

October 2007

St Dunstan's Review

CAN YOU DESIGN OUR FRONT COVER?

Competition starts on page 3



New garden room open at St Dunstan's Sheffield



Our life with St Dunstan's
Marjorie tells her story

Queen of the Road!



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

Billy gives Tina starter's orders on sponsored motorcycle ride

Author! Author! The story contest is back!

Are you the new King, Rankin or Cartland? Enter our latest writing competition! Rules are on page 4.

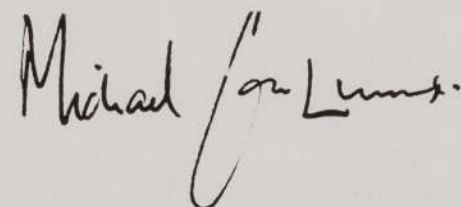
From **the Chairman**

In the September **Review**, there was an excellent photograph of Andy Bull walking up some steps during a mobility lesson shortly after being blinded. Nothing remarkable about that, I hear you say, but the point is that having been recently blinded one might have expected Andy to have been in the depths of gloom. But in fact he was smiling and looked thoroughly happy with his lot, or perhaps I should say putting a very brave face on his prospects, after his gruelling time in Northern Ireland. The **Review** has other shining examples; Gram Kiff representing Great Britain in the Triathlon, Gerry Jones parachute jumping with the Red Devils, and many others.

At the end of August we had a visit to Ovingdean from Lieutenant General

Sir Freddie Viggers, the Adjutant General. He thoroughly enjoyed his tour which included lunch with three St Dunstaners and a hands on visit to the Archery Club. Afterwards he expressed to me his amazement at the resolve and innate cheerfulness of all who he met striving to make the very best of their lives in darkness.

This is the stuff that makes the Royal Marine Band wish to return to Ovingdean each year. It is this constant ability to make the best of a bad job and to get on with life, accepting the cards they have been dealt, that so impresses all who come into contact with St Dunstaners, and inspires our valiant supporters and, so importantly, our donors, none of whom we could exist without.



St Dunstan's Review

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Noticeboard

CREATE OUR CHRISTMAS COVER

St Dunstan's Calendar

OCTOBER

To the 6th	Widows' Week (II)
1st	Indoor Bowling
6th	Writers' Forum
8th	Indoor Bowling
10th-11th	Computer Club (II)
11th	World Sight Day
12th-19th	Amateur Radio (II)
13th	Sailability
13th-14th	Commando Challenge
28th-Nov 10th	Bowling (II)
28th	Great South Run

NOVEMBER

3rd	Writers' Forum
11th	Remembrance Sunday
11th-17th	Dancing Week (II)
24th-25th	Golf

DECEMBER

1st	Writers' Forum
2nd-8th	Christmas Craft Week
9th	St Dunstan's Day
16th-27th	Christmas 'Week'
28th-Jan 5th	New Year 'Week'

THE FRONT PAGE AS YOUR CANVAS:

St Dunstaners and members of the Diana Gubbay Trust are invited to create some Christmas cheer for the December issue of **ST DUNSTAN'S Review**. We are asking all artists to demonstrate their skills in a yuletide competition by producing a seasonal scene for our Christmas cover.

Artists can choose their own materials, but the finished artwork needs to include a traditional Christmas theme combined with a Forces element and a positive depiction of overcoming blindness. Finished artwork should be 10 by 13 inches or in proportion, allowing a two inch deep space at the top for the masthead to be inserted. Submissions should not have been previously published.

There will be a prize of £50 for the winner whose work will be used as the cover for the December issue. A second prize of £25 will also be granted. The judge's decision will be final.

Finished artwork should be sent to Christmas Cover Competition, **ST DUNSTAN'S Review**, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD by 1 November. Winners will be notified later that month and full results will be included in December's issue.

• In the meantime, if you are already getting in the mood to deck the halls with boughs of holly, you may wish to check out the latest selection of St Dunstan's Christmas Cards and wrapping paper now available for sale. Full details are on page 12.

STARTING WITH A SCREAM...

DUSTDOWN THOSE KEYBOARDS: We are asking budding authors to pick up their quills for the latest **ST DUNSTAN'S Review** story writing competition. The subject and title are yours to decide. However, the story should start with the opening line: "He screamed silently as the pain began to take hold..."

Submissions should not have been previously published. The competition is open to St Dunstaners, their wives, husbands, widows or widowers or members of the Diana Gubbay Trust.

Please follow these steps when submitting entries for the competition:

- 1) Entries should be typewritten and should not exceed 1,500 words.
- 2) Please submit your entry under a nom-de-plume.
- 3) Please write your nom-de-plume and your real name on a sheet of paper and seal them up in an envelope, which should accompany your entry. Envelopes will not be opened until the judge has made his or her decision.
- 4) Only one submission per person. Multiple entries will be disqualified.
- 5) Entries must be received by the Editor, **ST DUNSTAN'S Review**, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD by 5 January 2008.

The winner will receive £50, second prize is £30 and the third will win £20. Winning stories will be published in the **Review**.

ST DUNSTAN'S COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE (COMMUNITY)

COMPLAINTS: We aim to provide the best possible care and service within St Dunstan's. If there is something that you are not happy about, or you can see an area in which improvement is needed, please tell us. It gives us the opportunity to investigate the matter and address it, thereby improving our service to you.

You are encouraged to raise concerns at any time directly with the person involved. He or she will investigate your concerns, try to resolve the problem and advise you if further action is needed. However, if you are unable to discuss your concerns at this level, or you are not happy with the outcome, you may wish to lodge a formal complaint. The following information explains how to do this.

Formal Complaints

You may wish to lodge a formal complaint if:

- Your concerns have not been satisfactorily resolved through the informal complaints process.
- The informal complaints process is not acceptable or appropriate to you, for whatever reason.

How do I make a formal complaint?

- Put your complaint on tape, e-mail or in writing (preferably using the leaflet available through Reception at HQ).
- Make it very clear what the complaint

is and what you think should be done about it. If you are unable to do this yourself, ask a friend, relative, advocate or member of senior staff to assist you.

- Send your complaint to: Ray Hazan, St Dunstaner Services Manager, St Dunstan's, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD. Tel: 0207 723 5021. E-mail: ray.hazan@st-dunstans.org.uk.

What will happen after I lodge my complaint?

You will receive a letter of acknowledgement, usually within three working days of the complaint being received. You may be asked to give more details of the complaint. You may want to ask a friend, relative or other representative (such as an advocate) to speak on your behalf or to attend any meeting which may be required in connection with the complaint.

The St Dunstaner Services Manager will investigate and address the complaint, and will write to you within ten days to advise you of the outcome.

What if I am not happy with the outcome?

If you are not happy with the outcome of the complaint, you need to advise the St Dunstaner Services Manager who will refer the complaint to the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will carry out further investigation of the matter and will write to you within ten days (of the complaint being referred to him) to advise you of the outcome.

What if I am still not happy with the outcome?

If the complaint has still not been resolved to your satisfaction, you need to advise the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will refer the complaint to the Chairman of St Dunstan's. The Chairman will investigate the matter further and will write to you within one month (of the complaint being referred) to advise you of the outcome.

Is there anywhere else I can go?

The Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) is a public body responsible for regulating the standards of care provided in care homes, including St Dunstan's. You can make a complaint to the CSCI at any time. Any complaint that is not resolved through the Home's internal complaints process (as described above) can also be referred to the CSCI.

You may wish to discuss your concerns with an advocacy service, such as those provided by Age Concern or Counsel and Care. Their contact details, along with those of the CSCI are as follows:

Useful Contacts

Age Concern (Head Office), Astral House, 1268 London Road, London SW16 4ER. Tel: 020 8765 7200.

Counsel and Care, Twyman House, 16 Bonny Street, London NW1 9PG. Tel: 020 7241 8555.

The Commission for Social Care Inspection, 33 Greycoat Street, London SW1P 2QF. Tel: 020 7979 2000.

WHEELCHAIR AND SCOOTER USE AT ST DUNSTAN'S OIVINGDEAN

SAFETY ASSESSMENT REQUIRED FOR ALL WHEELCHAIR AND SCOOTER USERS:

As readers will be well aware, St Dunstan's has a responsibility for the safety of everyone within the building and grounds at St Dunstan's Ovingdean. All St Dunstaners have a significant level of sight loss but we often find many are also frail and elderly, with hearing impairment and other additional disabilities.

Although we wish to maintain and promote as much independence as possible for wheelchair and scooter users, there have been some near-miss incidents recently with the potential for serious injury. Therefore, it has been decided that all wheelchair and scooter users must undergo an individual risk assessment when coming into St Dunstan's Ovingdean.

Accordingly, St Dunstan's staff will assess the ability of every St Dunstaner who wishes to self-propel a wheelchair or scooter and everyone propelling a wheelchair for someone else on the occasion of every visit. Without that assessment and reassessment, unaccompanied self-propelling is not permitted at St Dunstan's Ovingdean.

A practical test will be carried out to ensure that the user can safely manoeuvre the wheelchair or scooter around the building at a safe speed (not exceeding a slow walking pace), identifying obstacles and

people along the way, informing others of their presence and avoiding any collisions. If the test is completed successfully, the user will be taught the 'rules of the road' and, once these are understood, will be able to use the wheelchair or scooter within the building and grounds of St Dunstan's Ovingdean, subject to any conditions laid down by the assessor, for example, use limited to a nursing floor only. Any accident or near-miss will automatically mean a reassessment will be carried out.

If you are planning to bring your wheelchair to St Dunstan's Ovingdean, it is vital that you inform the appropriate staff prior to arrival. We need to know if the wheelchair is electrically powered and the type of charging equipment that you use. If using a manual wheelchair, does it fold? Most important of all, we need to know if any wheelchair passenger who travels with us can manage to get into our vehicles and transfer into a seat, or absolutely must travel in the wheelchair itself.

All this information assists us in selecting the correct vehicle and configuring the correct set-up within it prior to departure from Ovingdean. In most cases, we will not be able to carry mobility scooters unless they can be folded and are light enough to be lifted in and out of the vehicle.

In summary, although we are really keen to promote individual independence at Ovingdean in this matter, the health and the safety of the blind and visually impaired people in the house is the overriding factor.

CHILDREN IN A WORLD WITHOUT SIGHT ON WORLD SIGHT DAY

LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF ST DUNSTANERS: The theme for this year's World Sight Day on 11 October is 'blindness and childhood'. To mark the occasion, St Dunstan's will be highlighting the work the charity does going into schools all over the UK to raise awareness of what it feels like to live with blindness and the unique way St Dunstan's helps beneficiaries regain their independence. Press representatives will be invited to attend a school presentation taking place around the time of World Sight Day and see first hand the innovative way St Dunstan's increases children's understanding and banishes their misconceptions about blindness. A full report will feature in the December **Review**.

World Sight Day on 11 October aims to raise public knowledge of blindness as a major international public health issue. It seeks to influence governments to participate in national blindness prevention programmes. It strives to educate communities about blindness prevention. At its core is Vision 2020: The Right to Sight which aims to eliminate avoidable blindness worldwide by the year 2020. Studies indicate that 37 million people worldwide are blind, while 124 million have low vision. Three quarters of this total is avoidable either through prevention or treatment. Vision 2020 argue that 100 million men, women and children can be saved from going blind through preventative health care. It is a joint initiative between the International

Agency for the Prevention of Blindness and the World Health Organisation, with an international coalition of government organisations, professional bodies and eye care institutions. St Dunstan's is affiliated to the UK chapter.

CSCI REPORTS ON WEB

INSPECTORS' VERDICT ONLINE: St Dunstan's, like all registered care homes, is inspected by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) on a minimum of two occasions each year. Subsequently, the CSCI publish their findings on their website. These reports enable prospective applicants to see what services the home offers and how the CSCI views them. The CSCI can make requirements, which the home must meet in order to retain its registration for care. They can also make recommendations to the Charity on how they feel these services can be improved upon. The current report deems that St Dunstan's provides an excellent level of care and had fulfilled requirements placed during the previous inspection.

The inspectors' report and details of previous inspections can be obtained on the CSCI website on www.csci.org.uk in pdf (portable document format). If you have any queries regarding the content of the report, then please ring St Dunstan's Head of Care Jackie Greer on 01273 391420. She will be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR THOUGHTS

FEEDBACK WELCOME: A word of thanks! I hope that you find that St Dunstan's Ovingdean places a strong emphasis on providing the highest quality of service for all of its permanent residents and the respite, trainee and holiday visitors who come here throughout the year. Our aim is to provide a professional, efficient and friendly service and our goal is to obtain the highest possible level of satisfaction from you, our "service users" (if you will excuse the in vogue terminology!). To this end we always welcome your feedback, comments and suggestions (you help keep us on our toes!) and I just want to pass on my thanks to St Dunstaners, their relatives, carers, friends and advocates who have taken the time to complete the short Visitors Comments leaflet that we leave in the rooms and those who take the trouble to write to say 'thank-you' as so many of you do. Your thanks are passed on to the staff and all the questionnaires are scrutinised closely and, wherever possible, comments and suggestions are acted upon. A regular comment has been about the inability to alter the heating levels in the bathrooms as, unlike the bedrooms, there were no individual controls. I am happy to report that most bathrooms have now been modified – the exceptions will be dealt with soon. So keep the comments coming, please. If you are unhappy with anything, or have a complaint, please do let us know straight away so that we deal with it there and then.

Dick Lake
Ovingdean Manager

WRITERS' FORUM MEET MONTHLY

GET THE WORD HERE: The Writers' Forum meet on the first Saturday of every month - except January - for discussions about writing and getting work published.

Meetings are held in the Blue Room at St Dunstan's Ovingdean between 10am and 12noon. All St Dunstaners, members of the Diana Gubbay Trust, wives, husbands, widows and widowers are welcome to attend. Contact Donna Vaughan at St Dunstan's Ovingdean.

UGANDA REUNION NEXT APRIL

FOR THOSE WHO SERVED, SAILED OR WERE TREATED ON HOSPITAL SHIP: Falklands veterans who served, sailed or were patients on HS *Uganda* are invited to a reunion in Southampton on 20 April 2008. It will be held on the cruise ship *Aurora*. Admission is £15.50 a head which includes coffee on boarding and lunch and drinks. For more details of the occasion contact Nicci Pugh by e-mailing n_pugh@btinternet.com.

UNIFORM PHOTOS REQUIRED

CONTACT COLLECTIONS & ARCHIVES: The Collections and Archives department is seeking photographs of St Dunstaners in uniform. Contact Roberta Hazan at 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD or telephone 020 7723 5021.

BOOKS STREAM INTO YOUR PC

NEW SERVICE FROM RNIB: The RNIB has launched the BookStream book club which allows visually impaired readers to listen to Daisy audio books via the internet. The BookStream book club is available to blind and partially sighted people living in the UK. Simply register and subscribe! For an annual subscription of £50, subscribers can read as many Daisy audio books as they like throughout the year.

Registered users install NetPLEXTALK streaming software, and can then simply choose a title which they add to their virtual bookshelf, select the stream button, sit back, relax and read the book via the computer. Reading is flexible. If you don't want to read a book in one go, a bookmark will be stored so you can easily continue with the book later. Your personal bookshelf can store as many as five books at a time, with no limit to how many you read throughout your yearly subscription.

Amongst the catalogue is *Blind to Misfortune* by St Dunstaner Bill Griffiths and Hugh Popham. You will need to register if you wish to buy books or join the BookStream book club. The site is safe and secure as the RNIB server encrypts any sensitive information that readers provide.

Visit www.rnib.org.uk/booksite or telephone RNIB customer services on 08457 023153. Overseas readers are advised to call their export department on +44 (0)1733 37 5400 to check latest export prices.

LIONS MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE CAN BE A LIFE SAVER

KEEP PERSONAL AND MEDICAL DETAILS ON ICE: Lions International are encouraging people to keep their personal and medical details on a standard form and in a common location – the fridge! While they are focusing on more vulnerable people in the community, they point out the easy to use scheme can be of benefit to anyone.

The scheme is simple, complete the details on the form, put it inside the bottle supplied and place in the door compartment of the kitchen fridge. Emergency Services will know to look for the green crossed bottle in event of being called to your home.

Two green cross stickers will alert them, one is placed on the fridge door, the other on the inside of your front door.

The form within the bottle lists any illness or drug therapy that might affect treatment, allergic reaction to medication, allergies, current medication and where it can be found, GP contact details, pet details, names of carers or dependants, distinguishing marks and emergency contacts. In an emergency, the bottle will be passed by ambulance crew, police, or firemen onto a doctor or hospital staff.

If you would like to obtain an MIAB pack, contact Barbara Sweeney at St Dunstan's Headquarters on 020 7616 7922.

IS THAT MIGRATORY SPAM?

MIRTH, MUSICAL, DRAMA AND PANTO:
The following theatre productions will be performed with audio description. This provides visually impaired patrons with extra information on stage design, action, costumes and other features.

Monty Python's Spamalot is at the Palace Theatre on Wednesday, 7 November, ticket price £25. Peter Davison is King Arthur. Hannah Waddingham is an Olivier award winner for her *Lady of the Lake*. The show starts at 8pm, with an at seat introduction over Sennheiser headsets from 19:40. It ends at 22.10.

The Palace Theatre is at Cambridge Circus, a short walk from Leicester Square Tube. For the Box Office, telephone 020 7087 7960 or e-mail customer.relations@seetickets.com

The Sound of Music at the Palladium Theatre has three AD performances.

Tuesday, 20 November at 19:00, (please note early starting time) and Wednesday, 21 November at 14:30. Tickets for are £27.50 each. Maria may be played by Aoife, the Irish Maria, or a new Maria to be announced. On Saturday, 12 January 2008 at 14:30pm *The Sound of Music* is described again with Connie Fisher as Maria with tickets at £35.00 each. The show lasts 2 hours, 35 minutes.

The Churchill Theatre, Bromley, Kent is a short walk from Bromley South Station

with frequent services from London Victoria and Blackfriars. They offer AD on Saturday 14:30 matinees such as *Hobson's Choice* with John Savident on 20 October and family pantomime *Peter Pan* on 8 December.

Box Office on 0870 060 6620 or e-mail bromleyaccessbookings@theambassadors.com

Box offices will know about advance CDs and pre-show events nearer the time.

For information on theatre access and travel please visit <http://www.officiallondontheatre.co.uk/access>

VIRGIN MEDIA INTRODUCE AD

AUDIO DESCRIPTION ON CABLE TV: Cable television provider Virgin Media now has audio description for visually impaired viewers on over 30 channels. All Virgin areas provide audio description facilities on the four main BBC stations, ITV1, Channel 4, Animal Planet, Bravo, Challenge, Discovery Channel, Discovery Home and Health, Discovery Realtime, Disney Channel, E4, Hallmark, History Channel, Jetix, Living, Men and Motors, MTV UK, Paramount Comedy, Playhouse Disney, Sci-Fi Channel, Trouble, UKTV Documentary, UKTV Food, UKTV Gold, UKTV G2, UKTV History, UKTV Style and VH1.

Additional channels may be available in selected areas, such National Geographic and Boomerang+1 in Langley and Bromley, and Discovery Science, Discovery Civilisations and UKTV Drama in Knowsley.

Sighted assistance may be required to set up the facility.

Use the remote control to open the settings menu, press 8; select Change Display and Audio Settings, press 4; To select audio description, press the down arrow four times, press left or right once, press the 'OK' button to store settings and switch off.

When switching back on and a programme is highlighted, press the 'i' or 'Browse' button on the remote control. A 'More Information' dialogue box will pop up. After the programme description, it will say [S] for Subtitles, [SL] for sign Language and [AD] if the programme has audio description. AD listings can be found on www.tvhelp.org.uk

CLASSICAL BEAUTY AT V&A

PICASSO'S MUSE UNDER DISCUSSION:
The transformation of Lee Miller from artist's muse to ground breaking creator comes under discussion in a talk by Antony Penrose at the V&A on 15 October, 11:00-12:30. A renowned female icon of the 20th century, she was admired for her free-spirit and intelligence. Admission is free but advanced booking is necessary. Call the Booking Office on 020 7942 2211 or e-mail bookings.office@vam.ac.uk. Attendees gather at the Cromwell Road entrance meeting point. Entry to the V&A museum is free and people with disabilities are entitled to free admission to exhibitions with up to two friends. An access guide to the museum is available in accessible formats.

LORD MORRIS IN SPOTLIGHT

LIFE STORY OF MP: Writer Derek Kinrade charts the life of a longtime champion of rights for disabled people in *Alf Morris: People's Parliamentarian*. Now Lord Morris of Manchester, he introduced legislation to aid disabled people and became the world's first Minister for Disabled People, paving the way for the Disability Discrimination Act in 1995. With over 50 years of public life behind him, he served in Palestine and continues to campaign on matters of military welfare. The 500 page book incorporates a CD produced by the RNIB with accessible versions of the text. St Dunstaners can order the book at half price, £7.50 (plus £2.50 p&p). Anyone wishing to purchase the book should send a cheque for £10 to the National Information Forum, PP905, BT Burne House, Bell Street, London NW1 5BZ and quote NIF28.

STOP E-MAIL CHAIN LETTERS

CUT OFF HOAXES IN THEIR TRACKS:
There are numerous e-mails in circulation warning of bogus calls appropriating time on your telephone line or acquiring data by asking you to key in #90 or #09 numbers. These e-mails, which ask that you pass on the message to others, are hoaxes, often distributed with malicious intent when they include contact details for serving police officers, charities, or even Buckingham Palace. Just delete such e-mails.

INTRODUCING THE ST DUNSTAN'S 2007 CHRISTMAS SELECTION

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO SEND SEASONAL GREETINGS: As the Festive Season approaches, St Dunstan's is pleased to make its latest selection of Christmas cards available. The stylish range embraces both traditional and figurative tastes. All the cards carry St Dunstan's logo and contain the same greeting inside, declaring "Every good wish for Christmas and the New Year." Each pack comes with ten cards and envelopes, except the Craft Workshop twin packs which contain five cards of each design. All prices include VAT at 17.5 per cent.



St Dunstan's Craft Christmas Card twin pack

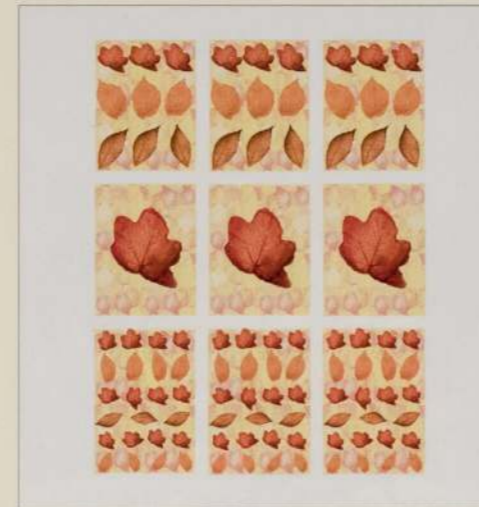
As in previous years, we are proud to present some unique card designs that have been produced by St Dunstaners in the Craft Workshop at Ovingdean.

The Christmas card, presented in a twin pack, was designed using the varied creations of St Dunstaners. The letters making up the phrase "Merry Christmas" were taken from the Alphabet Project, which was created to demonstrate many of the techniques

regularly practised within the department; from stone carving to ceramics, and woodwork to painting. The other elements of the designs employ further techniques such as the wooden hand carved turtle doves and papier mâché holly leaves. The first card has snow flakes falling against a dark blue background, the second against a pale blue background. Ref: DUN011X. Size 4.75 by 6.75 inches (121mm by 171mm). Price £3.50.



St Dunstan's Craft Autumn Leaves Notecard twin pack
The Autumn Leaves note cards make up a very bright and stylish twin pack, suitable for any occasion. They utilise clay and painted



leaves from the award winning Big Draw project completed by St Dunstaners in 2005. One is a leafy carpet of, the other views them in nine tiles. Ref: DUN012. Size 4.75 inches square (121mm x 121mm). Price £3.25.



Festive Sparkle
A close up photograph of golden baubles reflecting light as they hang on a Christmas tree with a gold tinselled five pointed star in sharp focus at the centre. Ref: DUN002X. Size 4.75 inches square (121mm x 121mm). Price £3.25.



Welcome Home
A painting of a red-breasted robin, perching on an iron handle that curves from a wooden door. Snow flakes fall from above, adding a frosty coating to nearby red berries and green leaves. Ref: DUN004X. Size 8 by 7.25 inches (98mm x 130mm). Price £3.00.



Christmas Fruits
A still life photograph combining a mix of satsuma oranges, brazils, walnuts and hazelnuts, red berries, holly and fir cones. Ref: DUN001X. Size 7.5 inches square (137mm x 137mm). The price for this set is £3.75.



Dove
A white dove, carrying a sprig of olive, flies wings outstretched against a blue background with a silver foil finish on the stars. Ref: DUN003X. Size 4.75 by 6.75 inches (121mm x 171mm). Price £4.00.



Choir Boys Procession
A group of choir boys, four carrying lanterns, are viewed through a trio of cloister arches. Ref: DUN005X. Size 4.75 by 6.75 inches (121mm x 171mm). Price £3.75.



Manger

A painting of the traditional nativity scene. Three wise men approach from the left, a shepherd and his flock from the right, while a Christmas star illuminates the manger where Joseph and Mary stand beside the new-born child. Ref: DUN006X. Size 3.4 by 9 inches (86mm x 228mm). Price £4.00.



Christmas Eve

A brightly lit Christmas tree illuminates the snow covered path to a church tower. Ref: DUN009X. Size 4.75 by 6.75 inches (121mm x 171mm). Price £3.50.



The Virgin and Angels

William Bouguereau's 1905 realist painting of a star-haloed Virgin Mary lifting the Christ child up from her throne as a host of surrounding angels worship them. Ref: DUN007X. Size 4.75 by 6.75 inches (121mm x 171mm). Price £3.75.



Our Little Tree

Two warmly-dressed children drag a Christmas tree through the snow followed by their dog. Ref: DUN008X. Size 6.75 by 4.75 inches (171mm x 121mm). Price £3.50.



St Dunstan's 2008 Diary



Slim design, red mock leather finish with St Dunstan's logo embossed in gold foil. Ref: DUN013X. Price £5.00.

Wrapping paper

Six assorted sheets of wrapping paper (pictured left) with 12 matching tags. Some with Christmas tree and bauble motif. Ref: DUN014X. Price £3.50.

Telephone 0845 450 8446 to place your order today

Name _____ Address 1 _____
 Address 2 _____ Address 3 _____
 Post code _____ Telephone _____

Code	Description	No of Packs	Cost per Pack	Total £
DUN001X	Christmas Fruits		£3.75	
DUN002X	Festive Sparkle		£3.25	
DUN003X	Dove		£4.00	
DUN004X	Welcome Home		£3.00	
DUN005X	Choir Boys Procession		£3.75	
DUN006X	Manger		£4.00	
DUN007X	The Virgin and Angels		£3.75	
DUN008X	Our Little Tree		£3.50	
DUN009X	Christmas Eve		£3.50	
DUN011X	St Dunstan's Craft Christmas Cards twin pack		£3.50	
DUN012X	St Dunstan's Craft Note Cards twin pack		£3.25	
DUN013X	St Dunstan's 2008 Diary		£5.00	
DUN014X	Wrapping paper		£3.50	
Merchandise Order Total			£	
Postage and Packaging on merchandise order			£	
Up to £15: £2.50 ; £15.01 to £30: £3.95 ; over £30: FREE				
Order total			£	

In the event that one or more of your choices is sold out, St Dunstan's will substitute an alternative design for you. Your order will be despatched within 21 days.

I am enclosing a cheque/postal order made payable to St Dunstan's (please write name and address on the reverse). OR Please debit my Master Card/Visa/Amex/Maestro
 Card No (Shaded boxes for Valid from Expiry date Issue No Maestro only)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return this order form along with your payment to:
St Dunstan's Christmas Cards, PO Box 220, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 6ZQ

Place orders online at www.st-dunstans.org.uk/christmas

Letters

Letters to The Editor are always welcome. Write to St Dunstan's Review, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD. E-mail ray.hazan@st-dunstans.org.uk.

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Silly Questions

I wonder, if other St Dunstaners are asked silly questions? The most often one I'm asked is, "How can you pin your number in, when you can't see?" I then have to explain, that the pin pad consists of three lines of three numbers, and once you've found the middle number 5, it's not rocket science to work out what's to the left and right. The other one I am asked is when people see me cleaning the windows of my bungalow. They ask how can I see to clean windows. I just tell them that just like their windows, mine have four corners, and four sides, and once you find one corner, the rest is academic. The classic question was asked of me when I was at Ovingdean training, the St Dunstaner sitting next to me was totally blind, and

a lady St Dunstaner sitting on my right was asked, "Was John born blind?" I light heartedly answered "Yes, the reason he's here, is because he was in the Royal Blind Artillery." She realised what she said, so we all had a jolly good laugh. My favourite question is, "How can you operate a computer, if you can't see?" That gives me a golden opportunity to explain, what a wonderful team we have at St Dunstan's, all dedicated to help us lead as normal life as possible, and so successful are they that I believe we are more normal than normal people. The questions remind me of the old lady, who left a note for the milk man, asking him to shut the gate behind him, because the birds keep pecking the milk bottle tops.

Chris Spellacy, West Kingsdown, Kent

Diamonds in Oz

Thank you for sending us the **Review**. We are always delighted to receive it and although it is many years since we were physically in contact with St Dunstan's, and there have been many changes, I still read all the relevant articles to Colin, and certainly Births, etc. We enjoy Balancing the Books

and miss Syd Scroggie's wonderful articles.

On 1 September, Colin and I celebrated our diamond Wedding. It will be a very low key celebration as Colin will have to be brought to our unit (where I still reside) from the Nursing Home where he now is. Guest numbers are depleted due

to the passing 60 years since the original occasion.

Colin is faring well at 86, but it became too much for me to care for him. He sends his warmest regards to all at St Dunstan's as do I.

Elizabeth Johnston,
Whealers Hill, Victoria,
Australia

End of tape regrettable

It seems to me, regrettable that the decision has been made to discontinue the **St Dunstan's Review** recording in audio tape mode and replace it with CDs. I might be a bit prejudiced on this, but I find it very handy to be able to listen on my Walkman and I don't have a Walkman for the CD. The only alternative can see I may have in the future is to record your CDs onto an audio tape and then listen to it back again. The proviso I would make on that one is though, we would be up to 45 minutes. If the CD exceeded 45 minutes, the end of it would be lost.

Ken Goulding,
New Moston, Manchester

Editor's note: The Sony D-NE240 MP3 CD player is just as portable as a Walkman. It has the added advantage that you need only one CD as opposed to two tapes. You can skip backwards and forwards from article to article much more quickly than on tape. Do give it a try! Priced £29.99 from Argos.

Raymond L Hazan

Treatment of the elderly is a disgrace

I have had macular degeneration partial blindness for three years now and have been under West Kent Eye Clinic, Princess Royal Hospital, with glaucoma for 15 years and had two operations for such, but my eyes went three years ago. I am an 84-year-old veteran of the Second World War, serving six years with the Eighth Army. It's a disgrace the way we older people are treated by this government. I and my wife, who is also disabled, are English and proud of such.

I heard this Prime Minister say the Union Flag is flown in Scotland because we are all the British Isles. If this is right, how come Scotland gets this injection for Macular Degeneration and other drugs and we in England are refused because of the cost?

One day the PM and care trust officials may become a victim of partial blindness like us, and then they will endure the discomforts this causes one, and those that live with the victims of illness.

My wife gives me the shopping list and the kind staff of Waitrose, Bromley, come around with me and then it's delivered home - there are some kind people still around.

You get no better from the social services, the only people who kindly help us is St Dunstan's, as I am an ex-Serviceman. It's about time this government thought more of its people like the good old days.

Ernest F. Parker,
Bromley, Kent

Hilton made the Jazz Party swing for me

It all began when a friend of mine, from Darlington, County Durham, the place of my birth, phoned me and said "Your old friend Chris Hopkins is to appear at the Swinging Jazz Party at the Hilton Hotel, Blackpool in September."

Who is Chris Hopkins? Don't be fooled by the name. It's an American name but he was taken to Germany as a small child, three or five years old, so

A selection of your comments drawn from The Editor's postbag

apart from the name, he's German. I first met him in 1999 when a friend, sadly no longer with us, took me to Hamburg for the IAJRC Convention – International Association of Jazz Record Collectors, a world wide organisation. People congregated in Hamburg from all over the world for a fabulous three-day event.

I first this unknown pianist and I enjoyed his playing and I said so when I met him personally. I asked him did he have a card and since that time, Chris Hopkins has kept me informed of his career as a pianist and as a member of a group called Echoes of Swing. On this quartet, Chris plays alto sax, his friend Bernd Lhotzky plays stride piano, unbelievably the trumpet player is a Geordie from South Shields called Colin Dawson, but he has lived in Germany for over 20 years. The fourth member of the group is Oliver Mewes on Drums. However, only two members of Echoes of Swing appeared at

the Swinging Jazz Party on the very first night which was the Stride Piano Summit, alongside world class musicians such as the world's greatest living jazz pianist Dick Hyman.

Over the four day period, I managed to meet most of the musicians, including Dick Hyman who turned out to be a very nice man. I discussed one of his old recordings where he played a giant Wurlitzer organ, with the great Ruby Graff on trumpet. But Dick Hymen said the BBC archives have a similar recording made in London many years ago.

However, I don't want to dwell on the jazz so much as the way I was received by the staff of the Hilton Hotel Blackpool. From the time I presented myself at their reception and explained I was blind, two members of staff took me to my room which was on the fifth floor. They were really concerned to show me how to handle the plastic key. I had no trouble with that.

When the door opened they took me in and showed

me round the suite – sheer luxury – I had a double room! When they realised I was comfortable, they left me, and I unpacked. Then I couldn't wait to go down and investigate the scene. I went down to the reception area and I wanted to familiarise myself with various places, largely the men's room. While doing so, a member of the staff approached me and said "Are you looking for something?" I said "I'm trying to familiarise myself with where the men's room is." So they took me along and showed me where it was.

When I came out, things were very quiet, not too many people around, but the first voices I heard were American. I made myself known and strangely enough I had met one of them before – the great Marty Grosz! It's difficult to explain about Marty but he's a great character and a brilliant story teller. In fact, he's a walking encyclopaedia on jazz, on rare tunes, etc. Apart from being a brilliant musician, he's also something of a cartoonist, but I didn't realise that until I bought a CD from

him, took it home and put a magnifier on it.

He'd drawn a caricature of himself and a guitar with a large key fitted to his tummy and the words "Wind me up Ernie". I remember him saying "Are you going to buy this CD or not?" I think we'd had some words about the price of the CD.

When I appeared for the evening meal for the first day. The waitress appeared took me to my table, asked me what I would like. When I had finished my meal and stood up, another waitress came and asked me where I wanted to go. She escorted me to the lift, I needed to go to the ground floor, so she rapidly pressed the right button.

At the concert room I was escorted to my seat. This procedure was repeated every time I went in the concert room and on standing to leave, quite a number of people asked me if they could show me to the exit, in many cases complete strangers. It was all very nice.

The procedure in the dining room at breakfast and the

main meal proceeded as explained. I didn't realise that I was the only one getting this attention.

The four day event went very rapidly. Most of the people from the swinging jazz party had vacated from the hotel, but I had a few hours to kill because my coach from Blackpool to Birmingham did not leave until 3pm. While I was sitting in the lounge, Chris Barnes can and asked how I had enjoyed everything. I had previously mentioned how I would like to thank somebody in authority at the Hilton for the marvellous way I had been received. She introduced me to the managing director's secretary so I was able to say it was absolutely flawless from the time I entered the hotel to the time I left.

I ordered a taxi to get to the coach station for three. One of the hotel porter's introduced me to the taxi driver who took my case from the lounge and got me in the taxi. In a short period of time, I was at the coach station at Blackpool. The taxi driver took me to the office and the young lady

was expecting me, she knew my name. I sat down and waited and when the coach arrived, the driver came in addressed me as Mr Phillips and saw me onto the coach. This one of the double decker coaches and I had a very comfortable trip from Blackpool to Digbeth Coach station in Birmingham. On arrival, a member of the staff saw that my case had been retrieved and he took me to the taxi rank.

The whole exercise was flawless from the time I booked my seat through the disablement department of National Express coaches. Following their procedure, a blind person has got no problems travelling by National Express to whatever location they desire. I am looking forward to going back to Blackpool by the same method for the 2008 Swinging Jazz Party.

**Ernie Phillips,
Walmley,
Sutton Coldfield,
West Midlands**

Balancing the Books

Ted Bunting files this talking book under implausible

The Nemesis File

Author: Paul Bruce

Reader: Stephen Thorne

Catalogue Number 1151

Duration: 8 hours, 15 minutes

All Welsh people are miserable and tight-fisted; all Arabs are thieves and all coppers are born out of wedlock. These "well known facts" may not actually bear close scrutiny but they are just the job for starting a bit of prejudice don't you think?

It's much the same with the notion that all the troubles in the north of Ireland were caused by the IRA, for the IRA ranks alongside the fact that all Scotsmen have red hair and freckles. Yet amazingly, the trooper of the SAS who wrote this story seems to have swallowed it hook line and sinker. Who played his guru I have no idea

but no doubt the brainwashing would have helped greatly in his task of killing people in cold blood. For that, in essence, is what this book is about; he and his fellows had targets pointed out to them and they then shot them at very close range. It is an extremely interesting story, nevertheless, if you don't mind the trooper's strong language, but it is a rather disturbing one too. I always had the idea, for example, that after you had signed the Official Secrets Act you kept your mouth shut, but here we have Paul Bruce, as he calls himself, singing like a canary and displaying to the public gaze the doings of a supposedly elite and covert unit. Somehow it doesn't seem proper. On the other hand, of course it may also be a fact that SAS men are all liars from the cradle, in which case this tale, plausible as it is, may be a mere fabrication from start to finish.

DJ Stu keeps records spinning for 24-hours

ST DUNSTAN'S Stuart Penfold spent a full 24-hours broadcasting on hospital radio in August. He played 266 records on Seaside HR, starting on 25 August, and the live broadcast crossed non-stop into 26 August. Most St Dunstaners will know Stuart as a trainee ROVI (more on page 36) and driver, and he was also calling the tunes at the Activity Week disco last month. However, he also has a secret identity as a presenter

on hospital radio, keeping patients' spirits buoyant in Worthing and Southlands. Stuart's broadcast was a sponsored event raising funds for the station which recently celebrated its 35th anniversary. He took calls from well-wishers as he played a selection of hit tunes across the Bank Holiday weekend. A jubilant Stuart was even back at work soon after, but were those matchsticks propping up his eyes?



Sylvia's floral advance

The Rehabilitation and Training department at St Dunstan's Ovingdean waved goodbye to IT Instructor Sylvia Woolford at the end of August. She said, "A big thank you to all my lovely ex-colleagues for making my last day so memorable. Also please add that I have been very honoured to work in such a lovely unique place." Sylvia joined St Dunstan's in 2001 and will now go on to study a course in Floristry at Plumpton College in Lewes.

Far East tribute in London

St Dunstaner Bill Griffiths attended a service in Whitehall, London last month commemorating those who died while Far East Prisoners of War. Wreaths were also laid in memory of Lord Mountbatten and Field Marshal Slim.

Evelyn Williams

Miss Evelyn Williams passed away on 25 August, aged 102. During the 1920s she worked as a secretary at St Dunstan's in London acquiring skills that were later put to good use as an administrator for hospitals in North Wales. Our sympathy goes to her family.

Ten questions on

The subject of rivers

Harry Beevers goes with the flow

- 1) What term is used for a river which flows into another river rather than into a lake or the sea?
- 2) On which river is the annual Yale versus Harvard university boat race held in the US?
- 3) On which river were the liners *Queen Mary*, *Queen Elizabeth* and *QE2* built?
- 4) Which river did Julius Caesar famously cross in 49BC?
- 5) Jerome K. Jerome's novel *Three Men in a Boat* is set on which river?
- 6) Opened by Queen Victoria in 1850, Robert Stephenson's 28-arched Royal Border Bridge spans which river?
- 7) Which musical features the song *Old Man River*?
- 8) The name of which river comes from the old Celtic word for "River"?
- 9) Roughly 20 per cent of the world's flowing fresh water is carried by which river?
- 10) In which country is the River Kwai?

Answers can be found on page 39.

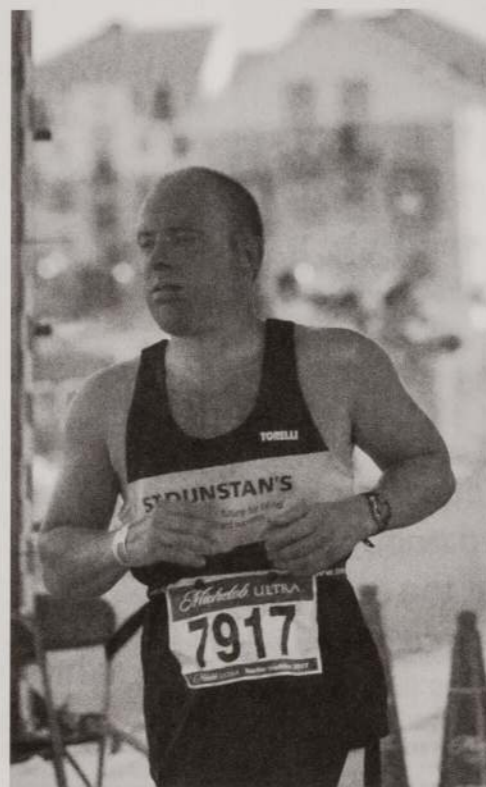
Hamburg Triathlon is lesson for the future says Graham

ST DUNSTANER Graham Kiff excelled when he joined 8,000 people from 60 countries around the world in the 19th Triathlon World Championships in Hamburg on 2 September. However, the experience is just grist for future competitions he says.

It was the first time the contest had been held in Germany and nearly half-a-million spectators lined the streets as athletes threw themselves into the combined swim, cycle and run event.

"It was an amazing experience," said Graham. "Brilliant, but we started at 7:15am. I wasn't prepared for that and I got cramp while swimming. We also had some problems with gears on the bicycle.

"I learnt a lot for the future though. I will need to learn about getting up early, getting some food into me, getting some energy. I think most of these events will involve an early start."



Graham on the run.

Graham, guided by his friend Dennis Murphy, was representing Great Britain in the Athletes with a Disability category. They had to swim 750m in the Binnenalster (which means "Inner Alster"), one of two artificial lakes in central Hamburg.

Back on dry land, they then had to mount their tandem and cycle a 20km course that ran north of the Elbe river. "The course was hillier than London, it had some quite long hills," said Graham.

Finally, they had to run 5km round the perimeter of the Binnenalster and along the second lake, the Aussenalster. "The run was a bit more out in styx, it seemed to be further away from the spectators."

Graham finished in three hours, nine minutes, and five seconds, slower than his London Triathlon but still sufficient to give him fifth place in the blind category, 29th place in Men's category and 31st overall. "Just think, I only started in April and here I was standing near the World Champions. I also met two blind American ladies who raced. One was 60 and took the Bronze."

Graham served in the Royal Air Force, completing a tour of duty in Bosnia, before retinitis pigmentosa destroyed much of his eyesight. He and wife Dawn have four sons. If any other St Dunstaner would like to tackle the challenge of a triathlon, Graham invites them to contact him on grahamkiff@btinternet.com.

Good news from Fareham Lions

ST DUNSTANER Bob Strickland has been putting his weight behind good causes in Fareham, Hampshire. As President of the Fareham Lions Club, he was able to present St Francis School with £1,000 and an equivalent sum to Fareport Talking News.

He presented the first cheque to headmistress Sue Chalmers, who teaches special needs children in the Fareham area. He had been impressed by the school, its staff and pupils during a fact-finding visit.

The second cheque was presented to Doug and Dilys Griffiths at a dinner meeting of Fareham Lions. Doug revealed that the Talking News had started life in the bathroom of a Victorian house at HMS *Dolphin*. The Fareport News sends out 300 recordings every week.

Although Bob intends to remain active in the Lions, he added that he hoped the next year would not be so demanding. However, the former Lance Bombardier was in the thick of celebrations when the

50th Stubbington Fayre was held over August Bank Holiday. "It went very well. There was quite a crowd. We really did have something for everyone," said Bob of the warmly received event. As chairman of the organising committee, he and his team brought together dogs, donkeys and other attractions for the show.

"There was plenty for the children to enjoy. The Punch and Judy show was a particular favourite. It always is. It was perfect weather too. Warm but not burning."

Crosby Cadets have a warm welcome for Bill

RAF St Dunstaner Bill Foxley has been feted by the cadets of 1128 Squadron, Air Training Corps in Crosby. They have named a lounge at their HQ after him.

Bill travelled to Crosby for an opening ceremony in May. "It was quite a day," he said. "I went with my son and daughter and we met up with my sister-in-law who still lives in the area. When we arrived at 1128 Squadron there was a guard of honour

waiting and we had to walk through into the hall. I got to cut the ribbon and the Bill Foxley Lounge was open."

He added that he had been a member of the ATC. "I was one of the first members. I joined in March '41 when the unit formed. My brother and I both got fired up and on my 18th birthday we both volunteered. There were a few people who had been there when I joined, so it was nice meeting them"

Bill's RAF career was cut short when he suffered severe burns escaping from the wreckage of a crashed bomber. He became part of a group of RAF men treated by Sir Archibald McIndoe as he pioneered new reconstructive methods of surgery. Collectively, that group became known as the Guinea Pig Club and Bill continues to champion the development of reconstructive surgery at East Grinstead.

Tight security at Palace!

John Flynn reports on the ancient guards who stopped St Dunstaners roman around at Fishbourne in Sussex

TIGHT SECURITY was in evidence when St Dunstaners visited the Roman Palace at Fishbourne in Chichester, West Sussex on 23 August. Andreas of the 51st Foot and Mouth Division kept his guard up when they arrived. An amiable chap off duty, he was not going to be seduced by a pretty face and a smile and was determined to enforce his guard duties without prejudice. He explained that as three large balloons had recently been exploded in the mosaic underground excavations, damaging ice cream cones and cola bottles, security had been tightened. As he was nearing the end of his first overseas posting, he did not want to risk being court-martialled for dereliction of duty. Punishment is severe in the legion and death, or flogging is not uncommon.

Janet Heyes of Birmingham, West Midlands and St Dunstaner Len Harper of Alcester Warwickshire wished him safe passage



home to the land of sunshine and vineyards.

Fishbourne Roman Palace was discovered by accident

during the digging of a water main trench in 1960. The discovery led to nine seasons of excavations that showed the site had

developed from a military base at the time of the Roman invasion in AD43 to a sumptuous Palace by the end of the first century. Between 1995 and 2002, new excavations by the Sussex Archaeological Society revealed exciting new insights into this area.

The Palace houses the largest collection of in-situ mosaic floors in Britain. Many of these were laid at the time of construction, which makes them some of the oldest mosaics in the country. The most famous shows Cupid riding a dolphin. Outside, the northern half of the formal garden has been replanted to its original plan which was recovered by excavation. An attractive plant display area contains a range of plants known to have been cultivated by the Romans. Adjacent to it is a Roman Garden Museum which includes a reconstructed Roman potting shed with a selection of horticultural tools.

Visitors will be able to join the Roman Army for the day between 22-26 October. Recruits will dress and drill with Roman soldiers and receive a certificate and a replica Roman coin as pay for the day.

Adjutant arrows in on St Dunstan's



The Adjutant General with St Dunstaner Peter Hammond during a lull in the Archery Week competitions.

LIEUTENANT GENERAL Sir Freddie Viggers, KCB, CMG, MBE, who as The Adjutant General takes responsibility for the welfare of those serving in the Army, visited St Dunstan's Ovingdean on 28 August. He was accompanied by Lady Viggers and his ADC, Captain Rachael Cooper, Royal Artillery. They arrived by RAF helicopter and were escorted on a tour of the building by Chairman Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox and Chief Executive

Robert Leader. St Dunstan's Archery Club also provided a hands-on session with bow and arrows and the Adjutant General hit gold.



Tina gears up for St Dunstan's

A BRITISH TRANSPORT police officer revved up full-throttle to support blind ex-Service men and women last month. Tina Billington-Hughes, 47, of Rushden, embarked on the trip of a lifetime, riding a Honda Shadow VT600 motorcycle from St Dunstan's Ovingdean to Edinburgh and back.

She was set off on her voyage on 3 September by St Dunstan's own motorcycle maniac, Billy Baxter. "I've only been a biker for three years, but I've often thought about riding around the UK as a holiday for a challenge. One of my friends, whose husband is in the Services, suggested I should do the ride for St Dunstan's and it seemed the perfect cause," she said.

Billy spoke of the support that he received from St Dunstan's after losing his sight while serving in the Army. He joined Tina for a quick ride down the hill, wishing her all the best, before waving a starter's flag to set her off on her journey.

The weather favoured Tina,



all the way up to Scotland and all the way back. "I only had a bit of rain in Preston, but that soon cleared," she said. "The best bit of the journey was riding through the Lake District by Windimere."

Tina had to abandon a planned stop at St Dunstan's

Sheffield, but made her return via Newcastle, Lincoln and Cambridge. She arrived back at Ovingdean on 7 September having ridden 1,214 miles. She was greeted on her return by FEPOW St Dunstan Stan Grimsey who congratulated her and thanked her for supporting St Dunstan's.

REUNION

The Norwich Reunion was held on 12 September at Barnham Broom Restaurant and Golf Club, Barnham Broom, Nr Norwich, Norfolk. There were 35 St Dunstaners and four widows attending. Lady Walker was the member of St Dunstan's Council presiding and gave a very interesting speech. St Dunstan Colin Bassett from Thetford replied on behalf of those present. Guests included Deputy Manager of Norfolk and Norwich Association for the Blind, Julie Lythgoe. Two ROVIs from Sheffield attended and were available to give advice and information on adaptive technology as well as giving people the opportunity to try out some devices.

Half-a-million veterans badged

As Veterans Minister Derek Twigg was making the 500,000th Veterans Badge presentation in London on 5 September, the highest ever badge presentation was being made 380 feet up at the top of Blackpool Tower. Five veterans received their badge in Blackpool, while the Minister presented the landmark badge to a former Lance Corporal from the Royal Logistics Corps. Eligibility for the Veteran's Badge now includes those serving up to 31 December 1994.

Happy 100th Archie

WE WISH MANY Happy Returns to Southampton St Dunstaner Archibald English who celebrated his 100th birthday on 5 September. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1926 and was commissioned as Lieutenant in 1942. Discharged in 1945, he worked extensively in mapping, revising many Ordnance Survey maps.

POET'S CORNER

FREEDOM

Give me the freedom to say what I like,
Give me the wisdom to stay my tongue,
Give me the power to do my own thing,
Offer me time to weigh up everything

Give me the option to choose my own way,
The sense to let others also have their say.
Give me the courage to face each new dawn,
To step back apace should that day seem forlorn.

Allow me the freedom to make my mistakes,
To offer my help, caring not what it takes,
To share in compassion, to combat life's ills,
The freedom to do it without any frills.

To speak when I need to, but not out of place,
To never bring problems for others to face,
To hold out my hand to someone in despair,
Remembering the times when I needed such care.

Offer me freedom to face each new day,
In peace and contentment, or even to pray,
That others be with me to share all my high's,
Full knowing that freedom's the ultimate prize.

William Arthur Morley

The language of computers

ATS St Dunstaner **Nancy Chadwick** finds there are advantages to learning how to use these newfangled infernal machines

THE SILENCE was broken by two dry coughs. Obviously I was not the only one waiting for the first lesson at the computer as if we were on Death Row for the Day of Judgement. My friends had told me that it would be easy for me as I could do touch typing and had used the piano keyboard for 70 odd years. I would be dragged into the 21st century in no time.

A feminine voice suddenly told me to switch on the computer. After confirming that the order was for me I explained that I could not see the machine and had no idea where the switch was. "The tower is next to your left leg on the floor." This was the first hint that I was going to have to learn another language. My "friends" had failed to mention this! My teacher began to identify the keys. The first one was "Alt" This was a German word meaning "old". What on earth was that for? The

next one was the "Tab" key. In the thirties and the forties this was a cheap cigarette and we children saved the tab cards, pictures of birds or planes, footballers, etc.

Following this I was introduced to the "Shift" key. In Lancashire "shift" means "get out of the way and do it quickly". The most perplexing key was the one entitled "period" To me this word could have one of two meanings but this "period" key meant "full stop". Incredible!

The grilling lesson ended and I walked down the corridor with my brain stunned. I began to falter in my footsteps and turned round to return to my tutor as it struck me that I did not grasp whether or not I should hold down the "alt" key whilst I tapped another. I turned around again and took the lift deciding not to show her that I wasn't very bright. Instead I would ask one of the other learners. It would be easy to identify

them as they were all very quiet and preoccupied with problems. The first one I accosted said he was not up to that. The next one said he had forgotten. The third one said in an aloof tone that he was on "short cuts". I wondered whether he was on a hairdressing course and not doing computers.

Later in the week I entered a small room designed to have some practice on a computer. I soon came to a problem and was aware that there were two or more men in the room. I said "I am in difficulty here. Is there anyone who can help me?" Three men came quickly to surround me. Leaning over my shoulder they poked their fingers at the keys at the same time as one another. I was alarmed, expecting the machine to go up in flames or the voice to have a nervous breakdown. Gently but firmly I was prised from my seat to make room for the leader. They argued about the method

to be used and forgot about me. After I had delivered my unheard message of gratitude for the help I retreated into the corridor.

Home again I spent two weeks refurbishing a small upstairs room into a study. When the computer had been delivered and connected I decided to make a new house rule for my husband. He must never touch the computer as he knew nothing about it. As a retired engineer he constantly seized hold of any new gadgets or machines and took them to pieces. Then he took some time to reconstruct them. He listened but, wisely, made no comment.

A few days later I was leaning over the banisters calling my dear husband downstairs. I called in a soft, polite seductive tone asking him if he would come upstairs to fiddle with my mouse. Intrigued he responded immediately. Instant success delighted me and resulted in further calls in the following weeks. However, as time rolled by he seemed to get deafer and the television got louder. Watching the soccer he said that he would try to

come at half time. In the meantime things worsened in the study. I now got into the habit of always putting an adjective in front of the word "computer". The study was now referred to as the "blue room" because of the language seeping under the door. I was on bad terms with the voice. Early on I had spotted its weak points.

For instance it was poor at spelling. A male relative suggested that I might be the culprit. I was livid and ignored him. Another weak point was not saying clearer some consonants. It always left out one consonant in the word "shift" with an uncouth result.

Sometimes the wretched voice stammered or sulked not saying a word. Frequently it refused to close down as it said we were having a dialogue.

I hotly denied this. It was decided to have a telephone on the wall next to my right hand and be able to ask for help from Ovingdean. This was most useful until I began to feel ashamed about the number of times I had sent an SOS. In vain I tried to disguise my voice. The recipient always said

"Hello Nancy. Do you want the computer room?" The next step was to have a trip to Sheffield for revision. The tutor was superb starting at the beginning without criticism but piling on the praise for success. To ease the stress, he made short intervals for a little gossip. Although still in the middle of summer I printed all the addresses for the Xmas cards. All the fear of the computer vanished. In no time I was doing all the correspondence, printing sticky labels and sending e-mails. My conceit was unbearable. In social gatherings I dropped casual remarks about the work I had done recently on the computer. I really had entered the 21st century. Thank you St Dunstan's. You have changed my life. Did I mention that I can print sticky labels?

Barn dance

ENTERPRISING Air Training Corps cadets staged a barn dance to support blind ex-Service men and women. Bexhill-on-Sea's 2262 Squadron, ATC raised £100 for St Dunstan's through the dance at St Stephen's Church Hall in August.

Our life with St Dunstan's

Marjorie Humphrey tells how failing to wriggle out of a voluntary duty brought her together with her husband

MANY PEOPLE have asked me about my connection with St Dunstan's, a connection incidentally of which I am extremely proud. This therefore is it.

As a child, born in 1922, I frequently came across beggars both male and female, always clad from head to toe in black, usually wearing a large hat, fairly elderly and holding out a big white enamel mug bearing the words "Blind Please Help". For some unknown reason I always thought these persons were possessed of some kind of evil spirit and remember being dragged reluctantly past them screaming my head off and being told not to be a silly girl. This goes back to long before I started school and is one of my first memories.

Having eventually survived school life and then being employed in the Civil Service, which was rated a reserved occupation, at the



Photograph: John Corfield

Piper Ludlow entertains Marjorie and Jackie during a recent excursion from Church Stretton.

age of nineteen, I thought my value to my country would be more in serving in the Armed Forces than ticking and turning for His Majesty's Customs and Excise. After much "case stating" and appealing with the aid of representative associations I was called to the Colours and very happy to go and endure the rigours of Service life in order to do my bit.

My occupations varied, since Civil Service experience didn't appear to be very

highly rated except that I was recommended for Officers Corps Training Unit which had not been on my agenda and remained so. Having initially been absorbed into labouring duties in a large underground shop where old ammunition in the shape of all kinds of big shells, howitzers and grenades, which had been damaged mostly by water during the evacuation from Dunkirk, were being repaired, scraped and repainted. Occasionally this involved an unwelcome explosion.

I being quite a strong girl was charged with the job of examining the finished articles, fitting them into a gauge and boxing, sealing and stacking them. One day while the Major in charge was doing his rounds I was engrossed in trying to remove a 3.7" shell from the gauge on which the paint had not quite dried, resulting in the fact that it was firmly stuck. The shells were plugged, not fused so I took a spare piece of wood and a large mallet and proceeded to hammer the "business" end of the round. After the departure of the Major I was ordered to "put on my hat" (which always meant you were in trouble) and report to Officer Commanding. In reply to his first question "What occupation did you follow in Civilian life?" and hearing my reply "Office Clerk" his attitude promptly changed. He then asked if I could operate a filing system and barked, "Go and re-muster to Clerk and report to the office." That is how I found myself in one of the most interesting jobs I ever did, working as his Personal Assistant.

That lasted about a year when the health of my mother necessitated

an application for a compassionate posting to London. Where would they employ me, which would allow me to keep the two stripes I had acquired in my previous job? I was re-enlisted as a virtual dogsbody.

It was a Unit housing the staff of a large Pay Corps Company most of whom lived in their own homes and travelled from them each day but those dependent on barrack accommodation were housed in three commandeered large private houses in Kensington, behind Harrods. There at various times I found myself in charge of all the different aspects of communal life from messing to physical training most of which required a course, prior to taking up the tasks but all of which I thoroughly enjoyed. That meant that whatever and whenever something out of the ordinary was demanded of me like taking 250 blankets on a horse-drawn van to Chelsea Barracks to be exchanged for clean ones I had to do it. Thus it was one day on part one orders when it asked for volunteers to take out war blinded men during their time off. No one



Corporal Marjorie.

volunteered so the Sergeant Major decided that I should be the volunteer because no one else fancied it. I must admit I tried to wriggle out of that one by telling her that I didn't think I could handle blindness.

One fine day the call came to appear on a Sunday afternoon and I had to go to the Hostel for St Dunstan's Physiotherapy students to help out. I was allocated to Mike Delaney, he had been blinded by an exploding mine, who wanted to walk round Regent's Park, have someone check his betting slips from the Bookmaker and to read his books of

instruction aloud to him (recordings were not available them). One of the books in question was *Gray's Anatomy*, a book full of diagrams and medical terminology about four inches thick.

During the Second World War the new St Dunstan's building at Ovingdean which had been completed

in 1938 was taken over by the Royal Navy and the training centre moved to Church Stretton in Shropshire. There were other properties such as the two beautiful Nash houses in Park Crescent behind Regent's Park tube station in London. One of which number 12 accommodated the St Dunstan's Physiotherapy Students who were training at the National Institute for the Blind School.

Before Mike departed back to the Emerald Isle he persuaded me to continue to read to an Irish friend of his, Joe Humphrey who was unable to get a reader. Joe had been blinded by a German hand grenade in the initial assault of the Monte Cassino attack in January 1944, Italy when serving with the Royal Marine Commandos.

Ovingdean was officially re-opened in June 1946 with a Sports Day and I was invited to this weekend event and made my first appearance as Joe's fiancée.

Joe eventually finished his course and during that time I had become acquainted with a few other St Dunstaner



St Dunstaners Norman Perry, Barbara Bell and Joe Humphrey during a Physiotherapy conference .

physiotherapists who are still about today like Barbara Bell, Bill Shea, Tom Hart and Norman Perry.

Joe and I were married in October 1946 and the rest as was said at the Eulogy at his funeral in 1998 "is history". We enjoyed 52 years together but Joe's prime interest was always in St Dunstan's. Many, many times I heard him say to his patients while he worked on them "I love my St Dunstan's." He went to Ovingdean two weeks before he died there and I am confident that he

could not have been more content knowing he was in the place he loved.

Even our children still speak fondly of their holidays spent at Northgate House, a large house in Rottingdean with a huge well-equipped garden which was run by St Dunstan's as a Children's Holiday Home for St Dunstaners' offspring. This was a very successful venture since the men from the Second War were all then young and most of their wives were assisting them in their work after they had completed training, thus giving the wives the freedom to either go away with friends or family, or as most of us did support the many private boarding houses in the village and meet up with our husbands during the day. Wives were not allowed to stay at Ovingdean until the rules changed in 1985.

In those days, the main building was always packed full of men, where they slept in dormitories of 20, with lights out at 11 o'clock. There was never an empty seat or space on a window sill to be had in the main lounge and when afternoon cups of tea were served,

a visiting wife could have a cup of tea but only the men were allowed to have a biscuit. We all enjoyed every minute of our time spent there, the comradeship was unequalled.

Some years ago when the funds were running short we were all asked to raise money for St Dunstan's in whatever way we could and since Joe was very much involved with Round Table, Forty-One Clubs and Rotary Associations he made it his business to travel all over Northern Ireland, where we spent fifty two years of our married life, telling anyone who would listen first and give a donation afterwards all about the work done for the war blinded. I am happy to say that we were able to raise a substantial sum. I was fortunate to be involved since many of the affiliated Ladies' Clubs invited me to speak to them.

When I look back on a hard-working but rewarding life I find that St Dunstan's and the wonderful people I have met there feature very largely in the scenario. The moral of the story is when anyone asks me about St Dunstan's they certainly get an earful!



Joe Humphrey runs through some braille notation.

A happy birthday for Joe!

SEVERAL GENERATIONS of family and friends gathered at St Aloysius to wish St Dunstaner Joe King a very happy 90th birthday last month. Joe from Liverpool, Merseyside served in the Royal Army Service Corps during WWII. There was a reminder of his Army days in the form of a photograph that he had sent his mother while posted overseas. Liverpool St Dunstaners will attest that he retains a good singing voice, but we suspect it was everyone else who burst into a round of Happy Birthday on this occasion.



St Dunstaner Joe King pauses before blowing the candles out. His wife Josie is seated beside him.

Jersey's cream come out tops!

THE CREAM Of Jersey's air cadets tackled St Dunstan's 'Go the Distance' Cadet Challenge on 26 August. The squadron planned a 'three pronged assault' on the challenge involving land, sea and air. The 80 cadets, boosted in numbers by units from Dorset and Wiltshire Wing Air Training Corps, gathered at St Catherine's Bay on the east of the island to participate in this year's competition. Joining the cadets were St Dunstaners

Billy Baxter and Steve Sparkes, St Dunstan's Head of Awareness Graham Footer and Cadet Challenge Project Officer Colin Williamson and wife Brenda. Billy's intention was to walk with the cadets 13.1 miles along the coastal footpath, while Sparky was determined to kayak the same distance around the north of the island with Colin.

The Lieutenant-Governor of Jersey, Lieutenant General Andrew Ridgeway kindly cut

short his holiday to come along to officially start the event. Unfortunately, due to mist at the airstrip, the air element of the challenge couldn't take off.

Colin and Sparky got to explore le Creux de la Touraille (the Devil's Hole) a cave on the north coast of the island. The kayakers finished in time to welcome the walkers home as they marched smartly back to their base.

Air we go by the sea again!

Jax Whiteley is amazed by aerobatic Jumbos in Eastbourne

EVER SEEN a Jumbo Jet doing aerobatics? – No, then you probably weren't one of the estimated 800,000 people who visited Eastbourne from the 16-18 August this year. Once again St Dunstan's staff and volunteer speakers were on hand to offer information and advice. Children and adults participated in blindfolded golf, and trying on "Simi-specs". Everyone who visited the stand went away from us perhaps a little wiser, and certainly more aware of the implications of losing one's sight. From toddlers to teenagers, schoolkids to grannies, we talked to them all. Meeting potential St Dunstaners and talking to descendants of WWI founder members. Generally doing what we set out to do – raise awareness about St Dunstan's and the wonderful work it does.

One of the fun moments was a visit to the stand by Eastbourne Sea Cadets who were delighted to see their photo in **St Dunstan's Review**. It was taken in April, when they completed the



Eastbourne Sea Cadets cheer on St Dunstan's.

Cadet Challenge. Another was the chance meeting of an old friend from his coastguard service days for St Dunstaner Chris Humphrey.

One youngster told us she and some school friends had raised money through a jumble sale and, since visiting our stand, decided she would donate the money to St Dunstan's.

Among the volunteers were St Dunstan's staff, who kindly gave up their free time to help over the four day show. The team included Ron Jones, Moira McGrath and



Tickled pink. Chris and Joy.

her daughter Stephanie, Gerry and Maureen Jackson, Claire Green, Joy Sired, Graham Footer, Jen Shannon, Colin Williamson, Chris Humphrey, Bryan Alexander, Martin Shannon, Nigel and Jax Whiteley.

The new ROVI on the block

As a Trainee Rehabilitation Officer for the Visually Impaired **Stuart Penfold** is busier than ever, but convinced that helping others learn how to cope with blindness is worth the effort

MANY OF YOU will know that I have been hitting the books (and the internet) since September last year. It was Spring 2006 when I started looking into becoming a Rehabilitation Officer for the Visually Impaired, otherwise



If you are going to teach long cane techniques, you need to try it first.

known as a ROVI. I hit the net scouring for information, I talked to the professionals from St Dunstan's own Rehab team and decided this could be for me.

I found one of very few courses which train people to become ROVIs, which is a surprise considering there is a large shortage of these trained professionals. The course I attend is based at The University of Central England in Birmingham. It is a full time two year course with a difference. There is no way that I and many of the other students could attend full time, so the course is run primarily through the wonders of the Internet. It's not all online since we do have to attend UCE (as we call it) for one week every six to eight weeks, for a total of ten times in two years. Sounds easy, but when you read on you'll discover how busy my time is. These weeks are called Group Learning (GL) weeks. Work is accessed

from a special website and all assignments are computer based and sent for marking via e-mail.

The days leading up to a GL week are always busy. There is a mountain of preparation work to be done ready for the week and the accompanying assignment. This includes from reading texts from websites and books. We also touch up on some of the skills we have learned in previous weeks.

These weeks are always very busy but very enjoyable, interesting and of course, we are learning the skills we need to do the job. There are plenty of lectures where we are busy listening, taking notes and discussing various issues. There are also two days where we learn to teach important practical skills. Time is spent learning how to teach Independent Living Skills like cooking and cleaning. We spend a day learning and teaching



Stuart gets to grips with eating a full English breakfast without seeing his plate.

mobility including sighted guide and cane skills. There is also lots of legislation and law to learn plus other very important aspects of social care. Of course, there is also a small amount of time spent socialising in Birmingham as well, as nearly everyone is away from home for the week. Not much though, there's those studies to think about!

When we get back home, it's time to sort out pages of notes and get organised, ready to start the next

assignment. This comprises of writing around two-to-three thousand words on a specific or several subjects. Now, that sounds a lot but once you get into it, that word limit soon creeps up on you. These assignments explore different issues of the job and are very interesting. In March we investigated the accessibility of a local public service and part of the assignment had to be completed in braille.

After writing the assignment over the next four weeks, it is then e-mailed off for

marking. During this time we are also practising the practical skills we have learned. You may see me up in the Rehab department either shadowing one of our ROVIs or teaching someone how to use a CCTV, a talking watch or a scanner.

To finish, I know I have made the right choice. The course is challenging, interesting and is giving me the skills to do an extremely important job. At this stage there is still a year to go which includes a placement for four months.

Welcome to St Dunstan's

Ernest Alford of Crawley, West Sussex served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1940 to 1946.

Nicholas Barber of Beccles, Suffolk served in the Royal Air Force Police from 1983 to 1996.

Hilda Burns of Fleetwood, Lancashire served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1951 to 1955.

Martin Chandler of Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk served in the Royal Air Force from 1952 to 1987.

Robert Childs of Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex served in the Merchant Navy from 1944 to 1947.

Arnold Colthart of Glenrothes, Fife served in the Royal Navy from 1948 to 1973.

Michael Cook of Lickfold, nr Petworth, West Sussex served in the Royal Artillery from 1954 to 1956.

John Corney of Abergele, Clwyd served as Leading Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

Patricia Davidson of Rainham, Essex served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1942 to 1946.

Dennis Davies of Clifton, Swinton, Manchester served in the South Lancashire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's Volunteers) from 1940 to 1946.

John Douglas of Newport Pagnell, Buckinghamshire served in the General Service Corps, the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment and the Royal Scots Fusiliers between 1944 and 1948.

Olive Foster of Brighton served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

Henry Fox of Birmingham, West Midlands served in the Royal Air Force from 1952 to 1957.

John Gallagher of Pennant, Llanon, Ceredigion served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1951 to 1953.

Mina Gibson of Bangor, County Down served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1941 to 1946.

James Glendenning of Bognor Regis, West Sussex served in the Royal Engineers from 1948 to 1950.

George Goodchild of Gamlingay, Sandy, Bedfordshire served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1939 to 1946.

Leslie Harris of Bromley, Kent served in the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1947.

Wilfred Holmes of Middlesbrough, Cleveland served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Douglas Hurley of Chard, Somerset served in the Royal Air Force from 1950 to 1953.

Sydney Jacobs, MBE of Roby, Liverpool served in the Royal Air Force as Sergeant from 1941 to 1946.

Henry Kavanagh of Formby, Liverpool served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1944 to 1946.

Edwin Knowles of Wythenshawe, Manchester served in the Royal Marines from 1941 to 1945.

Frank Lane of Birmingham, West Midlands served as Corporal in the Royal Air Force from 1937 to 1946.

Mary Leggett of Andover, Hampshire served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1942 to 1946.

Lewis Lewis of Llangwm, Haverfordwest, Dyfed served in the Merchant Navy and Royal Naval Reserve between 1928 and 1945.

Patrick Magee of Gosport, Hampshire served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1942 to 1946.

Gwynfor Mogg of Bridgend, Mid Glamorgan served in the Royal Horse Guards from 1959 to 1965.

Ronald Murphy of York, North Yorkshire served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1948 to 1953.

James Preston of Bridlington, North Humberside served in the General Service Corps, the West Yorkshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's Own), the Duke of Wellington's Regiment (West Riding), and the Royal Berkshire

Regiment (Princess Charlotte of Wales's) between 1944 and 1946.

Sydney Rogers of Urmston, Manchester served in the Manchester Regiment from 1939 to 1946.

Peggy Saunders of Worthing, Sussex served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1940 to 1945.

John Series of Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1947.

Jordan Silver of Lichfield, Staffordshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1945 and then the Royal Navy until 1946.

Sidney Tavender of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire served in the East Yorkshire Regiment (The Duke of York's Own) and Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (Princess Louise's)

John Taylor of Guildford, Surrey served in the General Service Corps from 1942 to 1944 and then the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers until 1956.

George Thompson of Chesterfield, Derbyshire served in the Royal Navy from 1940 to 1946.

Sylvia Vickers of Bridlington, North Humberside served in the Women's Royal Air Force from 1949 to 1950.

George Watt of Newtown, Powys served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

Ernest Weathrill from Whitby, North Yorkshire served in the Royal Service Corps from 1939 to 1946.

Frederick Wheeler of Telford, Shropshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1946 to 1948.

William Williams of Thornton Cleveleys, Lancashire served in the Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire) and then the Reconnaissance Corps between 1938 and 1941.

Ten Answers

Answers to quiz on page 21.

- 1) Tributary;
- 2) River Thames;
- 3) River Clyde;
- 4) Rubicon;
- 5) River Thames;
- 6) River Tweed;
- 7) Showboat, by Jerome Kern;
- 8) Avon;
- 9) River Amazon;
- 10) Thailand.

CABBAGE MECHANIC

The mechanic is a fun guy with this tasty mushroom soup

Try this homemade mushroom soup, delicious with farmhouse bread.

1lb (500g) mushrooms
3oz (90g) butter
2 medium onions
1 clove garlic
2tbl plain flour
2 pints (1litre) chicken or vegetable stock
1 bay leaf
3-4 myrtle leaves
Salt and ground black pepper
4fl oz (half cup) cream or natural yoghurt (optional)

Wipe the mushrooms and slice well. Chop the onions finely and crush or chop the garlic. Heat up the butter in a medium sized saucepan

and add the onions and garlic, cooking until they go soft. Cabbage Mechanic added a few fresh chives at this point as well.

Add the mushrooms, stirring over a high heat for about three minutes, then add the flour, covering the mushrooms and mixing in. Keep stirring. Add the stock. Cabbage mechanic used two chicken OXO dissolved in water, but vegetable stock is a good alternative.

Add the bay leaf and myrtle and simmer for ten minutes. After this, remove the bayleaf and let the soup stand for a few minutes. Place the soup in a food

processor and blitz until smooth. If you have a hand blender this will also do the job and saves the hassle of pouring the soup into a processor.

Return the soup to the saucepan, add salt and pepper to taste and bring back to the boil. The soup should be quite delicious at this stage. However, for extra luxury, mixing in some cream or plain yoghurt can add some extra zing.

This recipe should yield three to four helpings depending on bowl or mug size. The soup can also be easily frozen if not used up in one sitting.

BEER OF THE MONTH

by Colin Williamson

Meantime Chocolate

I recently discovered Meantime Chocolate from a London brewery called Meantime Brewery. They make the beers in Sainsbury's Taste the Difference range. Their Greenwich brewery proudly claims to be zero degrees, two minutes and 12 seconds east of the Meridian. This is a delicious ale with a true silky chocolate taste and beautiful aroma. Made with dark malts and infused with dark chocolate, this is an amazing beer and one to be savoured. ABV 6.5 per cent. Go on, indulge yourself!



Family News

BIRTHS

Congratulations on the birth of:

Lenny Paul Wanklyn on 22 March. He is the seventh great grandchild for Pamela Sumner of Wokingham, Berkshire.



Pam has since become a great-grandmother for the eighth time. Isaac Joseph Dove Pottage was born on 16 August. Pam is pictured holding a nine-day old Isaac in her arms.

Freya Blackwell on 26 May. She is the great-granddaughter of Margaret Smith of Lancing, West Sussex and the late Leslie Smith, and a sister to young Bailey.

Michael Anthony Roberts on 14 March. He is the son of Archie and Sarah Roberts of Hilton, South Africa.

RUBY ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Richard and Daphne Tippet of Redruth, Cornwall on 20 August.

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Walter and Sheila Skinner of Frieston, Boston, Lincolnshire on 5 September.

DIAMOND ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Stanley and Thelma Arnold of Yeovill, Somerset on 30 August.

Colin and Elizabeth Johnston of Wheelers Hill, Victoria, Australia on 1 September. Ronald and Mary Tipple of Crapstone, Yelverton, Devon on 6 September.

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

George and Irene Slater of Farington, Leyland, Lancashire who celebrated 61 years of marriage on 1 August.

Tug and Dorothy Wilson of Southwell, Nottinghamshire who celebrated 61 years of marriage on 10 August.

Arthur and Joyce Harris of Eastbourne, East Sussex who celebrated 65 years of marriage on 20 August.

Arthur and Violet Albrow of Brighton who celebrated 66 years of marriage on 23 August.

Harold and Jean Woodford of Stubbington, Fareham, Hampshire who celebrated 61 years of marriage on 24 August.

Kenneth and Nester Heath of Sutton Benger, Chippenham, Wiltshire who celebrated 61 years of marriage on 26 August.

John and Joan Whiteley of Sutton, Surrey who celebrated 63 years of marriage on 30 August.

Christopher and Joan Gray of Moordown, Bournemouth, Dorset who celebrated 62 years of marriage on 1 September.

Roy and Pauline French of Shepstone, Natal, South Africa who celebrated 68 years of marriage on 3 September.

Douglas and Tessie Knight of Churt, Surrey who celebrated 61 years of marriage on 1 September.

John and Eileen Taylor of Littlehampton, West Sussex who celebrated 65 years of marriage on 12 September.

John and Audrey Perfect of Yealmpton, Devon who celebrated 61 years of marriage on 14 September.

George and Jean Simpson of Barnsley, South Yorkshire who celebrated 61 years of marriage on 15 September.

Keith and Helen Crosby of Newhaven, East Sussex who celebrated 61 years of marriage on 17 September.

Arthur and Margaret Wood of Athersley South, Barnsley, South Yorkshire who celebrated 62 years of marriage on 17 September.

Joseph and May Gregory of Coventry, West Midlands who celebrated 67 years of marriage on 18 September.

Douglas and Muriel Pritchard of Broomhill, Worcester who celebrated 64 years of marriage on 18 September.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to:

David Greenwood of Belper, Derbyshire

on passing his CLAIT certificate in July. He covered file management, document creation and spreadsheets.

DEATHS

We regret to announce the death of:

Lilian Makin on 2 September. She was the wife of Kenneth Makin of Barnston, Merseyside.

Phyllis Kirby on 9 September. She was the wife of Percy Kirby of Fakenham, Norfolk.

Mary Elliott on 11 September. She was the wife of Brian Elliott of Amesbury, Wiltshire.

Norma Moone of St Peter Port, Guernsey, Channel Islands on 15 August. She was the widow of Claude Moon.

Dorothy Barlow of Whirlow, Eccleshall, Sheffield on 9 September. She was the widow of John Barlow.

In Memory

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

Jan Uitlander Cape Corps

Jan Uitlander of Cape Town, South Africa died on 27 February, aged 88. He was a farm worker before enlisting with the Cape Corps in 1941. Posted to a Light Anti-Tank Battery in Kimberley, he deployed to the Middle East. He became a driver and was involved with the stand at Sidi Rezegh and fought at Tripoli and Malta. He was blinded

by a hand-grenade in Libya. In 1944, he joined St Dunstan's at Durban and trained in basket and mattress making. He established his own workshop at home, retiring in the 1980s. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Geoffrey Misseldine Royal Artillery

Captain Geoffrey Edward Misseldine died on 17 April, aged 86. He had been working in his father's business before joining the Royal Artillery in 1939. He became a Gunner on anti-aircraft defence. Promoted to Lance Sergeant, he trained as a PTI and unarmed combat instructor. In 1942, he joined actor Dirk Bogarde on OCTU at Shrivenham and was subsequently commissioned. He was injured in 1943 by an exploding mine which killed his Sergeant. He was temporarily blinded, but returned to duty within six months. His unit joined the Canadian army during its assault on Juno beach. He was promoted to Captain, and fought in the Battle of Arnhem, moving into the Hague and on through Germany to Poland. He was discharged in 1946 and in civilian life, worked in marketing. His interests included cricket. Our sympathy goes to his sons David and Stuart and all of the family.

Ian Ash Royal Artillery

Ian William Ash of Frinton-on-Sea, Essex died on 18 July, aged 79. Having work at his father's dairy, he joined the General Service Corps in 1945. After three months, he transferred to the Royal Artillery. In 1946, he transferred to the Corps of Military Police and then the Royal Army Medical Corps in 1947. After two months, he rejoined the Royal Artillery. Discharged in 1948, he briefly took over his father's business but

later became a chef for a Lyons Corner House. Later, he became a confectionary salesman. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

John Brown Royal Army Service Corps

John William Brown of Orton Brimbles, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire died on 26 July, aged 70. He was a trainee mechanic before joining the Royal Army Service Corps in 1955. He served as Corporal before being discharged in 1955. He resumed work as a mechanic but later worked in financial services and on security. His interests included snooker and cycling and he was an active member of Peterborough District Bowling Club and the Blind Bowlers Federation. Our sympathy goes to his widow Jenny and all members of the family.

Eric Riby Royal Engineers

Eric Bayes Riby of Coleford, Gloucestershire died on 5 August, aged 87. He joined the Royal Engineers in 1940, serving in the UK, Italy and Holland. Discharged in 1946, he was a woodsman with the Forestry Commission in civilian life. His interests included gardening. Our sympathy goes to his widow Connie and all of the family.

Rodney Roebuck Royal Navy

Rodney Roebuck of Weymouth, Dorset died on 6 August, aged 70. He joined the Royal Navy in 1952 as an Artificer Apprentice. He took part in the Suez Crisis and in a 34 year career served in Africa, Ceylon, the West Indies and Canada. He was discharged in 1986 as Warrant Officer and became a technician at Weymouth College. Our

sympathy goes to his widow Audrey and all members of the family.

Ted Manville

Sherwood Foresters

Edward William Manville of Brighton died on 13 August, aged 85. He was an electrical engineer, and briefly a grocer, before joining the Royal Artillery in 1939. He served in the UK and India. In 1944, he transferred to the Sherwood Foresters. After his discharge in 1946, he became a glazier, but later joined the local authority in their housing department. Our sympathy goes to his widow Betty and all members of the family.

Percy Price

Royal Navy

Percy Thomas Price of Lancing, West Sussex died on 16 August, aged 88. He was a telegraph boy for the Post Office before joining the Royal Navy in 1938. He trained on HMS *Royal Sovereign* and then spent two years in the Mediterranean on HMS *Hood*. He took part in the Norway evacuations and then joined HMS *Pozarica* on the Russian Convoys. Discharged in 1948, he became a plumber and was also a lifeguard at Worthing Swimming Pool. He was an active member of the North Russia Club, an association of convoy veterans. Sailing and swimming remained an interest and he grew his own vegetables. Our sympathy goes to his widow Margaret and all members of the family.

Ted Tibbit

Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire Light Infantry

Charles Edward Tibbit of Ovingdean, Brighton died on 16 August, aged 84. He was a shop assistant before joining the 2nd

Battalion, Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire Light Infantry in 1941. His unit served in the UK and Europe. On 6 June 1944, he was one of 139 men who joined glider crews and sappers on an audacious mission to take the Caen Canal Bridge and the River Orne Bridge. The mission was conceived with the intention of cutting off any German reinforcements that would be heading towards the Normandy beaches. Six Horsa gliders were taken up to 4,000ft and released to glide silently into enemy territory. Ted was in Glider No 5, which hit an air pocket but still landed in a field adjacent to the Orne Bridge. They took the bridge (now renamed the Horsa Bridge) with little resistance and the area is generally considered to be the first part of occupied Europe to have been liberated. Having secured the area, the OBLI men went on to fight in battles at Escoville and Herouvillette and on to the Breville Ridge. After advancing to Sienne, they returned to the UK to regroup and were subsequently deployed to Belgium where they fought in the Battle of the Bulge. Ted then was amongst those called on for a further airborne mission in 1945, Operation Varsity. This time the mission called on them to cross the Rhine, but weather conditions slowed the gliders descent leaving them open to German fire. Heavy casualties were taken as the gliders tried to land and those that made it down found themselves immediately thrown into vicious hand-to-hand combat. Ted suffered a head wound during the battle. Back in the UK, he joined St Dunstan's at Stoke Mandeville and subsequently started training at Church Stretton. He then joined the assembly line at Lines Bros in Merton who made Tri-ang Toys, staying with the firm until 1972. His

interests included gardening, caravanning, and toymaking. He was a member of the Normandy Veterans Association. Our sympathy goes to his son David and all members of the family.

Joanne McDonald

Royal Air Force

Joanne Helen McDonald, nee Altass, of Hessle, East Yorkshire died on 18 August, aged 44. Having enjoyed the CCF at school, she joined the Women's Royal Air Force in 1981. She trained at Hereford and then joined the Dental Branch. After further training at RAF Halton, she was posted to RAF Finningley, Doncaster and later RAF Cranwell. She was subsequently posted to Cyprus where she met her husband also serving in the RAF. She became a Warrant Officer but lost her sight after developing a brain tumour and was subsequently discharged in 2005. She passed a Computer Literacy and Information Technology certificate and studied practice management, reflexology and also Braille. Our sympathy goes to her husband Alex and all members of the family.

James O'Hara

Royal Army Service Corps

James Henry John O'Hara of Wimbeldon, London died on 20 August, aged 81. He was a plumber's mate before joining the Pioneer Corps in 1944. He served with the Army Fire service but transferred to the Royal Army Service Corps. He suffered lime burns while stationed in Palestine in 1947. Discharged in 1948, he became a basket maker with the Royal London Society for the Blind. He enjoyed gardening, bowls and music. Our sympathy goes to his daughters, Anne, Jill and Lyn, and all members of the family.

Wing Commander Thomas Hall

Royal Air Force

Wing Commander Thomas Douglas Hall of Edwalton, Nottinghamshire died on 21 August, aged 87. He was an apprentice engineer with a wire manufacturer and served in the TA on search light duty before volunteering for the Royal Air Force in 1941. He trained at Skegness and was posted to RAF Scampton. He qualified as a ground engineer and then flight engineer. Having been promoted to Sergeant, he trained at St Athan and was commissioned as Pilot Officer in 1944. He remained in the Technical Branch, completing 50 operational flights with 50 Squadron. After the war, he served in Italy, Germany and Austria with the Missing Research and Enquiry Service. Promoted to Squadron Leader in 1955, he did tours in Singapore and Ceylon. He was promoted to Wing Commander in 1974. After retiring from the RAF in 1977, he took an appointment in Saudi Arabia training their air force and later became an organiser for Save the Children. Our sympathy goes to his widow Sheila and all members of the family.

Charles Gunn

Royal Army Service Corps

Charles William Gunn of Hove, East Sussex died on 22 August, aged 85. He joined No 10 Training Battalion, Royal Army Service Corps in 1942. Deployed to North Africa, he took part in the invasion of Sicily. He became a driver in the Motor transport Company and was deployed to Greece during the Communist insurgency. He met his wife in Athens during this time and they married in 1945. After his discharge in 1947, he became a driver for a glazing firm. Our sympathy goes to his son Leon and all members of the family.

Jeffrey Staines**Royal Air Force**

Jeffrey Staines of Swaffham, Norfolk died on 23 August, aged 83. He was an engineering apprentice before joining the Royal Air Force in 1945. He served in Northern Ireland and Scotland as Leading Aircraftman. Discharged in 1948, he resumed engineering with the Cooper Roller Bearing Company. His interests included reading, fishing and DIY. Our sympathy goes to his sons Barry and Richard and all of the family.

Thomas Littlewood**Royal Air Force**

Thomas Littlewood of West Park, Leeds, Yorkshire died on 26 August, aged 86. He was a tailor's cutter before joining the Royal Air Force in 1940. He served in 76 Squadron working on Halifax bomber airframes. Deployed to Palestine, he fought through North Africa and into the Canal Zone with the US Air Force. Contracting tuberculosis, he had his left lung removed and was discharged in 1947. In civilian life, he joined a horticultural company maintaining football pitches and bowling greens. Later, he joined a concrete engineering company. His interests included big band and classical music. Our sympathy goes to his widow Dorothy and all members of the family.

Ernest Saunders**Royal Air Force**

Ernest Saunders of Luton, Bedfordshire died on 27 August, aged 90. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1940, serving in Lincolnshire, Kirkham and Abingdon. After being posted to Rhodesia, he was discharged as Corporal in 1946. In civilian life, he became an inspector for Vauxhall. Our sympathy goes to his widow Peggy and all of the family.

William Livingston**Royal Armoured Corps**

William Francis Livingston of Aldingham, Cumbria died on 28 August, aged 84. He joined the Royal Armoured Corps in 1939 and after training deployed to North Africa. He served as a driver in the Middle East, Crete, Italy and after D-Day in North West Europe. He was amongst the soldiers who liberated the concentration camp at Bergen-Belsen where the bodies of emaciated captives had been piled up in the yards, the barely living often cast in with the dead. In peacetime, as a Corporal, he was a PT instructor and his interest in athletics carried into civilian life when discharged in 1946. He enjoyed swimming and was an accomplished long distance runner, winning several awards in Cumbria. He also enjoyed dancing. He became a driver for the Barrow Corporation and later a lifeguard at the local swimming baths. Our sympathy goes to his sons Philip, Stephen and Kieth, and all members of the family.

Edward Milthorpe**Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve**

Edward Milthorpe of Barnsley died on 30 August, aged 84. He was a painter and decorator before joining the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve in 1942. He trained as a signaller and became a Sergeant on a Lancaster Bomber crew. In 1943, he was commissioned as Pilot Officer and then promoted to Flight Officer after six months. He remained on Lancasters was promoted to Flight Lieutenant in November 1945. Demobbed in 1946, he resumed work as a painter and decorator. He enjoyed playing the piano accordion and saxophone. Our sympathy goes to his daughter Dorothy and all members of the family.

Bill Verralls, DFC**Royal Air Force**

William Arthur Verralls, DFC of Hoveton, Norwich, Norfolk died on 1 September, aged 93. He worked for a weaving company and in Smithfields Market as a clerk before joining Margate Borough Police in 1936. In 1937, he was commended by Margate Watch Committee for stopping a runaway horse. He enlisted with the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve (three days before resigning from the Police) in 1941, training as a pilot in South Africa. Initially, he flew Wellingtons and Stirlings but, on being posted to 207 Squadron at Linton-on-Ouse, he joined a Lancaster bomber crew. Having served as Flight Sergeant, he became a Pilot Officer in May 1943 and then Flying Officer after six months. He was promoted to Flight Lieutenant and reckoned that his crew were the last Lancaster to bomb Germany before peace was established. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross in November 1945. He was released to the reserve and rejoined Kent Police but resigned in 1946. His conduct was described as exemplary. He then managed a wine and spirit merchants in Margate. However, he was drawn back into the reconstituted RAFVR under an emergency commission in June 1952. The following year, he was appointed as a Flying Officer in the RAF's Aircraft Control Branch. He was promoted to Flight Lieutenant in February 1956. He served in Iraq, Bahrain and the UK before discharge in 1969. In civilian life, he joined the Bristow Group helicopter services company. His interests included wood turning, bowls and gardening. In 2001, he and two colleagues unveiled a memorial at Spilsby to all the 207 crews

who served there. Our sympathy goes to sons Stephen and Peter, daughter Wendy and all members of the family.

Trevor Phillips**Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve**

Trevor Phillips of Paignton, Devon died on 7 September, aged 85. He worked for an industrial agriculture engineering firm before joining the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve in 1941. A shard of glass injured his right eye in 1945. Discharged as Corporal in 1946, he turned to book-keeping and worked at Newton Abbot Hospital. He developed an interest in amateur radio, completing City & Guilds qualifications and becoming a member of St Dunstan's Amateur Radio Society, callsign G4IBH. Our sympathy goes to his widow Joan, son John, daughter Cheryl, and all of the family.

Alec Higgins**Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve**

William Alec Higgins of Mead, Eastbourne, East Sussex died on 9 September, aged 90. He was a draughtsman with the Electricity Board in the West Midlands before joining the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve in 1939. He trained at Sealand and at the Wireless School at RAF Cranwell. He joined the Y Service – Wireless Intercept – and was posted to Staffordshire. He was commissioned in 1944 and was posted to Bletchley Park before being discharged as Flight Lieutenant in 1946. In civilian life, he resumed work for the Electricity Board. His interests included athletics, bowls and music. He developed an interest in radio during the 1930s and was a member of St Dunstan's Amateur Radio Society, callsign G8GF. Our sympathy goes to his widow Daisy and all members of the family.

Palmer room opened!

A NEW CONSERVATORY, or garden room, was opened at St Dunstan's Sheffield on 16 August. It has been named the Palmer Room in memory of John Palmer, who was killed in a motorcycle accident in 1967 at the age of 24. The construction of the room has been made possible through the support of his parents Bill and Grace.

Grace Palmer passed away recently and the Chairman offered our condolences to Bill Palmer who joined a group of St Dunstaners during an opening ceremony at the training centre. "The Palmer Room is giving valuable extra space to the training centre, particularly as we expand its role to include what we call



Mr Palmer unveiled the dedication plaque.

an Introduction Week where we assess the needs of new St Dunstaners and then provide the training where we identify the necessity," said St Dunstan's Chairman Michael Gordon-Lennox.

"The role of Sheffield is becoming increasingly important to these new St Dunstaners and we are most grateful, Bill, for the part you have played in making this expansion possible. Earlier, I referred

to this room as a "Garden Room". It has a lovely airy and bright place with lots of glass and it has a friendly and welcoming atmosphere, which is particularly appropriate for blind people.

"To quote our founder, Sir Arthur Pearson: 'Many people see without perceiving; blind people learn to perceive without seeing'. This lovely room will certainly be perceived and greatly appreciated by all, and I am so glad that Bill's contribution will have this extra quality in memory of his son."

Bill then pulled on a specially prepared cord to unveil the plaque and declare the Palmer Room open. His son's memory is also recorded in Braille, which St Dunstaner Theresa Rowlands read to some of her fellow trainees.



Mr Palmer with the first St Dunstaners to use the new area.