

a trouble shooter, travelling round sorting out problems, before finally settling at the Haymarket in London. This meant commuting into town twice a day. Up in the morning to sort out the previous evening's performance, followed by a break at home for lunch. Then in again for the evening performance.

Dick had wanted to work on into his 80s, but during a trip to Newfoundland with his son to look into his origins, he suffered an aneurism. Additionally, the onset of macular degeneration meant an early retirement at 75.

It was a chance conversation between his brother, also suffering sight loss, and a social worker, where the name of St Dunstan's first came up. The remainder is history, so to speak. "It's just nice to know there are other people going through the same and knowing there is help at the end of the line. I really enjoyed the introduction week. There was that wonderful tall chap there who looked after us."

Dick and Sue still enjoy going to the theatre and the pictures. "The Royal Albert Hall look after us



marvellously well. One of my most memorable occasions was a Royal Variety performance in Glasgow. Marlene Dietrich was a wonderful lady. I would show her to her dressing-room. She would ask for a bottle of water, and clean everywhere first. On stage, she was so magnificent – stately and dignified, unlike some others I won't name."

So Dick and Sue have enjoyed a colourful life. One of the benefits derived at the stage door was a vine cutting. This has taken over a large part of their garden and produces some 300 pounds of grapes every year. I regret to report that we were unable to taste some 'Chateau Tavener' but Dick's sense of humour was sufficient to keep the atmosphere light and cheery!

Indoor shoot starts new year of archery

THE FIRST ARCHERY week of 2007 took place during the week of 20-28 January, indoors at Ovingdean. The first two days were taken up by the setting up of equipment and coaching sessions. Club competitions took place over the next five days.

Ditchling Archery Club visited on Wednesday evening for a inter-club match. The competition was close with St Dunstan's team winning by 21 points.

The Archery Club AGM was held on Friday afternoon with Club President Major Wendy Le Gassik presiding over the proceedings. Before the start of the meeting there was two minute silence for Amy Austin and Bert Wood who had passed away in recent months.

Friday evening was taken up with presentation of trophies and medals by Lady Paramount Mrs Sue Lilley.

The GNAS Handicap Medal was won by Clive Jones while the Longhill Trophy went to Keith Lanchester-Harding. The Laurie Austin Cup was won by Patrick Sidnell. Peter Hammond was the Tactile Archer to win the most

gold, while the Gaygan Gold was won by Steve Moseley. Norman's Shoot was won by Keith Lanchester-Harding, with Patrick Sidnell coming second and Norman Perry third.

On Saturday, we were visited by Hellingly Archers for a match and I am pleased to say St Dunstan's won by 48 points.

The week was a great success due the efforts and hard work of the organisers and volunteers.

Ten Answers

Answers to quiz on page 13.

- 1) Rats; 2) Beer;
- 3) *Ark Royal*; 4) Whitby;
- 5) Barnsley;
- 6) Green Howards;
- 7) Huddersfield;
- 8) Sheffield Wednesday;
- 9) Children;
- 10) Geoff Boycott, (note that Michael Vaughan is a Lancastrian by birth).

How I still read music!

St Dunstaner **Stanley Burrell** feared his days as an organ player were over, but help was at hand ...

I HAVE NEVER had a music lesson in my life and prior to losing my sight I had the ability to read treble and bass clef, but as my eyesight deteriorated I found that the distance between the treble and bass clef was too much for me to scan and read. So I started this new form, which I believe is called 'fake music', which is virtually the treble showing the air of the tune along with the chord symbols. This is the method that I use now. When I lost my sight and went totally blind, I thought the end of my organ playing was nigh.

Fortunately, I have a very good friend, Rod Dimpleby, who has the patience of Job. He comes along and assists me with computer work and organ playing, also we have many good debates. We have derived a method whereby instead of reading music, I listen to music. Rod will put the conventional music notation on to a CD and I have a piece of equipment that allows me to navigate very quickly between songs or

bars. To put it in a nut-shell, with constant playing and memory, eventually I can play a tune. It gives me satisfaction, but I feel sorry for the people having to listen to it. Nevertheless, I do appreciate tremendously the work that Rod does for me.

When my friend and I started this idea of dictated music, we did it on a straightforward audiocassette. It worked quite well, but as you know, unless one has 'cue and review' to try and find a particular section on a tape is guess work.

Eventually, we came across a computer programme and what Rod now does is plug a microphone into the relevant socket of the computer. He dictates into the microphone and on to the computer. He puts all the various songs in a sequence and uses Nero to burn them on to a CD. All the dictated music is on CD and can also be saved in MP3 format. So on one CD you can have a large number of songs.

I can now put the CD into my Victor Classic Daisy reader which the RNIB supply for their talking books. I can put bookmarks in and navigate to almost any bar that I want with a flick of a finger. I will then play, say three bars, depending on how difficult the piece might be, keep on repeating it until it goes into my memory. When I have very little difficulty playing those three bars, I go onto the next three and do the same. I put a bookmark in every three bars, so I can soon go back to a particular point if I forget a particular section.

Here is a sample of dictated music, using this system, with book marks inserted:

"Le Grand. In E flat, in four-four time. Bar one. We are starting on a dotted crotchet above C above middle C. Down to a quaver on C, followed by a crotchet on C, up to a crotchet on E. Bar one on the chord of E flat.

"Bar two. Down to a dotted crotchet on D, down to a quaver on B, a crotchet on

B, up to a crotchet on D. Bar two on the chord of G minor.

"Bar three. Down to a dotted crotchet on C, down to a quaver on A, a crotchet on A, up to a crotchet on C. That's on a chord of F minor. (Beep: Bookmark one inserted).

"Bar four. Down to a crotchet on B, then down an octave and you're coming up to five quavers, so you're starting on the B flat up to C, up to D, up to E flat, up to F, and then

two semi-quavers up to G, up to A. That's on the chord of B flat seventh.

"Bar five. Up to a minimum on B flat, and then followed by a quaver rest and three quavers, up to C, down to B, down to A natural. That's on the chord of E flat.

"Bar six. Up to a minim on the B flat, again followed by a quaver rest, and then three quavers, this time you go down to G, up to A, up to B.

That's on the chord of E flat seventh. (Beep: Bookmark two inserted)." Having inserted the bookmarks by pressing one button, I can now search through the music to find appropriate passages by using the cursor keys.

I believe I have over 150 tunes stored on disc in this way and I have a repertoire of around 30. If I want to play more, I can recap on one of the discs in order to memorise and be able to play it again.

A holiday in Palestine

ON LEAVING MY desert station in Egypt one night by train in 1944, it was a joy to waken bright and early in the morning to see green fields and lovely orange groves with fruit almost ready for gathering. I was in Palestine, no more sand for two whole weeks! The masses of fruit were a great temptation and I longed to help myself. Such scenery continued until Lydda was reached and there a change of trains took place to reach Jerusalem. The train traversed very rocky hills with scant vegetation, but here and there were shepherd boys tending their

St Dunstaner **Amy Gordon** visited the Holy Land during World War II

flocks of sheep and goats on the mountainside. The first glimpse of Jerusalem revealed a city of white buildings set upon a hill. The whole countryside seemed to be ranges of hills of different heights. Winding through the hills by train I thought I had never seen so many stones and the parable of the Sewer immediately came to mind.

A few impressions of Jerusalem itself: The old city is surrounded by massive

walls, which have eight gates. One of them, the golden gate is completely blocked by stone for the Moslems believe that when Jerusalem is taken again at the end of the world, the entrance will be through that gate, therefore, they have blocked it. All the mosques are now the Golden Gate, and the Temple area is of course the Moslems sacred ground. There are two large mosques, both of which are very old, and from here is a lovely view of the Mount

of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane. To the west of the Temple area stands at the Wailing Wall, where Jews still come to wail for the lost souls of the city; this is the only part that Moslems allow them to use. A British policeman is always on duty to deal with any trouble arising between adherents of the two faiths.

On the Hill of Golgotha or Calvary (still inside the city wall) stands the church of the Holy Sepulchre. This church is shared by Greek orthodox, Armenians, Roman Catholics Jacobites, Copts and Abyssinians and each have a chapel within its walls. It was a shock to find on this sacred ground little bits of rock were being offered for sale at five piastre or one shilling.

King Solomon's quarters. Just outside the city wall were massive subterranean caves, and here Masonic meetings are still held. The Garden of the Tomb, also outside the City walls is a place where some people believe Christ was lain, and not at the Holy Sepulchre where the church now stands. In the garden of Gethsemane is the Church of All Nations with its twelve beautiful domes, each, as the

name suggests, belonging to a different nation. Several ancient olive trees, believed to have been here 1,900 years ago are also in the garden.

I was able to attend a service at St George's Church, the only English church, it had about it an atmosphere typically English, even to the small choirboys.

Leaving Jerusalem by car on the way to Bethany, the view of the old and new city was particularly good. Bethany is a village, although little of the old are visible, for almost a new Arab town has grown up.

Through the hills of Judea there is little vegetation and few inhabitants. The road always appeared to be on the edge of a precipice – never have I seen such hairpin bends. Some distance from Bethany is the Samaritan's Inn, it was very easy to picture robbers attacking a man and leaving him by the wayside.

Nearing the Dead Sea the little vegetation completely vanished, everywhere brown and dry. The salt content of the Dead Sea is so high that one can almost sit on the water, and it might be added the sea is 1,300 feet below

sea level. Banks of salt remain at the waters edge. On the other side of the sea is the mountain from which Moses viewed the Promised Land. Jericho is an Arab town with flourishing orange and banana groves, due to the fresh water of the dam.

A visit to the Sea of Galilee involved some two-hundred and fifty miles travel. After about 80 miles Mount Tabor came into view, and there set at the side of the mountain was Nazareth, a lovely sight, but what a climb!!

Tall cypresses, fig and olive trees made a pleasant contrast to the white houses and walls. The heights of the town crowned by churches and orphanages and some schools I believe. The Church of the Annunciation is built on the foundations of a Crusaders' church of the 12th Century, but it is claimed that a church has stood on this spot since the time of Constantine, for it marks the Virgin's home. Over the site of Joseph's Workshop is a chapel, and the cave below is supposed to have been the home of Mary, Joseph and Jesus. Leaving Nazareth, plains are traversed, and Canaan of Galilee is reached. A Greek Orthodox church

stands over the spot where Jesus is said to have changed water into wine.

Over the hills and dales, and behold, shining blue expanse – the Sea of Galilee! A wonderful picture – blue, blue sky, gentle lapping water on the pebbly beach, and an atmosphere of absolute stillness. I couldn't help feeling that this was one spot unspoilt by man.

Tiberius at the side of the lake is rather an oriental town, and across the water Capernaum, busy with its little fishing boats.

A few miles south of Jerusalem lay Bethlehem. The inhabitants are mainly Christian and they worship in the oldest church in use – St Catherine's – the Church of the Nativity, which is built over the site of the Manger. Bending to enter through the small aperture in the wall (the original door was blocked many years ago to prevent people taking their animals in) one gets an impression of the great age of this building, for it dates back to 330 AD. Fifty or so huge pillars built by Constantine still support the enormous roof, which was repaired in Edward IV's reign



British machine guns and barricades are set up in the courtyard of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, 1938.

with wood and lead sent by him from England. Below the floor now used is a mosaic floor belonging to the original building and discovered only fifteen years ago.

This church like other sacred buildings suffers from divided ownership and is in the hands of Latins, Greeks and Armenians. In the courtyard outside the church Anglicans are allowed to sing on Christmas Eve.

Postscript

When writing this it was not possible to reveal the name of my station due to censorship. It was, however, the 27th General Hospital about five miles from Tel el Kiber, way out in the desert

60 miles from Cairo and 40 miles from Ismailia. It was a hospital of 2,000 beds where I served for three years. I was in charge of Operating Theatres and a Central Supply room, which served all surgical wards with wound dressings.

It was to this hospital that Cliff Gower was sent when wounded in North Africa. This was revealed when we met at the Warminster and Westbury Visually Handicapped Club. He was instrumental in my becoming a St Dunstaner having learned of my war service which was from September 1939 to November 1945, which included one year in Iraq.

Harry Beevers muses on popular rallying calls as he asks what would be a suitable St Dunstan's motto in the 21st Century

A battle cry of distinction!

RECENTLY REPRESENTED St Dunstan's at a seminar in Derbyshire on the subject "Positive about Disability" and it set me wondering whether our organisation had ever considered an appropriate motto for itself. My dictionary gives three definitions for the word Motto, "A sentence, phrase or word inscribed on something to indicate its character, or use", "A short expression of a guiding rule of conduct" and finally "A word or phrase used as a slogan by a faction". Synonyms such as "Battle-cry, war-cry and catch-phrase are also quoted. I decided to delve into my files to see what I could find and I give below one or two mottoes I have come across:-

The majority of mottoes appear to be in Latin, English or French although the first one below is in German:-

"Ich dien", "I serve" – that of Prince Charles, HRH The Prince of Wales. It is said to have been adopted by the Black Prince, son of Edward III taking the motto of the blind John of Luxemburg, who was King of Bohemia when he was killed fighting for the French at the Battle of Crecy in 1346. Prince Charles also adopted King John's emblem of three ostrich feathers.

"Dieu et mon Droit", "My God and my right" is the main English Royal motto, words allegedly spoken to his troops by King Richard I and adopted by King Henry V and subsequent monarchs.

"God is my help" – Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

"Per Adua Ad Astra", "Through struggles to the stars" – that of the Royal Air Force and the American state of Kansas.

"Nemo me impugne lacessit", "No-one touches me with impunity" – This used by The Order of the Thistle.

"Honi soit qui mal y pense", "Evil to him who evil thinks" – The Order of the Garter.

There are of course many military mottoes: *"Ubique"*, "Everywhere" denotes The Royal Artillery.

"Per mare per terram", "By sea and by land" is favoured by

The Royal Marines. *"Quis audit vincit"*, "Who dares wins" – The SAS.

"All for one and one for all" – The Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry and in literature, The Three Musketeers.

"Nulle secundus", "Second to None" – Coldstream Guards.

Llegio patria nostra, "The Legion is our homeland" – The French Foreign Legion.

"Semper fidels", "Always faithful" – US Marines.

"Ready, aye, Ready" is favoured by the Sea Cadets.

One of the most famous of all inscriptions is that on Britain's highest military honour, the Victoria Cross. Queen Victoria herself chose the simple inscription *"For Valour"*, which she preferred to the first suggestion, *"For the Brave."* *"For Gallantry"* are the words chosen for the George Cross introduced by King George VI in 1940.

Even the Premier League football clubs get into the act, such as Liverpool FC with *"You'll never walk alone"*, or:

"Nil satis nisi optimum" – "Nothing but the best is good enough" – Everton FC.

"Audere esse facere", "To be bold is to accomplish" – Tottenham Hotspur.

"Gloria concordia crescit", "Victory through harmony" – Arsenal FC.

"Prepared" – Aston Villa F.C. And here are one or two Motto oddities:

"Two minds without a single thought", Laurel and Hardy Appreciation Society.

"Mind your own business" – The motto inscribed on the first US coin to bear the words, 'United States of America', a penny made in 1727.

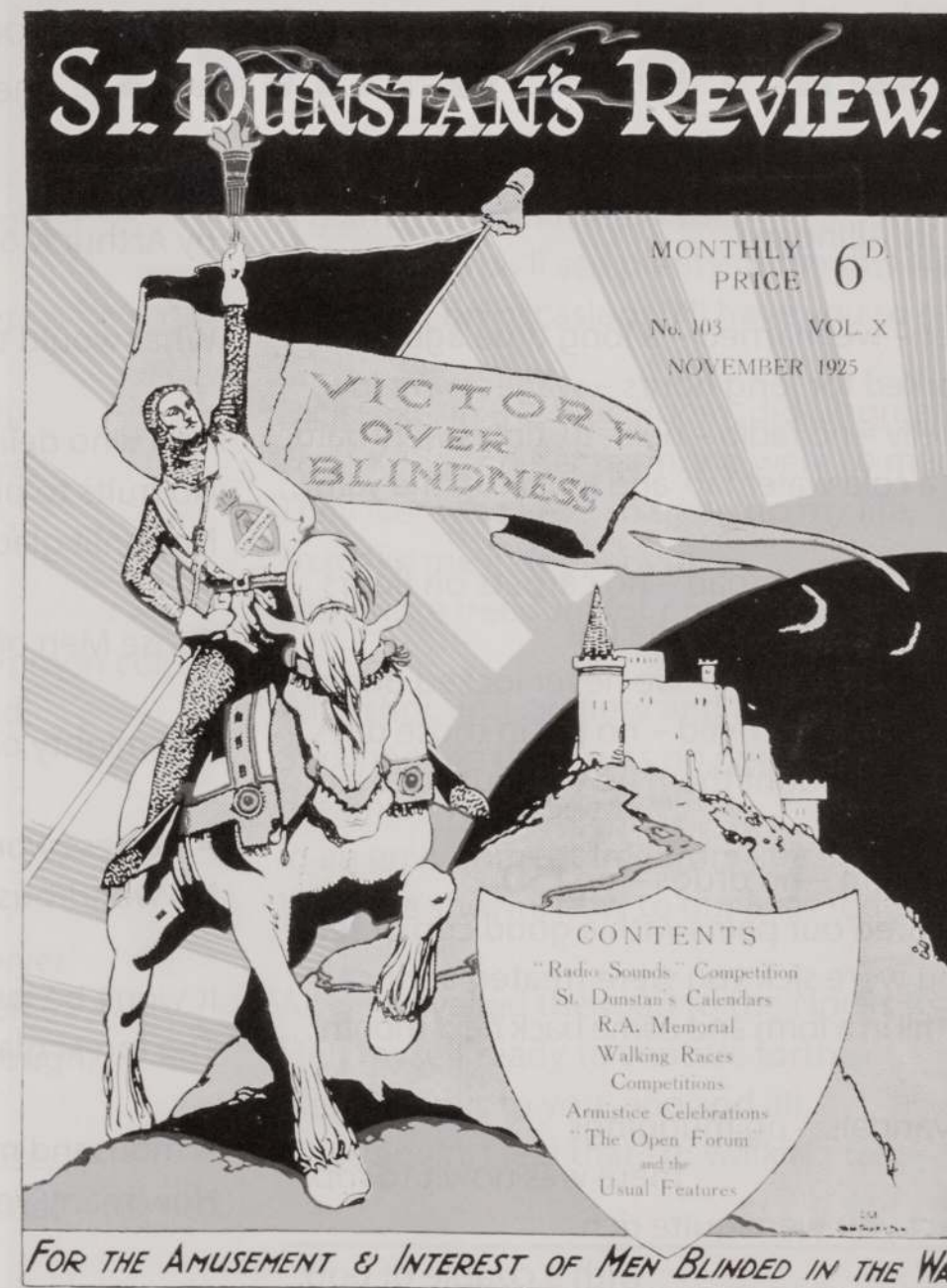
"The eye of the lynx is all-seeing" – Tennis umpires at Wimbledon.

"There's no place like Nome" – the town of Nome in Alaska, USA.

"Draco mortiens nunquam titilandum", "Never tickle a sleeping dragon" – Hogwarts School of witchcraft and wizardry attended by young mage Harry Potter.

"Vote for insanity you know it makes sense" – Monster Raving Loony Party.

So, when it comes to considering what might be



Back in 1917, the Review favoured "What the eye doesn't see, the heart doesn't grieve about" but "Victory over Blindness" had re-emerged as the standard by 1925.

appropriate for St Dunstan's I would have favoured the Latin word "Invicta" meaning "undefeated". However, the county of Kent has already taken it as their motto.

Returning to the title of the seminar in Derbyshire, I rather like the phrase "Positive about Disability" and therefore I tried to put the clock back sixty years and recall some of my

schoolboy Latin. I eventually came up with the very free translation of those words and suggest *"Stabilis de delibatum"*.

Any comments or alternative suggestions from our readers would be welcome. Write to Motto, **ST DUNSTAN'S Review**, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD.

POETS' CORNER

Poetry from St Dunstan's family members around the country

Memories

by Lily Allingan

I met – we married – a long time ago,
I worked for long hours – wages were low,
No telly – no radio – no bath, times were hard,
Just a cold water tap, and a walk up the yard...

No holidays abroad – no carpets on floors,
But we had coal on the fire
– we never locked doors,
Our children arrived – no pill in those days,
And we brought them up without state aid...

No valium – no drugs – no LSD,
We cured our pains with a good cup of tea,
If you were sick you were treated at once,
Not "fill in a form and come back next month"...

No vandals – no muggings
– there was now't to rob!
In fact you were quite rich
with a couple of bob,
People were happier in those far off days,
Kinder and caring in so many ways...

Milkmen and paper boys
used to whistle and sing,
And a night at the flicks
was a wonderful thing,
Oh we had our share of troubles and strife,
But we just had to face it, that was life...

And now I'm alone and look
back through the years,
I don't think of the bad times,
the troubles and tears,
Remember the blessings, our home and love,
We shared them together, and I thank God...

No Trees

by Arthur Morley

What would this world be like
without its trees,
And who delivered them, there are no signs,
No fruits to pick nor any seeds to grow,
No sunlit glades or tall majestic pines.

Those Men of War would ne'er have
been constructed,
The mighty oaks that built them,
just not there,
A treeless world would simply be as nothing,
No wondrous autumn colours, just despair.

It won't be long before we start forgetting,
The forest glades we strolled thru,
hand in hand,
A thousand million years for their creation,
How many years for us to understand?

How many more to bring about the changes,
To re-create the goodness we're destroying,
Re-energise this world that we're neglecting,
Bring back the trees that everyone's enjoying?

What will it take for everyone to realise
(This world, without its trees, a barren plain?)
That it's here and now we're
causing climate changes,
When will we heed the warnings we disdain?

We all must strive to bring about the changes,
Before we bring the world down to its knees,
And make sure that,
for all our children's children,
We leave a bounteous legacy, THE TREES!

The Addict

by Roy Ramsay

I'm sure I've got my final cold,
It's true that I've been growing old,
I hadn't planned on going yet,
But on this cough I wouldn't bet.

I'm choking and I cannot breath,
Keep three hankies up my sleeve.
I'm sat down here at five o'clock,
At eight I'll go and see the doc'.

There's no treatment for the common cold
This one's stubbornly taken hold,
He won't give me no penicillin
Though to take it I'd be willin'.

He said I can't do nothin' for yer,
But make a Will, go see your lawyer!
My friends and family shrug it off,
It's smoking gives you deadly cough,

Give up while you still can choose,
Whose funeral is it? Tell me whose?
I fumble inside paper bag,
For one more lozenge, one more fag!

Induction at St Dunstan's

by Brian Holmes

November 5th,
awakening I tried to contemplate,
Unlike Guy Fawkes, I knew not my fate.
Today I would journey South,
accompanied by my wife,
To St Dunstan's,
with hopes of a more fulfilling life.

Colin drove us down with every care,
Whilst we remained, an apprehensive pair.

But as I stepped in under that bulging dome,
Straight away I felt so much at home.

On entering the reception hall,
A giant of a man I heard call.
I'm Martin, you'll see plenty of me this week,
No doubt on occasions, I'll have you to seek.

Dick Lake, in the Blue Room, did us greet,
Then Katy, and her team, we were to meet.
They were the keys, to open up my life,
To make me independent,
with more freedom for my wife.

With shooting, archery and bowls to try,
Showing me there was no need to
dream of days gone bye.
In an environment free from stress,
We were shown, how to our lives redress.

As we travelled the road to the North,
I felt myself ready to venture forth.
Many thanks to you, one and all,
Once again, I feel that I'm walking tall.

BEER OF THE MONTH

by Colin Wiliamson

Shepherd Neame Christmas Ale 2006

If you can still find it on the supermarket shelves, this Kentish beer from Britain's oldest brewery is worth checking out. A zesty, hoppy, refreshing golden ale with a distinct aroma of citrus fruits. Although the label suggests mangoes I couldn't detect any. A delicate, bitter finish to it, this ale would be an ideal accompaniment to your Christmas pudding! Weighing in at 5.5 per cent, this beer should put the Ho! Ho! Ho! into anyone's festivities if you wish the relive that yuletide atmosphere!

Welcome to St Dunstan's

Anthony Addy of Ashford, Kent served in the Royal Artillery from 1945 to 1948.

Norman Ashton of Hadfield, Glossop, Derbyshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

Gerald Barnard of Ashington, West Sussex served in the Royal Engineers from 1938 to 1946 and was a prisoner of war in Poland.

Alis Coxon of Derby, Derbyshire served in the Women's Royal Air Force from 1950 to 1952.

William Dixon of Blackpool, Lancashire served in the Merchant Navy from 1942 to 1946.

Henry Dungey of Oulton, Leeds served as Private in the Royal Pioneer Corps from 1947 to 1949.

Stanley Dupree of Thetford, Norfolk served in the Royal Navy from 1939 to 1946.

Muriel Fisher of Heytesbury, Warminster, Wiltshire served in the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service from 1947 to 1948.

John Flint of Ilminster, Somerset served in the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment between 1945 to 1948.

Ronald Foreman of Penwortham, Preston, Lancashire served in the Corps of Military Police and the Intelligence Corps between 1940 and 1946.

Leslie Gay of Rotherhithe, London served in the Royal Air Force from 1954 to 1956.

Ronald Gerrard of Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham served in the Royal Air Force from 1946 to 1954.

Thomas Guild of Haywards Heath, Sussex served as Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force from 1949 to 1951.

Victor Halliwell of Holywell, Flintshire served in the Royal Navy from 1935 to 1947.

Kathleen Hart of Topsham, Exeter served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1942 to 1945.

Roy Hayter of Troon, Ayrshire served in the Royal Navy from 1958 to 1986.

Martival Hazlerigg of Walton-on-Thames, Surrey served in the Fleet Air Arm from 1945 to 1947.

Charles Hibbert of Esher, Surrey served in the Welch Regiment and then the Royal Corps of Signals between 1940 and 1946.

William Hobbs of Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire served in the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1945 and then the Royal Engineers until 1947.

Clive Holman of Burgess Hill, West Sussex served in the Home Counties Brigade, 1st Queen's Own Buffs, The Royal Kent Regiment, and Queen's Division between 1962 and 1968.

Leonard Hudson of Crowhurst, Battle, East Sussex served in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve from 1940 to 1946.

Carl Jaeger of Leigh-on-Sea, Essex served in the Royal Air Force from 1947 to 1955.

Roy Lakin of Stone, Staffordshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1955 to 1958.

Paul Lawrence of Gillingham, Dorset served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Denis Lewis of Williton, Taunton, Somerset served as a Gunner in the Royal Artillery from 1946 to 1948.

Della Linford of Buckingham, Buckinghamshire served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1939 to 1941.

Peter Lodge of Basingstoke, Hampshire served in the Royal Navy from 1962 to 1966.

William Martin of Wigan, Lancashire served in the Royal Pioneer Corps from 1945 to 1948.

George Mander of Hallgreen, Birmingham, West Midlands served in the General Service Corps and Royal Army Pay Corps between 1944 and 1947.

Derick Marygold of Coventry, Warwickshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

James Meighan of East Kilbride, Glasgow, East Renfrewshire served as Bombardier in the Royal Artillery from 1955 to 1960.

Michael Moore of Chesterfield, Derbyshire served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1954 to 1959.

Hazel Mosforth of Hove, East Sussex served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1940 to 1945.

Albert Paradine of Felixstowe, Suffolk served in the Welch Regiment and then the Royal Signals between 1940 and 1946.

John Penman of Kingston-on-Spey, Fochabers, Morayshire served in the Royal Signals from 1952 to 1954.

Paul Reynolds of Wilton, Salisbury served in the Royal Engineers from 1971 to 1976.

Ronald Roberts of Tadworth, Surrey served in the Royal Navy from 1941 to 1946.

John Roebuck of Ormskirk, Lancashire served in the Corps of Royal Signals from 1941 to 1947.

Linda Sanders of Oxted, Surrey served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1941 to 1946.

Thomas Scourfield of Bridgwater, Somerset served

as a cook in the Royal Navy from 1946 to 1948.

Howard Spencer of Ashford, Middlesex served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1947.

Eric Stace of Brighton served in the Devonshire Regiment from 1940 to 1946.

Frederick Steers of Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

William Tasker of Peterlee, County Durham served in the Royal Navy from 1955 to 1964.

Brian Turner of Gowdall, Goole, East Yorkshire served in the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry from 1949 to 1951 and then served further with its TA from 1952 to 1955 and again in 1956 to 1958.

William Verralls of Hoveton, Norwich, Norfolk served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946 and again from 1953 to 1969.

William Watson of Wallsend, Tyne and Wear served in the Reconnaissance Corps, Highland Light Infantry (City of Glasgow Regiment), Seaforth Highlanders (Ross-shire Buffs, The Duke of

Albany's) and finally the Royal Ulster Rifles between 1942 and 1946.

John Wheeler of Doncaster, South Yorkshire served as a Radio Operator in the Royal Navy from 1962 to 1966.

Thomas Wignall of Denton, Manchester served in the General Service Corps, Lancashire Fusiliers, Royal Welch Fusiliers, and Royal Engineers between 1943 and 1951.

John Williams of Buckley, Flintshire served in the Royal Welch Fusiliers from 1952 to 1954.

Peter Williams of Ashford, Middlesex served in the Royal Signals in 1969.

James Wilson of High Bentham, Lancashire served in the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1946.

Judith Wood of Faringdon, Oxfordshire served in the Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service from 1972 to 1980.

Charles Woods of Ryhope, Sunderland served as Able Seaman in the Royal Navy from 1940 to 1946.

Family News

BIRTHS

Congratulations on the birth of:
Maddison Hallmark on 3 January. She is the great-granddaughter of William and Rose Lockert of Brighton.

Kai on 28 January. He is the second great-grandchild of Bob and Peggy Davies of Weymouth, Dorset.

DIAMOND ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:
Leonard and Joy Dunn of Eastbourne, East Sussex on 8 February.

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Harry and Phyllis Pollitt of Leyland, Preston, Lancashire who celebrated 63 years of marriage on 22 January.

Tom and Shelagh Owen of Amberley, Gloucestershire who celebrated 62 years of marriage on 26 January.

Bernard and Dorothy Pitcher of Okehampton, Devon who celebrated 65 years of marriage on 26 January.

Christopher and Doris Spellacy of West Kingsdown, Kent who celebrated 61 years of marriage on 26 January.

Charles and Olive Grealy of Grange over Sands, Cumbria who celebrated 61 years of marriage on 28 January.

Evelyn and Patrick Casey of Sanderstead, Surrey who celebrated 62 years of marriage on 6 February.

Thomas and Peggy Lukes of Old Colwyn, Clwyd who celebrated 64 years of marriage on 8 February.

Joseph and Myrtle Hirsh of Chiswick, London who celebrated 61 years of marriage on 10 February.

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

DEATHS

We regret to announce the death of:
Margaret Lockwood on 5 November. She was the wife of Dennis Lockwood of Kirkby Lonsdale, Carnforth, Cumbria.

Edna Bridgman on 15 January. She was the wife of Frederick Bridgman of Edgbaston, Birmingham, West Midlands.

Doreen Heard on 15 January. She was the wife of Richard Heard of Enfield, Middlesex.

Kathleen Armstrong on 31 January. She was the wife of St Dunstaner Roy Armstrong of Walthamstow, London.

Joan Spring of Edgware, Middlesex on 29 January. She was the widow of Patrick Spring.

Gladys Frost of Moston, Greater Manchester on 2 February. She was the widow of Royal Engineer St Dunstaner Herbert Frost.

Molly Murrell of Taunton, Somerset on 7 February. She was the widow of Army St Dunstaner Lewis Murrell.

Our sympathy goes to their family and friends.

In Memory

Leslie Shvemar

Royal Canadian Air Force

Leslie Otto Shvemar of Downsview, Ontario, Canada died on 13 January, aged 83. He joined the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1942. After training as a radar operator, he was attached to RAF Coastal Command and flew on anti-submarine patrols between Iceland and Greenland. Discharged as Leading Aircraftman in 1946, he became a member of the Sir Arthur Pearson Association. He maintained a keen interest in new technologies. Our sympathy goes to his widow Bertha and all of the family.

The Rev Bruce Kenrick

Royal Army Medical Corps

The Reverend Bruce Henderson Kenrick of Oban, Argyll died on 15 January, aged 86. Born at Aintree, Liverpool, he was the son of an accountant and attended the Merchant Taylors' School, Crosby. He started training as an accountant, harbouring a desire to study medicine, but both ambitions were interrupted when he was called up in 1940 and became a stretcher bearer in the Royal Army Medical Corps. Training in Yorkshire, he later served in Africa as part of the Gold Coast Defence Force. He was commissioned in 1944 and joined 127 Parachute Field Ambulance, part of the 6th Airborne Division, which deployed in Italy. Discharged as Lieutenant in 1946, he began to study medicine at the University of Edinburgh, hoping to become a doctor. With influence from the Christian Union, he switched to a degree in divinity. Ordained as a Presbyterian minister, he published his first book in 1956, a study of faith titled *The New Humanity*. Continuing his studies at the Princeton Theological Seminary in New York, he spent his weekends with the East Harlem Protestant Parish Project, working with the urban poor, drug addicts and homeless in an area rife with racial tension. He recorded his experiences in a book *Come out the Wilderness* which inspired many young clergy to commit themselves to inner-city ministry. More personally, he developed a belief that faith was expressed in struggle and the Church's role was to aid the suffering and suffer with them. "The Church must suffer and be crucified with those he seeks to serve," he wrote. "It must keep on being crucified even though the nails bite deep and the hope of resurrection is obscure." After contracting

typhoid during an abortive missionary trip to Calcutta, he moved to North Kensington in London as part of an ecumenical ministry. The area had little council housing and with Rachman-style landlords thriving, he formed the Notting Hill Housing Trust (NHHT) with support from the Methodist Church-based Notting Hill Social Council. Mortgaging his own house to buy another, he kick-started a programme of buying houses at auction, renovating them and renting them to needy families. They started with five houses in the first year, followed by 17 in their second. Within five years they had re-housed 1,000 people. Initially, they received little assistance as they were out of step with government and local authority thinking of the day. However, the NHHT became a model for other organisations around the country. While lobbying members of Harold Wilson's government, Kenrick concluded that a national organisation was required to champion the welfare of the homeless. He convinced influential players in the housing field and major charities to forgo fundraising and support what would become Shelter. The new organisation was launched in December 1966, boosted by the transmission of the BBC documentary drama *Cathy Come Home*. They convinced the government to introduce legislation to provide funding for housing associations to enable them to buy and renovate rundown properties as well as rent rebate schemes for poorer tenants. Kenrick's tenure as Chairman of Shelter was short-lived and he severed all ties after a series of acrimonious exchanges. In 1968, he travelled to the West Indies on a Churchill Fellowship grant to study living conditions in preparation for a book to help immigrants. Returning to the UK, he became a member of the United

Reform Church and ran a parish in Bayswater and then Hackney. A further book, *A Man from the Interior*, written in 1980 after a visit to Cuba argued that Communism and Christianity could co-exist. He and his wife divorced in 1983, but they remained close. He retired to Iona but continued to act as a locum minister in the parish and was feted for his Remembrance Day service. He also took pleasure in being Father Christmas for local schools. A banjo and ukulele player, he also enjoyed white-water canoeing. He had been writing a further book though this endeavour was frustrated by the onset of blindness. Our sympathy goes to Isabel, son Justin, daughters Faith, Ann and Iona and all other members of the family.

Roland Aldridge

Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

Roland Aldridge of Newport Pagnell, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire died on 19 January, aged 83. He joined the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment in 1940 and was posted to North Africa. He was briefly attached to the Army Air Corps, but returned to the West Kents. After heavy casualties, he transferred to the Sherwood Foresters in 1943, fighting through West Africa and Italy. He took part in the battle for Monte Casino suffering shrapnel wounds and shell shock. After a period of recovery in Naples, he joined the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in 1944 and became a crane driver. Discharged in 1946, he joined the GPO and later became a security guard with the MOD. He also served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (TA) from 1952 to 1956. His interests included gardening and he was a member of the Royal British Legion. Our sympathy goes to his son and daughter and all the family.

Vera Patterson

Women's Auxiliary Air Force

Vera Patterson of Millfield, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear died on 24 January, aged 86. She was a shop assistant before joining the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in 1941. She served at Gosport and was discharged as Leading Aircraftwoman in 1946. Initially, she returned to shop work but soon trained as a nurse. As an SRN she did midwifery and later became a health visitor and field worker for students. Our sympathy goes to her nephews and nieces and all other members of the family.

Stanley Rickard

Royal Armoured Corps

Stanley Robert James Rickard of Southwick, Trowbridge, Wiltshire died on 31 January, aged 88. A butcher in civilian life, he joined the Royal Wiltshire Yeomanry (TA) as a groom in 1937. He deployed to Palestine in 1940 with 600 horses. He was sent to South Africa to recover from an illness and operated as a butcher in Trans Jordan before transferring to the Royal Armoured Corps in 1941. He remained with the 8th Army from El Alamein to Florence, Italy. Returning to the UK in 1944, he was demobbed in 1946. In civilian life, he worked as a groom in stud farms and for a market trading company in Westbury. He later joined Bowyers' Sausage and Pie Factory. Keen of farming and related issues, he kept Bantams, winning prizes at county shows. Our sympathy goes to his widow Florence, daughters and all the family.

David Saunders

Royal Air Force

David Henry Saunders of Watermead, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire died on 28 January, aged 86. He joined the Royal Air

Force in 1937 and was deployed as an Air Frame Fitter with 85 Squadron on the British Expeditionary Force. Returning to the UK prior to Dunkirk, he was later posted to Duxford, working on Hurricanes and Beaufighters. Discharged in 1946, he joined Airtech in Hoddenam as a Quality Control Manager. His interests included winemaking and sequence dancing. Our sympathy goes to his son Colin and all of the family.

Archie Luxton

Royal Artillery

Archibald James Luxton of Ovingdean, Brighton, previously of Black Torrington, Beaworthy, Devon, died on 2 February, aged 90. He joined the Royal Artillery at Camborne in 1940. After serving as a Gunner he was discharged in 1944. One of 11 children, he was an agricultural worker and saw mill hand in civilian life. As his sight deteriorated, he became a kitchen porter at a hospital. He took an interest in cookery, wrought iron work, toy making and picture framing. Our sympathy goes to his niece Susan and all of the family.

Maud Williams

Women's Auxiliary Air Force

Maud May Williams nee Ball of Uplands, Stroud, Gloucestershire died on 6 February, aged 82. Having left school at 14, she worked in a green grocers and other shops in Liverpool until 1942 when she volunteered for the Women's Auxiliary Air Force. After serving at Morecombe and RAF Woodvale, she was discharged as Leading Aircraftwoman in 1945. In civilian life, she raised a family. Her interests included knitting and crossword puzzles. Our sympathy goes to her sons Harold and Maurice, daughter Lorraine and all other members of the family.



Keep it moving lads! Hauling a Scimitar CVRT over more than two kilometres is no easy task.

3 Troop pull for St Dunstan's

By Simon Rogers

Thirty-six Army recruits pulled a tank weighing nearly ten tonnes at Winchester on 10 February. They entered into the challenge to support blind ex-Service men and women.

The recruits, all in 11th week basic training as 3rd Troop, A Squadron, Army Training Regiment were tasked by Sergeant Rob Chubb with hauling a 9.2 tonne Scimitar CVRT (Combat Vehicle Reconnaissance Tracked) over a mile and a half (2.4 kilometres) of their training ground at Warminster. To

get the Tank moving on a flat surface, the team had to exert a force of between one-and-a-half and two tonnes. In the way of these things, there was a subtle incline on the tarmac surface.

St Dunstaners Ron Jones and Colin Williamson went along to lend moral support. They chatted with the recruits about their ambitions for life in the Army after completing training. Colin stepped in for part of one leg, getting a painful feel of their exertion.

The recruits finished their task in about 40 minutes with applause from Ron and Colin.



Scenes from the Tank Pull.



Army St Dunstaners Ron and Colin chat with Privates Kumbirai Mutambisi and Ravi Buldano after the exercise.