

May 2008

St Dunstan's Review



Rainbow finish for Atlantic Row!

St Dunstaner Alan Lock and Matt Boreham are greeted by a rainbow as they reach Barbados after rowing across the Atlantic Ocean!



The Princess Royal and the Guinea Pig

The Princess Royal visits Blond McIndoe Research Foundation.



Photograph: Reg Stone

Happy Birthday Bernard!

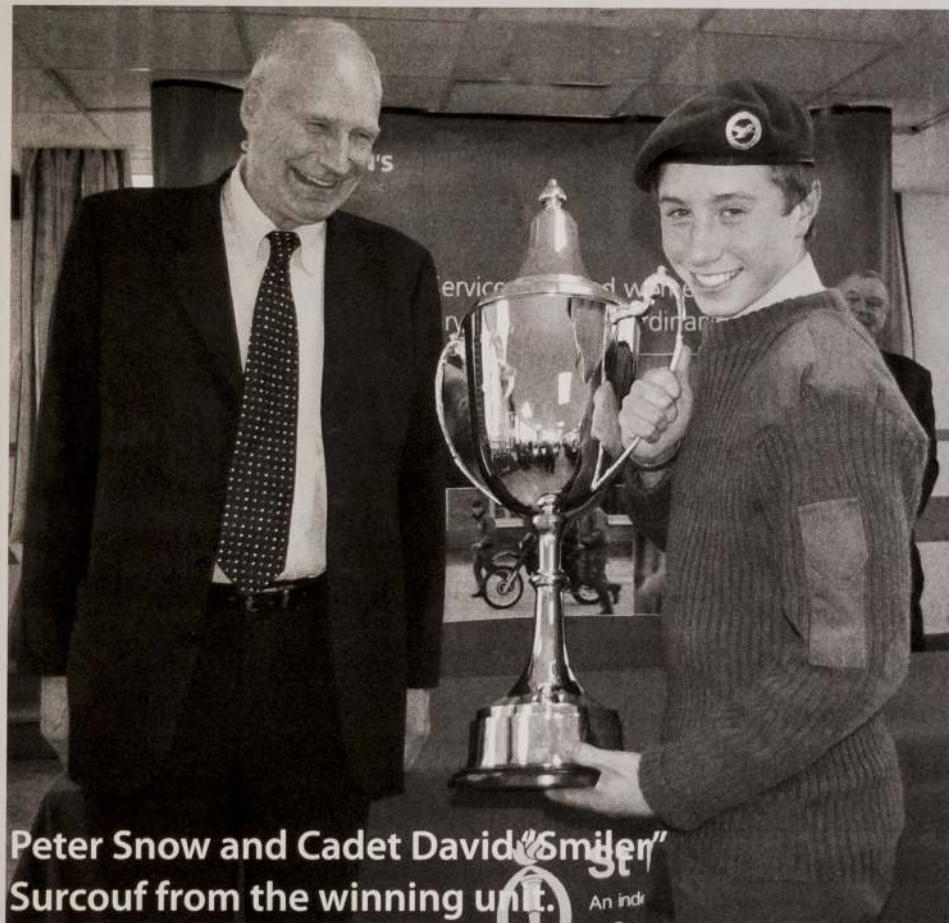
St Dunstaner Bernard Holden celebrates his 100th birthday with Dame Vera Lynn. Special birthday greetings came from Her Majesty The Queen, and there was a warm welcome waiting at the Bluebell Railway.



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

Alan Lock becomes first VI person to row across the Atlantic Ocean!

After nearly 80 days at sea, Matt Boreham and St Dunstaner Alan Lock completed an epic journey - rowing across the Atlantic Ocean! Report on page 24.



Peter Snow and Cadet David Smiler Surcouf from the winning unit.

Who won the Cadet Challenge?

By land, by sea, by air. All is revealed on page 16.

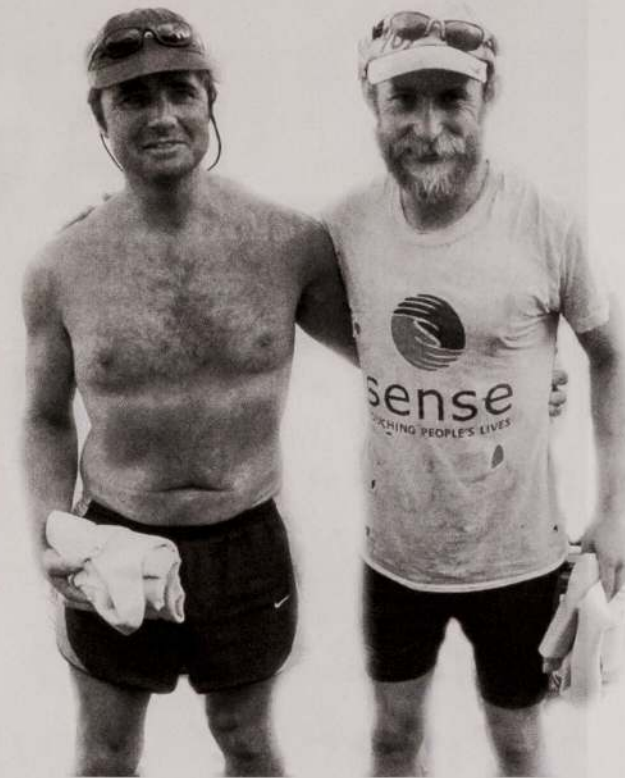
Editor: Ray Hazan E-mail: ray.hazan@st-dunstans.org.uk

Tel: 020 7723 5021 Fax: 020 7262 6199

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St Dunstan's Review comes in several formats.

The Talking Review, available on MP3CD, is read this month by David Castleton and Valerie Tomalin. The **Review** is also available in braille or as a Word document via e-mail or on floppy-disk.



Printed by Hobbs the Printer

Your message from St Dunstan's Chairman, Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN

From the Chairman



The Chairman with St Dunstaner Sidney Tavender during the Ex-POW Reunion. A report starts on p26.

LAST MONTH, I attended the Ex-Prisoners of War Reunion. It is a special occasion. If they do talk about their experiences, it is in an off-hand, and almost a matter-of-fact way. Rarely do they talk about the courage, determination and sheer bloody-mindedness, which pulled them through. Never do they boast about their exploits.

At breakfast the next morning, two ex-FEPOW's, who had never previously met, but "served" their time on the Burma railway, were introduced to each other. They hugged, bound by memories and experiences. That is what a reunion is about.

It is a privilege to sit at the same table as people like that!

St Dunstan's Calendar

MAY

Writers Forum	3
Blind & Handless Reunion	7-13
VE Day	8
Golf	17-18
Feast of St Dunstan	19
Archery Club (II)	24-1 June
Bisley Shooting Contest	28

JUNE

Gardening Week	1-7
50 Year Badge Holders	5-8
Writers Forum	7
London to Brighton Bike Ride	15
Ladies' Week	22-28
Veterans Day	27
Wildwood Golf Invitation Day	29

JULY

Writers Forum Weekend	3-6
History Week	13-19
Band of Royal Marines	16
Golf	19-20
HMS Sultan	25-2 August

AUGUST

Writers Forum	2
Race Week	3-9
London Triathlon	9-10
VJ Day	15
Archery Week (III)	23-31
Activities Week	31-6 September

SEPTEMBER

Writers Forum	2
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Noticeboard

ST DUNSTAN'S LLANDUDNO

NOT YET READY FOR VISITORS: While we appreciate that there is a great deal of interest in St Dunstan's third centre in Wales, much development work needs to be carried out before it opens. At this stage we are unable to grant access, especially as plans for construction work gather momentum. An update on progress will be included in December's **Review**.

BOOK UP FOR ACTIVITY WEEK

LAST CHANCE TO JOIN THE GANG: The St Dunstan's Activity Week runs from 31 August to 6 September. As in previous years it promises to be full of adrenalin fuelled action on land and water. A week to remember for sure! Anyone wishing to participate should contact Alex White in the Sports & Recreation department at St Dunstan's Ovingdean before the end of May.

There is also a single place left on St Dunstan's Team for the London Triathlon in August. The event combines swimming, bicycle riding and running into a single challenge. Interested parties should contact Louise Timms at St Dunstan's Ovingdean as soon as possible. Telephone 01273 391463.

DOUBLE RAIL TRANSPORT CONSULTATIONS UNDERWAY

PROTECTION POLICIES AND STATION DESIGN UNDER SCRUTINY: The Department of Transport and Transport Scotland are undertaking two related consultation programmes concerning disabled people using railways in England, Scotland and Wales. In the first, they are inviting comments on proposed revisions to the *Train and Station Standards for Disabled Passengers: A Code of Practice*. Changes are intended to focus on train and station design. In the second, they are asking for comments on revised guidance for train operators writing Disabled Persons' Protection Polices. These documents set out what services, assistance and staffing the operator has in place to assist disabled people using its trains and stations

A copy of the Code of Practice consultation can be found online at www.dft.gov.uk/access/cop while the Protection Policies can be found at www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/open/dppp/.

Copies of the consultation documents can also be requested on Audio CD from the Railways for All Team on 020 7944 5284.

Any responses should be made by 23 May.

SIGN UP FOR HMS SULTAN

LIMITED PLACES AT SUMMER CAMP: There are a limited number of places available for the Summer Camp in HMS *Sultan*. Applications are invited by contacting Organising Secretary Dave Burrows on 02392 550532 or e-mail DCB119399@aol.com. Dates for the Camp are Friday, 25 July to Saturday, 2 August 2008. Contact Dave by 5 June at the latest.

NEW GOLF COMPETITION RULES

ST DUNSTANS GOLF UPDATE: We currently have 12 St Dunstan's members cleaning their clubs and practising their skills to try and win our new Annual Invitation Day Trophy which will be a Claret Jug, similar to that presented to the English Open Champion. It will be awarded to the overall St Dunstan's winner, well worth the effort.

The organisation of the invitation day, (which has had to be rescheduled for 29 June confirmed and deposit paid), is progressing well, prizes have been donated for the day, are of high calibre and well worth all the effort to try and win them at this prestigious event on the St Dunstan's golfing calendar. We are looking for some help at the Invitation Day, such as extra ball spotters and guides and general help all-round. Any volunteers will be most appreciated, so please get your friends to give a helping hand. If you know anybody that can help, please contact Donald Oliver on 02392 582698.

The committee has decided not to award prizes at all the medal matches during the year, but to collate points from the matches and have better quality prizes at the final end of year match. We hope our golfers will agree with latest arrangement.

The new format will be:-

Attendance on each day	1 point
Winner – each medal match	10 points
Runner up - each medal match	9 points
3rd place	8 points
Points up to 10th place accordingly	

The winner will be the person with most points accrued at the end of the year, and will receive a very nice annual trophy, to be played for the following year. He or she will also receive a replica to keep.

We welcome all the new members to the club and hope you will enjoy the company of your fellow golfers and the challenging golf course at Rusper. All the medal matches are promulgated in the **St Dunstan's Review**.

There is a St Dunstan's fabric badge available which can be sown onto the breast pocket of blazers. If you are interested let me know.

Next year is the centenary year of Maritime Aviation. The Fleet Air Arm Field Gun Crew Golfers, Fleet Air Arm Armourers, Air Crew and ex-members of the Fleet Air Arm, are holding a golf extravaganza. I have put St Dunstan's Golf Club forward as a prospective participant. This is in the planning stage at present. Anybody interested please let me know so that I can make a note of it as the event is progressed.

Young Ollie

GO YOMPING IN DATMOOR

MARINE FUNDRAISER IN SEPTEMBER: A website forum for former and serving Royal Marines is extending an invitation to all injured service and ex-service personnel, who are undergoing or completed their rehabilitation, to join them for the Dartmoor Yomp based around Princetown, Devon on the last weekend in September.

The main event on the Saturday will consist of a 15-mile walk across the southern part of Dartmoor utilising the bridleways and footpaths and is being designed to be accessible for all levels of physical ability. The walk will have multiple access points so that participants can either do the full 15-miles or shorter stages depending on their level of desire or ability. Volunteers have offered to provide horses and horse-drawn carts for those who would prefer to ride and the loan of some all-terrain wheelchairs is being investigated.

For those who do not wish to participate in the "Yomp" they will be more than welcome to join the social events. The main base for the event will be "The Plume of Feathers" in Princetown, which is well known to all users of the moor. There will be a reception on the Friday evening (venue TBA) and on the Saturday evening there will be an informal social gathering at The Plume of Feathers with a hog roast.

The objective of the event is to give something back to those who have been

injured in the course of their duty, to provide them with a physical challenge and also social events hosted by serving and former Royal Marines. If the "Dartmoor Yomp" is a success we hope to make this an annual outing.

The Once A Marine Always A Marine Charity Fundraiser and Weekend Out Dartmoor Yomp 2008 will run 26-28 September. Anyone interested in participating should contact Colin Williamson, telephoning him on 0191 4838022 as soon as possible.

THE PERFECT MUSICAL

RESIDENTIAL COURSE FOR VI ADULTS: The University of Bristol will be running a four day residential course for visually impaired adults examining the development of *My Fair Lady* from book to stage. Participants will have the chance to immerse themselves in all aspects of the musical, learning the songs, acting scenes, and thinking critically about the narrative. The fee is £260, with sighted guides being asked for a voluntary contribution of £50. For more details contact Claire Wickham on 07964 727 322 or e-mail claire.wickham@bristol.ac.uk.

Another course, Chem Bones - the structure, function and chemistry of the human body, is full, but it is hoped to arrange a repeat session. Again, ask Claire for details if interested in attending.

VI FRIENDLY TV REMOTE CONTROL

EASY TO HOLD DEVICE: Hagger Electronics are currently stocking the Doro HandleEasy 321rc, a simple to use universal television remote control specially designed for people who have limited dexterity or sight impairment. The hand-held device is very easy to hold and to use for changing channels and adjusting the volume of your TV or home stereo.

There are seven programmable keys, which have a hard texture for best tactile feeling. A learning function allows the device to pick up information from existing remote controls and potentially it can be used for multiple devices mixing channel keys for the inevitable set-top box and volume control of the TV. AAA batteries are required. Price £17.01 (£19.99 with VAT), Haggars ref is HBI0003. They can be contacted by telephone on 0845 8820 505. Their website is www.hagger.co.uk.

SKYPE DISCUSSION LIST

MAILING LIST FOR INTERNET PHONE SYSTEM: All aspects of Skype, the voice communication software which works free of charge on PCs and selected mobile phones will come under the scrutiny of a new e-mail group. To join, send an e-mail to ibbyk@mmt.demon.co.uk, marking the subject line with "Wish to join the Skype worldwide mailing list" and listing name, town and country in the body.

REVIEW DERBY SWEEPSTAKE

LAST CHANCE TO ENTER SWEEPSTAKE 2008: The Epsom Vodafone Derby will be held on 7 June. As usual, the **Review** is running its annual Sweepstake. The draw is open to all St Dunstaners, beneficiaries of the Diana Gubbay Trust, widows and widowers.

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

Each applicant should send their name and address, the number of tickets required, and a stamped addressed envelope, to Simon Rogers, Derby Sweepstake Department, **St Dunstan's Review**, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD.

Prize money will be distributed amongst the winners with **50 per cent** going to the holder of the ticket drawing the winning horse; **20 per cent** to the holder of the ticket drawing the second horse; **10 per cent** to the holder of the ticket drawing the third horse; and **20 per cent** to be divided equally among those drawing a horse which actually starts the race. No prize won in the sweepstake will be paid to any person other than the person to whom the winning ticket was sold.

INHERITANCE TAX EXEMPTION FOR WAR WOUNDED

LITTLE KNOWN BENEFIT: Veterans of the Armed Forces and their families can benefit from a clause that exempts them from payment of Inheritance Tax. The concession arises if they die from a wound, accident or disease contracted on active service or service of a war like nature.

This may apply even if death occurs decades after the wound was inflicted. Anyone receiving a War Disablement Pension should almost certainly qualify, but even those who do not receive such a pension may still benefit even if a wound or disease plays a part in the death, even indirectly.

Inheritance Tax liability starts once an individual's estate reaches a value of £250,000, for many people, the value of their home property. Many war veterans could be paying the tax unnecessarily because they are unaware that they qualify for exemption under Section 154 of the Inheritance Tax Act 1984.

The concession is not limited to people who served during World War II and, in a written statement to the House of Commons last year, Veterans Minister Derek Twigg emphasised that it extended to those serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"As part of the assistance provided to bereaved families, the MOD Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC) considers

whether the circumstances of a death of anyone currently serving in the armed forces allows an exemption from inheritance tax and, where appropriate, provide the executor or family member with a certificate of exemption which can be passed to the relevant tax office," said the Minister.

"For claims arising as a result of injuries or illness sustained in previous conflicts or in retirement, applications for an exemption have to be made to the JCCC by the executor/next of kin following the death of the individual concerned."

Anyone wishing the executors to make use of Section 154 should leave a statement alongside their will explaining circumstances of any wounds, injuries or disease suffered while on service. Executors may also require medical notes or a report explaining how these conditions contributed to the death. Executors will then need to apply to the MOD.

If the MOD's JCCC or Defence Council decide the claim is valid, the Inland Revenue will accept the decision without contest. If the MOD rejects the claim, it is still possible for executors to appeal through the courts. There is no time limit on claims, so executors can apply if they were unaware that a veteran qualified for exemption at the time of death.

A similar dispensation applies to the special ex-gratia payment made to ex-Far East Prisoners of War in 2000.

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

Turn again Dick Wittyfan

It is with some reluctance that I write this letter but I do so having read with horror the piece in April's **Review** purportedly proclaiming St Dunstan's intention to erect seven 30ft wind turbines on the roof of St Dunstan's Ovingdean. It is to be hoped the article is not to be taken too seriously since it has upon it the clear stamp of a well known RN officer's ingenious April foolery, akin to ordering a simple sailor to go below and fetch green oil for the starboard lamp. However, as Confucius observed, thinking is the seed of action. I therefore feel it is not altogether inappropriate for me, as one who has derived lifelong benefit from the magnificent rehabilitation and training received at the Ovingdean centre, and as someone who has been deeply involved in renewable energy issues, especially wind energy, for

Electric April take-off for Ovingdean wind turbine

By Henry Kaiser

S EVEN NEW WIND turbines are to be installed at St Dunstan's Ovingdean this month, sprucing up the aeroplane-styled building for the post-carbon era. The Howard's Goosier wind generators, version 1.4, will convert kinetic energy from the powerful South Downs wind turning it into electricity. This power can then be used to run appliances within the building in an environmentally friendly fashion. It may also be possible to return electricity to the national grid. Winds around nine-metres-a-second will generate an estimated three megawatts of electrical power.

Dick Lake, commented on the long and secret negotiations to overcome the building's Grade II-listed status. "It was the alignment of 21st century need with the architect's original concept that eventually won over the planners," he said.

"The unbelievable speed of this prefabricated installation is entirely due to the preparation work that Jim Faithfull and the Maintenance Team did on the roof while we had the scaffolding up last year for the new windows project.

"Not only does this scheme firmly nail Ovingdean's green colours to the Kyoto mast," enthused Dick Lake, "but it means that I can have an accurate read-out of wind speed and direction and plan my cycle ride to the station with precision."

Completed in 1938, St Dunstan's Ovingdean was purpose built for use by blind people, incorporating guide rails with tactile markings, rubber edged doors and safety gates on stairways. Architect



A spruce boost that will juice-up Ovingdean's batteries.

Francis Lorne modelled the Art-Deco structure on an aeroplane, a central fuselage with two wings either side, though the later addition of the swimming pool and Ansell training wing now creates the impression of an aeroplane and side car.

no danger of the structure taking off in an extreme gust. "If it did take off, I expect it would be impounded by the harbour authorities before it went a mile," joked Mr Howards.

Similar turbines can be found generating electricity off the Prestatyn coast, not far from Llandudno where St Dunstan's plans to open a new centre. They were placed on the sea bed in 2003 using remotely operated vehicle installation (ROV).



Building the future. Lady Pearson lays the foundation stone.

April fool! Just in case you weren't sure, the wind turbines were a spoof created in the spirit of the season.

the last ten years, to sound the horn of caution.

1. As I am sure we are all aware, such a development would most certainly attract fierce opposition and hostility towards St Dunstan's from environmentalists and nature lovers of all descriptions throughout Sussex and far beyond and could quite easily lead to a public hearing. It is also on the cards that the MOD would file a strong objection - as it is doing

with increasing frequency - on the proven grounds that wind turbines interfere with radar, endangering the safety of aircrews and the efficiency of the country's anti-missile defence system.

2. Experience has taught me, as it has others, that wind energy companies simply are not to be trusted as far as the question of noise nuisance is concerned. When asked if their machines make a noise, they invariably say no. The fact is that they measure only for

high frequency noise. The point is that wind turbines most definitely do produce significant low frequency noise which can be clearly heard for miles. This low frequency noise is caused by turbulence created as the arms of the rotor pass the support girders.

Obviously, to mount wind turbines on the roof of the Ovingdean building would enormously increase the noise nuisance since the building itself would act as a colossal sound-board. The deep hum would be very distressing and would in all likelihood render at least the top floor of the building, including the beautiful winter garden, unusable.

As far as the output of the turbines is concerned, it is well to remember that the wind energy companies always promote their turbines in terms of output capacity. The reality is that a turbine very rarely produces its full capacity or anything remotely near it. This is owing to (A) the inherent intermittency of wind and (B) continuous fluctuations in wind strength. When wind strength is too low, turbines produce no current. When wind strength is too high the

turbines have to be closed down to avoid damage. Given the prevailing wind conditions in the Ovingdean area, there would be an almost chaotic variation in wind strength from far too little to far too much.

3. If at some point, St Dunstan's were to be approached by a wind turbine company, it would be worth remembering that there are viable and affordable alternatives to the use of wind energy for the production of electricity, solar panels being probably the most familiar. Needless to say, solar panels do not depend on exposure to full sunlight in order to operate. Among their other advantages, they are unobtrusive and genuinely silent. In case St Dunstan's should wish to consider the potential of solar panels further, I will be happy to send a very readable article on the latest advances in the technology of solar panel production.

I do hope you and the mysterious author of the original find this reaction to the published article amusing if not particularly interesting.

**Maurice Aldridge,
Huntly, Aberdeenshire**

We also heard from ...

Loved the Wind Turbines story. If only it were true!

**Donna Vaughan,
Ovingdean**

You had me going with the wind turbine story. For a few minutes I thought it was real.

**Nigel Whiteley,
Peacehaven, East Sussex**

I thought the wind turbine April fool was just brilliant.

**David Habershon,
London**

My St Dunstaner husband is in training for the London to Brighton bike ride. His bike is in the garden shed where it is set on rollers so that he can pedal away quite safely for hours on end. I am currently looking into the possibility of having him coupled up to the house electricity supply so that all that energy can be put to some good use.

I have just read about the wind turbines to be fixed on the roof of Ovingdean and it occurred to me that while he is undertaking this work Hugh Howards might be able to connect the exercise bikes and rowing machines in the gym into the new system. I am sure that more

St Dunstaners would be encouraged to use the bikes and rowing machines when they realise that they would not only be doing themselves good but also contributing to the decrease of Ovingdean's carbon footprint and helping to save the planet.

I suggest that all work should be completed by 1 April 2009. Yours greenly,

**Joan Beevers,
Castleford,
West Yorkshire**

• The **Review's** April Fool turbine story was a talking point in St Dunstan's circles for sometime after 1 April. The article was written by Simon Rogers with additional material from Dick Lake. Clues that something might be awry started with the headline. The byline Henry Kaiser was taken from the designer of Howard Hughes' Spruce Goose, an elaborate aircraft that never flew.

Of course, some elements of the feature were true. Although some people thought the ROVI robots were fictional, it was indeed the method used to install the wind turbines running off the Prestatyn coast.

Sound advice from Ray

I regularly attend meetings of the local MDS Society which is organised by Northamptonshire Association for the Blind (NAB). Over recent months, some members have enquired about modest MP3 players.

Last autumn, our energetic Ray Hazan recommended the SONY CD Walkman D-NE 240 available from Argos at about £ 30. I selected the battery type without a radio because it is simple to operate, very portable and not too many buttons. I am very pleased with the result and can thoroughly recommend it. Thanks to Ray for his "Sound" advice.

**Geoffrey Law,
Kettering,
Northamptonshire**

Carry a torch for St Dunstan's

Following on from the debacle which is the Olympic Torch relay, why don't St Dunstan's celebrate our 100th anniversary in 2015 with our very own Torch relay?

The Torch, being the 'symbol' of St Dunstan's, could be carried by St Dunstaners, staff

and supporters alike from our new office in Scotland, taking in the Sheffield Training Centre, Llandudno, our Headquarters in Harcourt Street and finishing in style at St Dunstan's Ovingdean. There is plenty of time to organise the logistical side of things and I'm sure there would be ample volunteers willing to take up the torch and help raise awareness of this wonderful organisation by conveying the Torch across their particular counties.

I am happy to do my bit but it has slowly dawned on me that by the time this mammoth event comes around I might not be as fit as I used to be so I've decided to curtail my plans of running from the Scottish Borders to the Lake District and instead have now decided that the leg from Port Hall to Ovingdean seems more realistic!

**Colin Williamson,
Hebburn,
Tyne and Wear**

• St Dunstaners Clive Jones and Don Planner were on top form when they carried the Millennium Torch in 2000. Don also went the distance in this year's London Marathon and we have a full report on page 22.

Balancing the Books

Ted Bunting finds a French butterfly with devastating effect

Papillon

Author: Henri Charrière

Reader: Robert Gladwell

Duration: 24 hours and 59 minutes

Catalogue No 1371

Papillon, "the butterfly", is the story of a French criminal condemned for murder. After nine years in a penal settlement, he escapes from Devil's Island in 1941. It is also, for my money, a strong contender for the title of "best ever adventure story."

In graphic, "no holds barred" language it describes a savage, inflexible prison system and the often inhuman methods that were used to enforce it. There is little humour in this book but amongst all the hard, desperate men there is violence and animal passion a-plenty. This is life lived at its lowest level but compelling listening for all that. I have tried without success,

to ascertain if *Papillon* is fiction or fact, it is certainly completely believable. I did find out that it was a successful movie with Steve McQueen in the title role, but I'll wager diamonds the film is not a patch on the book.

- *Papillon* was translated from the French by Patrick O'Brian, CBE who is renowned for his own Aubrey-Maturin series of novels set in the Royal Navy during the Napoleonic Wars.

The veracity of Charrière's account has long been questioned, though the author always maintained that it was true. Modern researchers, however, believe that Charrière got much of his material from other inmates. He died in 1973, but in 2005, a 104-year-old Parisian, Charles Brunier claimed to be the real Papillon. Also a convicted murderer, Brunier was at the prison at the same time. Like Charrière, he also had a tell-tale butterfly tattoo.



Nigel's icy abseil

AS SNOW SWEPT across England on 6 April, St Dunstaner Nigel Whiteley stepped off the roof of a building. He abseiled 117ft down the side of the Congress Theatre, Eastbourne in support of St Dunstan's and the Make-a-Wish Foundation. "It's easier out of a helicopter," he said in reference to his Navy days. "But it was great. I could do it again."

Ten questions on...

The subject of Flags

Harry Beevers runs some brand new questions up the mast

- 1) The flags of Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Iceland all feature which device?
- 2) The flag of which British islands in the Caribbean is a blue ensign with a young woman in a white dress with twelve oil lamps depicting a Biblical parable?
- 3) What colour is the maple leaf on the flag of Canada?
- 4) Which of the UK's four patron saints is not represented on the Union flag?
- 5) Which bird is depicted on the national flag of Bolivia?
- 6) On what date in February are flags flown on public buildings in this country to celebrate the Queen's accession to the throne?
- 7) Whose portrait appears on the state flag of Washington in the USA?
- 8) When a flag is at half mast how far down from the top of the mast should it be lowered?
- 9) Which symbol appears on more national flags than any other?
- 10) On the first successful ascent of Mount Everest in May 1953 which four flags were taken to the summit?

Answers can be found on page 38.

RAF turns 90 as oldest veteran helps make sick boy's dream come true

AS THE Red Arrows and two Typhoon fighters flew across London to mark the 90th anniversary of the Royal Air Force, Henry Allingham and the crews of RAF Odiham were able to make it a day to remember for a young boy with a muscle wasting disease.

St Dunstaner Henry, Britain's oldest man and surviving founder member of the RAF was introduced to 11-year-old Jordan Wright, who suffers from duchenne muscular dystrophy. Via the Make-a-Wish Foundation, Jordan had his own tour of the RAF base in Hampshire and was allowed behind the controls of a Chinook helicopter, riding back on the station fire engine.

He had asked to be a RAF man for a day because his grandfather had been a member of the Service.

Henry was present as nine cherry trees were planted at RAF Odiham to mark the Royal Air Force's 90th anniversary. The trees mark each decade since Lord Trenchard founded the service on 1 April 1918, amalgamating the Royal Flying Corps and Royal Naval Air Service which Henry joined in 1915.

Rotary honour Cyril for Service Above Self

by Simon Rogers

A ST DUNSTANER has been feted by his local Rotary Club for organising a social club for blind and visually impaired people. The award came as a total surprise to Cyril Richardson of Sidcup, Kent when it was presented to him at a luncheon organised by the Rotary Club of Sidcup.

"It was funny, because when the President began talking about the award I thought he was speaking about someone else. He began by saying that the recipient was also a disabled person but then he seemed to change direction," said Cyril. "Suddenly he announced my name!"

Jim Chambers presented Cyril with a Service Above Self award in recognition of his chairmanship of the Sidcup Social Club for the Blind. Cyril has also been Acting Secretary for several years, though with humility

he is quick to add that he has a good team working to keep the club running as a self-sufficient body.

"I lost my sight about eight years ago, with macular degeneration," said Cyril who served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946. "Kent Association for the Blind had seven clubs in the Borough of Bexley and Sidcup was one of them. About five years ago, they decided each club should have a visually impaired Chairman and I was talked into taking it over. A few years ago, the organiser resigned, so I took on that role as well. We meet every fortnight, 25 times a year."

The club runs a variety of entertainments with singers, keyboard players, violinists and other musicians. Harvest Festival, Easter Bonnet parades, Bring'n'buy sales



Cyril Richardson receives his Service Above Self award from Jim Chambers, President of The Rotary Club of Sidcup.

and raffles add to the variety. Three annual collection days also help keep the club running. Some 35 blind people regularly attend the club with seven sighted volunteers helping out. It is also affiliated to the Kent Association for the Blind.

Harrods Trust Fund donates over £300,000

ST DUNSTAN'S is delighted to announce a special, one-off award of £309,223 from The Harrods Limited Richard Burbidge Staff Benefit Fund.

The Fund was established by Sir Richard Burbidge, former Managing Director of Harrods, during the First World War to help employees who had been injured.

St Dunstan's was approached in 2007 about the possibility of receiving a share of the charitable trust's funds as the Trustees were planning

to close the trust. Following a presentation to the Fund Trustees in September last year and following subsequent liaison, we were delighted to receive the recent news that St Dunstan's would be receiving such a substantial sum.

"We are delighted to have received such a generous contribution from the Harrods Limited Richard Burbidge Staff Benefit Fund," said Andrew Jones, Director of Fundraising and Communications. "This

Harrods, the famous London store.



donation will allow us to help even more blind ex-Service men and women, offering them lifelong support enabling them to regain their independence, meet new challenges and achieve a better quality of life."

Music revives spirit at St Dunstan's

by Simon Rogers



Marilyn Baker sings from the heart at St Dunstan's.

BLIND Singer and radio presenter Marilyn Baker brought her distinctive brand of gospel to the main lounge at St Dunstan's Ovingdean on the evening of 14 March. She sang and played piano for an audience of St Dunstaners and guests from nearby care homes, mixing anecdotes about her faith and experience with music.

Guide dog Pennie sat at her feet, while her assistant Tracy

Williamson who is sight and hearing impaired took over the microphone for a poem set to music.

Marilyn lost her sight as a child but demonstrated a talent for music. She subsequently studied at the Royal College of Music before establishing her ministry. Lately, she has also been presenting a radio show, *Insight*, on Premiere Radio and recently became Chairman of the Torch Trust for the Blind.

Jersey Cadets win St Dunstan's Challenge by land, by sea, by air!



The Winners! Jersey ATC revel in their success after receiving their trophy from Peter Snow.

JERSEY AIR TRAINING Corps were revealed as the 2007 winners of St Dunstan's 'Go the Distance' Cadet Challenge on 19 March. They were feted by television presenter and military historian Peter Snow as he presented them with their trophy in recognition of their spirited approach to the half-marathon challenge.

No7 Overseas Jersey Squadron, ATC had elected to tackle the challenge by land, sea and air, echoing a St Dunstan's promotional

Simon Rogers reports

campaign of recent years. St Dunstan's Head of Awareness Graham Footer recapped how over 80 cadets from Jersey ATC, with visiting units from Dorset and Wiltshire Wing Air Training Corps. "Their challenge encompassed all the services, Army, Navy and Air Force," he said. "The challenge was attended by four St Dunstaners and they all set off from St Catherine's Bay on the east of the island. The Lieutenant Governor

of the Island came along to see them off. The proposed flight had to be postponed for a later date because of fog, but that was the easy bit. The hard bit was to kayak around the island and to go along the coastal path. I was one of the walkers and that was tough. You are rock climbing at some parts!

"It was an absolutely fabulous day. I would like to thank everyone who took part. It was great to see these young people at the end of the day with so much

energy left. It was great to see them achieve this. It was tremendous." Peter Snow echoed that sentiment as he presented their trophy and certificates of achievement.

Second prize in the contest went to TS Eastbourne who had organised a gun run along the seafront. The third prize was also by a Sea Cadet group, TS Flamingo had rowed up the River Tyne.

Commenting on the Cadet Challenge, Peter Snow said, "The Cadet Challenge is a wonderful scheme, not only is it testing the ingenuity and commitment of each of the Cadets, it is also helping to break down their misconceptions about blindness and promote inter-generational understanding."

The Lieutenant Governor of Jersey, Lt-General Andrew Ridgway presented a special award to the most outstanding cadet from the winning team, Enya Moisan. "It goes to a member of the kayak team, not the most confident kayaker but she overcame her fears and demonstrated a great deal of perseverance. She is an excellent role model for the cadets and young people in Jersey," he said.



Peter Snow tried his hand at the acoustic rifle.



You went how fast?! Billy Baxter discusses motorbike speeds.



TS Eastbourne and TS Flamingo with their prize trophies.

St Dunstaner Bernard Holden talks to Simon Rogers about keeping life on track through war and peace.

Steam stalwart celebrates his 100th birthday

ST DUNSTANER Bernard Holden celebrated his 100th birthday at the Bluebell Railway continuing an association with trains that began on the day he was born. It could be said that railways are in his blood.

"I was born at Barcombe Station where my father was Station Master," said Bernard. "That was in 1908." His family moved to Steyning and with the start of the First World War early memories are coloured with troop and ammunition movements, Canadian soldiers passing through on their way to Shoreham. "My father was very busy through that time. I had an older brother, he got called up in the First War. He joined the Royal Marines Infantry in 1916. They were the early Commandos of the Navy. He was sent to the Dardanelles. Churchill started that, and it was his downfall. He sent them to



Staff at Barcombe Station in 1903.

Turkey thinking it would be a walk over, that they would force their way up through Turkey but that didn't happen. He described it as the "Underbelly of Europe." Churchill was a great man for sayings like that."

With the Dardanelles Expedition turning sour Bernard's brother was taken off the front line for clerical duties at the HQ because he had learnt shorthand.

"That saved his life then, but when he came home he contracted tuberculosis and died shortly after."

Work opportunities were limited following the First World War but Bernard joined the railways as a junior clerk at Waterloo in 1925. He recalls the divisions of the General Strike the following year. "It didn't last long, the miners went on strike, others came out in

support but the other unions didn't have any money to pay strikers. Labour was cheap, so they just starved them out. The railway people lasted about two weeks. My senior clerk said to me 'Don't you go on strike boy because they will give you the sack'. So I was the only one working on this country railway station. Those who were on strike were pretty decent to me because of this Station Master."

One immediate result of the strike concerned milk deliveries to London. The 17-gallon milk churns were moved onto Army trucks for delivery. "It never came back," said Bernard. "That was the beginning of the end of the country branch lines, the traffic never came back."

Bernard was made redundant though he filled in at various stations. "They didn't stand me off, but come 1930 things got a bit busy. Hitler started making himself a nuisance and they didn't know what to expect.

"Churchill had told them there would be another war, but they didn't think that after the carnage of the 14-18 war that there would possibly be another one.

Hitler was a different kettle of fish to anyone else. He was a Dictator and he took the whole of the German nation with him.

"Come 1938, I was working at Head Office in London. We used to work half day Saturday like the banks, 12 o'clock we used to finish, but this time we were told a special messenger was coming over with an emergency timetable in case the Germans invaded. They didn't know what Hitler would do, they had no measure of his sanity or strength."

Bernard was charged with taking the emergency timetable round to other London suburban stations. His last port of call was Victoria. "My uncle had been station master there, but another man had taken

over. I was under instruction not to travel by public transport, only to use the railway from London Bridge to Victoria so these secret timetables wouldn't fall into enemy hands.

"I spoke to the Deputy station Master at Victoria and he said 'That's all right, come here last, I'll be here till 10.' So I set off round New Cross, Norwood, Croydon, Clapham Junction. They all had to sign for these papers and then put them in the safe. When I got to Victoria I walked into a bear's nest. The Senior Station Master had stayed behind. He was a bit of a tartar and gave me a lecture on the Germans. They way he spoke you'd think they were arriving on the next train.

"What I didn't know then



Steyning Railway Station during the General Strike.



French troops arrive at Dover after the Dunkirk evacuation.

was that he'd been in the First World War in the Railway Operations Division, in France, pushing trains of ammunition up to the Front Line. One day the Germans had tried to break through and make a bolt for Calais. They were pushing trucks of ammo forward but British troops were coming back. He slowly drew the train back from enemy lines and got it back behind British Lines. He got the Military Cross for that."

When the time came for Bernard to join the Army he expressed a desire to continue working with trains. As a result, he was taken into the Royal Engineers with the Railway Operations Company.

"We were involved with Dunkirk, getting all the returning troops off to their new destinations. We were lucky that the Germans didn't send their aircraft over because they could have cut us off if they had attacked from behind."



Bernard visited the Taj Mahal during his years in India.

Bernard then accepted a commission with the Indian Army, again working the railways. "It's not that the Indian Army didn't have any officers, but they were in better jobs and there was no incentive for them to change," said Bernard.

Fears that the Russians would go into India proved to be unfounded, but the threat remained from Japan. Bernard points out that the death railways had a military objective, to allow Japanese forces a way through Burma to India. As prisoners of war were forced to lay tracks through the jungle, Allied Forces prepared a counter offensive on the other side.

It was in India that Bernard first met the Forces

Sweetheart, Vera Lynn. "The others kept talking about her. I hadn't heard her and didn't know anything about her then, but men who had just joined us from England kept talking about her.

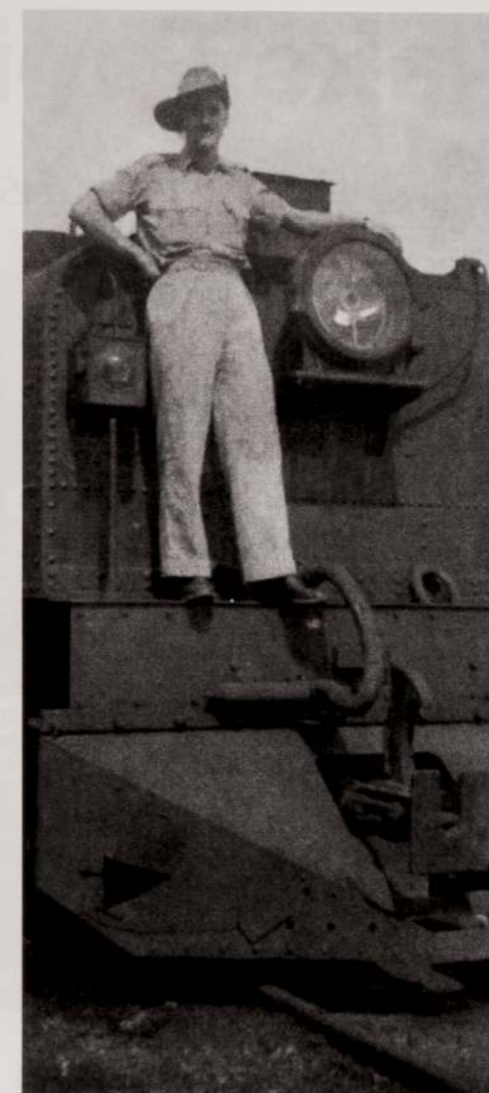
"She was due to sing at an airfield they had cleared, but one officer said 'If you don't stop going on about this warbling woman you won't have a carriage to go in.'"

As it turned out, alternative transport was found and Bernard attended Vera's concert. "She was under armed guard, they wouldn't risk ENSA performers."

They met again in recent years and share a link through the same branch of The Royal British Legion. Dame Vera is President of the Ladies' section, Bernard President of the Men's.

Bernard returned to the UK in 1946 and was at a cricket match when an old boss sat down beside him and said "Are you ready to do some work yet?"

"He didn't say hello, or anything else, just are you ready to work. I'll never forget that." Bernard returned to UK railways,



Bernard in India. All images in this feature come from his biography, *Let Smoke Make Steam*.

working for South Eastern and Great Western Services. He added that being "late back" he lost some seniority, but it doesn't seem to have held him back.

Life took a turn in 1959, when four students drew him into a scheme to run a local railway line, scheduled for the chop. Bernard saw its future as a leisure line rather than a public service and he was instrumental in

the formation of the Bluebell Railway line.

Does he have a preference for steam over electric trains? "No, you've got all the bother of firing up the engines and then disposing of the ash. Electric is what you want for getting people into London. Steam trains are fine as a piece of history, as a leisure line."

Bernard followed his retirement from British Rail by becoming Station Master for the Bluebell line. He was awarded the MBE for services to Railway preservation in 1992.

He remains President of the Bluebell Railway and was feted by 50 members of the Royal Engineers Association formed an honour guard at Sheffield Park Station on his birthday. One of the steam trains was given a new name plate reading Centenarian, and he was cheered by fellow members of the Royal British Legion.

Bernard is thoughtful about proposed extensions to the Bluebell Line, but with the track record of his last 100 years he adds "I will be first in line for a ticket when they do it."

Runners make Capital effort

Simon Rogers stays on the trail of St Dunstan's Marathon team



Nearly 18-miles and Maria was still going strong.



Team St Dunstan's in Greenwich.

FIVE ST DUNSTANERS were amongst the 34,000 people who completed all 26.2 miles of the London Marathon on 13 April. On a fresh Sunday morning, Marathon veterans Don Planner, Iain Millard and Steve Sparkes were joined by fresh faces Maria Pikulski and Craig Lundberg. Also on the team were Louise Timms and Alex White from St Dunstan's Sports & Recreation department, Woppy Keeling, wife of St Dunstan's Vice Chairman Major-General Andrew Keeling, and her son Tom Heal, and Janet Carter and Peter Adams, guiding Maria and Don.

Three other runners, Leah Griffin from RAF Leuchars, Nicola Miles from Herne Bay, Kent, and Duncan Godber of Thorney, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire were also pounding the streets of London to raise funds to support St Dunstan's.

Weather was variable! The sun, when it was out, vied with a chill wind and persistent showers. Despite these obstacles, Team St Dunstan's persevered as over 35,000 runners started the run in Blackheath.

Steve Sparkes, aged 47, was the first St Dunstaner to reach the finish, chest raw

but otherwise ebullient. It was his 4th time on the run and he maintained a healthy lead.

Next up was St Dunstaner Maria Pikulski, aged 47. "I feel great," she said. "It was wonderful. It's a one time thing, but you've got to do it. It's a great experience."

Following on her heels were Iain Millard, aged 49, on his eighth Marathon, and Craig Lundberg, aged 22, on his first. Craig had suffered a leg injury around 16-miles, but persevered. At the start, he had announced his determination to finish, and that he did. Also battling with a painful knee was Don Planner, aged 60. Last year excessive heat forced Don out of the race, but this year he kept going, breaking through the pain barrier for his 18th marathon.

Duncan Godber	3:10:49
Leah Griffin	3:52:34
Woppy Keeling	3:54:45
Tom Heal	3:54:45
Steve Sparkes	4:29:34
Alex White	4:29:34
Nicola Miles	5:34:49
Maria Pikulski	5:50:28
Janet Carter	5:50:28
Craig Lundberg	5:53:51
Iain Millard	5:53:51
Louise Timms	5:53:51
Don Planner	6:49:59
Peter Adams	6:49:59



Louise, Craig and Iain on the move.



That has got to hurt!
Alex and Sparky in Docklands.

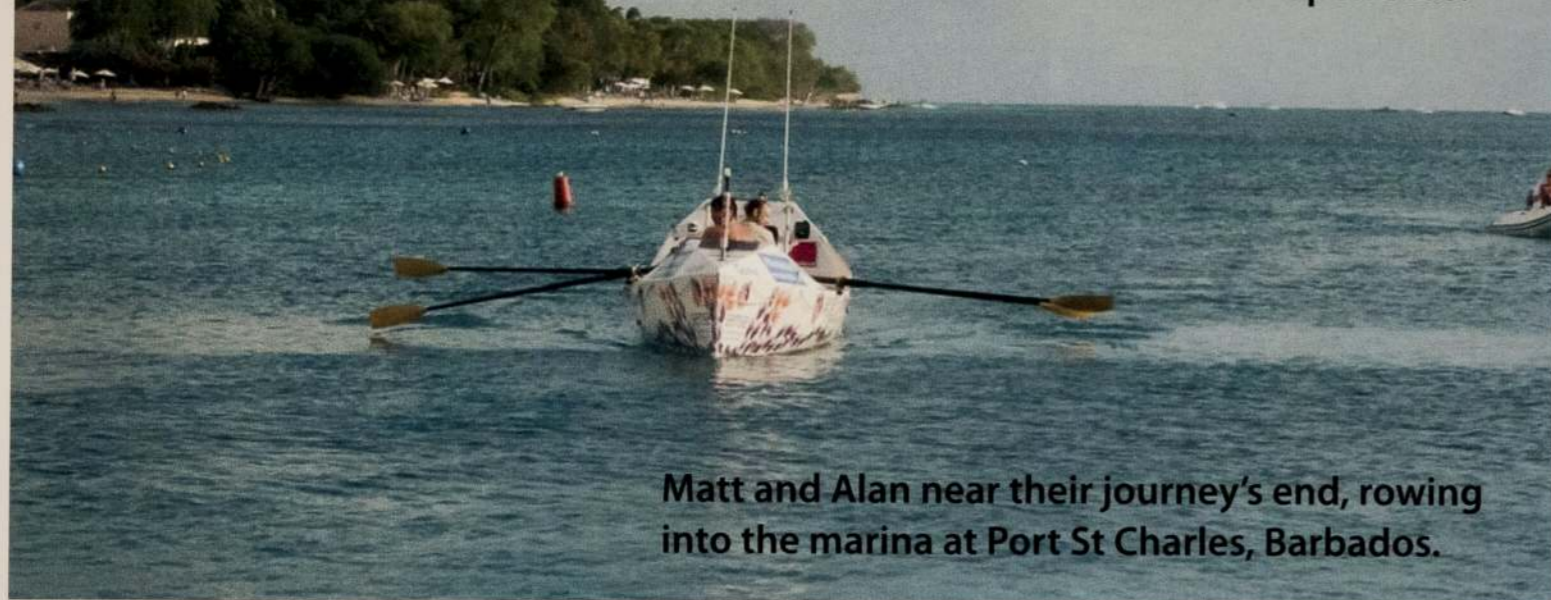
Well done! Don and Peter hit The Mall.

Land at last!

Alan Lock becomes the first visually-impaired oarsman to row across the Atlantic Ocean



Alan in open seas.



Matt and Alan near their journey's end, rowing into the marina at Port St Charles, Barbados.

AFTER A GRUELLING 86 DAYS AT SEA, Royal Navy St Dunstaner Alan Lock, aged 28, successfully crossed the Atlantic to arrive at Port St Charles in Barbados on Sunday 6 April. He is set to earn a place in the Guinness Book of Records as the first registered blind man to row nearly 3,000 miles across the Atlantic Ocean.

"I'm just feeling a bit sore," he said when asked if he had his land legs back. "And I have certainly lost a hell of a lot of weight. I had beefed up before setting out, but all the muscle I put on before has gone. I've lost about two-and-a-half stone."

Alan was discharged from the Navy after cone-rod dystrophy destroyed his central vision. However, that didn't prevent him setting to sea again in a row boat with builder and champion rower Matt Boreham, aged 38. They aimed to row 2,987 miles of ocean to raise funds for Sense, the deafblind charity.



Almost there! Land is but a few feet away.

Leaving Tenerife on 11 January, over the following three months they endured all the unfettered forces of the ocean. Weather conditions were so bad that on some occasions they were actually going backwards. As it was, they had to abandon their original plan of going to Antigua, wind and currents pushed them south and Barbados became a better option for ensuring a successful conclusion to their journey.

"One thing that will stay with me is when about 100 dolphins swam past," said Alan. "On the other hand when our water maker broke it was rather scary. It was in the middle of a storm and we made a quick repair, but if it hadn't succeeded that would have been the end of it."

The Gemini rowboat was designed to be self-righting, though Alan and Matt also used safety lines in case they were swept over. As it was, high waves could wash away food and drinks in a second.

Chocolate supplies were an early casualty and Alan and Matt also went through three salt encrusted cookers during their voyage.

Just as they thought they were on a home stretch, weather conditions worsened. "It's very frustrating continuously rowing hard for almost 3,000 miles and still having to battle our way through the last few hundred miles," said Alan before they reached Barbados. "This is Matt's fourth Atlantic row and he says it's the worst conditions he's ever experienced. When we do finish we'll know we've done it against the odds!"

"The thought of a proper bed is now very appealing as we both feel very tired. We usually go to sleep just after midnight and get up at about 8am. In those eight hours we'll probably get a maximum of four to

five hours decent sleep, in 30 to 45 minute chunks, as the continuous noise of the waves hitting Gemini and the sudden movement of the boat regularly wakes us."

Their boat was unaccompanied and faced the most extreme of weather conditions. As a result, their bodies are now covered in salt sores and blisters.

Touching dry sand on the shores of Barbados, an emotional Alan, said, "This is a dream come true for me and I am so proud to show what people who are blind can achieve." Alan and Matt have raised around £17,000 for Sense to date and are hoping to push that figure higher by selling their boat.



Welcome ashore! Alan is greeted by his mum.

Casting off the shackles!



Norman Kerslake, Peter Brice, Sydney Gwillim, Alf Lockhart, Bill Griffiths, Tom Hart, Sidney Tavender, Charles Blockley, Richard Tavener, Joseph Hirsh, Joe Ponting, Sir John Gingell, Leslie Sims, Henry Smith, Gerald Barnard, Bob Dixon and Henry Sheridan.

ST DUNSTAN'S EX-PRISONERS of War held their annual reunion at Ovingdean on April 4-6. The weekend began with an informal get-together in the Blue Room on the Friday evening, allowing old acquaintances to be renewed and new ones to be established.

The group unites St Dunstaners who have

Simon Rogers reports

been captured by enemy forces in various conflicts, most during the Second World War, but some from the Korean War. Stories of the bad old days were mixed with hopes for a better tomorrow. Royal Signals St Dunstaner Sydney Gwillim seemed incredulous at the recent revelation that the troopship he boarded

had been sunk by a British submarine. "We were in the sea for ages," he said. "The Japanese Navy were actually quite decent to us when they picked us up." What followed once on land was a different matter, but that remained unstated.

The Annual General Meeting next morning advanced with cool efficiency, the group's President Sir John Gingell



Sydney Gwillim tells Tom Hart that he recently discovered that he had been sunk by a British submarine before being captured during the Fall of Singapore.



Sapper Gerald Barnard was amongst St Dunstaners at the Ex-POW Reunion.



Air Commodore Charles Clarke spoke of life as a prisoner of the Germans during World War II. He was one of many forced onto the Long March when the Russians advanced.



St Dunstaner Sidney Tavender's map of FEPOW camps was accepted with gratitude by St Dunstan's President Ray Hazan, with Ex-Prisoner of War representation from Tom Hart, Bill Griffiths and Sir John Gingell. It charts the positions of 288 camps where Allied soldiers were held captive or forced into labour. It will be displayed at each St Dunstan's centre, Ovingdean, London and Sheffield.

making light of his role as “an acolyte of Elizabeth Dacre.” Minutes for the previous year were accepted and the standing committee was re-elected for another term.

As usual, the main event was the annual dinner in the Winter Garden where the group welcomed guests such as St Dunstan’s President Ray Hazan, Chairman Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN, Manager Secretariat Richard McCrow, Ovingdean Manager Dick Lane, Admissions Officer David Habershon and St Dunstan’s Padre Father Martin Morgan.

The guest of honour was Air Commodore Charles Clarke who recounted some of his own experience as a Prisoner of War. He recalled his friendship with a late St Dunstan’s POW, Stewart Harris who had endured much at the hands of the SS.

“We had a very rapid turn over of crews. I was lucky to survive 18 operations,” he said. “Six of these were trips to Berlin at the height of the offensive. I was eventually shot down over Germany and ended up a prisoner in Stalug Luft III of Great Escape fame or notoriety



Ex-Prisoners of War Peter Brice and Leslie Sims.

because, you will remember, it is where 50 officers ended up being murdered after the escape. They were chosen at random.”

He went onto describe the chill conditions during The Long March when the Russian advance prompted the Germans to retreat. There was no preparation as the prisoners were herded towards Berlin.

The evening advanced with a few words from Billy Griffiths and presentations from Tom Hart. St Dunstaner Sidney Tavender presented St Dunstan’s with a map detailing the locations of POW camps in the Far East. It was accepted with thanks from St Dunstan’s President Ray Hazan. “It is my very

great privilege on behalf of St Dunstan’s to accept this picture from Sidney,” he said. “I understand it is one of only three, so it is very special in its own right. More important than that, it will be shared between Brighton, London, Sheffield, and Llandudno. Hopefully all who look upon it will realise the great sacrifice made by POWs past and present.”

Sunday’s Service of Remembrance was almost a re-creation of the Long March itself. Snows swept across England and a thick white layer continued to fall as everyone made their way down to the Chapel. Father Martin Morgan conducted the Service with Tom Hart delivering the final exhortation.

Path of Remembrance

David Habershon on improvements to the St Dunstan’s Walkway at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire

MANY ST DUNSTANERS will have enjoyed a visit to the National Memorial Arboretum which is set within the National Forest of Staffordshire, at Alrewas near Lichfield. For those who haven’t been there, the Arboretum comprises 150 acres of trees and memorials devoted to the concept of Remembrance and was established in 1997, on former gravel and sand pits. It already contains 130 memorials of national significance.

In addition, the Arboretum is now the home of the new Armed Forces Memorial which was opened in October 2007 by Her Majesty The Queen. This striking and emotive memorial has quickly assumed national significance. It gives recognition and thanks to those who have died whilst on duty or as a result of terrorist action since the Second World War, and acknowledges the enduring



sacrifice of those who mourn their loss.

Many service charities have made their mark at this lovely place and St Dunstan’s is no exception. In prime position is the St Dunstan’s Walkway, a short path which links the visitor centre and the chapel. Work has already started to improve this Walkway, to increase awareness of St Dunstan’s. The central feature will be a large St Dunstan’s crest on the ground which is now being constructed by St Dunstaners at the Ovingdean craft workshop. This will be surrounded by four stone benches and the pathway will be re-surfaced with bricks, replacing the tarmac and gravel. The

Walkway is bordered with scented shrubs to give pleasure to those who have lost their sight. Plaques will be prominently placed at each end of the path to mark St Dunstan’s “ownership”. The work should be complete by the end of July 2008.

Altogether the Arboretum is a unique haven of contemplation and hope for the future. You can both enjoy and learn about the trees and their surroundings, and reflect upon their special symbolism.

The Arboretum has a lot to offer both young and old. If you haven’t visited before, do go for a day out to enjoy the peace and tranquillity, the trees, the memorials, the history, the sense of national pride. Lunch or drinks are served in the Arbour Restaurant and there is a gift shop. Above all, very soon you will be able to admire the newly refurbished St Dunstan’s Walkway with pride.

ASK ROD

Your questions and queries answered by the ROVI (Rehabilitation Officer for the Visually Impaired) on Duty

Tel: 01273 391447

E-mail: rovi@duty@st-dunstans.org.uk

Is your equipment collecting dust?

FOLLOWING February's item about the ROVI on Duty system, we'd like to encourage people to contact us if they have sight loss related equipment at home, issued by St Dunstan's Rehabilitation & Training department, which is not being used. It may be that you haven't used something for a time, and are not sure how best to make it work now, or that you feel it is no longer the right piece of equipment for you. Whatever the reason, we'd like to talk about how you might start using it again or, if appropriate, suggesting another piece of equipment which might suit you better.

If the equipment isn't going to be of use to

you any more, we'll help make arrangements for it to be returned to St Dunstan's Ovingdean so that we can re-issue it. The types of equipment we're thinking about are magnifying glasses, electronic magnifiers (CCTVs), scanners, canes, talking and easy to see clocks and watches. If you have equipment which no longer works, we'd also like to know about it, but it must be something which has been supplied by the Rehabilitation & Training department.

The number to ring is 01273 391447 which will put you through to the Duty ROVI. We expect this service to be quite busy once the article has been published, so please leave a message with your name and where you live so we can ring you back, or try again later if you prefer.

Golfing-a-go-go at Rusper

by Don Oliver

ST DUNSTAN'S GOLFERS teed off for a new season at Rusper Golf Course on 12-13 April. They managed to get some golf in despite torrential rain, though it was obvious that everybody was a bit rusty and needed the weekend to loosen up a bit.

The first day was taken up with some lessons from Janice Arnold and on the Sunday players managed to complete nine holes. St Dunstaners George Jackson and Andy Allott made their Rusper debut with five others.

The new handicapping system is now enforced and the winner for April was this year's captain, St Dunstaner Mike Tumilson.

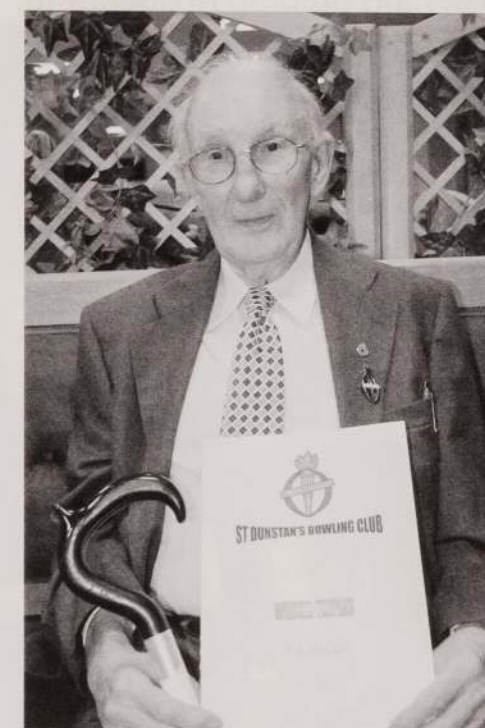
See you back at Rusper Golf Course on 17-18 May and don't forget the Invitation Day at Wildwood on 29 June.

A good game for the season

Bob Osborne has the latest results from the Bowling Club

THE ST DUNSTAN'S Spring National Bowls tournament ran from 2-15 March. We were very pleased to welcome three new members to the game - Nellie Robertson, Julie Waters and Ron Thorpe. However, since our last meeting, we have lost one of our members, Denis Busby, and he will be sadly missed.

What would we do without our helpers? As usual, it would not have been a successful time without their participation. Many thanks are owed to John Mugan, and Roger and Jack from Saltdean Bowling Club. We were particularly pleased to welcome Jack back after his serious illness.



Three times as pleased! Sid Bowden was delighted that his team won the triples.

As usual our ladies who looked after our tea and coffee breaks with their usual aplomb also deserve

a round of applause. That should also extend to all the staff who helped us during our two weeks.

RESULTS

SINGLES

- 1st Alan Gibson
- 2nd Lionel James
- 3rd Peter Hammond

PAIRS

- 1st Graham Johnston and Bob Osborne
- 2nd James Poole and Lionel James

TRIPLES

- 1st John Powell, Sid Bowden, and Peter Hammond
- 2nd Ted Arnold, Marjorie Scott, and Bob Osborne

We also had our "Fun Four" where the ladies could join in and the winners were Nellie Robertson, Kate Allen, Bob Osborne and Bill Finbow.

Our next tournament will be held Sunday, 26 October to Saturday, 8 November when we hope you will all be able to join us.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

In 1958, St Dunstaner John Hughes of Rock Ferry was feted for saving his neighbour during a household blaze. He rolled Mrs Evans in a carpet to smother burning clothes while his wife telephoned for an ambulance.

Sir Ian Fraser revealed that he found a braille note a better reminder than tying a knot in his handkerchief. He added that blindness encourages a good memory, but in his case this did not extend to telephone numbers.

Now this is a quick march!

Stan Bowers wants to storm the castle - Commando style!

SOME OF YOU old sweats out there may have volunteered or taken part in the programme of training Commando's in the 1940's. The Commando recruits were taken by train to Spean Bridge in Scotland. From the moment they arrived, training started in the majestic but very harsh and inhospitable conditions that characterise the Great Glen Way. Their mission, if they chose to accept it, was to leave the railway station on a seven-mile speed march to The Commando Basic Training Centre carrying a minimum 36lb Bergen on their backs.

Worse to come, if they didn't get to Achnacarry House, also known as "Castle Commando", within one hour they were RTU'd - Returned To Unit, by way of marching back to the railway station and waiting for the next train out. I'm not sure if they got a better deal staying. The area has wonderful scenery and is a lovely place for a holiday,



A Company, ACF with our St Dunstaners at Spean Bridge.

but for the recruits it would have been no fun, just very hard work.

Back in 1996, a group of former Royal Marines decided to re-enact the march for charity and every year since they have been doing a great job doing the run and raising loads of money for good causes.

In January this year, St Dunstaner Colin Williamson rang me up and asked if I fancied a little run in Scotland on 8 March. I

said yes, which was when he revealed the seven-miles in under an hour part.

Colin added that we would be running with a group of cadets from A Company, Yorkshire North & West ACF under the command of 2Lt J. Holmes. Apart from Colin, the team also included St Dunstaners Peter Walker, Peter Lindsay and Craig Lundberg.

Our accommodation was at the local village hall along with 30 other servicemen,

two showers, two loos and four sinks between the lot of us! Very friendly washing arrangements, but we managed. We bedded down in a little room which was a bit quieter than the main hall after a few beers in the local pub.

We had an early night, most of us nervously thinking of what was to come the next day. Morning arrived along with rain, rain, and more rain. Since crossing the border, it had not stopped raining, that nice drizzle rain that gets into everything. Wet weather gear was a waste of time.

We met up with A Company and the other mad fools taking part. The guys who were doing the proper run had to have their Bergens weighed. Each had to be 36lbs at the start and would be weighed again at the end.

St Dunstaners and the old and bold didn't have to carry any weight, so they made their way to the start line. On the other hand, I had to drive the bus up to Achnacarry House for the transport back to Spean Bridge.

I then ran back to the halfway point to meet the lads. I didn't quite get there before

I met up with Craig and Peter Lindsay. I'm not sure if the brave Corporal Chris McCarthy, ACF was smiling or grimacing, but he did a grand job in guiding our two younger members to a very respectable time of 1 hour, 5 minutes. Well done lads!

Next came Peter Walker. Peter was jogging along, thinking of a nice cold beer. Some way behind came Colin doing his Paula Radcliffe impersonation.

The guys who were doing the run proper started half-an-hour after the old and bold, but they didn't take long to catch up. The first runner home made it just under the hour. Amazing,

with all the weight they were carrying. I'm sure many gallons of sweat were lost that day, but everyone was very pleased to see the finish line.

The route started at the railway station, on to the road and a mile-and-a-half along a steady but steep hill towards the Commando Memorial, then turning left to follow the tracks for three-and-a-half-miles to the canal bridge at Gairloch, the track then followed the beautiful shore line of Loch Lochy and into the estate of the Clan Cameron and Achnacarry House. Amazingly, while the run was going on, the rain ceased for an hour but as



And they're off! A Company, ACF lead the way.

the Tail-End Charlies were making it home the heavens opened up again.

After many cups of hot NAAFI tea and lots of back slapping and congratulations to everyone and from everyone, we headed for the warmth and dry of the transport back to Spean Bridge.

Later in the evening, we were all invited to an

informal dinner at an hotel in Fort William. As the winners went to collect their trophies, there was an announcement Of a special trophy to be awarded to the St Dunstan's team and I froze as Craig and I stood up to go to receive the trophy. Everyone in the dinning room stood up, cheered and applauded, as they gave us and the team a standing ovation. Very humbling, but a very proud moment.

We spent some time talking to the lads, most of them special forces, about St Dunstan's and the work we do. I know they all will remember us, but hopefully they won't need our services. We then headed back to Spean Bridge and the bar where we met up with a bunch of former Royals, who we met earlier. I'm not sure what time the landlord kicked us out, but it was a great night.

REUNION ROUND-UP

THE 2008 REUNION Season got off to a flying start at St Dunstan's Ovingdean with the Brighton (I) gathering on 18 March. Air Vice Marshal Richard Kyle, CB, MBE presided on behalf of St Dunstan's Council and St Dunstaner Paul Walker made the reply for those present. There were 22 St Dunstaners and two widows at the function.

The Derby Reunion on 19 March was held at the Midland Hotel, Derby, Derbyshire. St Dunstan's President Ray Hazan presided, while St Dunstaner Colin Green made the reply on behalf

of the 45 St Dunstaners and two widows attending.

Ray Hazan was also presiding at the Middlesbrough Reunion held at the Thistle Hotel, Fry Street, Middlesbrough on 3 April. There were 20 St Dunstaners and five widows attending. WAAF St Dunstaner Ruby Corner of Stokesley replied on behalf of those present and the ROVIs from St Dunstan's Sheffield were out in force with a display of equipment and useful gadgets.

There were 31 St Dunstaners and seven widows at the Cambridge Belfry Hotel,

Cambourne, Cambridge for the Cambridge Reunion on 9 April. St Dunstan's Chairman Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox, RN took the helm as presiding member of St Dunstan's Council. St Dunstaner Tony Lee replied on behalf of those present.

The Birmingham Reunion at The Botanical Gardens, Westbourne Road, Edgbaston, on 15 April brought together 64 St Dunstaners and six widows. Timothy Bacon was the member of St Dunstan's Council presiding, while St Dunstaner Ray Whitehouse gave the vote of thanks.

POETS' CORNER

Poems by St Dunstaners from Blackpool and Gillingham, Kent

Thinking back by Bill Dixon

I'm thinking back to the days gone by,
When I sailed the seas 'neath a leaden sky.
The type of scene the U-Boats used,
To make our convoys more confused.
Where will those bastards strike next time,
Whilst we're sailing line on line.
Keeping formation as we're told to do,
To let our speeding escorts through.
To catch those U-Boats taking sight,
Before the next torpedo strikes.
To sink a ship midst mortal cries,
It's fate again - who lives - who dies?

We breathe out thanks - you'll understand,
3,000 miles before we land.
So what of tomorrow; or the very next day,
Those U-Boats can't be far away.
They'll send torpedoes in our midst,
FATE will decide who's hit - who's missed.

The morning broke - another day,
Eat, work & sleep, to earn our pay.
The BOSUN walking fore then aft,
Ships work to do - he knows his craft.

WITHOUT A SIGN, THOSE CLANGING BELLS
Danger's coming near,
"Which side - what side," I hear you cry.
Strain your eyes and ears,
That German tin-fish meant for us,
Goes on its deadly way,
It missed us by a yard or two

FATE HAS RULED THIS DAY!

The crisis gone as we sail on,
My thoughts on wife and kids.
I hope to see my home again,
And mates I've sorely missed.
It nearly wasn't so, you know,
When I go thinking back.
That yard or two they missed us by,
Nearly was on track!

There'd be no more of Sally, little Steve & Mac,
There'd be no more my mates to joke and fool,
There'd be no eagerly waiting outside school.

There'd be no more gentle loving
Just my Sal and me,
She's here beside me sleeping.
As my vigil I am keeping.
My mind goes on repeating
& thinking back at sea!

Relaxer Vous by Joan Price

Relaxer Vous, Relaxer Vous,
That's the healthy thing to do
Troubles come and troubles go
You hit the high and then the low.
That will help a long life's span
With worth your day just to try to fill
But don't expect that others will
If one and all will play their part
It cheers you up and warms the heart.
Visit St Dunstan's - a good place to start
To cheer you up and warm the heart.

Welcome to St Dunstan's

Kenneth Aiken-Jones of Langold, Worksop, Nottinghamshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1946 to 1952.

Doreen Arthurs of Harrow, Middlesex served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1947 to 1950.

Stanley Bartholomew of Ongar, Essex served in the North Staffordshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's), Royal Army Ordnance Corps and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1940 to 1946.

Thomas Bishop of Portslade, East Sussex served in the Royal Signals from 1940 to 1944.

Leslie Bottrell of Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria served in the Royal Navy from 1945 to 1946 and then the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1950 to 1962.

Grace Carroll of Harrogate, North Yorkshire served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1941 to 1945.

Barbara Collier of Truro, Cornwall served in the

Women's Royal Naval Service from 1943 to 1946.

Tony Cooke of Wigan, Lancashire served as Lieutenant in the Royal Navy from 1947 to 1975.

Mary Corran of Lichfield, Staffordshire served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Sidonie Dawson of Brighton served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1942 to 1945.

John Evans of Fareham, Hampshire served as Signaller in the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1949.

Charles Forman of Edinburgh served as a Stoker in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1947.

Alec Glover of Somersham, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1962 to 1984.

Walter Glynn of North Shields, Tyne and Wear served in the Royal Engineers from 1940 to 1944.

Dorothy Godfrey of Brighton served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1943 to 1947.

Sybil Henderson of Brighton served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1942 to 1943.

George Hewitt of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1940 to 1945 and then the London Irish Rifles until 1946.

Ian Hogarth of Kendal, Cumbria served in the Royal Engineers in 1939.

Cyril Hore of Ascot, Berkshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Derek Illingworth of West Pelton, Stanley, County Durham served in the General Service Corps and as Lance Corporal Royal Signals between 1950 and 1960.

Barbara Jackson of Binfield, Bracknell, Berkshire served as Subaltern in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1939 to 1945.

Pandelis Jerouiaconou of Bedford, Bedfordshire served in the Cyprus Volunteer Force from 1942 to 1946.

David John of Uttoxeter, Staffordshire served as Stoker Mechanic in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1948.

Cecil Johnson of Scawby, Brigg, South Humberside served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1947.

John Lawson of Hull, North Humberside served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1943 to 1947.

Cyril Luxton of Hove, East Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

Robert McDowell of Abergele, Clwyd served in the South Lancashire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's Volunteers) and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers between 1942 and 1946.

Leo McMahon of Dudley, Cramlington, Northumberland served in Germany with the Royal Signals from 1955 to 1957.

Peter McNeil of Plymstock, Plymouth, Devon served in

the Army from 1945 to 1948 and again from 1951 to 1963.

Joan MacKay of Gosport, Hampshire served in the Women's Royal Army Corps from 1958 to 1964.

David Middleton of Feniton, Honiton, Devon served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1957 to 1960.

Kenneth Moss of Stainforth, Doncaster, South Yorkshire served in the Royal Navy from 1944 to 1948.

Joan Naylor of Lychpit, Basingstoke, Hampshire served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1942 to 1945.

Adrian Neat of Cwmbran, Gwent served in the Royal Engineers from 1966 to 2007.

Alan Newman of Hounslow, Middlesex served in the Royal Army Pay Corps from 1942 to 1947.

Patricia Nichols of Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1941 to 1945.

Dennis Noble of Bristol, Avon served in the Royal Marines from 1942 to 1946.

Lance Corporal Christopher Nowell of Dronfield, Derbyshire has been serving in the King's Royal Hussars since 2001.

Gerard Parle of Liverpool, Merseyside served in the Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps and then as Sapper in the Royal Engineers between 1939 and 1942.

Victor Perry of Newport Pagnell, Milton Keynes served in the Royal Artillery from 1939 to 1945.

Betty Punnett of Henfield, West Sussex served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1945 to 1948.

Mollie Read of Surbiton, Surrey served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1943 to 1946.

Graham Richards of Grayshott, Hindhead, Surrey served in the Royal Armoured Corps from 1954 to 1956.

Trevor Rose of Spalding, Lincolnshire served in the Royal Lincolnshire Regiment from 1956 to 1958.

Dr Frederick Shaw of Hunstanton, Norfolk served in the Royal Sussex Regiment from 1947 to 1949.

Allen Shorter of Crawley, West Sussex served in India with the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1947.

Grace Smith of Liverpool, Merseyside served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1942 to 1946.

William Smith of Wantage, Oxfordshire served in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve from 1943 to 1947.

Wilfred Smithson of Preston, Lancashire served in the Royal Army Service Corps and General Service Corps between 1945 and 1948.

Alfred Springate of Gloucester, Gloucestershire served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1945 to 1948.

Derek Stead of Lepton, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire served in the Merchant Navy

from 1943 to 1946 and then the Royal Air Force until 1952.

Audrey Stevens of Melksham, Wiltshire served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1942 to 1946.

Charles Talkington of Northwood, Middlesex served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Eric Tancred of Middleton, Manchester served in the Royal Signals and General Service Corps between 1945 and 1948.

Cyril Wilson of South Shields, Tyne and Wear served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

John Wilson of Doncaster, South Yorkshire served in the General Service Corps, 54 Training Regiment and 15th/19th King's Royal Hussars from 1945 to 1948.

Harry Wood of Sheffield, South Yorkshire served in the Royal Artillery from 1939 to 1946.

Millicent Woodgate of Exeter, Devon served in the Royal Army Pay Corps from 1941 to 1945.

Ten Answers

Answers to quiz on page 13.

- 1) A cross;
- 2) Virgin Islands;
- 3) Red;
- 4) St David;
- 5) Condor;
- 6) 6 February;
- 7) George Washington;
- 8) Sufficiently to allow room for an imaginary flag of the same size, the invisible flag of death;
- 9) Star;
- 10) Those of India, Nepal, Britain and the United Nations.

BEER OF THE MONTH

by Colin Williamson

Pontefract Liquorice Stout

A unique beer experience. This is a traditional stout, brewed with a blend of roasted dark malts infused with liquorice, the same liquorice used in the famous Pontefract cake. The Yorkshire town of Pontefract having been associated with

liquorice since the 16th century. This stout has an ABV of 6 per cent and is full bodied and easily drinkable.

A good opportunity to sample this beer is at the Pontefract Liquorice Festival which will be held 12-13 July. The Sunday is National Liquorice Day.

Family News

BIRTHS

Congratulations on the birth of:

Anika Rose Wilson on 2 December to Jacqueline and Russell Wilson. She is not only the great-granddaughter of Anne Watkins and late St Dunstaner Danny Watkins, but also the great-great-granddaughter of St Dunstaner Christopher Brennan.

Noah on 24 December. He is the first great-grandson of Donald and Betty Lorenz of Blofield, Norwich, Norfolk.

Faye Davy, weighing in at 6lb, 14oz on 8 March. She is the 13th grandchild of Leslie and Jenny Davy of Haroldwood, Romford, Essex.

Kelvin James Cooke, weighing 7lbs, 7oz, on 6 April. He is the first great-grandson of Alistair and Deania Reid of Ventnor, Isle of Wight. Granddaughter Lydia and her husband Mark are the proud parents.

SILVER ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Christopher and Joyce Ottewell of Llandrindod Wells, Powys on 7 April.

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Arthur and Elizabeth Burns of Southampton, Hampshire on 29 March.

Brian and Ann Hopkins of Wootton, King's Lynn, Norfolk on 19 April.

DIAMOND ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Frederick and Annie Allen of Wheatley Hill, Durham, County Durham on 27 March.

Ronald and Ivy Green of Cheadle, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire on 30 March.

Wally and Doreen Smith of Petts Wood, Orpington, Kent on 1 April.

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Hugh and Mary Hartley of Swanmore, Southampton, Hampshire celebrated 66 years of marriage on 24 March.

Henry and Dolly Jones of Great Barr, Birmingham, West Midlands celebrated 61 years of marriage on 29 March.

Stanley and Betty Watson of Layer de la Haye, Colchester, Essex celebrated 61 years of marriage on 29 March.

Arthur and Mabel Porter of Bognor Regis, West Sussex celebrated 66 years of marriage on 4 April.

Albert and Florrie Hodges of Leyland, Preston, Lancashire celebrated 61 years of marriage on 5 April.

Jim and Margaret Knowles of Darfield, Barnsley, South Yorkshire celebrated 64 years of marriage on 8 April.

Jim and Audrey Lowman of New Barnet, Hertfordshire celebrated 61 years of marriage on 8 April.

Eric and Grace Beck of Clacton-on-Sea, Essex celebrated 65 years of marriage on 10 April.

Thomas and Edith Mcloughlin of Spital, Wirral, Merseyside celebrated 65 years of marriage on 10 April.

Patrick and Helena Feeney of Southwick, West Sussex celebrated 61 years of marriage on 11 April.

Doug and Gwen White-Howles of East Bergholt, Colchester, Essex celebrated 67 years of marriage on 14 April.

Henry and Audrey Sheen of Magdalen, King's Lynn, Norfolk celebrated 67 years of marriage on 14 April.

Husband and wife St Dunstaners Sydney and Sandy Spring of Little Chalfont, Amersham, Buckinghamshire celebrated 68 years of marriage on 16 April.

Charles and Gladys Pay of Senacre, Maidstone, Kent celebrated 65 years of marriage on 17 April.

Kathleen and Ron Hope of Manchester celebrated 63 years of marriage on 18 April.

Gordon and Eileen Aston of Buckingham, Buckinghamshire celebrated 63 years of marriage on 19 April.

John and Betty Davies of Rotherhithe, London celebrated 61 years of marriage on 19 April.

DEATHS

We regret to announce the death of:

John Irwin on 23 December. He was the husband of Wren St Dunstaner Franky Irwin of Neasham, Darlington.

Myra Mason on 14 March. She was the wife of Royal Artillery St Dunstaner Joseph Mason of Grimsargh, Preston, Lancashire.

Frank Farmborough of East Harling, Norwich, Norfolk on 3 April. He was the

husband of Gladys Farmborough of East Harling, Norwich, Norfolk.

Isobel Preston of Harrogate, North Yorkshire on 18 March. She was the widow of Lieutenant Geoffrey Preston.

Elsie Dugdale of Moston, Manchester on 31 March. She was the widow of Norman Dugdale who served in the Cheshires.

Elizabeth Ward of Chandlers Ford, Hampshire on 7 April. She was the widow of St Dunstaner Kenneth Ward.

Elsie Briggs of Birkdale, Southport, Merseyside. She was the wife of the late Herbert Briggs.

Our sympathy goes to their family and friends.

In Memory

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

Herbert Briggs

Royal Army Service Corps

Herbert Briggs of Birkdale, Southport, Merseyside has passed away. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1943. Born in 1911, he became a decorator before joining the Royal Army Service Corps in 1941. He became a driver with 4th Armoured Brigade and was mentioned in despatches for gallant and distinguished conduct in the Middle East. Wounded in action, suffering gunshot wounds at Benghazi in 1942, he was casevaced to South Africa before being taken to St Dunstan's at Church Stretton. He

studied Braille and was briefly encouraged to become a shopkeeper, but turned towards physiotherapy as a career. In 1948, he set up in private practice developing it over nearly 40 years. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

Archibald English

Royal Engineers

Archibald Morris English of Salisbury, Wiltshire died on 8 March, aged 100. He joined the Royal Engineers in 1926 and trained as a surveyor, mapping and revising UK Ordnance Survey maps. He was commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant in 1942. Discharged in 1945, he joined the local authority in Southampton carrying out new surveys on the bombed town. He retired from Southampton City Council in the mid-1970s. His interests included cabinet making, DIY and gardening. Our sympathy goes to his widow Margaret and all members of the family.

Maurice Carter

Royal Army Medical Corps

Maurice Carter of Swindon, Wiltshire died on 10 March, aged 71. He was a collier in Durham before joining the Royal Army Medical Corps in 1956. Training at Crookham and Glasgow, he was posted to Hong Kong and then Singapore. He also served in the Middle East and was stationed in Saudi Arabia and Aden. Discharged in 1965, he worked at a sheet metal factory and then on the railway. He later became a baker's assistant. His interests included photography, stamp and postcard collecting, gardening and DIY. Our sympathy goes to his widow Rosalie, sons Michael, Dorren and Ivan, daughter Rachel and all other members of the family.

Edward Latham

Army Catering Corps

Edward Latham of Tuebrook, Liverpool, Merseyside died on 14 March, aged 88. He worked in the building trade and joined the Royal Artillery (TA) in 1939 and was embodied after five months. Transferring to the Army Catering Corps in 1944, he served in France, Germany and Spain. Discharged in 1947, he resumed work in the building trade and also worked for General Motors. Our sympathy goes to his widow Frances, daughter Brenda, and all the family.

Patrick Magee

Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

Patrick Magee of Gosport, Hampshire died on 14 March, aged 87. He joined the Royal Army Ordnance Corps in 1940, but transferred to the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in 1942. He subsequently served in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. Discharged in 1946, he worked for the Ministry of Defence at HMS Daedalus, Lee-on-Solent for 40 years. His interests included golf. Our sympathy goes to his daughters Jaiyne and Valerie and all other members of the family.

Frieda Saunders

Auxiliary Territorial Service

Frieda Saunders nee Skinner of Longfield, Kent died on 14 March, aged 78. She was a care assistant in a nursing home, but then became a junior nurse. On the outbreak of the Second World War she joined the Women's Land Army. In 1948, she joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service and worked in ration stores at Colchester. She was discharged in 1949 and married, working in a variety of stores in the Maidstone area. Her

interest included gardening, needlepoint and knitting. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

Sid Cordes
Royal Artillery

Henry Sidney Cordes of Purton, Berkley, Gloucestershire died on 18 March, aged 87. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1940. Having fought through Northern Europe to Germany, he was discharged as Bombardier in 1946. He then became a mechanical fitter for petrol pumps and motor mechanic, emigrating to Australia and then New Zealand. Our sympathy goes to his widow Margaret, daughters Susan, Melanie and Linda, and all other members of the family.

Robert Baillie

Royal Army Service Corps

Robert Henry Baillie of Dorking, Surrey died on 19 March, aged 95. He was a butcher before joining the Royal Army Service Corps as a driver in 1940. Deployed to North Africa, he served in Cairo and Tunisia. Wounded at Tobruk, he was later involved in the liberation of Italy. He was seconded to the Jewish Relief Unit before discharge in 1946. In civilian life, he became a bus conductor and then joined the pyrotechnic company Shermuly and became a supervisor. He enjoyed acoustic rifle shooting. Our sympathy goes to his brother and all members of the family.

Bill Morgan
Royal Air Force

William Desmond Morgan of Knaphill, Woking, Surrey died on 19 March, aged 79. He had been an apprentice baker and sewing machine mechanic before joining

the Royal Air Force in 1946. Specialising as a caterer, he trained at RAF Padgate and RAF Halton. He served in Egypt, France, Aden and Zambia. Discharged as Sergeant in 1968, he managed pubs and clubs in a variety of locations. His interests included golf, bowls, darts and gardening. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

George Macmillan
Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

George Thomas Walter Fraser Macmillan of Gillingham, Kent died on 24 March, aged 69. He was a farm labourer before joining the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in 1956. He served at Arborfield, Tripoli, and Stirling before being discharged in 1961. Returning to civilian life, he became a coach driver and then a taxi driver until his sight deteriorated. He also worked as a civilian employee for the Army at the local barracks. Our sympathy goes to his widow Sandra, son Kenneth, daughter Mandy and all other members of the family.

Anthony Addy
Royal Artillery

Anthony Addy of Smeeth, Ashford, Kent died on 23 March, aged 81. He was a carpenter's assistant before joining the General Service Corps in 1945. Transferring to the Royal Artillery, he served in Egypt, India and the UK. Discharged in 1948, he worked for British Railways in civilian life. Our sympathy goes to his son Christian and all other members of the family.

Barbara Bell
Auxiliary Territorial Service

Barbara Letchford Bell of Ovingdean, Brighton died on 21 March, aged 86. She

had been a St Dunstaner since 1943. Raised in Ben Rhydding, she was a Girl Guide during her schooldays. After completing a secretarial course she became a clerk with Martin's Bank, professing that she had no head for figures. Enlisting in the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1942, she was posted to Wokingham to join an anti-aircraft battery. She and other girls were responsible for providing firing instructions to the gun batteries. In December that year she was supposed to go to Horsham for further training in determining the height of the target. As her train approached Bramley near Guildford, a rattling noise on the roof prompted her to look out the window. An air raid was in progress and the train was under attack. Machine gun fire was followed by a stick of bombs and Corporal Bell was injured by flying glass. After a period of hospitalisation, she joined St Dunstan's at Tiger Hall in Church Stretton. She was instrumental in securing a piano for the girls billeted there and quickly proved herself as a Braille reader and writer. Very quickly, she settled on physiotherapy as an occupation though unlike her male contemporaries she started her training back in London which was still being subjected to air raids. "I was a female and things being as they were in those days, it wasn't considered 'quite naice' for me to do physiology and anatomy and things with the men," she later commented. Qualifying in 1946, Barbara was called upon by Coronation Hospital, Ilkley to set up its Physiotherapy department. She combined this work with private practice for nearly four decades. In her spare time, she grew chrysanthemums and was a member of the local Soroptomists and Gramophone Society. A member of Wharfedale Naturalist Society, she enjoyed walking the moors

and climbing in the Lake District, scaling Wainwright favourites such as Great Gable and Scafell Pike. She was also a keen ornithologist with birdsong complementing her interest in tape recording. She also recorded other subjects with St Dunstan's Tape Recording Group and was a mainstay of St Dunstan's Ladies Group. In 1975, she represented St Dunstan's in Belgrade at an International Conference on Blind Women. Barbara was also a guide dog owner and was honoured by the GDBA for using guide dogs for over 50 years. Another point of pride came in 2001 when she was presented to Her Majesty The Queen at Buckingham Palace during an event marking St Dunstan's 85th anniversary. It was the second time they had met. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

Wilfred Meadows
Royal Engineers

Wilfred Habberley Meadows of Solihull, West Midlands has passed away, aged 80. He studied Civil Engineering before joining the Royal Engineers in 1947. After training at Newark, he was posted to Austria. He was 2nd Lieutenant when discharged in 1949. In civilian life, he became a vacuum engineer, evaporating aluminium and gold. Later, he took over the family business making gold leaf. After retiring, he bought a farm in North Scotland. A member of Rotary and Probus, he also enjoyed playing bridge. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

Leonard Hudson, OBE
Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve

Leonard George Hudson, OBE of Haywards Heath, West Sussex died on 25 March, aged 93. He joined the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve in 1940 and was stationed at

Portsmouth and Southampton. After flying training in the West Indies he served in convoy escorts on aircraft carriers such as HMS *Speaker*. He later became a pilot instructor and was Acting Lieutenant Commander when demobbed in 1946. In civilian life, he worked for the Peninsula & Oriental Steam Navigation Company spending time in Asia and the Far East. He was a Group Manager for the company and was awarded the OBE for services in this field in 1974. He enjoyed clock making and cabinet making. Our sympathy goes to his son Mark and all members of the family.

Mary Clements

Women's Auxiliary Air Force

Mary Clements of Raynes Park, London died on 27 March, aged 92. She joined the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in 1939, starting as a clerk and specialising in personnel. Discharged in 1943, she raised a family. Her interests included reading and sewing. Our sympathy goes to her sons John and Douglas, daughter Margaret and all members of the family.

Aubrey Jones

Royal Air Force

Arthur Aubrey Jones of Dunstable, Bedfordshire died on 27 March, aged 84. He joined the Royal Air Force as an apprentice in 1939, training as an Airframe Fitter, though by 1941 this was cut short and he became an Aircraftman II. A few months later, he was posted to South Africa, swimming in a lagoon that was occupied by sharks. Having qualified as Leading Aircraftman, he was posted to India and after stops in Bombay and Calcutta, he was stationed near Bihar. This was followed by a posting in the Bengal jungle where

he worked on Wellington Bombers. He also serviced Beaufighters and Mosquitos, crossing from one side of India to the other by train and paddlesteamer. Leaving Bombay on VJ Day he joined a special aircraft inspection team, later becoming Senior Technician. It was a point of pride that his last duty in the RAF was the London Parade marking the Coronation of Her Majesty The Queen in 1953. After discharge, he worked in research and development on guided weapons and then became a metrologist. He also lectured on engineering for nearly 20 years. His interests included gardening, music, rugby, cricket and swimming and he was active in the University of the Third Age. He also raised funds for the restoration of his local church, Crohn's Disease, RAFA, Sight Concern and St Dunstan's. In 2006, he did a sponsored five-mile swim, though walking to the local pool for each session clocked up an unrecorded 21 miles. Our sympathy goes to his widow Ena, their sons and all other members of the family.

John Lelliott

Royal Air Force

John Lelliott of Surbiton, Surrey died on 28 March, aged 97. He served as Corporal in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1945. He later moved to South Africa, dealing in RACAL Simulators. Our sympathy goes to his widow Gladys and all members of the family.

Leonard Johnson

Royal Artillery

Leonard James Johnson of Lee, London died on 29 March, aged 93. Leaving school as a 19-year-old, he had worked as a librarian for a law publisher, then with his father at *The White House* public house in Bow, and

as a warehouseman in Bishopsgate. Joining the Royal Artillery in 1939, he served in London on an ack-ack battery and was later deployed to North Africa. After being shot in the thigh, he was returned to the UK and discharged in 1944. He then worked for a shoe company, later starting his own business distributing footwear. In later years, he was a manager for Tesco and also worked for Hambros. His interests included DIY, caravanning and touring. Our sympathy goes to his son and all of the family.

Mary Kirk

Women's Royal Naval Service

Mary Kathleen Kirk nee Aldridge of Selsey, Chichester, West Sussex died on 29 March, aged 89. She was a secretary and also served with the Red Cross before joining the Women's Royal Naval Service in 1942. She was initially posted to the Port of London Authority as a writer, but then sent to India, Sri Lanka and Singapore in the South East Asian Command. She briefly worked in Admiral Mountbatten's office. Discharged in 1946, she resumed work as a secretary, later raising a family. She enjoyed jazz concerts. Our sympathy goes to her sons Robert and David, daughter Beatrice and all the family.

Vic Davies

Royal Air Force

John Henry Victor Davies of Braunton, Devon died on 30 March, aged 86. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1948. He was a Postman before volunteering to join the Royal Air Force in 1941. Serving as Leading Aircraftman, he was discharged in 1945 after losing his sight. He studied Braille and leather work and although he considered becoming a shopkeeper became a jobbing gardener after moving to Devon. He grew

flowers and vegetables such as tomatoes, lettuce, cucumbers and chrysanthemums in his own garden, while also tending gardens for other people or companies. In 1965, he became a greensman for Saunton Golf Club, re-working the land when it was redesigned by Frank Pennink and expanded as a two-course site. The 36-hole venue remains one of the most highly regarded golf courses in the UK. He was dubbed a dog psychologist when he began breeding and training Labradors. A member of several dog clubs, he won trial prizes with all of the dogs he trained, though he abhorred the idea of Labradors being bred purely for show believing this would remove their natural instincts. His dogs were active at local shoots and he briefly complemented this by breeding pheasants. He enjoyed singing and harboured an ambition to do so professionally, participating in local music festivals and concert parties. He also collected war medals, cataloguing their provenance as the collection grew. Our sympathy goes to his niece and nephew and all members of the family.

Brenda Kearsley

Auxiliary Territorial Service

Brenda Alice Kearsley nee Garner of Weaverham, Northwich, Cheshire died on 31 March, aged 89. As a 14-year-old, she went into private service, working in this capacity until she married. After a spell with ICI, she joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1943. She served as a spotter for ack-ack units and later as a telephonist. Discharged in 1945, she became a wife and mother, nursing her husband through a long period of ill health. Her interests included cycling and walking. Our sympathy goes to her son James and all of the family.

Tony Peluso**Royal Army Service Corps**

Ralph Anthony Peluso of Walton-on-Thames, Surrey died on 30 March, aged 86. An apprentice toolmaker, he served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1941 to 1945. In civilian life he worked as a painter and decorator. He enjoyed football and golf. Our sympathy goes to his widow Yvonne and all members of the family.

Dennis Ray**Merchant Navy**

Dennis William Ray of Birmingham, West Midlands died on 1 April, aged 84. He joined the Merchant Navy as a greaser in 1943, serving on rescue tugs in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Discharged in 1947, he worked in engineering and became a department manager at a wire mill. Our sympathy goes to his widow Mary and all members of the family.

Arnold Tate**Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve**

William Arnold Tate of Nunthorpe, Middlesbrough, Cleveland died on 1 April, aged 86. He was a trainee upholsterer and trainee cutter before joining the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve in 1941. He was stationed at RAF Padgate and then Bridgnorth before being posted to Tunis. He also served in Italy before discharge in 1946. He resumed work as a tailor and cutter but later worked as a machinist for an aircraft manufacturer. His interests included woodwork and gardening. Our sympathy goes to his widow Mary and all the family.

Samuel Kyle**Royal Signals**

Samuel Kyle of Turriff, Aberdeenshire died on 3 April, aged 87. He joined the

Royal Signals in 1941 and was stationed in Scotland before deploying to North Africa. He was involved with the Salerno landings and fought through Italy to Yugoslavia. He was stationed in Austria before discharge in 1946. In civilian life, he was a sheet metal worker and then worked for Scottish Gas repairing gas meters. He later became a sales supervisor. He enjoyed football and was a referee, sang in a choir and could play the accordion. Our sympathy goes to his widow Roselyn and all of the family.

Robert Gardner**Royal Air Force**

Robert Jeffrey Gardner of Hove, East Sussex died on 4 April, aged 86. He worked for the Co-op in Tyne Valley before joining the Royal Air Force in 1941. Specialising as a fitter, he worked on Spitfires. Posted to the Middle East, he moved onto Malta and into Sicily. He suffered shrapnel wounds before being discharged as Corporal in 1946. Initially, he rejoined the Co-op, but later worked for the Ford Motor Company. He enjoyed sports as a competitor and spectator. He was also a founder member of 145 Squadron Association, setting up a reunion that drew ex-comrades from the USA and Canada. Our sympathy goes to his niece Jacqueline and all of the family.

Reginald Harvey**Royal Air Force**

Reginald Harvey of Chelsea, London died on 5 April, aged 95. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1935, training at Uxbridge and Marston as an Aircraft Fitter. He served in Norway, France, Belgium, Holland and Germany before being demobbed as Sergeant in 1945. In civilian life, he worked for AEC, London Transport and in the

hardware business. His interests included reading, driving and football. Our sympathy goes to his sons Peter and Stephen, daughter Janet and all of the family.

Frances Holt**Women's Auxiliary Air Force**

Frances Holt nee Peel of Hoyland, Barnsley, South Yorkshire died on 5 April, aged 84. She was a domestic servant in Leeds before joining the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in 1941. She trained as a cook at RAF Melksham before being posted to Northern Ireland with Coastal Command. Demobbed in 1946, she met her husband in Wales two years later. She enjoyed reading and crosswords. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

James Hothersall**Royal Marines**

James Hothersall of Ribblesdale, Preston, Lancashire died on 7 April, aged 78. He joined the Royal Marines in 1947 and was posted to Cyprus. He suffered damage to his ears, nose and eyes from a stray mortar bomb during a training exercise in Palestine. As a result, he was invalided out of the Service in 1949. In civilian life, he worked in auto engineering and also the printing trade. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Charles Brookfield**Royal Navy**

Charles Brookfield of Norton, Sheffield, South Yorkshire died on 8 April, aged 90. He was first employed in a steel works, and then a funeral director, before joining the Royal Navy in 1942. He served at Scapa Flow, in the Mediterranean, Ceylon, India, Australia, and Hong Kong. Discharged in 1946, he worked for an engineering firm

making gearboxes. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

Kenneth Sills**Royal Artillery**

Kenneth Sills of Winterringham, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire died on 9 April, aged 86. He joined the Cavalry of the Line as a boy soldier in 1937. He transferred almost immediately to the Royal Dragoons and posted to India where he joined the 3rd Carabiniers (Prince of Wales's Dragoon Guards). As mechanisation took hold, the Carabiniers became part of the Royal Armoured Corps. In 1941, a cadre of Carabiniers formed the 25 Dragoon Guards and deployed to Burma as part of "the Forgotten Fourteenth" tasked with stemming the Japanese advance. After being wounded in 1944, he was returned to the UK and posted to Winterringham. When he married in 1945, he and his bride were bundled into a three-ton army truck and whisked away. The "kidnap" was executed by some army pals who dropped the newly weds in Scarborough for their honeymoon. Recalled to Germany with HQ 7th Armoured Division and promoted to WOII, he joined the War Crimes Trial Unit in Hamburg. Discharged in 1949, he joined the City of London Police but transferred to Lincolnshire Police after two years. Apart from his police duties, he also served in the Royal Artillery, TA from 1952 to 1958. He retired from the Constabulary as sergeant and then became a shipping agent for British Steel. In 1985, he was elected to Glandford Borough Council and became Mayor in 1992. His term of office included several Royal visits to the area, from Prince Edward, Princess Anne and Her Majesty The Queen. Our sympathy goes to his son Richard and all members of the family.

Princess Royal visits pioneering centre for reconstructive surgery

by Simon Rogers

RAF St Dunstaner and member of the Guinea Pig Club Bill Foxley was introduced to The Princess Royal when she made a flying visit to the Blond McIndoe Research Foundation in East Grinstead in March. Last year, Princess Anne became patron of the foundation which is a leading centre developing methods to treat burns and improve wound healing.

The foundation has a 40-year history of its own, but is also the legacy of renowned plastic surgeon Sir Archibald McIndoe who pioneered new treatments for badly burned airmen during World War II. Several St Dunstaners, including Bill Foxley were among those who volunteered to undergo new treatments, often quite painful. Apart from cutting, grafting and stitching, McIndoe followed through with a series of techniques intended to raise the morale of his patients, helping them to adjust to post-War life. With typical



Photograph courtesy of Blond McIndoe Research Foundation

Guinea Pigs George and Bill meet The Princess Royal.

British humour, the airmen dubbed themselves The Guinea Pig Club. Since those days, Bill has continued to champion the development of reconstructive surgery, serving many years as a trustee for the foundation.

He was presented to the Princess Royal alongside George Holloway, a fellow Guinea Pig who breaks the mould having served in the Royal Marines.

"It was a very enjoyable visit," said Bill. "The Princess is Patron of the Queen Victoria Hospital and the

Blond McIndoe Foundation. I had been introduced to her before when she unveiled a plaque in the Canadian wing in memory of her grandmother who was there in the 40s.

"She knew all about the Guinea Pigs because her father is our President. She said she had spoken to him to get all the facts and figures right."

Bill added that HRH Princess Anne had chatted with technicians and other people at the centre finding out about their work.