

December 2007

St Dunstan's Review

MERRY CHRISTMAS



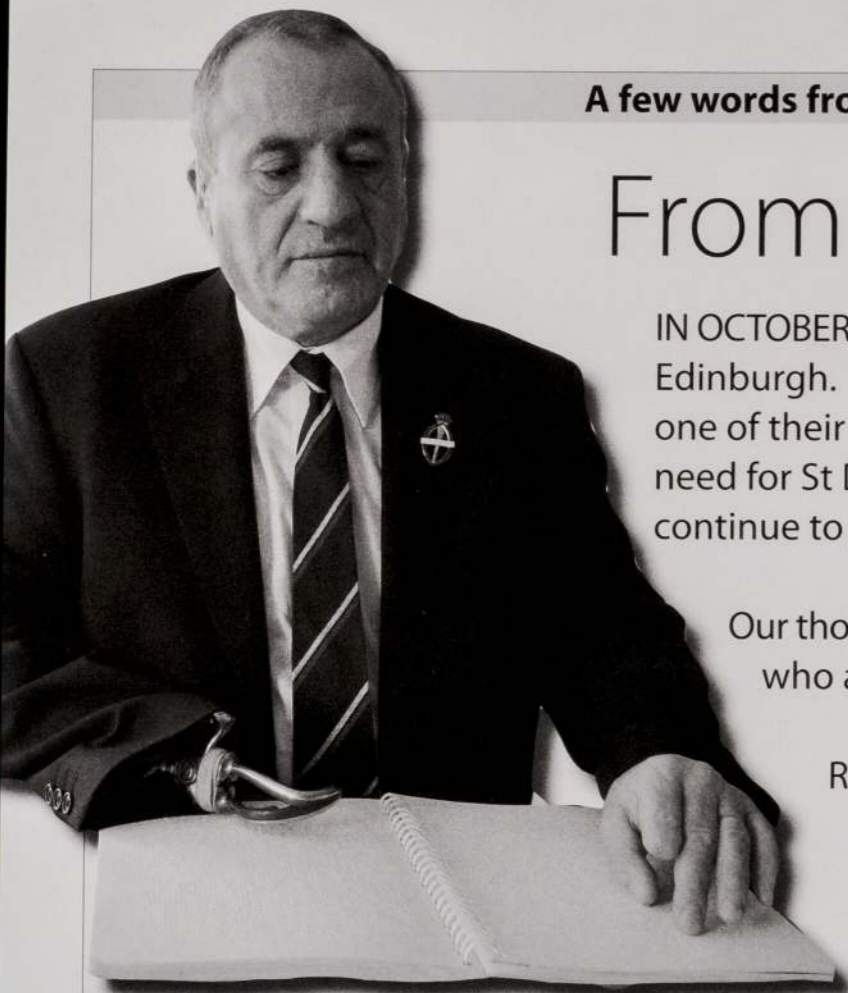
A few words from St Dunstan's President, Raymond Hazan

From the President

IN OCTOBER, I visited the 3rd Battalion, The Rifles, based in Edinburgh. They had recently returned from Iraq, where one of their Riflemen lost his sight. It emphasises the need for St Dunstan's, quite apart from the many who continue to join our ranks in less violent circumstances.

Our thoughts are with those Service men and women who are separated from their families at this time.

Robbie and I wish all the family of St Dunstan's a Happy Christmas and fruitful 2008.



Greetings from Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN

From the Chairman

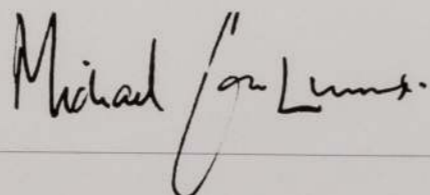
HOW MANY of you read in the newspapers that the Red Cross has banned Christmas nativity decorations from shops in case they offend customers of other faiths?

Comments followed quickly and one that particularly caught my eye was: "It is seriously sad when we live in a multi-cultural society that it is considered offensive to have Christmas decorations. Why not just ban the whole thing and we can become a miserable bunch of politically

correct bores with absolutely no culture whatsoever?"

We do seem to live in a politically correct society but I am sure you would all agree that we should continue to enjoy Christmas with our families as it is a particularly important and happy festival for Christians around the world.

Jenny and I wish you all a very happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.



A seasonal message from Robert Leader, DL



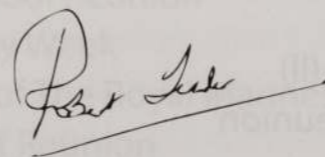
From the Chief Executive

WE HAVE always recognised that the increasing numbers in the St Dunstan's family brings with it the attendant risk of losing that 'personal touch' that we regard as so important.

My contact with St Dunstaners throughout the past year tells me that we are still managing to keep the flame of "family" alive.

Wherever you are spending this Christmas I hope the feeling of being part of this great family will bring you happiness and hope for the coming year.

A very happy and blessed Christmas to you all.



SEASONS GREETINGS FROM ST DUNSTAN'S

PEACE AND GOODWILL TO ALL

All staff at Headquarters, Sheffield, Ovingdean and working around the country wish the members of the St Dunstan's family a very Happy Christmas. We trust everyone will enjoy good health and happiness during the coming year.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all!

COVER STORY: This month's cover was conceived by St Dunstaner John Perfect who directed artist Reg Wilkinson. The snow-capped masthead was designed by Emily Hunt.

St Dunstan's Review December 2007 No 975

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Published monthly by **St Dunstan's** an independent future for blind ex-Service men and women
12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD.
Patron: Her Majesty The Queen
Charity Reg. no 216227.

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

Printed by Hobbs the Printer



THE REVIEW WILL BE BACK IN FEBRUARY

NEXT ISSUE OUT AT START OF FEBRUARY: There will be no edition of **ST DUNSTAN'S Review** published during the month of January. The **Review** will be back, in all formats, in February 2008 with more news, features and information. In the meantime, all comments and contributions are welcome.

Noticeboard

WHAT'S ON IN THE FORTHCOMING YEAR

A WIDE CHOICE OF ACTIVITIES: These are just some of the events and activities that make up St Dunstan's 2008 calendar. Details of other meetings and activities will appear in future issues when arrangements have been confirmed. For events at St Dunstan's Ovingdean the dates quoted are usually the day of arrival and departure, but arrangements will be made to maximise use of Ovingdean vehicles. All holiday and club activity bookings should be made via Jackie Castle, Bookings Coordinator on 01273 307811 ext 1422 or e-mail jackie.castle@st-dunstans.org.uk. Events marked tbc are to be confirmed.

DECEMBER 2007

Writers Forum	1
Christmas Craft Week	2-8
St Dunstan's Day	9
Christmas "Week"	16/17-27
Ovingdean Christmas Show	18
New Year "Week"	28- 5 January

Indoor Bowling	15
Computer Club (I)	20-21
Amateur Radio (I)	22-1 March
Indoor Bowling	22

MARCH

Writers Forum	1
Bowling Club (I)	2-15
Brighton Reunion (I)	18
Derby Reunion	19
Music Week	20-26
Indoor Bowling	24

APRIL

Middlesbrough Reunion	3
Ex-POW Reunion	4-7
Writers Forum	5
Cambridge Reunion	9
Flora London Marathon	13
Widows' Week (I)	13-19
Birmingham Reunion	15
Indoor Bowling	21
Brighton Reunion (II)	22
Central London Reunion	23

EVENTS FOR 2008

JANUARY

Indoor Bowling	7
Indoor Bowling	11
Indoor Bowling	14
Indoor Bowling	18
Archery Club (I)	18-27
Indoor Bowling	25
Skiing (Italy)	19-26

FEBRUARY

Writers Forum	2
Indoor Bowling	8
Dancing Week (I)	10-16
Valentine's Day Dance	14

Anzac Day	25
Masonic Weekend	25-28
Leeds Reunion	30

MAY

Writers Forum	3
Blind & Handless Reunion	7-13
VE Day	8
Scotland Reunion	tbc
Feast of St Dunstan	19
Eastbourne Reunion (I)	20
Archery Club (II)	24-1 June
Burley Reunion (I)	28
Burley Reunion (II)	29

JUNE

Gardening Week	1-7
Chichester Reunion	4
50 Year Badge Holders Reunion	5-8
Writers Forum	7
Exeter Reunion	11
London to Brighton Bike Ride	15
Surrey Reunion	17
Eastbourne Reunion (II)	18
Bisley Shooting Contest	tbc
Ladies' Week	22-28
Newcastle Reunion	24
Durham Reunion	25
North London	26
Veterans Day	27

JULY

Eastbourne Reunion (III)	3
Writers Forum Weekend	3-6
Llandudno Reunion	9
Liverpool Reunion	10
History Week	13-19
Band of The Royal Marines Concert	16
Cardiff Reunion	23

HMS Sultan	25-2 August
North Hampshire Reunion	29

AUGUST

Writers Forum	2
Race Week	3-9
Blackpool Reunion	5
Chorley Reunion	6
Barrow Reunion	7
London Triathlon	9-10
VJ Day	15
Archery Week (III)	23-31
Sports & Activities Week	31-6 September

SEPTEMBER

Sports & Activities Week	August 31-6
Writers Forum	6
Norwich Reunion	10
RMA Lymstone	13-14
Bristol Reunion	17
Aylesbury Reunion	25
Physiotherapist Weekend	26-29

OCTOBER

Writers Forum	4
Widows' Week (II)	5-11
Worcester Reunion	7
Lanhydrock (Cornwall & Plymouth) Reunion	8
Royal Marine Commando Challenge	11-12
Computer Club (II)	15-16
World Sight Day	16
Amateur Radio (II)	17-24
Bowling Club (II)	26- 7 November
Great South Run	26
Kent Reunion	30

NOVEMBER

Bowling Club (II)	October 26- 7
Writers Forum	1

Remembrance Sunday	9
Armistice Day	11
Dancing Week	23-29 November
Christmas Craft Week	30-6 December

DECEMBER

Christmas Craft Week	November 30-6
Writers Forum	6
St Dunstan's Day	9
Christmas Week	20/21-28
New Year Week	28- 5 January 2009

Bookings will be confirmed two months before the event. Where there is insufficient space to accommodate everybody, decisions on priorities will be made with club officials. We recommend that you confer with club secretaries to check how activities are structured - is the event a formal or informal meeting, tournament or competition, programme of visits, etc?

Visitors to Ovingdean can listen to a recorded weekly programme of events. The speaker is on the left of wall between the door to the lounge on the right and the dining room on the left. It has a prominent button for playback.

EX-POWS REMINDED TO BOOK IN

REUNION IN APRIL: St Dunstaners who were prisoners of war are reminded to book accommodation at St Dunstan's Ovingdean for the Ex-Prisoners of War Reunion on 4-7 April. Attendees should contact Bookings Coordinator Jackie Castle, on 01273 391422 or via e-mail on jackie.castle@st-dunstans.org.uk.

MASONS' LADIES PLEASE NOTE

MASONIC WEEKEND APRIL 2008: Would any Ladies accompanying their men folk to St Dunstan's Ovingdean for the Masonic Weekend and who would like to join in the Ovingdean coach trip on the Saturday, please let me know by the end of February 2008. Telephone St Dunstan Ernie Bignell on 01903 764134. If I don't know, I can't ask for a seat to be booked.

DANCE TO THE TUNE OF ROMANCE ON VALENTINE'S DAY 2008

LOVE IS IN THE AIR: The Band of the Adjutant General's Corps will be playing at the Valentine's Day Dance at St Dunstan's Ovingdean on 14 February, which is part of the next Dance Week. If you were not able to attend the November Dance, St Dunstan David Schofield would still like to hear your stories of interesting things that happened on St Valentine's Day. He is intending to compile a feature for publication in the February 2008 **Review**, (such as a wedding, engagement, or special memory). David can be contacted by telephone on 0115 932 3517.

If you have a special Valentine message for a loved one that you wish to include in the February **Review**, write to Simon Rogers at **St Dunstan's Review**, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD. Send your message, which should be no longer than 25 words, by 7 January 2008 at the latest.

NURSING FLOOR REFURBISHMENT

WE HOPE TO KEEP DISRUPTION TO A MINIMUM: This advance notice to all those hoping to visit Ovingdean in 2008. A major refurbishment project on the nursing floors will be starting in late January and last possibly until nearly Christmas. The project is addressing our nursing rooms that are increasingly less suitable for our more dependent patients. Many now require the staff to lift them and need better wheelchair access particularly into the bathrooms. To meet this challenge, we will take each nursing floor at a time and convert the fuselage space into nine totally new bedrooms with hoists and en suite 'wet-room' bathrooms. We will move the current fuselage functions (server, assisted bathrooms, offices etc) on to the south wing of each floor.

I apologise in advance for three effects of this major undertaking.

The first effect is that we will lose some of our capacity for short-stay care places over much of the refurbishment period. The good news is that holiday and rehabilitation places will be largely as now.

The second consequence, which we will really try and avoid by good planning, is two-fold. We may either only be able to confirm stays close to the time of coming in. If we hit unforeseen problems in the worst case, we may have to cancel visits at short notice.

The third effect, which is one that we can do very little about, is that during the contractor's working day (08:00 to 17:00, possibly including Saturdays) the work will sometimes be very apparent throughout the house. We will do our best to minimise the disruption but the construction of the building means that noise, and even dust, travels much further throughout Ovingdean than one might imagine.

In summary, please bear with us during this time of significant upheaval. The end will be well worth it but it will undoubtedly get frustrating along the way!

Dick Lake,
Ovingdean Manager

FREE TALKING GLUCOSE METERS

AVAILABLE TO DIABETES PATIENTS: The SensoCard Plus talking blood glucose meter is available free to diabetes patients in the UK. It requires just 0.5 microlitres of blood per test and measures 3.5 by 2.1 inches (88x55mm). Features include spoken results in five seconds and a store for 500 readings. To receive a free meter, patients should ask their healthcare advisor or district nurse to contact BBI Healthcare on 01792 229333. On referral, they will issue a "Free meter voucher"; once this is returned they will issue a SensoCard Plus meter kit. Test strips are available on prescription from the patient's health care advisor. Further details can be found on www.sensocardplus.com or by e-mailing info@bbihealthcare.com.

BREAK THROUGH THE BARRIERS

SPORTING ACTIVITIES IN 2008: Apart from swimming and regular gym sessions at Ovingdean, St Dunstan's Sports & Recreation department is on hand to help St Dunstaners set new levels of achievement in a variety of activities.

Swimathon

The Swimathon in April (date to be confirmed) is 5,000metres individually or as part of a relay group. Places need to be booked in January, so please contact Mandi Fermer on 01273 391465 if interested.

London Triathlon

St Dunstaners are invited to join the team for the 2008 London Triathlon. This will consist of a 1,500m swim, a 40km bike ride and a 2.5km run. Entrants will need a good level of fitness to compete in the event on 9-10 August next year.

Sports & Activities Week

Expect the unexpected! Originally intended for younger St Dunstaners, the Activities Week has been embraced by a wider age group. It mixes a range of land and water based activities, rock climbing, abseiling, sailing and motor sports and lots more. A doctor's note is required to confirm participants have a good level of fitness.

Royal Marines Commando Challenge

The Commando Challenge will be held in Exmouth, Devon over 11-12 October. The event has proved itself a superb weekend,

providing the opportunity to have a go at overcoming the famous Commando endurance course that the Royal Marines still currently use as part of their training. Inevitably participants get covered in mud. The Saturday is the three-mile fun challenge. It is still quite physical and care has to be taken as participants make their way through streams, muddy tracks, water-filled pools and tunnels. Even in torrential rain it remains surprising fun. The Sunday event uses the same endurance course but with an extra run, covering seven miles in all

Great South Run

Europe's premiere ten-mile running event on 26 October is a great warm up if you have ambitions for the London Marathon. Or you can just enjoy the camaraderie on the way round historic Portsmouth.

Anyone interested in taking part in any of these events should contact Louise Timms on 01273 391463.

SKIING GEAR AVAILABLE

SKI SUIT, SKIS AND LADIES BOOTS: Thanks to a generous donation, the Sports department has acquired one pair of skis (no bindings), two pairs of boots (ladies 5 & 6), one all-in-one ski suit and three pairs of salapettes. All circa 1980-90's and second hand. If you are interested in any of the clothing or equipment mentioned please contact the Sports department on 01273 391463 or 391465.

ACCESSIBLE WALKING GUIDES

TACTILE AND BRAILLE MAPS: North Wales based Disability Access and Multi Format Publishing company Fieldsman Trails has joined forces with The Bookshop in Mold, Flintshire, to establish a unique online service supplying maps (National Parks) and other products in a variety of formats.

Their website www.fieldsmanbookshop.co.uk supplies Tactile, Relief, Large Print and Braille Maps. Also, Talking Pictures (Birds and Mountains), and Greetings Cards, as well as Guide Books of Accessible places to visit, allowing individuals to plan their trip prior to arrival, whether as a visually impaired or blind walker, wheelchair user or walking with a pushchair.

Advice is also available online or using other preferred methods such as telephone or fax, regarding information about walking locations best suited to your lifestyle.

The Bookshop is at 33 High Street, Mold, Flintshire CH7 1BQ. Telephone 01352 759879 or e-mail moldbooks@btconnect.com.

Fieldsman Trails have a dedicated website at www.fieldsmantrails.com and can be written to at Fron Deg, Clayton Road, Mold, Flintshire, CH7 1SU. Otherwise telephone 01352 756202 or e-mail via fieldsman@fieldsmantrails.com. They recently reissued their *Just Walking The Dog* cassette tape series, available for an annual subscription of £24.

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.
- 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 DAY

IN MEMORY OF SIR ARTHUR: St Dunstan's Day on 9 December will mark 86 years since the death of our founder Sir Cyril Arthur Pearson, Bart. It was his determination and inspiration that laid the foundation for the organisation that continues to help visually impaired ex-Servicemen and women achieve independent lives. After losing his sight, he defied the conventions of the day and encouraged other blind men and women to reclaim productive roles in society.

OUR VOLUNTEERS ARE THE BEST

A REAL ASSET TO THE CHARITY: St Dunstan's recently achieved the Investing in Volunteers Quality Standard, recognising the excellent work the charity does in partnership with volunteers.



"This is the result of much hard work by both staff and volunteers," said Nikki Mardell, Social Worker and Volunteer Coordinator at St Dunstan's Ovingdean. "Our volunteers are a real asset to the organisation and this award recognises how much they are valued."

Investing in Volunteers is the UK quality standard for all organisations involving volunteers. Investing in Volunteers

aims to improve the quality of the volunteering experience for all volunteers and for organisations to acknowledge the enormous contribution made by volunteers. Investing in Volunteers is managed by the UK Volunteering Forum and delivered by Volunteering England, Volunteer Development Scotland, Volunteer Development Agency in Northern Ireland and Wales Council for Voluntary Action.

St Dunstan's was assessed against a range of best practice standards and proved to excel in all aspects of working with its volunteers.

Investing in Volunteers is unique in that it is the only standard that focuses on volunteers. It is based on four areas of volunteer management; planning for volunteer involvement, recruiting volunteers, selecting and matching volunteers and supporting and retaining volunteers.

SIR PETER IS NEW VICE PATRON

DESERT COMMANDER BECOMES AMBASSADOR FOR ST DUNSTAN'S: General Sir Peter de la Billiere, KCB, KBE, DSO, MC, DL has become a Vice Patron of St Dunstan's for the next three years. A former Director of the SAS, he commanded British Forces during the Gulf War. He has been actively involved with the welfare of military personnel and regularly joins St Dunstaners at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday. He succeeds the late Sir Edward Jones who died in May.

DREW RETIRES FROM COUNCIL

FOURTEEN YEARS AS ST DUNSTAN'S TRUSTEE: Drew Lyburn, OBE recently retired as a member of St Dunstan's Council. He completed National Service with the Royal Air Force and became an actuary in civilian life. As Governor of the Scottish National Institution for the War Blinded, he became a co-opted member of St Dunstan's Council, the charity's governing body, in 1994. Many St Dunstaners will remember him from reunions and our thanks are due for his contribution to the organisation.

AD IS HOBBIT FORMING

TALKING TOLKIEN ON STAGE: Epic fantasy The Lord of the Rings will be performed with audio description at London's Drury Lane Theatre on Saturday, 1 March at 14:00. Tickets are priced £30 plus a £2 booking charge. At seat introduction will be at 13:30 as Hobbits from the cast greet the audience from 13:50. This three-hour staging offers an amazing theatrical experience as a £25 million musical adaptation of Tolkien's trilogy. The stage is 45 foot wide and revolves with 17 individual floor lifts to create one fantastic location after another. Audio description is by Irene Richards.

More information can be found on the website www.lotrthemusical.com. An original cast album is due out at Christmas. Box Office telephone is 0870 895 5505 or e-mail customer.relations@rutheatres.com.

FACES OF BATTLE AT MUSEUM

ARMY MUSEUM RESTORES IDENTITY OF FACELESS WOUNDED: A harrowing, yet often redeeming, exhibition restores the identity of World War I's faceless wounded at The National Army Museum in Chelsea, London. Faces of Battle documents the lives of men who were seriously disfigured during the Great War and became the subjects of pioneering reconstructive surgery by surgeon Harold Gillies.

In 1915, he set up a ward at Queen Mary's Hospital, Sidcup expecting 200 casualties - 2,000 returned after the Battle of the Somme. Many of the techniques pioneered by Gillies would be developed further by his cousin Archibald McIndoe when he came to set up The Guinea Pig Club.

The exhibition includes uniforms, sculpture and other contemporary artwork documenting the lives of the men treated by Gillies, maps of the areas where they were injured, and the surgical techniques used and subsequent rehabilitation and recovery. Much of the material included is being revealed for the first time since the First World War. Admission is free and the Faces of Battle exhibition will be open until May next year, though there is an ongoing project to document the lives of families of Gillies' patients and other Service men with similar experiences. More details can be obtained by telephoning the museum on 020 7730 0717 or going online at www.national-army-museum.ac.uk.

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

Gift of Water

This year Ghana in West Africa celebrated 50 years of Independence, whilst I have enjoyed the last three years of showing my Independence, as a St Dunstaner, in managing a Water and Sanitation project in Northern Ghana, 25 kilometres, west of the town of Tamale.

It all came about, when in 2004, I was asked, using the skills taught to me whilst serving in the Royal Engineers, could they be used to the benefit other, less fortunate people,

living in a third world environment? (I served 40 years in the TA.)

Water Supply is what I came up with, together with latrine construction. I approached the Army Specialist Team (STRE) on Water Development (WD) for their help and advice and true to their form, they are at this moment, for the third year, on my behalf, training in Ghana, on Exercise Water Endeavour 2007, before returning home in December.

As you may be aware, due to it's constitution

and strict charity laws, St Dunstan's cannot fund any part of the Water and Construction work in Ghana, neither for that matter can the Military, but they both encourage my endeavours to be as independent as possible, what ever one's medical condition. For this I'm most grateful. I'll give you the full story in our February 2008 issue of the **Review**, including the ups and downs (and there's plenty!!) once the Exercise for this year has finished.

**David Stuttard,
Biddulph, Staffordshire**

I found this book was easy to turn down

Talking Book reviewer Ted Bunting is correct when he surmises that members of the SAS do not talk about or disclose details of operational matters (Balancing the Books, **St Dunstan's Review** October 2007). It

is something we accept as a condition of our service in an elite unit with a proud and honourable tradition.

I was recently offered this book as a talking publication at my local public library. I had no hesitation in refusing it and as a member of the

regimental association I know that I am not alone in that sentiment. It is regrettable that a reputable publication such as the **Review** should publicise this book when it is, as implied, quite implausible.

**Ex-Member of 2SAS
(Name and address withheld)**

St Dunstan's Drivers take the challenge

Earlier this year I was talking to my fellow drivers about the fun and games of doing the Royal Marines Commando challenge, some of them scoffed and said I was far to old to do it again this year, so I challenged them to put their money on the table and do it with me, they did .

With the team name of the Stormin' Normans, they were Gary Norman, team captain, Paul Green, Paul Twilley, Phil Morley, Geraldine Plaw and her daughter Karen. I sent off the application form and entrance fees, before they could change their minds, I then spent the next few weeks teasing them about the mud and dirt, the tunnels and the cold, cold water, great fun for me , but their worried faces got more and more fearful as the day grew closer.

On 12 October we set of to an Exeter hotel to await our fate. Early Saturday morning we set off to Woodbury Common for our three

The Stormin' Normans - Gary, Stan, Paul, Paul, Phil, Geraldine and Karen.



mile fun run. Transport from Bicton Arena to the start line, was by the Royal Marines' 3 ton trucks - the experience starts here! RM PTI's insisted we would enjoy their little warm up routine and invited us to take part. Jumping up and down and waving our arms about to the polite encouragement of the PTI's seems to work. As for the course itself, we finished with seven very dirty, very wet and muddy smiling faces, tired but very happy to have succeeded in pushing themselves way out of their comfort zones.

After a nice hot shower and a burger and a beer, we returned to the hotel for a few hours sleep, ready to hit the town and talk endlessly about our experience of the day. We did the commando challenge! We want to say a very big thank you to all our sponsors for all the money we raised to go to local charities in Exmouth. It was a great day to be remembered for a long time. Thank you also to my fellow commando runners, you should never volunteer, but wear your T-shirts with pride.

**Stan Bowers,
Brighton**

St Dunstaner autobiography now on sale online

I have written a book titled *Just 21 Years*, an autobiography of the first 21 years of my exciting life. It covers an extraordinary period in the history of our nation. I was born in London before the outbreak of WWII when social conditions were so vastly different to those of present days.

The book describes my appalling school life which I left at age 13, a virtual illiterate lad. These were the days when the country was barely recovering from the horrors of the 1914-18 war. There was mass unemployment and the streets were full of limbless men in bath chairs and on crutches. I endured a series of monotonous, useless jobs, until I 'grabbed' the King's shilling and volunteered to join the Army at age 17. I went on to serve four years, in the PHI, landed in Normandy June 1944, 'enjoyed' some bloody, bitter battles fighting German SS

Divisions. When we reached the River Rhine, I was in the first wave to attack the other bank, mounted the bund and started to play football with an anti-personnel mine.

Now that is enough, I want St Dunstaners to buy my book. I started it to keep the grey matter ticking over and finished up putting it on the WWW. It was an interesting exercise and I recommend the hobby to all. Just click on to www.infantrystory.com. From there it is easy to download the pdf file to your computer for a measly £6, and you can also print it off.

It won't win a Booker award, but I hope you find it of interest. All money realised from the sale of the book will go to charity. First St Dunstan's, next the RNIB, and then the British Legion. Proceeds will be proportionately equalised and paid to each organisation every 12 months. So the rest is up to you, tell your family and friends to click on www.infantrystory.com.

**Charles Hanaway,
Brighton**

Proud to have been with you at Cenotaph

A few months ago my friend John Wheeler asked me to be his escort at this years ceremony. I was delighted to accept and we looked forward to the occasion. John lost his sight in 1964 whilst serving with the Royal Navy but only became a St Dunstaner this year. To be on parade with him and his companions was a lasting memory and to link arms and march past the Cenotaph made me feel very proud and humble. The care and courtesy shown to your members and carers alike by all your staff was beyond reproach. The arrangements for the hotel and transport were excellent, and we both came away refreshed by the goodness of humanity. I spoke to many St Dunstaners over the weekend and heard not one complaint of your wonderful organisation or any bitterness with regard to their loss of sight.

**Colin Brett,
Doncaster**

Balancing the Books

Ted Bunting on a book mixing humour with the serious

The Buttered Side

Author: William Ridler

Reader: Gabriel Woolf

Catalogue No: 1784

Duration: 13 hours, 7 minutes

After hearing the first hour or so, in which young David describes the West Midland town of his birth and his father's second-hand junk shop, I imagined I might be reporting on the funniest talking book I've yet encountered. The phrase "a laugh a minute" fits this early section like a glove, aided in most generous-measure by the dialogue in a wonderful Black Country cum Birmingham accent. But the progression that takes young David through teenage

David to David the man brings an increasing seriousness in its wake. The young man has as many good intentions as one could wish but good intentions pave the way to hell according to the proverb and when he becomes involved with Wendy, the spoilt and highly promiscuous daughter of wealthy antique dealer Dan Franklin, he quickly loses all control of events. When Wendy discovers that the "safe period" isn't so safe after all, David also loses his independence and becomes a second class member of the Franklin family. Fortunately, however, he retains his sense of humour to the end, which is jolly good news for all of us for I believe even the posh folks of Eastbourne could enjoy a book like this.

Bon voyage, Barbara Go fishing

ST DUNSTAN'S wished Barbara Price bon voyage when she retired in October with the intention of going to Spain for a family holiday.



She joined the charity as a Laundry Assistant in July 1997, but after two and a half years transferred to the Security department as a Receptionist. Happy and courteous, she will be missed by colleagues and St Dunstaners alike.

Retirement should allow her more time to enjoy walking, but when she returns from her holiday she will still be dropping into Ovingdean to fill in on reception and help out with PBK.

DEAN ANGLING and Coaching Enterprises – DACE for short – run by St Dunstaner Peter Moore offers a wide range of fishing experiences in the Forest of Dean. Days can be tailored for individuals or corporate groups.

More information about DACE and related activities can be found on www.daceangling.co.uk. Alternatively, contact Peter on 01594 560241.

Ten questions on...

The subject of Scotland

Harry Beevers heads north for Hogmanay

- 1) What name is given to the thoroughfare linking Edinburgh Castle and Holyrood Palace and made up of four streets which run into each other?
- 2) What is the predominant colour in Scottish tartans?
- 3) A plaque at Prestwick Airport in Ayrshire marks the only visit to Britain by whom travelling from Germany to the USA in 1960?
- 4) Mons Meg can be seen at Edinburgh Castle. What is Mons Meg?
- 5) What would you expect a Scotsman to do with a filibeg, eat it, wear it, put it in a vase or take it for a walk?
- 6) In Scotland they call it a Bubbljock, what would it be called in England?
- 7) In which sport did Andy Irvine represent Scotland?
- 8) Which Scottish town became famous from the 19th century for its mills making colourful shawls with a teardrop design?
- 9) What is the Scottish equivalent name for bitter beer?
- 10) On which island are the graves of 48 Scottish kings, four Irish kings and eight from Norway?

Answers can be found on page 31.

St Dunstaners pick up the pace in Portsmouth

TWO ATHLETIC St Dunstaners improved their running time in the Great South Run on 28 October. Don Planner of Poole, Dorset, running with Christopher Moorley, shaved over a minute-and-a-half from his run compared with last year. He had been forced to drop out of the London Marathon in April, but was back on form completing the ten-mile run round historic Portsmouth in 1 hour, 56 minutes and 18 seconds.

St Dunstaner Iain Millard, running with Louise Timms and Lynn Mullins, also picked up the pace. All three of them crossed the finish line in 1 hour, 44 minutes and 27 seconds. That was a six minute improvement for Iain, but a minute slower for Louise and Lynn.

Nigel and the Newsreader



NEWSREADER John Suchet opened a Low Vision Day at St Thomas' Hospital where suppliers of low vision aids gathered to demonstrate their products on 27 October. He chatted with St Dunstaner Nigel Whiteley and others representing St Dunstan's at the event.

Arthur Carter proudly recalls representing St Dunstan's during the dedication of a new memorial in Alrewas, Staffordshire

HM The Queen opens new memorial to Service men killed since WWII

A NEW Armed Forces memorial to those killed since the Second World War was officially opened at Alrewas, Staffordshire in the presence of Her Majesty The Queen. It was my honour and privilege to carry St Dunstan's Standard and represent the charity with my escort Tom Lang.

Just prior to the arrival of the Royal Party consisting of The Queen, The Duke of Edinburgh, Prince of Wales, Duchess of Cornwall and the Prime Minister and his wife, a Guard of Honour, approximately 90 Standards from The British Legion and other associations was formed on the approach road. After the official welcome, the Standard Bearers were dismissed and took their reserved seats in the stands.

The dedication was given by HRH Prince Philip, followed by prayers from the Archbishop of Canterbury

and clergymen of other denominations.

When the ceremony came to a close, we retired to a marquee for refreshments. Shortly, Prince Charles entered and chatted with

several people. Security was strict, but everything was well organised and many of the 4,000 guests will remember it, seeing the names of their loved ones inscribed on the memorial walls.

Girls rule on challenge



FIVE ST DUNSTANERS cracked the Royal Marines Commando Challenge three-mile fun run on 13 October. St Dunstaners Paul Meredith, Dave Powell, Maria Pikulski, Steve Sparkes and Gerry Jones threw themselves into the mud and mayhem in Exmouth.

However, it was girl power that ruled on the seven-mile version the following day. After a night of imbibing, the gentlemen retired, leaving Maria with staff members Louise Timms and Mandi Fermer to tackle the longer challenge by themselves.

Tragedy of Kipling's son on DVD

THE CIRCUMSTANCES that led to the First World War death of Rudyard Kipling's only son John are examined in an exhibition at London's Imperial War Museum and also in a television film which has been released on DVD. *My Boy Jack* stars Daniel Radcliffe of Harry Potter and Equus fame, who appears as the doomed young Lieutenant with poor eyesight. Radcliffe is 17-years-old, much the same age as John Kipling who died at the Battle of Loos in 1915.



Photograph courtesy of ITV

Actors David Haig and Daniel Radcliffe with Henry.

Rudyard Kipling used his influence to secure a commission in the Irish Guards for his medically unfit son. The boy perished in his first action, six weeks after being posted to France.

Daniel met up with a survivor of the First World War when the film was screened at the Imperial War Museum last month. St Dunstaner Henry Allingham was amongst guests on the day. Radcliffe was mindful of troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, though with Remembrance Sunday approaching, Henry's

thoughts remained on the sacrifice of those fighting in the trenches. The Imperial War Museum is hosting the exhibition until 24 February. It includes rare artifacts and

costumes from the film. Although *My Boy Jack* was recently broadcast on ITV with audio description, this feature has not been included on the DVD release.

Amy flies Henry's flag

ONE FAMILY'S love of sailing was being acknowledged by a team competing in the US Sailing's 2007 Rolex International Women's Keelboat Championship held in Houston, Texas last month. The Stellar Jay team were flying the burgee for Britain's Narrow Seas Yacht Club. Team

member Amy Carlson flew the flag not only because of her family's continuing interest in sailing, but also in honour of her great-grandfather St Dunstaner Henry Allingham. Henry gave Amy the flag after he was presented with his Pride of Britain award in October.

Malta remembers Coastal Forces

A ROYAL NAVY St Dunstaner joined other veterans in Malta for a Service of Commemoration marking the contribution made by Allied Coastal Forces in defending Malta and keeping supply lines open during World War II. Ernest Severn of Doncaster, South Yorkshire travelled with his son and daughter to Ta'Xbiex Marina, Malta for the ceremony held at their old base HMS *Gregale* on 29 September.

Ernest visited Malta while serving on HMS *Revenge* and then HMS *Kenya*, both ships were engaged on perilous convoy duties.

Ernest and his family were collected by coach and taken to Ta'Xbiex. The service started with a short re-enactment of a typical day experienced by a family in Malta during the war. The performance ended with the wailing sound of air raid sirens. This was followed by a formal ceremony of blessing for a plaque that commemorated the presence of Allied Coastal Forces and the bond they forged with the people of Malta during



St Dunstaner Ernest Severn with the Mayor of Ta'Xbiex, Mrs Antoinette Vassallo, after the dedication ceremony.

World War II. It recalled the memory of their bravery and those who lost their lives. Music was provided by the local police band.

There was a welcoming address by His Excellence Nick Archer, MVO, Her Majesty's High Commissioner in Malta. The service was led by Canon T.O. Mendel and the lesson read by Peter Bickmore, BEM.

The plaque was unveiled by the Mayor of Ta'Xbiex, Mrs Antoinette Vassallo. After the service, the Mayor, Sir Derek

Holden-Brown, Chairman of the Coastal Forces Heritage Trust, and Mr Ray Ellis, Chairman of the UK Coastal Forces Veterans Association sailed out of the marina and cast three wreaths out to sea. "It was a fine occasion," said Ernest.

Ernest has since returned to Malta on several occasions. "The elderly people were very small because of the starvation back then," he said. "There are a lot more cars there as well. Back in the war, there were only one or two small cars."

Police cadets go underground!

BEXLEYHEATH Metropolitan Police Volunteer Police Cadets went underground in the Capital when they became the first group from the Emergency Services to take part in St Dunstan's Cadet Challenge on 25 October. They completed their 13 miles on the stairs and escalators of London's tube network, following a treasure hunt trail from station-to-station. Each cadet spent a period under blindfold so they experienced the hustle and bustle of the busy transport system in the same way as a visually impaired traveller.

They were joined by three St Dunstaners and split into three teams using different branches of the Underground. Team One was led by adult instructors Ian Cobb and Mick Tresadern and had Mike Tetley and guide dog Chad to accompany them. Mike clearly demonstrated the problems blind travellers face when he had to carry Chad, who weighs 90 pounds, up and down the escalators. Team Two, with instructors Desi and Angela



Bexleyheath VPC at Charing Cross Police Station.

at the helm, had Royal Navy St Dunstaner Chris Humphrey with them

St Dunstaner and Cadet Challenge Project Officer was 'adopted' by Team Three who had Jeff Moorey, Police Coordinator for Bexleyheath VPC, in charge. "This was a well planned,

well executed challenge, it was a very demanding schedule but the cadets were magnificent," said Colin. This was the first time a cadet challenge has been held in London and it really caught the public's attention. Well done Bexleyheath Volunteer Police Cadets, a splendid effort!"



CADETS FROM 391 (Wilmslow) Squadron Air Training Corps donned their PT kit and raised a sweat for St Dunstan's on 3 November at the Royal School for the Deaf and Communication Disorders in Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire. Encouraged by Flying Officer Sarah Oakley, 18 cadets took part in a half marathon and worked out in the gym in order to participate in this year's St Dunstan's Cadet Challenge.



Peter Hammond lets his arrow fly.



Ron Jones with best archer Cadet Jamie Asquith.

New Romney keep trophy in target!

THE WINNERS of St Dunstan's Cadet Challenge 2006 were out to retain their title when they challenged St Dunstaners to an archery contest. With coaching from Romney Marsh Bowmen, 2513 (Romney Marsh) Squadron ATC took on a

team of St Dunstaners on 4 November at the Marsh Academy Leisure Centre, New Romney, Kent. They were set under way by the Mayor of New Romney Clive Wire and the President of Romney Marsh ATC, Arthur Trusler, aged 90. Targets were marked with the RAF's

red, white and blue insignia. In the end St Dunstan's won, fuelled by an excellent score from Peter Hammond. Cadet Jamie Asquith was deemed to have been the best archer amongst the cadets and he was presented with a leather quiver by St Dunstaner Ron Jones.

Petersfield support St Dunstan's

ST DUNSTANER Gerry Jackson presented the Mayor of Petersfield with a St Dunstan's plaque on 17 October. Councillor Paul Molloy had announced a number of charities which he intended to champion during his term in office, which included the organisation for blind ex-Service men and women. Gerry spoke of the charities work. "We find it very difficult to think of something that a blind person can't do," he said. It transpired that both Mayor Molloy and Gerry were both members of the Fleet Air Arm Field Gun Crew.



25 years after the storm!

Lisa Johnston reports on a 2 Para St Dunstaner participating in the Remembrance Sunday ceremony in the Falkland Islands



A 2 Para veteran with St Dunstaner Stephen Tuffen during the Remembrance Day ceremony in Port Stanley.

A ST DUNSTANER who almost died during the Falklands Conflict honoured his fallen comrades at a Remembrance Sunday Parade in the Falkland Islands on 11 November.

Twenty-five years ago, at the tender age of 18, Stephen Tuffen, serving in the 2nd Battalion, Parachute Regiment, was struck down by a high velocity bullet in the back of the head

during the battle for Goose Green. Although suffering the loss of peripheral vision as a result of the injury, he braved summer squalls on Stanley's seafront to lay a St Dunstan's wreath at the Cross of Sacrifice.

"I guess I feel guilty that I survived when men who had families died," said Stephen. "I was just 18 and I didn't have a wife or children. I view things like this service and parade

as for the guys who were less fortunate than myself. I'm proud that they have been remembered here, it's hugely important."

Stephen came very close to death himself. In the battle for Darwin, he was shot in the head approximately 60 yards down the hill to the north of where Colonel H. Jones was killed a short time later.

Amidst the hail of bullets, and in particular a deadly efficient Argentine sniper, nobody could reach the dying teenager and attend to him, but eventually help came. Such were his injuries, however, his Lance Corporal gave little for his chances.

"Apparently Lance Corporal Bentley said '...fill him with morphine and help someone else'. Basically that's code for 'make him more comfortable, he's not going to survive,'" explained Stephen. But survive he did; eventually he was taken to

the temporary hospital site at Ajax Bay where he was given emergency treatment. "I bumped into one of the doctors recently; he didn't remember me but he remembered my injury – not many men survived gun shot wounds to the head in the Falklands Campaign. He told me he had to cup my brains and scoop them back into my head."

Stephen was transferred from Ajax to the hospital ship *Uganda*, which included St Dunstaner Edith Curson as Chief Matron amongst the medical staff, and then eventually to the *Hydra* and then flown to Uruguay. "I was flown from there to RAF Wroughton. My sight was bad - as if I had tears in my eyes; it was very blurry. After treatment where they had to take some bits of bone and hair out of my brain it eventually improved."

During his visit to the Falklands he hopes to meet up with some of the medical team that cared for him on *HSUganda*. "I'd really like to piece together my journey and what treatment I had." He added: "The people here are amazing they care so much about us all. I just



Stephen lays a St Dunstan's wreath on the Cross of Sacrifice with others commemorating the memories of those who lost their lives during the Falklands Conflict.

bumped into someone (an Islander) on the street today and he asked me what regiment I was with and we just chatted about what we had done in 1982."

Stephen's next destination was Goose Green where other 2 Para veterans were going to help him to find the spot where he was struck down. **More next issue.**

For our tomorrow...!

Ray Hazan reports on the Remembrance Weekend in the UK



Coldstream Guards Sgt Damien Holland and Sgt Bob Appleby flank Audrey Brooks, David Knowles, Robert Barnett, Billy Miller, Kevin Rixon, and our Wreath Bearer Alan Chew.

THE REMEMBRANCE Weekend will be remembered for its several aspects, but dominated overall by the memory of our lost comrades.

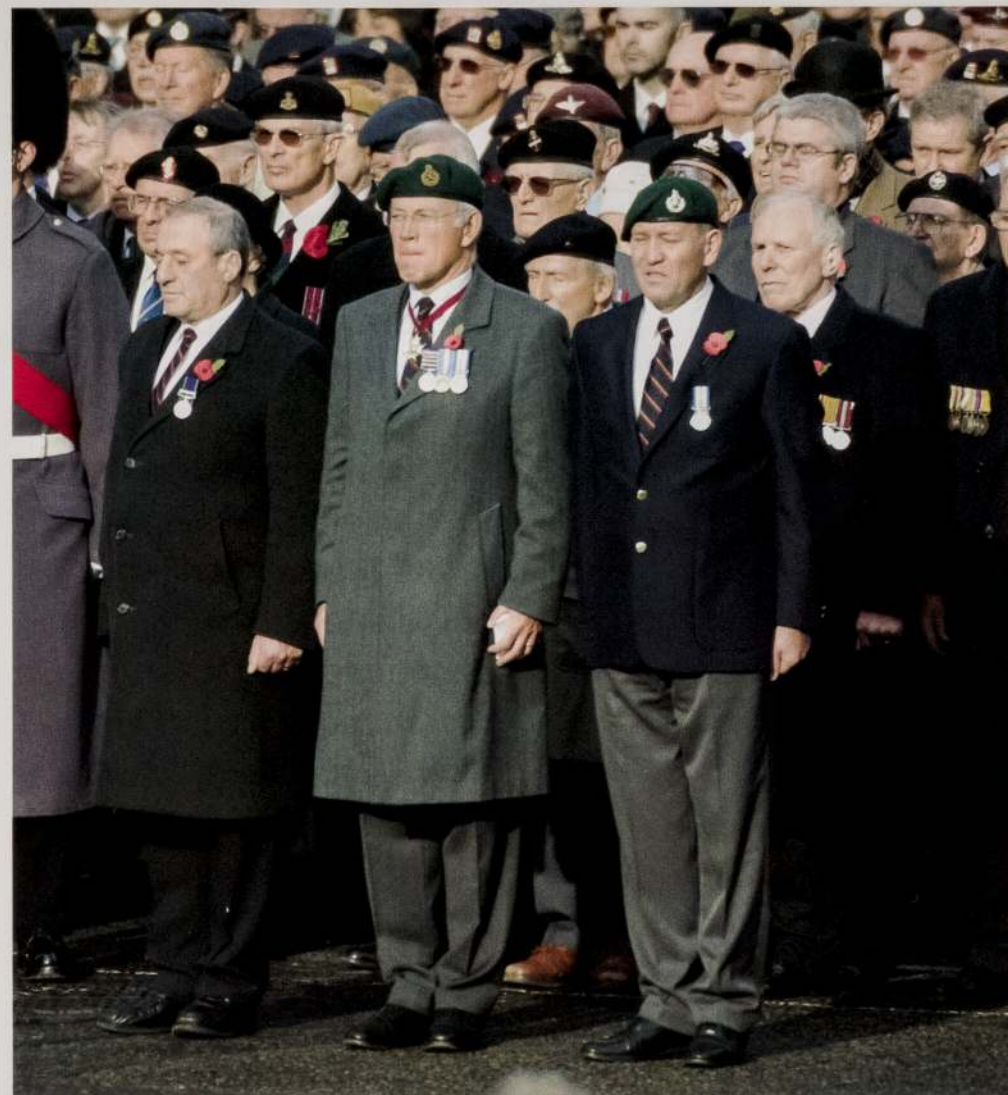
For several people, the reunion began on the Friday, 9 November when they took advantage of the offer of reduced rate

accommodation at the Regents Park Marriott Hotel. Shopping, sightseeing, meals and theatre shows were on the agenda.

As more arrived the next morning, David Habershon and Niki Kokonas, ably assisted by Admissions, Pensions and Grants staff plus several Area Welfare

Officers, were on hand to greet St Dunstaners and smoothly sort out accommodation. They do a great job and make it all look so easy, belying the infinite detail with which the programme is organised.

We were only offered tickets to the afternoon performance of the Festival



St Dunstan's President Ray Hazan, Vice Chairman Major General Andrew Keeling and Falkland Veteran Steve Sparkes at the head of St Dunstan's contingent.



St Dunstan's Alan Chew carried the first of two wreaths that day.



Ken Miller, Len Moules, Chris Spellacy, Joyce Graham, Clive Woods, Ernest Parker and other St Dunstaners on parade.



St Dunstan's Doreen Lowery at large in Whitehall.



Arthur Carter carries St Dunstan's Standard.

of Remembrance held in the Royal Albert Hall on Saturday. It was a cleverly organised programme blending song, interviews, film clips, military music, divine worship and the parading of standards. The St Dunstan's Standard was paraded by Arthur Carter. It was hard not to be moved by friends and colleagues being deprived of life, of parents mourning lost sons and daughters, and children still too young to fully understand the absence of a father or mother. There we were; brave, manly, fearless and 'shoulders back' ex-Service men trying not to embarrass ourselves next to our escorts as we surreptitiously wiped tears from our eyes, whilst they were doing exactly the same!

The few of us fortunate enough to attend returned in time for a few 'warmers into the bank' before sitting down to an enjoyable meal, efficiently served by the staff. They were to continue to be helpful, pleasant and polite throughout our stay. The dining room resounded with maximum decibels as friends met, and many attending their first such occasion expressed their 'excitement'.

An early start, following a 6:30 alarm call was fully justified as one bus broke down. It was thanks to Jennie Barley of the Admissions department, chatting up an RAC man who had technically been called to repair the taxi behind the bus, who set them on the road again. But

we were all on parade in good time on Horse Guards. A shower or two tried to dampen our spirits, but was outshone by the sun as we marched into Whitehall and drew up opposite Downing Street.

The two minute silence was broken only by the sighing of the breeze. But nothing could interrupt thoughts of comrades or family members we had lost. It was also the moment to think of those St Dunstaners who had given their sight for their country and who had passed on, leaving us high standards of achievement to follow.

Thanks to the thorough briefing of our escorts and the contribution of Sgts Bob Appleby and Damien Holland of the Coldstream Guards, the contingent was one of the best ever in terms of keeping step and dressing. This unfortunately was not matched by the BBC television coverage. Major General Andrew Keeling, CB, CBE, Vice Chairman of St Dunstan's, with Steve Sparkes, both veterans of the Falklands campaign and both in their Royal Marine green berets, led the contingent. The

President of St Dunstan's, on Andrew's right, felt a little outnumbered! Wreaths were handed over by Edward Chew and Nigel Whiteley as the column passed the Cenotaph.

We were fortunate enough, as always, to have a band right in front of us to lead the way to the second saluting dais, mounted by HRH the Duke of Edinburgh. The pavements were fully lined by applauding members of the public, which gave everyone a boost to their stride.

After a lunch served to some 263 St Dunstaners, escorts, widows, guests and members of staff, the Chairman, Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN, firstly apologised for being unable to lead the contingent this year due to a pending knee replacement. He thanked all the escorts, the two Sgts, and hotel staff, all of whom drew enthusiastic applause. He wanted to bring everyone up to date, referring to building works at Ovingdean, Sheffield and Harcourt Street.

The Chairman welcomed General Sir Peter de la Billiere as a new Vice Patron



St Dunstaners Alis Coxon, Leslie Whitmore and Bill Griffiths.

of St Dunstan's, to succeed the late General Sir Edward Jones, who passed away in May. It was a popular choice with the gathering.

The Chairman concluded by mentioning that St Dunstan's had been recognised as an Investor in Volunteers and thanked all who had contributed to this accolade.

Former Royal Marine Stephen Sparkes gave the response. "I was a bit worried when I was invited to attend the parade, knowing I had to guide both General Keeling and your President!" But he reminded the audience that we were here today to remember those who had given their lives for their country. As members of the armed forces, we

have all performed our duties to the best of our abilities. However, the harsh realities of conflict are fallen comrades and trauma, both physical and psychological and we all have our way of dealing with it." He went on to relate his own experiences in the Falklands and how the comments of two children, whose parents had taken Steve's patrol in and fed them, had made very innocent but meaningful comments which had sustained both him and his fellow Marines. "Thank you for coming to help us," said a little girl. "How long to you think it will be before we can go back to school?" asked her brother. This had made it all worthwhile to Steve and his comrades. They had felt appreciated.



Peter Walker, Carl Williams, Nigel Whiteley with our Post War wreath, Nicholas Chambers, Charlie Daly, Gerry Jackson, and other post-War St Dunstaners march to the Cenotaph.

He went on to describe how St Dunstaners needed help and how 'this wonderful organisation that is St Dunstan's' is always there to assist. "They give us the support, direction and confidence to go out and face the day to day world called 'life'. This is radiated and amplified

by the performances of St Dunstaners." He went on to give several examples of achievement in his own amusing way.

Steve ended by thanking St Dunstan's for their support and, on behalf of all St Dunstaners, expressing appreciation to all members

of staff for the work they do on our behalf. He concluded by proposing a toast to 'absent friends' and received a loud and sustained applause for his words.

Shortly before Remembrance weekend, HM The Queen had officially opened the National Arboretum Memorial in Staffordshire. Some 16,000 names of Service and uniformed people who had lost their lives in the service of their country since the Second World War were remembered. Their names are carved in stone. Many hundreds of trees represent a living and upright memorial to these people. The Arboretum provides a fitting sanctuary where families can remember their lost ones. "We will remember them."

Our thanks to all involved in the organisation of the weekend.

Their spirit still flies high

AT THE 11TH HOUR on the 11th day of the 11th month, Britain's oldest war veteran and founder member of the Royal Air Force, 111 year-old Henry Allingham lays a wreath at the British Air Services Memorial in

St Omer in Northern France. During an emotional return to the place where Henry was stationed during the First World War he joined with civic dignitaries and senior RAF officers to remember fallen comrades.

Emotional memories for Craig

THE CITY OF Liverpool held its breath when St Dunstaner Lance Corporal Craig Lundberg laid a wreath in memory of fallen comrades on Remembrance Sunday. Craig, aged 22, was guided by soldiers who served with him in Basra. Wearing desert uniform, the overwhelming memories were clearly etched on his face as he approached the Cenotaph at St George's Hall Plateau.

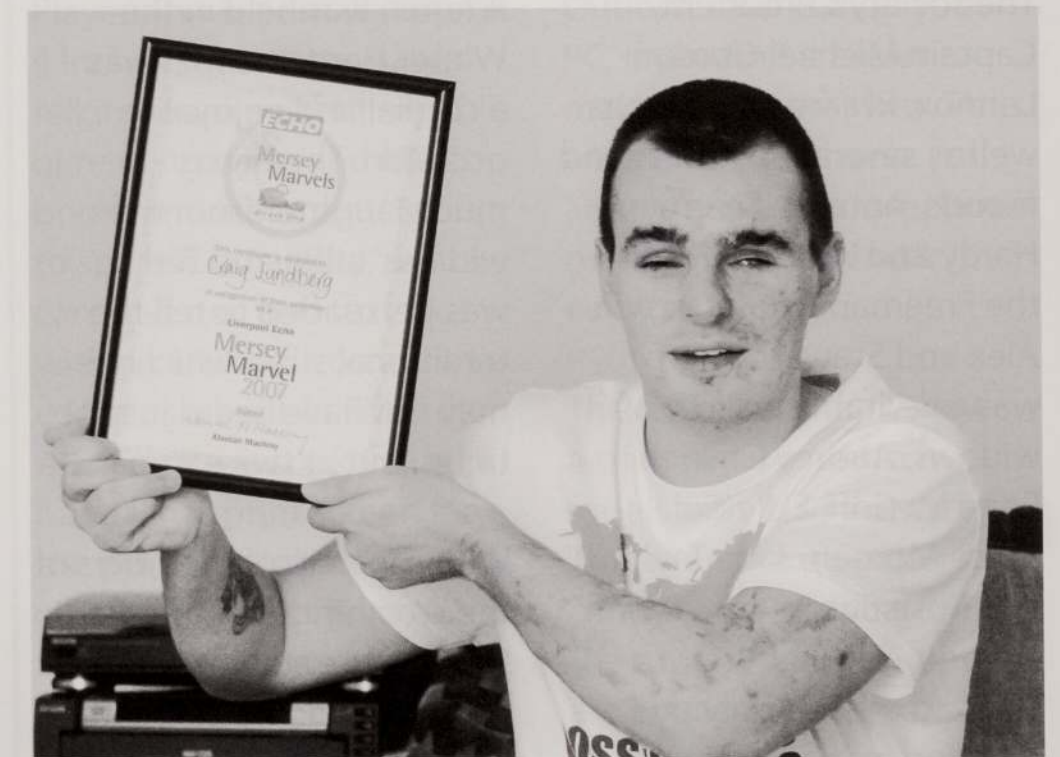
In October, Craig was hailed as a Mersey Marvel by the Liverpool Echo. The newspaper noted that having nearly been killed when blown up by a grenade in Iraq on March 22, he has defied doctors with his recovery and left his family and friends in awe at his resilience and determination.

Just seven months on, he is coaching visually impaired youngsters in sports. Craig is teaching football, hockey and cricket to 20 visually impaired youngsters for charity Daisy UK.

Echo editor Alastair Machray said: "Craig is a remarkable young man who has refused to let what happened to him stop him from leading a full and rich life. Already he is giving something back to others. He is an inspiration and a worthy Mersey Marvel!"



Lance Corporal Lundberg laid a wreath at the Liverpool Cenotaph for the Duke of Lancaster Regiment.



Craig has been dubbed a Mersey Marvel by readers of the Liverpool Echo for sports work with blind children.



Changing frequencies!

Ray Hazan reports on the latest meeting of the Radio Society

THE GATHERING of St Dunstan's Amateur Radio Society, held 12-18 October, was both a sad moment and yet positive. After 31 years, the St Dunstan's Amateur Radio Society has made the decision to cease operating regularly from Ovingdean. This is due to the demands on the accommodation, and the shortage of operators able to attend the biannual meetings in Brighton.

It was highly appropriate that two of the founder members, Bill Shea, G4AUJ, Club Chairman, and Ted John, G3SEJ, Club Secretary and Treasurer should have made the announcement at the AGM held on Saturday 13 October.

The society's President, Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN, was present as well as several members and friends, notably, Freeman, Hardy and Willis (without the Freeman!), Ray, Darwin, Alex and Stewart. There was a veritable wallow of widows, Audrey Gaygen, Edna McGoff, Elsie Cole, Joyce Morgan, Jane Taylor and Rose Shed.

Ted had missed only one meeting in the 31 years and has always been solidly backed up by his

wife, Beryl. Bill was closely behind in attendance. The AGM wished to note the contribution by all three and thanked them for the hours of pleasure obtained through the radio, backed up by their encouragement and enthusiasm.

A lunch was held in the Winter Garden and it was a cordial and enjoyable occasion. There was much laughter from the widows' table and Ted was persuaded to tell the traditional story which we may not have heard just 31 times, but at twice a year..!

With the help of members of the Worthing Amateur Radio Society, the station was up and running and contacts made to keep St Dunstan's callsign, GB3STD, heard over the air waves.

Before communication via the computer became feasible, amateur radio was the perfect way for blind people to stay in touch with friends both in the UK and all over the world.

One past member, George Cole, said he could walk into his local and be totally ignored. But, within minutes of getting on the Morse key, which was George's speciality, he could be "talking" to friends worldwide.

The Society has had some 40 members throughout its existence. There has been a trip to Jordon as guests of the late King Hussein, visiting speakers, and visits to local places of interest. There has been fraternity, fellowship and the 'freedom' to roam the air waves.

But the positive side is that the club will continue to function and communicate, quite appropriately, on the daily schedule on the air. They will also hope to meet at least once a year at St Dunstan's Ovingdean.

The Society owes much to many people, both in and around Ovingdean and throughout the country. Maintaining aerials on the roof of Ovingdean in the middle of winter and in a gale earns much respect and gratitude to both volunteers and Ovingdean maintenance staff. Thank you to everyone, and you haven't heard the last of the St Dunstan's Amateur Radio Society yet!

Please read the **Review** for any future dates.

Swimming Lessons

If you are interested in having swimming lessons, learn how to swim or would like some coaching by a qualified swimming teacher then contact Mandi Fermer on 01273 391 465 at St Dunstan's Ovingdean.

Ten Answers

Answers to quiz on page 16.

- 1) The Royal Mile; 2) Black;
- 3) Elvis Presley; 4) A 15th century cannon; 5) Wear it, it's a kilt; 6) A turkey;
- 7) Rugby Union; 8) Paisley;
- 9) Heavy; and 10) Iona.

New tech on show!

Ray Hazan reports on the Computer Club

STRIVING TO keep up with technological developments is a full-time job. The St Dunstan's Computer Club tries to help in this respect and the 10-11 October meeting was no exception. We were pleased to have 11 St Dunstaners present – a slowly expanding number.

Allan Shaw is the grandson of a St Dunstaner and has previous experience in the field of audio books. He has set up a company, Saks Electronics, to create the VI Player. This is a small (approx 4 inches square), portable talking book system capable of reading daisy and MP3 books and files, has text to speech capability, ie, it can read doc and text files with an artificial voice, and contains a built-in FM radio. All menus are spoken and it has a large print screen for the partially sighted. The storage of books is via an SD card, which means you do need a computer from which to download books unless and until libraries issue books on SD cards. The

price is around £175 and Allan hopes to launch the product in January. Please go to www.viplayer.co.uk for full details.

Although he was not present at the club meeting, St Dunstaner David Poyner was responsible for a talk on using the Nokia mobile phone calendar. It is very straightforward to use with many features allowing single entry for multiple events, such as a week's holiday. The calendar can be synchronised with the Outlook calendar on your PC, if you find it easier to make entries that way. Thus, with a mobile phone, you always have your telephone numbers and calendar events with you.

The first afternoon is now a traditional event, a free-for-all with Brad Crawshaw! There is not a question he cannot answer, whatever the topic where computers are concerned. There were certainly no pauses in discussion and debate. One important lesson he made

is that if you are using a USB peripheral, which needs power, such as a camera, use the ports on the back of the PC rather than on the front, or use a powered hub extension.

We were the largest group for the buffet supper to date. Equally substantial was the chatter, fellowship and bonhomie of the evening. The story telling at the end was its usual standard; I say no more!

The second day saw a demonstration of the TapMemo. This is a voice

activated memo taker, phone book and calendar. It is somewhat limited in memory storage though it should be sufficient in the home situation. The product is marketed by Cobolt Systems at £89.95 and more details are at www.cobolt.co.uk (tel: 01493 700172).

Mike Crawford gave an excellent demonstration of the Guide screen reader, though it is more than just a reader. It enables those who have little knowledge of computing to use the system in all its functions by simply using menu choices

– “1 to write a letter, 2 to read a document” and so on.

For those interested in text to speech conversion, say in creating an audio book, visit: <http://dimio.altervista.org/eng> where you can download two freely available programmes which permit you to change voices “on the fly”, and much more, in your document.

Our thanks to Janis Sharp, Mike Crawford, PBK and all who participated in the two days. Next meeting is Wednesday and Thursday, 20-21 February 2008.

REUNION ROUND-UP Reports on the most recent area reunions

THE BRISTOL REUNION was held on 26 September at the Arnos Manor Hotel, Arnos Vale, Bristol. It brought together 25 St Dunstaners and five widows. Lord Low of Dalston was the member of St Dunstan's Council presiding, while St Dunstaner Clifford Gower responded on behalf of those present.

The Worcester Reunion was held on 2 October at The Whitehouse Hotel, Worcester, Worcestershire

uniting 22 St Dunstaners and four widows. St Dunstan's President Raymond Hazan presided while St Dunstaner Arthur Turner responded on behalf of those present. There were best wishes for Vera Walker, wife of St Dunstaner James Walker, who celebrated her 81st birthday that day.

There were 21 St Dunstaners and nine widows at the Marriott Hotel in Bearsted, Kent for the Kent Reunion on 10 October. St Dunstan's Chairman, Captain Michael

Gordon-Lennox presided, while Ted Pepper from Maidstone responded, adding that he was proud to be a St Dunstaner.

The season closed with the Cornwall Reunion on 24 October. There were 14 St Dunstaners and four widows at The Queen's Hotel, Penzance, Cornwall. David Knowles, CBE was the member of St Dunstan's Council presiding and the response was given by St Dunstaner Denis Packham.

Freeviewing the world of AD!

Simon Rogers examines audio description options for visually impaired viewers who do not want subscription television

CHANGES IN THE way the UK watches television have the potential to open new doors of accessibility for blind and visually impaired people when they tune in to a favourite television programme. The digital revolution, which saw Whitehaven become the first area to switch off analogue transmitters, creates the opportunity to broadcast audio description (AD) which can be activated in much the same way as deaf people would turn on subtitles.

Believe it or not, when Peggy tells someone they should “Get out my pub!” blind viewers can be informed that she has thumped her hand on the bar, then pointed stridently at the door. The narrator will also mention who is being ejected from the Queen Vic.

This is the advantage of audio description – extra narrative, placed in between dialogue, that reveals something of the surroundings – a London

pub, a desert, or a castle. It may say something of the costume – jeans and t-shirt, regency gown or top hat and tails. Are people on screen sitting down, standing up, or running?

Audio description has been around for some years. According to Ofcom, many broadcasters have been exceeding their obligations in providing the service. BBC1, for example, now provides audio description for nearly 11 per cent of its output with AD. Good news if you are an *EastEnders* fan.

Around 76 channels provide some audio description, but how do you get it? For most households, the move to digital means getting a “set-top box”, which can be plugged into an existing television set.

Households who have opted for subscription based services via satellite such as Sky TV or Virgin TV on cable, will find that audio description services are readily available, though sighted assistance will be

required to navigate through set-up menus for activation.

For households who do not want the burden of a monthly subscription, the alternative is a platform known as Freeview. You buy the equipment, you plug it in and can then tune in to some 40 television channels and a wide range of radio stations. The snag is that few Freeview set top boxes currently decode the AD signals.

One exception is the Logik LDR V3 Freeview Digital box, priced £59.99 (plus £6 delivery) which can be found online at www.currys.co.uk (product code 739395). Pressing the home key at the bottom of the remote control, which can be set to beep with every key press, will reset the box to BBC1. The remote also has a dedicated AD button. Supplies may be limited because of the Whitehaven switch-over.

Customers of Aldi may also find a Micro Freeview Receiver from Tevion on the shelves before Christmas,



Claire cycles along a dusty trail in Nepal.

On 1 September, I set off for Lhasa, from where I would cycle nearly 800km via Everest Base camp on the Tibetan side to the capital of Nepal, Kathmandu. It would be a long, arduous journey mainly on dirt track and mostly at altitudes exceeding 4,500m. Tibet is often referred to as the "Roof of the World". It is the size of Western Europe and yet has a population of only four-million so I was full of admiration for the scattering of people that we met who were making their living in this barren, moonscape environment. In Tibet, I felt I was at the core of nature; the scenery was utterly inspiring; wide horizons, vast skies, jagged peaks pushing up at the side of broad fertile river valleys.

Safely back in London, many people have asked me what was the highlight of the trip. It's a hard one to answer. In 22 days, we experienced so much. We spent a few days in Lhasa to acclimatise to the altitude and this allowed us time to visit the Potala Palace, former residence



Everest at last! Claire is on track to the famous mountain.

of the Dalai Lama and the most symbolic structure in Tibet. Every place we then visited beyond Lhasa, be it a restaurant, guesthouse or basic tent, would unfailingly have a picture of the Potala on the wall.

The Jokhang shrine in Lhasa is also the spiritual centre of Tibet and witnessing the pilgrims performing the Kora, where they walk clockwise around the building, quietly praying and spinning the prayer wheels was again a unique experience. Visiting the debating courtyard at the Sera Monastery where the monks energetically challenge each other with their understanding of the scriptures is also like nothing I have ever encountered.

And the prayer flags snapping in the wind at the summit of every peak were a moving sight; the Tibetans believe that the prayers written on the flags are blown by the wind to the gods and after a long mountain pass, the sight of the prayer flags was both welcoming and emotional.

But the real highlight had to be that first glimpse of Everest. The Tibetan name is Qomolangma meaning Goddess Mother of the Snows. The road to Everest on the Tibetan side, although still a rough dirt track, has been widened so that the Land cruiser jeeps can thunder past you with Chinese tourists on their way to base camp. They visit in an afternoon, jump out of their vehicles, take a few photos and drive off again. From Lhasa, our journey by bicycle had taken us ten long days of cycling. We had climbed several mountain passes, some the equivalent of Snowden and in between it had been a constant but gradual uphill grind. At altitude, you simply can't exert yourself. The body doesn't get the oxygen to the muscles fast enough to stop them seizing, so I developed a slow, almost meditative



Stan the Bear at Base Camp.

rhythm as I cycled; "Slow-ly-Slow-ly-Cheek-ky-Monk-key".

That morning had been particularly gruelling. It was one of those days where the road ahead looks flat, but clearly isn't, made worse by a wind gently blowing straight in our faces. And then it got a little steeper and I could have started to get despondent, but I could see some of the group ahead had stopped on the next corner and were pointing. Suddenly, the clouds lifted and there it was; Everest, majestic and breathtaking.

The next 10km were fuelled by the adrenalin of seeing Everest. As I got nearer, it just seemed to get better and better. Photos do not

really do it justice, since every change of light, or veil of cloud cover seemed to reveal a new view. Our Sherpa guide had laughed each time I'd asked "Is that Everest?" pointing at a distant snowy peak. "That's not even a mountain," he would say.

And now I could see Everest, I knew what he meant.

It's a trip which pushed me to the limits but was also extremely rewarding and for that reason, one I'm unlikely to forget. My description of Everest Base Camp puzzled Mike when I spoke with him. It did not sound the same as the place he had visited for himself in the 1970s. But then we realised that he had made his trip to the other side of the mountain.

"Stan", kindly donated by World of Bears, Taunton, Somerset joined me on the journey to Everest and is shown here with St Dunstan's flags at Everest base camp, the highest part of the journey at 5,200m.

Thanks go to all of the friends and colleagues who have given their support to this trip and helped to raise a total of £1,400 for St Dunstan's.

CABBAGE MECHANIC

Fed up with turkey? Try this fish dish to spice up the solstice!

Luxury Kedgerree

1 fillet of smoked haddock
1 fillet of smoked cod
1 fillet of salmon
350g long grain rice
3 hard boiled eggs
½ pint milk
1 small onion
Chives
Curry powder
Peas or petit-pois
1tbs olive oil
Course-ground pepper
Cream,
Crème fraîche
Slice of lemon

This luxury kedgerree makes a tasty start to Christmas Day, either as a breakfast or spicy brunch. Originally known as Khitchari or "mess", as in "mess

of pottage", the dish was a mix of rice and lentils until Scottish soldiers stationed in India allied it with the smoked fish of their homeland. In this tradition, kedgerree remains a meal that is exceedingly versatile and experimenting with ingredients can yield refreshing and exciting results.

For this version, place your rice, peas and half of the onion, sliced and diced, in a saucepan of water and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and allow to simmer for around 15 minutes. Drain any excess water and place on one side. Boil the three eggs, remove the shells, and place on one side. Remove

any skin from the fish fillets, then heat a skillet pan with the olive oil. Add the fish, chives and remaining onion to the pan, pepper well on both sides of the fish as you cook it for 2-3 minutes. Add some of the milk, enough to cover the fish and poach for seven minutes or so. Try not to let the milk boil over.

The fish will break into flakes. Add the rice and more milk if you feel the mix is drying out. Slice the eggs and mix them in as well. Add curry powder to taste, mixing well. Add a dash of cream and remove from the heat. Serve with a garnish of crème fraîche and a slice of lemon.

BEER OF THE MONTH

Gordon Xmas Ale by Colin Williamson

I recently tried a Christmas beer from Scotland which is exported to Belgium but not yet sold in the UK. Called Gordon Xmas Ale, the label depicts a delightful snow scene which could catch the unsuspecting beer drinker unawares as this is not a beer to be messed with. This ale has an ABV of 8.8 per cent and is rich and warming, tasting of dark treacle and figs, with caramel and alcohol sweetness. It is a very pleasant ale to sit and sip by an open fire, dreaming perhaps, of Santa Claus riding his sleigh through the snow bringing you a crateful! Apparently during WWI, Scottish soldiers brought gallons of the stuff over to Belgium, the Belgians got a taste for it and now it is brewed especially for the Belgian market. I acquired my supply from an online beer warehouse which can be found at www.beersofeurope.co.uk.



Welcome to St Dunstan's

Ronald Almquest of Bromsgrove, Worcestershire served in The Royal Warwickshire Regiment from 1944 to 1952.

William Anderson of Romford, Essex served in the Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) from 1941 to 1945.

Doreen Barns of Gloucester, Gloucestershire served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1942 to 1946.

Geoffrey Bearcroft of Tamworth, Staffordshire served in the Royal Engineers from 1959 to 1965.

Reginald Bell of Buckingham, Buckinghamshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Ronald Blaber of Seaford, East Sussex served as Petty Officer in the Royal Navy from 1940 to 1945.

John Boyd-Nicol, MBE of Cupar, Fife served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1980.

Eric Browne of Cirencester, Gloucestershire served in the Royal Air Force from 1938 to 1950.

Henry Bruce of Barnsley, South Yorkshire served in the Royal Army Medical Corps, the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and the Intelligence Corps between 1939 and 1946.

Dennis Cox of Peterborough, Cambridgeshire served in the Royal Engineers from 1938 to 1946.

Sidney Deller of Telscombe Cliffs, Peacehaven, East Sussex served in the Royal Engineers from 1940 to 1946.

Desmond Dowding of Ruislip, Middlesex served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

Charles Eastwood of Hartlepool, Cleveland served in the Royal Corps of Signals from 1979 to 1999.

Miles Evedon of Thornton Cleveleys, Lancashire served in the Army Catering Corps from 1951 to 1964.

Charles Garrett of Lichfield, Staffordshire served in the Royal Navy from 1940 to 1946.

Ernest Gibson of Hythe, Kent served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1940 to 1946.

Anthony Golding of Faversham, Kent served as Able Seaman in the Royal Navy from 1947 to 1951.

Henry Gooch of Gravesend, Kent served in the Royal Engineers from 1940 to 1943 and then the Army Catering Corps until 1946, rejoining from 1949 to 1953.

Russell Goodwin of March, Cambridgeshire served as Guardsman in the Irish Guards from 1944 to 1948.

Margaret Grant of Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1943 to 1946.

John Hodgson of Truro, Cornwall served in the Border Regiment from 1954 to 1959.

Laurence Holt of Winscombe, Somerset served in the Royal Air Force from 1936 to 1945.

Olwen Horley of Llanfairpwllgwyngyll, Gwynedd served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Emrys Jones of Merthyr Tydfil, Mid Glamorgan served in The South Wales Borders and The Gloucestershire Regiment between 1940 and 1946.

Robert Keays of Newtownards, County Down served in the Royal Air Force from 1953 to 1969.

William King of Nottingham, Nottinghamshire served in the Scots Guards during 1954.

Kathmin Lawes of Haslemere, Surrey served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1942 to 1945.

Ronald Lewis of North Cornelly, Bridgend, Mid Glamorgan served in the General Service Corps, The Welch Regiment, and The Sherwood Foresters (Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment) between 1942 and 1946.

Gordon Long of Birmingham, West Midlands served in the Royal Navy from 1970 to 1976.

Kenneth Marsden of Sheffield, South Yorkshire served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1953 to 1960.

Ernest Middleton of Baslow, Bakewell, Derbyshire served in the Royal Navy from 1941 to 1946.

Cécile Miller of Fareham, Hampshire served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1942 to 1946.

Kenneth Murch of Yelverton, Devon served in the Royal Air Force from 1939 to 1945.

Mieczyslaw Pachowski of Leicester, Leicestershire served in the Polish Air Force from 1942 to 1949.

Alfred Parmenter of Pimlico, London served in the Royal Sussex Regiment, East Surrey Regiment, Queen's Royal Regiment, and the Royal Engineers between 1942 and 1947.

Arthur Pilgrim of Ipswich, Suffolk served in the Royal Artillery from 1940 to 1946.

Albert Porter of Rochdale served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

Gladys Quaife of Poole, Dorset served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1944 to 1947.

David Reid of Llangefni, Gwynedd served in the Royal Navy from 1947 to 1954.

Arthur Roberts of Maesteg, Mid Glamorgan served in

the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1945.

Timothy Sangster of Loughton, Essex served in the General Service Corps and Royal Artillery between 1946 and 1948.

Kathleen Shaw of Chislehurst, Kent served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1941 to 1944.

Albert Shepherd of Hailsham, East Sussex served in the Royal Engineers from 1937 to 1946.

William Shields of Sunderland, Tyne and Wear served in the Royal Navy from 1939 to 1947.

Thomas Smith of Stafford, Staffordshire served in India while in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1947.

Yvonne Smith of Romford, Essex served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1942 to 1945.

Winifred Sterritt of Lisburn, County Antrim served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Fred Taylor of Sheffield, South Yorkshire served as Leading Seaman in the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1946.

Dewi Thomas of Cardiff, South Glamorgan served in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve from 1942 to 1947.

Gertrude Thomas served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force and the Women's Royal Air Force between 1947 and 1949.

Harold Thomas of Dolgellau, Gwynedd served in the Royal Artillery from 1943 to 1947.

George Todd of Newark, Nottinghamshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Marjorie Townsend of Derby, Derbyshire served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1941 to 1945.

Ernest Trossell of Eastbourne, East Sussex

served in the General Service Corps, The Wiltshire Regiment (Duke of Edinburgh's), and the Royal Army Pay Corps between 1945 and 1948.

Alan Walker of Haywards Heath, West Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1965 to 1977.

Arthur Walton of Newhaven, East Sussex served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1941 to 1946.

Kenneth Walton of Macclesfield, Cheshire served in the Royal Air Force Police from 1941 to 1946.

Joan West of Poole, Dorset served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1942 to 1946.

Eric Westerman of Sheffield, South Yorkshire served in the

Royal Army Service Corps from 1958 to 1960.

George Wikeley of Middlesbrough, Cleveland served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1939 to 1945.

Joseph Wilshaw of Newcastle, Staffordshire served in the North Staffordshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's), The King's Shropshire Light Infantry, and the Royal Artillery between 1942 and 1947.

Kenneth Wilton of Preston, Lancashire served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Joan Worthing of St Ives, Cambridgeshire served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force and Women's Royal Air Force between 1948 and 1951.

Family News

BIRTHS

Congratulations to:

Samuel Conway Jacobs was born on 18 August. He is the great-grandson of Dorothy Jacobs and the late Samuel Jacobs.

WEDDINGS

Congratulations to:

Ken and Joan Waugh of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne & Wear who married on 26 October.

The Registrar conducted the ceremony at Embleton Hall, Northumberland, Cumbria. Ken and Joan later flew off on a two-week honeymoon in Lanzarote.

SILVER ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Phil and Olive Hill of Stafford, Staffordshire on 6 November.

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Harry and Doris Murray of Cults, Aberdeen on 26 October.

DIAMOND ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Kenneth and Jean Piper of Eastbourne, East Sussex on 28 October.

Leonard and Lily Fulker of Borehamwood, Hertfordshire on 8 November.

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Henry and Madge Bracewell of Penwortham, Preston, Lancashire who celebrated 61 years of marriage on 21 September.

Jack and Marjorie Wakeford of Brighton who celebrated 62 years of marriage on 20 October.

William and Evelyn Beardsmore of Lower Gornal, Dudley, West Midlands who celebrated 62 years of marriage on 24 October.

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

Ken and Lorna Westcott of Minehead, Somerset who celebrated 61 years of marriage on 26 October.

Clive and Dolores Tunks of Newquay, Cornwall who celebrated 62 years of marriage on 27 October.

Alan and Joyce Hirst of Darlington, County Durham who celebrated 62 years of marriage on 1 November.

Robert and Mary Austin of Accrington, Lancashire who celebrated 64 years of marriage on 2 November.

Leslie and Gwen Smith of Matley, Peterborough who celebrated 69 years of marriage on 6 November.

Francis and Mary Cross of Barton, Preston, Lancashire who celebrated 61 years of marriage on 7 November.

James and Doris Fox of Westhoughton, Bolton, Lancashire who celebrated 61 years of marriage on 9 November.

George and Ann Taylor of Loose, Maidstone, Kent who celebrated 67 years of marriage on 9 November.

Frederick and Gladys Smith of Blyth, Northumberland who celebrated 62 years of marriage on 10 November.

Peter and Joyce Webster of Polton-le-Fylde, Lancashire who celebrated 65 years of marriage on 14 November.

Frank and Betty Wooldridge of Bromley, Kent who celebrated 66 years of marriage on 15 November.

Albert and Marie Burns of Gillingham, Kent who celebrated 63 years of marriage on 21 November.

Harold and Doll Jackson of Gravesend, Kent who celebrated 65 years of marriage on 21 November.

DEATHS

We regret to announce the death of:

May Clark of Dover, Kent on 24 March. She was the widow of Percy Clark.

Norma Burrows on 16 October. She was

the wife of William Burrows of Luton, Bedfordshire.

Betty Newton of Smallfield, Horley, Surrey on 14 October. She was the widow of Reginald Newton.

Jessie Blundell of Penketh, Warrington, Cheshire on 20 October. She was the widow of Harry Blundell.

Violet Calcutt of Bow, London on 22 October. She was the widow of Henry Calcutt.

Jill Drzewicki of Bristol, Avon. She was the widow of Franciszek Drzewicki.

In Memory

Jeff Kark, MM

4th Armoured Car Regiment

Jeffrey Arnold Kark of Durban, South Africa died on 10 June, aged 85. He joined the South African Tank Corps in 1940 and was posted to 4th Armoured Car Regiment, who were deployed to the Western Desert. He was awarded the Military Medal for gallant and distinguished service in Italy in December 1944. His time in Italy came to a close when he was injured by a land mine explosion, suffering damage to his sight and hearing. Discharged in 1945, he studied agriculture, then entered the family catering business. He ran a wine-tasting club was active in the local Desert Rats Association. Our sympathy goes to his widow Connie and all of the family.

Anthony Godfrey

Royal Navy

Anthony John Godfrey of Rainham, Kent died on 3 October, aged 73. He was an

office junior in Chancery Lane before joining the Royal Navy in 1951. He served in the Mediterranean on HMS *Pembroke* and other ships. He was onboard HMS *Galeb* when it escorted Marshal Tito when he became the first Communist head of state to visit the UK in March 1953. Discharged as Able Seaman in 1954, he worked for Bowaters and later IPC in Chatham. His interests included snooker, billiards, driving and reading. Our sympathy goes to his widow Sheila and all the family.

Bill Blacker

The Queen's Own

Royal West Kent Regiment

Frederick William Blacker of Bennetthorpe, Doncaster, South Yorkshire died on 9 October, aged 94. He was working as a Monumental Mason, having completed his apprenticeship, before joining The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment in 1940. He became an instructor, specialising in ground mines and anti-personnel mines, and was commissioned in 1944. After being demobbed in 1946, he resumed work as a monumental mason, working extensively for the Co-operative Society Funeral Department. He enjoyed sports, particularly football and rugby. Our sympathy goes to his brother Ronald and all of the family.

Rowland Morgan

Royal Air Force

Rowland Morgan of Linthorpe, Middlesbrough, Cleveland died on 10 October, aged 87. He had joined the GPO as a telegraph boy before joining the Royal Air Force in 1938. He trained as an electrician and worked on Hurricanes, Whitleys and Lancasters. After D-Day, his squadron advanced through France and Belgium, onto Germany. Demobbed in

1946, he rejoined the GPO and had become a manager with British Telecom by the time he retired. His interests included reading, travelling abroad and gardening. He was a member of the Buffaloes and the Erasmus Club. Our sympathy goes to his son and daughter and all members of the family.

Duncan McWilliam

Royal Army Service Corps

Duncan McWilliam of Dennistoun, Glasgow died on 11 October, aged 75. He worked as a milk delivery boy, in a mill, and for a grocery business before joining the Royal Army Service Corps in 1950. He served in Chester and Yeovil. Discharged in 1951, he resumed work in the grocery trade and later for NAAFI. Our sympathy goes to his sons and daughters and all of the family.

Grace Pinchin

Women's Royal Naval Service

Grace Mabel Pinchin, nee Woodward, of West Wittering, Chichester, West Sussex died on 12 October, aged 88. She had trained as a secretary and worked as a VAD before joining the Women's Royal Naval Service in 1942. After training at Mill Hill, she was posted to Harwich and then, in 1943, to Mombassa, Kenya and on to Basra, Iraq. In 1944, she was posted to Colombo, Ceylon. She returned to WRNS HQ in London before being discharged as Leading Wren in 1946. She married and raised a family. Her interests included tapestry, gardening and going to the cinema. Our sympathy goes to her sons Nicholas and Jeremy and all of the family.

George Sulter

Royal Air Force

George Anthony Sulter of Eastbourne, East Sussex died on 15 October, aged 96.

He worked for a department store before joining the Royal Air Force in 1941. He trained as a mechanic and was posted to RAF Kinloss as a radar technician. Discharged in 1944, he subsequently set up a company designing equipment for GCHQ and then worked for a bulldozer company. He ran a private club in Fleet before retiring. He was a member of RAFA. Our sympathy goes to his widow Muriel, son Lester and all members of the family.

John Vincent

Royal Air Force

John Vincent of Crosland Moor, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire died on 16 October, aged 85. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1940 and trained as a wireless operator and air gunner. Posted to North Africa, he joined a Wellington crew as Warrant Officer and flew 33 operations in three months. However, the aircraft was shot down near Tobruk and, after eight days behind enemy lines, the crew were captured. After three months as a prisoner of war in North Africa, he was transferred to Italy and then Germany. Liberated by Cossacks at the end of the war, he returned to the UK for discharge in 1945. In civilian life, he serviced and constructed electronic devices such as radios and televisions. He was an active member of the Huddersfield Society for the Blind and local Macular Degeneration Society. Our sympathy goes to his widow Marjorie, their sons and all other members of the family.

John Hopkins

Royal Air Force

Gomer John Hopkins of Epsom, Surrey died on 19 October, aged 87. Leaving school as a 14-year-old, he worked as a

miner in Mountain Ash, Glamorgan before joining the Royal Air Force in 1941. Serving as a Leading Aircraftman, he was posted overseas and captured by Japanese forces in Java in March 1942. During his time as a Far East prisoner of war, he contracted beri-beri and suffered from malnutrition and other privations. After being liberated, he was returned to the UK via RAF Cosford and joined St Dunstan's at Church Stretton where he trained in boot repair. Discharged from the RAF in 1947, he initially worked as a boot repairer in London but later turned to packing work and was employed at the USAF base at High Wycombe. He later became a machine operator for the Mullard Radio Valve Company, manufacturing electronic valves used in televisions, radios and amplifiers. His interests included making stools and trays. He was also a member of St Dunstan's Bowling Club and Ex-Prisoners of War Society. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

Ronald Proctor

The Suffolk Regiment

Ronald Louis Proctor of Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex died on 19 October, aged 84. He worked at Tate & Lyle's sugar refinery in Silvertown, London prior to being called up to The Suffolk Regiment in 1941. He landed on Gold Beach in Normandy on D-Day, driving Bren Gun carriers during the invasion of France. Discharged in 1946, he returned to Tate & Lyle but later became a school caretaker. Our sympathy goes to his daughter Sharon and all of the family.

Frank Sadler

Royal Air Force

Laurence Frank William Sadler of Polegate, East Sussex died on 20 October, aged 93.

He worked as a clerk for several chemical companies which made hair restorers and conditioners before joining the Royal Air Force in 1940. In 1942, he was posted to India with 355 Squadron, a Liberator Bombing Squadron. Discharged as Sergeant in 1946, he rejoined his former employer as an accountant, but later became a property manager. Our sympathy goes to his partner Olive and all other members of the family.

David Mason

Royal Naval Patrol Service

Vincent David Mason of Walney Island, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria died on 21 October, aged 84. He was a farm worker before joining the Royal Navy in 1942. He was posted to the Royal Naval Patrol Service, or Harry Tate's Navy, which used a fleet of requisitioned trawlers, whalers, paddle steamers and tugs and ancient weapons. Deployed on mine clearing operations, he was based at Queensborough, Isle of Sheppey and then Swansea. After losing his eye in an accident with a marlin spike onboard ship, he was discharged in 1945. In civilian life, he became a grave digger and later a school caretaker. He enjoyed cooking, making jam and bread. Our sympathy goes to his widow Maureen, sons Dennis and Desmond, and all members of the family.

Eric Heath

Royal Air Force

Eric William Heath of Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex died on 22 October, aged 85. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946. In civilian life he worked in heating and ventilation and then an engineering company. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Ruth Cope**Women's Auxiliary Air Force**

Ruth Cope of Trowell, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire died on 25 October, aged 84. She trained in nursing before joining the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in 1942. Posted to Market Drayton, she trained as a driver of lorries and staff cars. She married a RAF man in 1944 and was discharged in 1945 to become a mother. In addition to raising a family, she worked at the Central Training School for the Post Office. The family relocated to Rhodesia for a while and she became a telephonist on return to the UK. Her interests included camping, walking, and painting. Our sympathy goes to all other members of the family.

Jack Watson**Royal Artillery**

"Jack" Albert Godfrey Watson of Tooting, London died on 28 October, aged 88. He worked for an engineering firm and then a dairy before joining the East Surrey Regiment in 1939. He trained as a Bren Gunner and was deployed to France. After being evacuated from Dunkirk, he transferred to the Royal Artillery. Discharged in 1946, he initially rejoined the dairy, but later resumed engineering. He also worked for the Metrication Board and Patent Office. His interests included art and writing poetry. Our sympathy goes to his widow Ivy, their sons and daughters and all members of the family.

William Bradshaw**The Dorset Regiment**

William Henry Bradshaw of Porthcawl, Mid Glamorgan died on 4 November, aged 81. He was a spring maker before joining the Dorsetshire Regiment in 1944. As a Lance Corporal, he served in Hong Kong and Korea. After developing Multiple Sclerosis,

he was discharged in 1956. His interests included leatherwork, toy and slipper making. Our sympathy goes to his widow Margaret and all members of the family.

Leslie Blake**Royal Marines**

Leslie John Blake of Bishops Cleeve, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire died on 8 November, aged 86. He worked in an aircraft factory before joining the Royal Marines at Plymouth as a 17-year-old in 1938. He was posted to HMS *Renown* and was on Arctic patrol when war was declared. He was on the ship as it closed in on the Admiral Graf Spee when it was scuttled off the coast of Montevideo in 1939. Returning to the Royal Marine Brigade, he joined HMS *Prince of Wales* which was sunk in December 1941. Rescued from the sea, he was taken to Singapore, which in turn fell to Japanese invasion. As a Far East Prisoner of War he was taken to Sumatra and was moved from Muntok to Palembang, Chng Hwa, Mulo, and Sungei Gerong, enduring beatings and privation in various labour camps. He was repatriated in 1945 and continued to serve in the Corps until 1952. His interests included reading and gardening. Our sympathy goes to his widow Joan, sons Vernon and Tony, daughter Lynda, and all other members of the family.

John Beeson**Royal Air Force**

John William Beeson of Cam, Dursley, Gloucestershire died on 9 November, aged 71. He joined the Royal Air Force as a 17-year-old in 1954, and trained as an instrument fitter, specialising in navigation equipment. After working on search and rescue aircraft for Coastal Command, he

was posted to Malta where he turned to Canberras. Discharged in 1966, he joined Prudential Insurance and later Keyboard Training in the USA. Returning to the UK, he joined Whitbread Brewery as a shift manager. He then ran a health food shop and worked for a bus company in North Devon before retiring. His interests included reading and woodwork. Our sympathy goes to his widow Patricia and all of the family.

Frederick Matthews**Royal Air Force**

Frederick Henry Matthews of Heacham, King's Lynn, Norfolk died on 11 November, aged 80. Having been raised in a Dr Barnardos home, he worked as a shoe repairer before joining the Royal Air Force in 1946. He trained in Sudbury, Suffolk and was then posted to RAF Lutterworth. He transferred to RAF Conningsby before being discharged in 1948. Initially, he became a nursery man at a market garden in Uxbridge, but then joined London Transport as a guard and later a train driver on the Underground. He later became a signalman and was chief signalman at Baker Street Station when he retired after 37 years service. He was a keen gardener and kept an allotment. Our sympathy goes to his widow Patricia, son Roger and all of the family.

Gillian Rawson**Women's Auxiliary Air Force**

Gillian Edith May Rawson, nee Wilcock, of Fareham, Hampshire died on 12 November, aged 83. She worked for a knitting wool company before joining the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in 1942. Stationed at RAF Norton for training, she was then posted to RAF Cranwell as a teleprinter operator. She also served at RAF bases in Norfolk and

Scotland. Discharged in 1945, she returned to the wool company but later became PA to the managing director of Glynwed, the cooking utensil manufacturer. She enjoyed craftwork, driving, music and was interested in cathedrals. Our sympathy goes to her son Nigel and all members of the family.

Major Christopher Gray**Royal Tank Regiment**

Major Christopher Horner Gray of Moordown, Bournemouth, Dorset died on 13 November, aged 87. He went to the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and was posted to the Training Battalion at Warminster, followed by Bovington where he joined the Royal Tank Regiment in 1939. He was commissioned in May 1940 and promoted the following year. He landed in Normandy on D+1 and was severely wounded. In 1946, he was promoted to Captain and was involved in producing Tank Warfare pamphlets. He was promoted to Major in 1955 and retired in 1975. His interests included crosswords, reading and DIY. Our sympathy goes to his widow Joan, son Richard, daughter Angela and all members of the family.

William Burchell**Royal Navy**

William Thomas Burchell of Brighton died on 14 November, aged 81. He worked in a Birmingham plastics factory before joining the Royal Navy in 1943. He trained at Portsmouth and then served in the Indian Ocean on HMS *Adventure*. Discharged as Able Seaman in 1947, he became a roof tiler and later a bus conductor and driver. He also worked as a postman. In more recent years he endured the amputation of both legs above the knee. He enjoyed music and bingo. Our sympathy goes to his widow Joyce and all members of the family.

Diamond day for Bill and Hildegard

THERE MAY be a tear in his eye, but this is a happy moment recorded for Bill and Hildegard Carthy of Gloucester, Gloucestershire as they celebrated 60 years of marriage on 11 October. They marked the occasion with family at a local hotel where steaks were dramatically flambéed at the table. Later, they were joined at home by friends for cake and champagne. St Dunstaners Bill served in the Royal Artillery for 25 years, though some St Dunstaners recall him from his pre-Army days as Billy Mac, an impressive pugilist fighting on the Liverpool boxing circuit.



And the winners are ...

ARTIST AND television presenter Tony Hart selected the winners of **St Dunstan's Review** cover contest. First prize went to St Dunstaner John Perfect of Yealmpton, Devon who assumed the role of auteur,



directing Reg Wilkinson to draw Santa and Service men in a festive London setting. Second prize went to St Dunstaner Gordon Aston of Buckingham who painted a traditional nativity with three wise men approaching Madonna and child (left). Third prize was given to St Dunstaner Sheila Rodman of Sheffield, South Yorkshire who combined elements of montage with textured painting to depict three wise men following a star marked with St Dunstan's badge (right).

Contest judge Tony Hart served in the 1st Gurkha Rifles, but is widely known

as the presenter of the BBC's *Vision On* series, the first programme to bridge the gap between children with hearing and those without. He praised all three contest winners for the quality of their entries.

