St Dunstan's

Review

April 2009

Photographs: Simon Rogers/St Dunstan's Collections & Ar

Hails from the Chief

In memory of Sir Arthur, first Founder's Day Awards are unveiled at Sheffield

St Dunstan's

An independent future for blind ex-Service men and women

St Dunstan's Review

an independent future for blind ex-Service Men and Women

April 2009 **No 989**

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An audio version of the Review comes on an MP3CD. It is produced with Talking Book machines in mind but can be used on players that are MP3 enabled. The ROVI on Duty can advise on RNIB Talking Book machines such as the Plextalk or Victor Classic devices. Telephone 01273 391447 or e-mail rovionduty@st-dunstans.org.uk. The Sony D-NE240 is a useful domestic alternative available from high street outlets or by mail order.

Your readers this month are Valerie Tomalin and Andrew Cooper.

E-mail and floppy-disc
The Review can also be sent as a Word document by e-mail. This is also available on floppy-disc for computer users.

Patron: Her Majesty The Queen
Vice-Patrons: Rear-Admiral Sir Donald Gosling, KCVO, RNR; Air Chief Marshal; Sir Roger Palin, KCB, OBE; General Sir Peter de la Billiere, KCB, KBE, DSO, MC, DL; Admiral Sir Jonathon Band, GCB, ADC **Founder:** The late Sir Arthur Pearson, Bt., GBE **President:** Raymond L. Hazan **Vice-Presidents** Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Leach, GCB, DL; Sir Richard Pease, Bt, DL; Captain Michael Gordon Lennox, OBE, RN; François W Edwards, FCA, LLB, MA; Michael Delmar-Morgan **Chairman:** Major General Andrew M. Keeling, RM, CB, CBE **Vice Chairman:** Timothy R. Bacon **Honorary Treasurer:** John S. Varley

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Cover Story

Certified excellence

The winners of St Dunstan's first Founder's Day Awards were unveiled at Sheffield on 18 March. Not everyone was able to attend, but the magic of technology unites them on the lawn of St Dunstan's Sheffield along with the inspirational Sir Arthur Pearson. From left to right at the back, we have St Dunstaners Dai Jones and Martin Shail, then Janis Sharp, Revd David Youngson, and Louise Timms. In the next row are St Dunstaner Alan Lock, Mike Hosking, St Dunstaner Chas Rhodes, volunteer Vera Bunker, Dennis Williams and St Dunstaner Gordon Aston (who assures us that his Leprechaun friend does not speak). In the foreground, is Sir Arthur Pearson with Joan Osborne who has grown up and fostered the environment that he created in 1915.

We have a full report on the Founder's Day awards on page 18. Honours, awards and achievements form a central theme in this issue, reflecting the wide ranging interests of members of St Dunstan's Family and their supporters and the influence they have in making life better for many others.

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St Dunstan's Calendar

APRIL

Fly Navy 100 Golf Bonanza	3
Writers Forum	4
Ex-POW Reunion	3-6
Widows' Week (I)	8-15
Golf (I)	18-19
Masonic Weekend	24-27
Anzac Day	25
Flora London Marathon	26

MAY

Writers Forum	2
Gardening Week	3-9
Fishing (III)	4-8
Handless Reunion	6-12
VE Day	8
Golf (II)	16-17
Feast of St Dunstan	19
Archery Club (II)	23-31

JUNE

Bisley Shooting Contest	3
Writers Forum	6
Ladies' Week	14-20
50 Year Badge Holders	18-21
London to Brighton Bike Ride	21
National Armed Forces Day	27
Golf Invitation Day	28

JULY

Writers Forum Weekend	2-5
History Week	12-18
Royal Marines Concert	15 *tbc*
Golf (III)	18-19
HMS *Sultan*	31-8 Aug

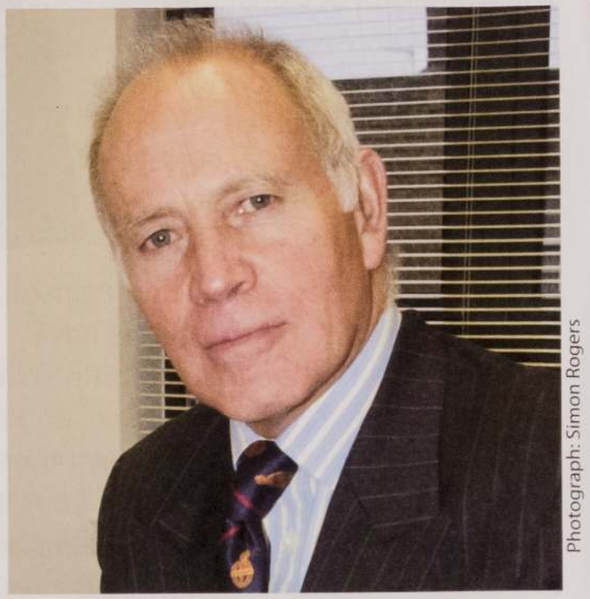
Your message from St Dunstan's Chairman, Andrew Keeling

From the Chairman

I wonder if you watched the recent TV drama programme about Lady Thatcher's last few months as Prime Minister? The story ended with her being forced out of office by her rebellious colleagues – an unwelcome and traumatic experience for her – and the film ended with her saying to herself, in a quizzical and surprisingly soft voice "It's a funny world".

Last month, L/Cpl Johnson Beharry, VC – one of only ten surviving holders of this award for truly outstanding valour in the face of the enemy, and still a serving soldier himself – publicly voiced his disappointment with how the Government fails to recognise and look after veterans with psychological wounds. He was also brave enough to describe his own on-going trauma. Even more surprising, and equally good news in my view, General Sir Richard Dannatt – the current head of the Army – has publicly supported Cpl Beharry. How reassuring, and how unusual, that the lot of those that are permanently scarred on the battlefield, but who live to tell the tale, should receive any public attention and air time at all, let alone a brief flutter of headlines.

It is probably difficult for those in our community to think of a more



Photograph: Simon Rogers

compelling subject than this, yet it has been hugely overshadowed in the media by the consummate greed of a recently retired senior banker, the size of his pension, and the apparent inability of "the system" to do anything about it.

It is indeed a funny world, but it's the only world we've got so I guess we'd better get on with it. Meanwhile, let's hope that Johnson Beharry's brave words and the personal involvement of the CGS do lead to a greater recognition of the human costs of war to those that serve their country.

Andy Keeling

Noticeboard

FIRST SEA LORD BECOMES VICE PATRON OF ST DUNSTAN'S

NEW VICE PATRON, NEW VICE PRESIDENTS: Admiral Sir Jonathon Band, GCB, ADC has become one of St Dunstan's Vice Patrons. He succeeds Admiral Sir Jock Slater, GCB, LVO, DL, who stood down in March as one of St Dunstan's Vice Patrons, a position he has distinguished since 1998.

Born in 1950, Sir Jonathon has served in the Royal Navy since 1967. He has served in the Far East, West Indies, and South Atlantic. He was Flag Lieutenant to the Commander-in-Chief Fleet during the Falklands Campaign and later assumed command of HMS *Phoebe*, operating in the NATO area. His last sea command was HMS *Illustrious* which included operational deployments to the Adriatic and Bosnia. Promoted to Rear Admiral in 1997, he became Assistant Chief of Naval Staff. He was appointed First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff in 2006. His hobbies and interests are family dominated, including tennis, boating and golf.

Three long serving members of St Dunstan's Council have also been appointed Vice Presidents of the Charity. They are Captain Michael Gordon Lennox, OBE, RN, who recently retired as Chairman, François Edwards, who was a Trustee for 23 years, and Michael Delmar-Morgan, former Vice-Chairman and a trustee for 37 years.

A DAY EARLIER FOR BARROW

REUNION DATE CHANGES: Please note that the Barrow Reunion will be held a day earlier than advertised. It will take place on 7 July.

The date for the Sheffield Reunion has now been confirmed. It will be held on 14 October.

SIGN UP FOR HMS SULTAN

THE DOGS ARE READY FOR SUMMER: Anyone wishing to attend the Summer Camp at HMS *Sultan* should contact Organising Secretary Dave Burrows on 02392 550532 or e-mail DCB119399@aol.com. Dates for the Camp are Friday, 31 July to Saturday, 8 August 2009. The closing date for applications is 1 May.

SWITCHING ON TO DIGITAL TV

WHEN DOES THE CHANGE OVER REACH YOU?: Television broadcasts in the United Kingdom are switching from analogue to digital signals. The digital TV switchover is Government policy and means that almost everyone will be able to receive digital TV through an aerial (Freeview). For many people this means buying new or additional equipment if they wish to continue receiving their television service. The digital switchover has already started and ends around 2012.

Border
Border has already started the process and finishes in June. The Scottish Borders have completed, the Isle of Man will finish by 18 June, with Cumbria, South West Scotland and the South Lakes due to complete by 24 June.

West Country
West Country starts this month and finishes in September 2009. Torbay and South Devon will complete on 22 April, Exeter, parts of Devon, Somerset and Dorset will follow by 20 May. North Devon will be completed by 29 July. West Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly will finish on 5 August followed by Plymouth, parts of Devon and East Cornwall on 9 September.

Granada
Granada which serves Liverpool, Manchester, Lancashire, Cheshire and North Staffordshire begins the switchover on 4 November and finishes on 2 December 2009. Viewers who overlap with other areas, such as Border, may find their service makes the change earlier.

Wales
Wales starts in August 2009 and finishes in 2010. The process will start in Swansea and South West Wales area in August, North Wales in October, with the west and Cardiff areas finishing in February 2010.

The remaining analogue areas will follow in this order:

- STV North switches in 2010
- STV Central switches between 2010 and 2011
- West switches between 2010 and 2011
- Channel Islands switch in 2010
- Central, Yorkshire and Anglia switch in 2011
- Meridian switches between 2011 and 2012
- London switches in 2012
- Tyne Tees and Ulster switch in 2012

Most areas will carry out the switchover in two stages. In stage one, the old BBC2 signal will be switched off and replaced by the digital version. In stage two, BBC1, ITV1, Channel 4 and Five signals will be shut down and replaced with the digital versions.

If you already have digital or multi-channel television equipment then you are set to go. If not, you will require either a set-top box or integrated television set to continue receiving broadcasts. In the February Review, Ask ROD detailed some of the equipment and services available, emphasising systems that incorporate audio description (AD).

Options to consider include, the number of television sets in your household that you wish to convert, whether you choose to pay one upfront cost or pay monthly for a subscription service, or if you choose to buy a standard digital box, High Definition (HD) equipment, an integrated digital TV (iDTV) or a digital TV recorder.

Switchover Help Scheme
As each area prepares for the switchover, the Government will be sending a letter to households that are believed to be eligible for assistance with the change. The scheme will help you convert one television set to digital (even if you have converted another television set in your home.

You are eligible for assistance from the Switchover Help Scheme if:

- You are aged 75 or over,
- You have lived in a care home for six months or more,
- You are registered blind or partially sighted,
- You get (or could get): Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance Constant Attendance Allowance, Mobility supplement

Eligible households will be provided with easy-to-use equipment, installation help, a new dish or aerial if required, and demonstrations on using the new equipment. Over seven million people across the UK are expected to be eligible, but it is worth noting that the Switchover Help Scheme is only active in areas that are going through the Digital Switchover. For example, if you live in the Border area, help is currently available, if you live in London you will have to wait until 2012. The Help Scheme is available for £40, though for eligible people receiving income support it is provided free of charge. Applications will be accepted until one month after the last transmitter switch in that region.

The Switchover Help Scheme can be contacted on 0800 40 85 900 between 08:00 and 21:00, seven days a week.

NEW VENUE FOR SIGHT VILLAGE BIRMINGHAM

QAC MOVE EXHIBITION TO HOCKLEY: The next QAC Sight Village exhibition will be held in Birmingham on 14-16 July. It will be open each day 10:00-16:00 and relocates to The New Bingley Hall, 1 Hockley Circus, Hockley, Birmingham B18 5BE. Admission is free. The exhibition showcases technology, support and services for blind and visually impaired people.

TENTH ANNUAL VISUALLY IMPAIRED CLIMBING COURSE

FIVE DAYS IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS: The Mountaineering Council of Scotland will be holding their tenth annual course for Visually Impaired climbers on 14-18 September. The five day residential course is held at the National Outdoor Training Centre at Glenmore Lodge near Aviemore, and is run by highly qualified and experienced instructors. Participants are encouraged to try new activities or extend their abilities to a level that they find comfortable.

The week's activities will include a full days walk in the Cairngorms, an introduction to rock climbing, abseiling, and Canadian canoeing. The highlight of the week is an overnight expedition using one of the above activities. The full cost of the week is £370. This includes accommodation in twin rooms, cooked breakfast, evening meals and packed lunches. Glenmore Lodge will supply all equipment required for the week. Participants usually finish the event with a campfire singalong.

For further details contact Norma Davidson on 01356 660242, e-mail her at norma274@btinternet.com, or write to her at The Mountaineering Council of Scotland, The Old Granary, West Mill Street, Perth PH1 5QP.

REVIEW DERBY SWEEPSTAKE

SWEEPSTAKE 2009: The Epsom Vodafone Derby will be held on 6 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 3 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.

MOBILE SIGHT LOSS UNIT

BACK ON THE ROAD: Action for Blind People's Mobile Sight Loss Information Service will be out and about in the following areas this month. In the week commencing 6 April they will be Ebbw Vale and Gwent as well as Bolton. Then after 20 April they will be in Hertfordshire, then Worcestershire starting 27 April. Another unit will be in the Scottish Borders area in the week starting 20 April and again from 27 April. Full details for time and place for each location can be found on the AFB website www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk or by checking with their National Helpline Number 0800 915 4666 nearer the time.

ACT FAST FOR DESCRIPTION

WHOOPI'S SHOW COMES WITH AD: The musical tale of a showgirl hiding from gangsters will be audio described by Irene Richards at the London Palladium on 18 July at 15:00. Tickets for *Sister Act The Musical*, produced by Whoopi Golberg cost from £19.50 and more details can be obtained by telephoning 0844 412 4648 or e-mailing customer.relations@seetickets.com.

Irene will also be describing *West Side Story* in Sheffield Theatres Lyceum Auditorium at 14:30 on 4 June. There will be another performance with audio description on 10 June at 19:30. The 10 June performance will be followed by a "Talk Back" session where the audience can put questions to the cast and crew. For more details telephone 0114 249 6000.

Over in Birmingham at the Hippodrome, there will be and AD performance of *The Witches of Eastwick* on 9 April at 19:30. The describers are Jonathan Nash and Margaret Spittles and there will be a Touch Tour before the curtain rises. The duo will also be describing *Scooby Doo and The Pirate Ghost* at 17:00 on 17 April, which again includes a Touch Tour before the show begins. As mentioned last issue, they will also describe the 30 April performance of *West Side Story* at 19:30. The show will be preceded by a Touch Tour. Next month, they turn to describing *Quadrophenia* on 22 May at 20:30 which also has a Touch Tour (will St Dunstan's Ovingdean be mentioned in the closing minutes). For details of all the shows at the Birmingham Hippodrome, call their Box Office on 0844 338 5000.

The Welsh National Opera production of *La Bohème* will have AD on 30 May at Birmingham Hippodrome at 14:15 and at the Wales Millennium Centre on the evening of 3 June. There will be a Touch Tour for both performances. For Millennium Centre details, telephone their Box Office on 029 2063 5000.

Balancing the Books

Ted Bunting on a portrait of the changing face of China

China Old And New
Author: John Logan
Reader: Crawford Logan
Catalogue no. 12407
Duration: 6 hours, 32 minutes

As a young man employed by an Anglo-American tobacco company around 1930, John Logan was called into the London office and told, "We are sending you off to China for a few years." And so they did, and this delightful book describes how he learned Mandarin and began his love affair with China past and present. What an excellent teacher he would have made; I too have a respect and a liking for Chinese people but I believe I've learned more of their character and customs through this book than I did in three years spent in the Far East. China's long history has been a turbulent one in which natural disasters as well as man made ones feature prominently. Individual "freedom" has never been in abundant supply but possibly that is inevitable given the vast population. After his contract ended in the 1930's John Logan made three further visits to China, in 1974, 1977, and 1980. Each time he was able to record considerable change and progress. Since then of course the country has been thrown open as never before. Idealists in the West still criticise, needless to say, but I'm now inclined to suggest we should concentrate on how far they have come rather than how far there is still to go.

Hardy approach gives Alan distinctive voice

A new volume of poetry by the Writers' Forum's Alan Morrison is available from Waterloo Press. The collection is titled *A Tapestry of Absent Sitters* and costs £9 and can be ordered online at www.waterloopresshove.co.uk or via post for £10 including p&p. Cheques, payable to Waterloo Press should be sent to Waterloo Press, 95 Wick Hall, Furze Hill, Hove BN3 1NG. The London Magazine hailed Alan as "a young and talented poet and one who can move our sense of pity and sorrow in the manner of Hardy" while other critics have applauded the distinctive voice and radical eloquence of his poetry.

Thank you

Our thanks go to Bert and Dorothy Porter of Rochdale, Lancashire for donating £600 towards the work of St Dunstan's.

Ten questions on...

The subject of Saints

Haloed teasers from **Harry Beevers**

1) In which East Anglian town is the grave of St Edmund?

2) Which mainline rail terminus is named after a boy who according to Christian tradition was martyred at 14 years of age?

3) In England in 597 AD, St Augustine became the first holder of which religious title?

4) According to legend what did St Patrick drive out of Ireland?

5) If you are suffering from Saint Francis's distemper, of what are you short?

6) Who is portrayed grabbing the nose of the devil with blacksmith's pincers?

7) In the year 1937 a locomotive of the Patriot class, No. 45501, was named after which former saint who in the 10th century served as Bishop and Archbishop?

8) Which saint's day is celebrated on 15 July?

9) Which Archangel, the patron saint of grocers, paratroopers and policemen, has his feast day on 29 September?

10) Which film comedy starring Marilyn Monroe featured the St Valentine's Day massacre?

Answers can be found on page 35.

Clydesdale honour Mike

The golfing skills of a St Dunstaner were applauded at the 27th annual Clydesdale Sports Personality of the Year Awards on 6 March. In previous years, Mike Mayo of Lesmahagow, Lanark has won runners-up prizes in the event run by Clydesdale Sports Council. This year, his golfing prowess won him the Senior Male Award. "I am really proud," said Mike. "All the hard work Bill my caddy and guide and I put in has paid off at last."

A promotion for Sir Donald

Honorary Commodore Sir Donald Gosling, KCVO, RNR, has been promoted to the rank of Honorary Rear-Admiral, Royal Naval Reserve, with effect from 2 March 2009. Sir Donald, who celebrated his 80th birthday last month has been a Vice Patron of St Dunstan's for 11 years. The co-founder of NCP car parks, he is president of the White Ensign Association and vice-president of the King George's Fund for Sailors. He is also patron of the Ark Royal Welfare Trust.

Higher rate DLA for 2011

Campaigners celebrate as Government announce Mobility Benefit for Blind to be introduced in two years time

FROM APRIL 2011, an estimated 20,000 severely visually impaired people will be entitled to receive the higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance. The move was announced by James Purnell, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on 17 March.

The benefit will support severely visually impaired people with additional mobility costs, allowing them greater freedom to get out and about, either socially or to find work. At current rates this will mean an additional payment worth £29 a week to those who qualify (£1,508 per year).

Jonathan Shaw, Minister for Disabled People had declared the Government's support for the move during a debate on the Welfare Reform Bill. "I know many severely visually impaired people have been waiting to hear this good news and will be very happy with the outcome. The Government has been working closely with the RNIB to make this possible so I'd like to especially thank them for all their support."

The move has been widely hailed as a victory for campaigners from the Royal National Institute of Blind People who have been lobbying Members of Parliament for over two years. MPs taking part in the debate persistently quoted blind constituents who had contacted them as part of the campaign.

Lesley-Anne Alexander, Chief Executive of RNIB said: "We are overjoyed by this announcement. It is a fantastic victory for people with severe visual impairment and for everybody who has supported RNIB's two and a half year campaign to end this long standing injustice.

"The extra £29 a week really will change lives, giving people with severe visual impairment greater opportunities for employment, further education and social activities previously denied to them. It's a key to their greater independence, safety and quality of life.

"RNIB thanks the Government for committing to make this much needed change, as well as all the MPs who have supported the campaign and their blind constituents."

The RNIB believe that the Department of Work and Pensions are looking to include people with no light perception, people with only light perception, those who can only see hand movement in front of their face, those who can see only the top line of an eye test chart from three metres away, and who also have a highly restricted field of vision.

The application process for claiming the higher rate will likely combine self-assessment questions and proof of visual acuity and field of vision. Certification forms (CVIs) issued to newly certified blind people would provide the information required about visual acuity and field of vision.

People with severe visual impairment currently in receipt of the lower rate and wishing to claim the higher rate would need to complete self-assessment questions and provide evidence of their visual acuity and field of vision. It is likely that this information could be provided by high street optometrists, the details of this are being worked out by DWP.

Elizabeth's bingo event helps St Dunstan's

Photograph copyright and courtesy of The Coventry Observer

A 94-YEAR-OLD Coventry woman has raised over £1,500 to help blind ex-Service men and women. Elizabeth Shropshire read about St Dunstan's in a Coventry Observer feature on Eric Sayce and arranged for him to speak to residents at Harry Stanley House. Inspired by Eric's talk, she then organised a raffle, and bingo event which, along with donations from fellow residents, raised the impressive sum. Eric was delighted to accept the donation on behalf of the Charity, thanking Mrs Shropshire and her friends for their effort.

"We really do appreciate all the hard work that has been put in," said Eric.

Park tribute to Joe & Joan

The real thrill is seeing youngsters enjoy themselves at the park say Fleet Air Arm St Dunstaner and his wife

A ST DUNSTANER and his wife have received the ultimate accolade after 40 years working to improve their local community – they have had a park named after them. Joe and Joan Waterman were feted further for their active involvement in the community of Grange Ward in Somerford, Christchurch, Dorset when Waterman's Park was opened by the Earl of Wessex last December.

Photograph copyright and courtesy of the Bournemouth Daily Echo

Joe and Joan Waterman take delight in making their community a better place to live for everyone.

Joe served as an Air Fitter in the Royal Navy during the Second World War, serving on HMS *Gosling*, HMS *Daedalus*, HMS *Heron*, and HMS *Raven* amongst other ships. After training, he specialised in fitting radar into naval aircraft and had been promoted to Petty Officer when discharged.

In civilian life, he worked as a civil engineer and moved into selling office equipment. He later worked for Raleigh Bicycles where he became Southern Area Sales Manager.

Having settled in Christchurch, Joe and Joan were drawn into a 1960s project to raise funds for a swimming pool at Grange School. Joan then became leader of a local scout group and Joe was invited to join Christchurch District Scout Council. As their PR officer, he formed the post of Mayor's Scout, which has remained a tradition ever since.

Another project saw Joe working to have a plaque dedicated to the memory of American and local Servicemen who were involved in a crash at Christchurch Airfields in 1944. That was in 2002, and Joe was also feted by the Town Mayor for his work in the borough.

The couple became founder members of the Friends and Residents of The Grange Community Association (FROGS) in 1999 and campaigned to provide a BMX and skate park for youngsters in the area. As the project developed, Joe and Joan found themselves visiting and inspecting established "wheel parks", talking to users and neighbouring councils to learn from their experiences, preparing a preliminary plan, estimating costs, and investigating sources of finance.

Their hard work bore fruit in 2005 when the wheel park was opened at Dorset Road Recreation Park. In recognition of Joe and Joan's contribution to making the area a better place in which to live, it has been named Waterman's Park.

"We don't do this for recognition," said Joe. "We do it because we want to make where we live a nicer place to live and the community respects that and does get involved.

"We sometimes go to the park which is looking magnificent now with all the facilities and are thrilled to see all the youngsters enjoying and taking care of it."

Be the best says Henry

Photograph copyright: Olivia Harris

St Dunstaner Henry Allingham, aged 112, visited a primary school in his home town of Clapton, Hackney in February. Savvanah Clarke, aged 7, was one of the pupils who received some trusted advice from Henry: "Be as good as you can at whatever you do."

Gwarchodfilwr Cymreig yn beicio 203 milltir i Gaerdydd

Clive a Les farchoga chan Caerludd at Cymru mewn pryd achos St Dafydd s Ddiwrnod

Or for those of us across the border:

Welsh Guardsman pedals 203 miles to Cardiff

Clive and Les ride from London to Wales in time for St David's Day

Photographs: Simon Rogers

Clive and Les cycle towards the Victoria Monument with Luke and Paul in the van close behind.

by Simon Rogers

A ST DUNSTANER put his foot down for a tandem ride that covered over 200 miles and crossed two countries to help

The Met wish Clive all the best on his endeavour.

Falklands veterans return to the islands last month. Clive Jones, who served in the Welsh Guards before being blinded, and his friend Royal Navy veteran Les Heyhoe spent four days in the saddle, riding a unique tandem from central London in England to Cardiff in Wales. It was an overcast morning on 26 February when Clive and Les rolled out their tandem at the offices of St James's Park. The previous day in Gosport, Hampshire had been subject to the return of snowfall. However, Clive wasn't getting any sympathy when he said the ride seemed like a good idea when he thought of it.

With shades of Fred Flintstone and Barney Rubble, Clive and Les took their seats on the ZEM four-wheel tandem, a rectangular frame, a wheel on each corner, that allowed them to sit side by side rather than one in front of the other.

"I'm the eyes, Clive's the engine," said Les as they pedalled out to Horse Guard's Parade for a test spin. The journey began in earnest when they rode round to Admiralty Arch. Officers from the Metropolitan Police escorted them along the Mall, round the Victoria Monument, past Buckingham Palace and onto Park Lane. Next stop RAF High Wycombe.

Throughout their journey, Clive and Les were accompanied by Lance Corporal Luke Buckley and Guardsman Paul Gardener-Allen from The Welsh Guards who maintained close supervision from the support bus. The first day ended in high spirits, but there were still three days ahead. The next day went equally well as they rode onto RAF Brize Norton.

Clive and Les arrive in Cardiff with Luke and Paul, L/Cpl Morris and the Royal British Legion Bikers.

Day three was tarnished by bad weather, but Clive and Les took to the Gym to make up the equivalent distance.

It was a jubilant Clive and Les who rode into Cardiff on St David's Day. A parade was mustering outside the City Hall as they cycled up to the Falkland's Memorial to be greeted by Lance Corporal Lee Morris of Maindy Barracks who was sporting red tunic and bearskin. Also present were a contingent from the Royal British Legion Motorcycle Club and St Dunstaner Keith Lanchester-Harding and his family. Limbs aching as they climbed off the saddle, Clive and Les thanked everyone who had supported their ride, Lee Cullen of St James's Park, The Metropolitan Police, Cardiff Police, The Welsh Guards, and RAF.

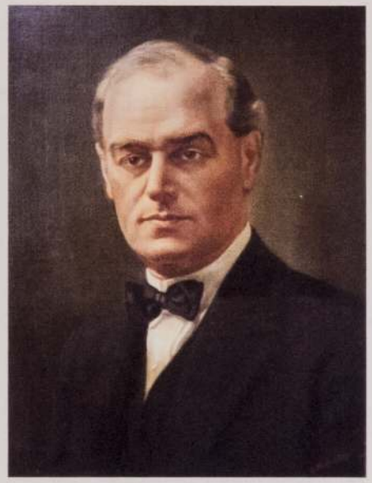
With a target of £5,000, Clive was delighted to say that £2,100 had been collected as the Review went to press.

A legacy of achievement

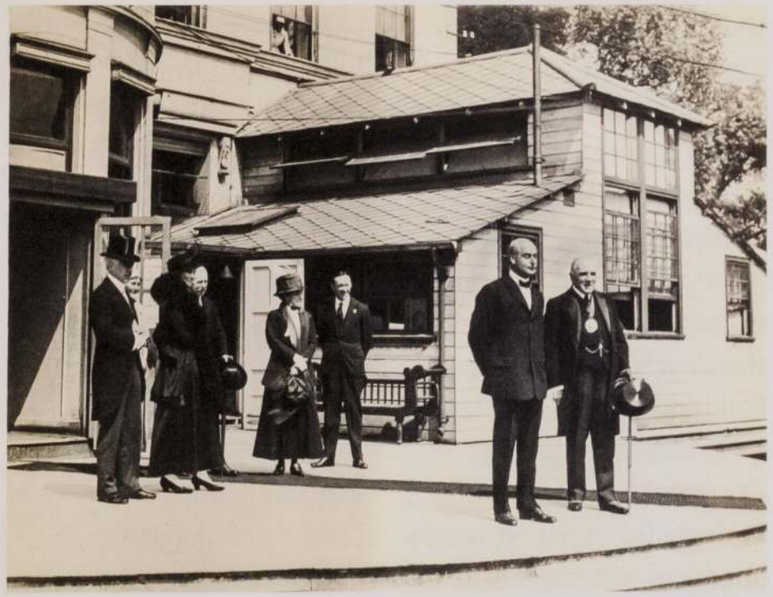
The best accomplishments of St Dunstan's community are applauded at the first Founder's Day Awards ceremony

THE FIRST ANNUAL St Dunstan's Founder's Day awards were unveiled in the Palmer Room at St Dunstan's Sheffield on 18 March. There were eight categories celebrating a wide range of experience and the awards were presented by St Dunstan's Chairman Major General Andrew Keeling.

St Dunstan's President Ray Hazan opened proceedings by explaining the background to the awards that commemorate the memory and legacy of Sir Arthur Pearson. "We've got to be grateful to our Chief Executive, Robert Leader, who conceived the idea. Over the past decade, St Dunstan's has looked forward more than ever, looking at how we could get our services to more me people, perhaps in a way forgetting about our past," said Ray. "Robert, quite rightly, wanted to not lose sight of how we began and the person to whom we owe so much."



St Dunstan's founder Sir Arthur Pearson.



Photographs St Dunstan's Archives & Collections

Sir Arthur Pearson with the Lord Mayor of London at St Dunstan's Lodge in Regent's Park.

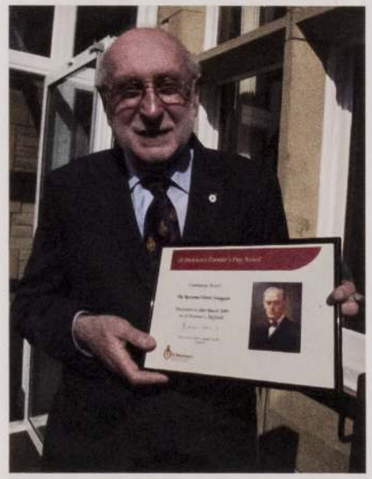
Pearson was a successful newspaper magnate, founding the Daily Express and a publishing empire that persists to this day. Life changed when he lost his sight, but he became a tireless advocate of blind welfare in a world that cared little for such things. That accelerated when he met with wounded soldiers, blinded in the trenches of the First World War.

Ray revealed that he led a working party which had settled on a two-pronged solution. "We wanted to remember Sir Arthur Pearson the man. Because he's buried in Hampstead Cemetery, very close to the hotel we use on Remembrance Weekend, we made a pilgrimage to his graveside which was very appropriate for Remembrance Weekend.

"The second part was to celebrate the legacy of achievement that he has left us. When you think of all the thousands of St Dunstaners who have been through the organisation, we wouldn't have achieved any of that had it not been for our Founder Sir Arthur. Now as I've implied, every St Dunstaner who has come through our hands has achieved. It doesn't matter if it's tying your shoelaces or breaking a world record – it is an achievement."

Thanking the selection committee, Ray added that the awards were about the achievement, not so much the person, the journey that individual took in making that achievement.

St Dunstan's Head of Rehabilitation and Training Katy Barrett stepped into the spot light to announce the winners. The first was the Community Award which was won by RAF St Dunstaner Rev David Youngson of Billingham, Cleveland. He had been proposed by a colleague Murielle Wardell for creating a local club's first talking monthly newsletter. The service started 28 years ago on audio cassette, but lives on with CDs going out to over 300 listeners.

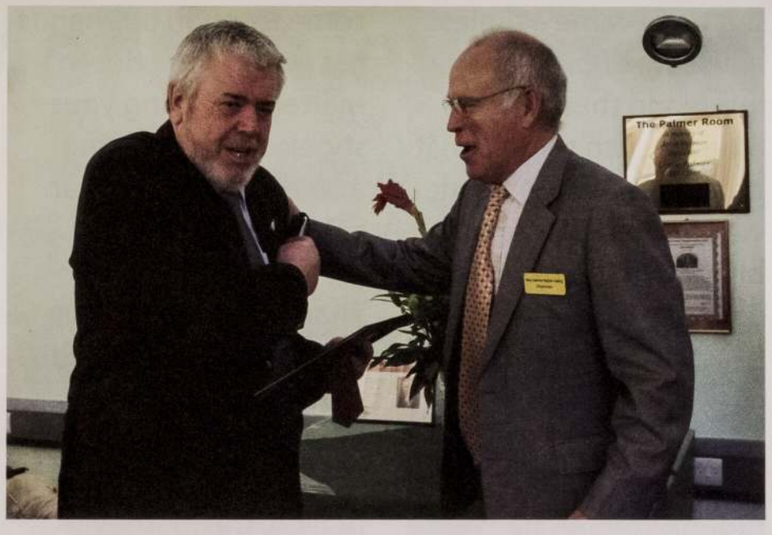


Rev David Youngson received the Community Award for his work on a talking newsletter.

David spoke of two people who had inspired him, Robert Runcie and Brian Johnson, adding that he felt any project that made life better for other people was worth pursuing.

The second award was for Special Achievement which was bestowed on Joan Osborne of Saltdean, Brighton. She and her St Dunstaner husband Bob were unable to attend, but Katy revealed the background to the award. The daughter of First World War St Dunstaner Joe Walch, Joan has literally grown up in the family of St Dunstan's. Apart

Special Achievement: Joan Osborne.



St Dunstaner Dai Jones receiving The Training Achievement Award from the Chairman.

from caring for Bob, she has made enormous contributions to the life of St Dunstan's through the Bowling Club and Brighton Social Clubs.

Earlier, Joan told the Review of her surprise and delight at receiving the award. "I've had some very nice comments from people congratulating me," she said.

Next was the Volunteer of the Year Award which was presented to Vera Bunker of Brighton, who has been helping as a friend and guide for St Dunstaners at Ovingdean for around 20 years. "I have to admit that I have loved every minute of it," she said.

The Training Achievement Award (or should that be Gwobr Cyflawni Hyfforddiant) was presented to RAF St Dunstaner Dai Jones of Talybont, Barmouth, Gwynedd. Since losing his sight, Dai has embarked on a series of further education courses and last year became the first St Dunstaner to obtain the CLAIT Plus Certificate.

Vera has been a friend for around 20 years.

"I must say thank you to Gaye (Staff). She was terrific," said Dai. "She worked tirelessly to make sure everything was set up for me. And if you have ever tried to link two spread sheets using Supernova, you will know exactly what I mean. Thank you very much."

Gordon Aston and one of his sculptures.

Cornwall Association of Woodturners such as Dennis Williams and Mike Hosking have helped Chas Rhodes.

The Award for Creative Art was won by RAF St Dunstaner Gordon Aston of Buckingham continuing a trend that has seen him win local prizes for his paintings and sculptures, including the Helen Keller International Art Award. Although unable to attend the presentation, Gordon was delighted to hear of his success. Having worked as a silk screen printer, art has always been an important aspect of his life and he remains determined that sight loss should not change that. Working with magnifiers, he continues to paint and sculpt figures using a variety of materials, often imbuing them with a sense of fun or personal history. A series of leprechaun figures started when he noticed a neighbour would sit on a log and smoke a cigarette. "I thought I would make something to keep her company," said Gordon. Another figure, a woman in a dark shawl with a case, recalls Irish immigrants that were a common sight on the streets of Liverpool during his childhood. "They all dressed like that, though nobody seems to remember them now."

The next award went not to an individual but an association. Army St Dunstaner Chas Rhodes had nominated the Cornwall Association of Woodturners for the Innovator of the Year Award. They have helped several St Dunstaners, Chas included, to set up workshops for their hobbycraft. Further, they have made special jigs to enable St Dunstaners to use power tools safely and with confidence.

Chairman Dennis Williams accepted the award adding that they had more blind people taking up the hobby of woodturning.

Sportsman of the Year Alan Lock at sea.

The next award bucked the trend as it was won by a Royal Navy St Dunstaner. It was also the most hotly contested category. However, one person stood out in definitive fashion when the Sports Person of the Year Award was decided. St Dunstaner Alan Lock of London was declared winner. He has also completed the London to Brighton Bicycle ride, run the Marathon de Sables and climbed Ben Nevis. However, he also spent three months enduring extreme maritime conditions as he rowed the Atlantic – the first visually impaired person to do so. Alan was unable to attend the presentation since he is in training for the London Marathon and has also started laying plans to cycle across America. He later told the Review of his delight at receiving the award. "It's great," he said.

Janis Sharp recognised potential of computers.

The final category was the Chairman's Commendation for Outstanding Service which was bestowed on three members of St Dunstan's staff.

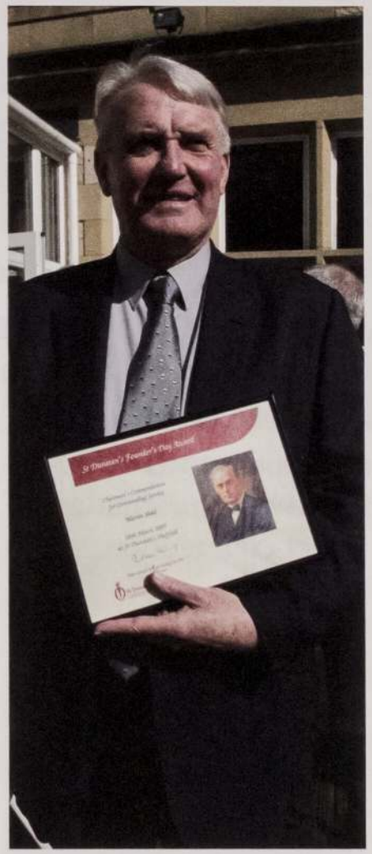
The first award was to Sports and Recreation Supervisor Louise Timms who has given up much of her own time to help St Dunstaners fulfil their sporting ambitions in a variety of disciplines. The second award was given to IT Supervisor Janis Sharp, who joined St Dunstan's over 20 years ago as a typing instructor. Katy Barrett paid tribute to the manner in which she recognised the potential that computer technology had to improve the day-to-day lives of St Dunstaners and has continued to keep abreast of developments ever since.

Louise Timms - helping St Dunstaners to achieve their ambitions.

Last, but not least, Royal Marine St Dunstaner Martin Shail was also commended for reassuring new St Dunstaners "that they will be alright" when attending their introductory week at St Dunstan's Ovingdean. Martin accepted the commendation with humility adding that the real work was done by the team he works with.

"I must say what a huge surprise and honour it is to be recognised by my colleagues like this," he said. "I'm here because I get paid to be myself - warts and all! I meet and greet everyone on a Sunday and by the end of the week they go away not wanting to go. It's always great to see them back again. Thank you so very much."

St Dunstan's Chairman Major General Andrew Keeling, making his first visit to St Dunstan's Sheffield Training Centre, closed official proceedings saying that it was a very significant time to recognise the achievements of members of St Dunstan's community. "I know from Ray that the competition in each category was strong, the decisions were not obvious," he said. He thanked staff at Sheffield for hosting the presentation then congratulated the winners and the selection team.



Martin Shail puts his fellow St Dunstaners at ease when they visit.

REUNION 09

The reunion season started in lively form at St Dunstan's Ovingdean on 10 March. There were 25 St Dunstaners and three widows at the Brighton (I) Reunion. St Dunstaner David Stuttard was the member of St Dunstan's Council presiding and Alf Dodgson responded with some colourful jokes.

Laker's Progress

Ges Laker, who is walking around the coast of Britain to raise funds for St Dunstan's, is into the fourth county of his trek. Having left Sussex behind, he has walked through Kent with Phoebe and Sumo and at press time they had reached Clacton in Essex. Wind and rain have bedevilled them, though recent days have been sunny. Despite a leg injury, Ges is still on the road.

Blackpool win at St Dunstan's

Air Commodore Ian Stewart presents prestigious Trophy to winning team

Photographs copyright Larry Bray

Members of 177 (Blackpool Airport) Squadron proudly receive their trophy from the Air Cadets Commandant, Air Commodore Ian Stewart, BSc, RAF.

Laura Mitchell reports

THE WINNERS OF the St Dunstan's 'Go the Distance' Cadet Challenge were revealed on 18 March at St Dunstan's Ovingdean. Commandant Air Cadets, Air Commodore Ian Stewart presented Blackpool's Air Cadets with the trophy after they triumphed in the charity's annual national Cadet competition.

During 2008, Cadet Units around the UK were challenged to complete a half marathon in the most imaginative way possible and with the involvement of a St Dunstaner. The 177 (Blackpool Airport) Squadron ATC worked out that by walking to and from the pleasure beach from their airport HQ combined with riding four of the roller coasters would allow them to clock up a stomach churning 13.1 miles.

Also present at the Awards were members of St Dunstan's Speaker Team, all themselves St Dunstaners who, among other community activities, volunteer to attend Cadet Challenge events. They included Simon Brown, 30, who lost his sight following a sniper attack whilst repairing vehicles in Iraq and Billy Baxter a former member of the Royal Horse Artillery who lost his sight after contracting an infection whilst serving in Bosnia.

Commenting on the Cadet Challenge, Air Commodore Stewart said, "The Cadet Challenge is a great test of teamwork and ingenuity for Cadets. It also provides them the opportunity to raise awareness of St Dunstan's and the vital work the organisation does to support blind ex-Service personnel."

Colin Williamson, St Dunstaner and Cadet Challenge Project Officer, paid tribute to the winning team's efforts. "This was a well organised and innovative

Cadets from the ground-breaking 1st Northern Ireland Battalion, ACF won second prize.

The Dalbeattie Cadets from West Lowland Batallion, ACF were the first Scottish Units to take part.

Lt Jonathan Holmes with Trustee David Knowles.

The "outstanding" Lt David Rutherford.

Challenge event," he said. "It was a really fun way to complete the distance and resulted in some great publicity both for the Cadets and for St Dunstan's. All the finalists are a credit to their Units and should be proud of their achievements."

The runner up trophy was presented to Army Cadets from County Londonderry. B Company, 1st Northern Ireland Battalion, ACF, carried a dummy casualty in a stretcher from Portrush to Coleraine completing various tasks under blindfold en route.

Third prize went to Dalbeattie Detachment, West Lowland Battalion, ACF who decided on Dalbeattie Forest as the venue for their challenge which featured walking, map reading and various command tasks, some under blindfold.

There were some additional awards being presented for the first time. The first was a new

RAF St Dunstaner Ron Freer and Donna Vaughan are joined in a computer lesson by 177 Squadron.

National Fundraising Trophy. This was won by Catterick and Stokesley Detachments, Yorkshire and North West ACF. They raised an impressive sum of £2,601 for St Dunstan's. There to collect the trophy was Unit Commander, Lt Jonathan Holmes.

The second new award was the Outstanding Adult Instructor Trophy. This was awarded to the adult instructor who had quite literally, gone the extra mile, both in keeping his unit going and in undertaking the Cadet Challenge. The 2008 Outstanding Adult Instructor trophy went to Lt David Rutherford from Londonderry ACF.

Following the Awards presentation, Guests and Cadets were given the opportunity to tour St Dunstan's Ovingdean, meeting St Dunstaners and staff and finding out about life without sight and how the facilities available for training, rehabilitation, sporting and social activity help combat blindness. They also got to participate in some of the favourite activities of St Dunstaners such as acoustic rifle shooting.

Dancing for body and soul

Eric Cooper and Arthur Turner report on the launch of the St Dunstan's Dance Club and the theraputic value of dancing

THE INAUGURAL MEETING of St Dunstan's stompers (dancers) was convened on Friday 6 March with much hilarity and aching feet, after a fun filled week with David and Glenys.

Thanks to Helen Emmerson for her efforts on our behalf. The ballroom was immaculate, reverberating to the sounds of Glen Miller and some of David's own compositions. His versatility on the organ is quite remarkable. He and Glenys worked so hard to make our dance week a success.

We are so lucky at St Dunstan's to have access to so many talented artists prepared to donate their time and energies for our enjoyment. And enjoy it we did! The newly united Salsa Formation Team intensively trained by David and Glenys for blind men and women will welcome any dancing newcomers who would like to join us.

A warm welcome was extended to Phil Brown, all the way from Derby, for his excellent music and DJ-ing at the Gala ball in the lounge on Friday evening. We hope to see him again.

Tom and Amy Bryden of Newcastle-upon-Tyne were equally enthusiastic. "We are here for the dance week between 1-7 March at St Dunstan's Ovingdean," said Tom. "Unfortunately, this year there is no big band, but that's not to say that the atmosphere is not here. We have thoroughly enjoyed the week so far.

"In point of fact, it has been a complete success. As usual we have the comradeship to give each other support in dancing lessons and the tutors again this week, David and Glenys and Margaret have been so patient teaching us dancing, new routines and new ways. We are thoroughly becoming engrossed with the dances.

"As we learn the new routines more and more people are joining into it. We have our little formation team dance where we do our Mambo 5, which is really a party piece but we thoroughly enjoy it. Dance Week to us means so much: It means the comradeship of St Dunstaners, the friendship we encounter, we exchange little family views from each other,

photographs and music. It's one big, big happy Dance Club."

Dolly Jones of Birmingham felt that the week was of benefit to her husband Harry. "He had a stroke when he was 64 and it was a bad one," she said. "He never really got going again until he was 66, getting his strength back. Then we came to St Dunstan's and started dancing. It gave him the confidence to do the waltz, not the quick step. Now he's going into 84 and not doing too bad at all. We are looking forward to the Gala night so he can do his bit once again."

The logistics of arranging the week also fail to dampen the spirits of David Schofield. "The reason I like doing the Dance Club is that St Dunstan's have helped me interact socially," he said. "When the opportunity arose, I thought it would be an ideal opportunity to get St Dunstaners together. When we saw

Stan Grimsey, Lindy, Joan Morgan and Sue dance in step to the music of Phil Brown.

Tom and Amy Bryden on the dancefloor.

Les Peploe takes a spin with CA Denise.

Organist Phil Brown proved a hit with a varied selection of tunes.

St Dunstaner Ernie Cook puts on the style.

Eric and Madge Cooper enjoy a quick step.

Denise and Mansel join the formation team.

George and Joan during a slow dance.

Sue takes a spin with St Dunstaner Ken Kettle.

the ballroom for the first time, our minds were made up. Getting people to dance and sing to music brings people together. It has proved to be very successful because the numbers are increasing annually.

"If you haven't filled in a club form, please contact me as soon as possible as it will soon be over subscribed. Call me on 0115 9323517."

David is keen to point out that dancing exercises mind and body. "You have to think about the steps you are making, so that keeps your mind active, coordinating the moves. Then you also use all your muscles, probably some you never knew you had," he said. "Plus you can cover a fair old distance on the dance floor, that's all good exercise without the need for gym."

Bill Leith

William Alexander Leith passed away on 3 March, aged 80, following a period of illness. His association with St Dunstan's spanned almost 40 years, initially when his firm provided photographic services for The Review and publicity exercises. His other passions, running and flying also came into play. In 2007, he ran the London Marathon for the Charity and championed a scheme that introduced St Dunstaners to the pleasure of going aloft in light aircraft. Our sympathy goes to Stroma and his sons.

Blitz brought war to home

John Docherty still recalls the two- day attack that devastated the heart of Scotland's industrial township

EVERY TIME A Friday the 13th looms on the calendar Glasgow St Dunstaner John Docherty's thoughts turn to the people of Clydebank who lived through an intense bombing raid in 1941. Barely nine years old at the time, John and his family were amongst the population surprised when the hell of war reached their doorstep in the now infamous Clydebank Blitz.

Photograph copyright John Docherty

Young John and his mother on a 1941 trip to Blackpool some months after the Clydebank Blitz.

"I think how did I survive that? For all the bombs that were dropped, all the people who were killed, and there must have been hundreds, how did they miss me?" John asks. "There were so many buildings that took direct hits, one just 25 yards from my house took three. What happened to those people?"

Photograph copyright and courtesy of Clydebank Library, West Dunbartonshire Council

An Air Warden lifts a child from the ruins.

With a dense mix of shipbuilding and manufacturing industries, a large population had built up in the area to service those businesses. However, as those firms diverted their efforts into war work there seemed little comprehension that the town was a ready-made target for attack. "We all knew that the Singer sewing machine factory was making ammunition - with 24,000 people working there - and that John Brown's shipyard was doing war work on the ships, and even that the oil drums in Old Kilpatrick would be another target," said John.

Despite this, there remained a sense that bombing raids were something that just happened in London. That changed dramatically on Thursday, 13 March 1941! "Everything was quiet and nice that night," said John who was at home with his family listening to the wireless. "We heard the sirens over the radio and I remember my mother saying 'Oh, that's poor London getting an air raid', and then suddenly the sirens go off in Clydebank. We thought it was just a practise. We had no experience of going to the shelters for real so we just stayed where we were and then the bombs started dropping."

Photograph copyright and courtesy of Clydebank Library, West Dunbartonshire Council

Around 1,200 people died in the Clydebank Blitz.

As the first wave of German bombers approached Clydebank, the sky was lit by a full moon. Over the next nine hours, 250 planes would drop 1,650 incendiary devices and 272 tonnes of bombs. Singer's timber yard was set ablaze, followed by an oil storage depot and the Auchentoshan distillery. John believes that the *Queen Elizabeth*, carrying 19,000 troops may have been another target. The ship was said to have been heading for Southampton, but had in fact set sail for America.

The tenements also came under attack. "It wasn't safe to go anywhere, so we stayed where we were," said John. As Thursday became Friday, the exploding bombs intensified, as one wave of German planes was followed by the next. The small resistance from local anti-aircraft units ceased as they ran out of ammunition. "That's why I think of it as Friday the 13th, it started on the Thursday but the worst of it was on Friday. The bombing was non-stop. A landmine dropped near our house which would have killed us if it had gone off but it was blown away by another bomb."

The all clear finally sounded around 06:00 and people were moved to the Town Hall where buses were brought in to move the surviving population to surrounding villages. "About 11am some of the buses were attacked by German planes. They were machine gunned. My uncle lived in a building nearby and when he got home he found his best suit hanging up full of bullet holes."

John and his family were moved to Renton, then Alexandra, then Lyndsey, and back to Renton. "We came back to Clydebank eventually, but not everybody did. That's one of the great mysteries, were people gone because they had settled elsewhere or had they been killed?"

A tale written with great brio

SARAH HARRISON, author of over 20 novels such as *Rose Petal Soup*, *A Spell of Swallows*, and *The Nightingale's Nest* was the judge of the latest Review story contest. She also wrote the self help guide *How to Write a Blockbuster* as well as several children's books. Her second choice of story was Roy Ramsay's *The Gastronome Club's Hunt*. "It was funny and inventive and written with great brio," she said. Roy won £30 with his entry which you can now read here...

The Gastronome Club's Hunt

by Roy Ramsay

The peace of the Midchester countryside was shattered and the Gastronome Club's twice monthly hunt begun when their president, Cholmondeley St John-Knotworthy (pronounced Chumley Sinjen-Knotworthy) was touring his estate one day, walking off a particularly fine lunch.

As he staggered, full of venison and port wine, up a hill into Fine Weather Copse, he chanced upon a full-grown boar badger asleep in the hot sun. This particularly ferocious animal had eaten a good number of rotting apples in the Squire's orchards the night before and was in fact blind drunk.

"I've never eaten badger before," said the gastronome to himself. Having no weapon to hand he fell upon the luckless creature meaning to strangle it with his bare hands.

Now drunks generally fall into one of two categories. They either become maudlin and tearful or turn into savage fighters. Old Brock's natural inclination was toward the latter every time. He was going to get it in the neck when he got home for staying out all night -something he had never done before - badgers don't as a rule, preferring to slumber well out of harm's way deep underground.

Old Brock's first thoughts on stirring were of an angry Mrs Brock and all the little Brocks setting about him for failing to bring home the bacon. Then he became aware of a ferocious headache and almost immediately that it wasn't Mrs Brock that was attacking him but some great fat swine of a man who was trying to strangle him.

Old Brock operated on a short fuse at the best of times and this was one of the worst. With tooth and claw he ripped the Squire to shreds, gent's natty suiting, skin, muscle, bone and all. If his faithful friend Tolly Hargreaves hadn't ridden out to look for him on his own black mare the Squire might well have bled to death where he lay. In the event, he succumbed to his wounds three days later in the private suite of the cottage hospital, but not before he had laid on "The Hunt."

Sitting up in bed, his face the colour of celery, and aided by his executor, Binky Makeoff, senior partner in Grabbitt, Twistem and Makeoff, Solicitors and Commissioners for Oaths, he arranged that his chums in The Gastronome Club should take a share in the income from his estates in perpetuity, provided that they hunted the badger on his land, twice monthly, in the foxhunting season.

"The hunters must go on foot," squeaked the Squire. "But no digging is allowed, no dogs and no weapons. The hunters can wear protective clothing if they like, but the blasted animal, when found, must be strangled with the bare hands. The first man to lay hands on the beast, in each hunt, is to receive a prize of five hundred pounds."

He consulted his scribbled notes. "To work up a good appetite for their free dinner at The Hall, each hunt must fully encircle my land, taking in the twelve fenced copses, a distance of some five miles. The circuit is to be completed, rain or shine, on two Saturdays every month, with the sole objective of sitting down to roast badger on the Sunday."

At first the huntsmen laboured round the fields in fencing masks and body armour, sweating profusely. As the months turned into years with never a sighting of a badger above ground the hunt became a cross-country run in shorts and singlets for the younger members, and a hike in tweeds and felt hats for the older brigade.

Since the object of this ludicrous and futile exercise was known to be a hunt, the participants were regularly duffed-up by wild and noisy hunt saboteurs, who destroyed the peace of the countryside. The saboteurs daubed anti-hunting slogans on the hunters' gleaming Range Rovers even though Bunny Scattergood bravely stood guard. Giant of a man though Bunny was, he was not over-bright and the saboteurs regularly and systematically abused him as he defended one side of the vehicles whilst they carried out their artwork on the other. The whole thing became a ritualistic lark and the villagers brought out picnics to enjoy the fun.

One day, Old Cecil Featherstonehaugh (pronounced Fanshawe, in the way of

the Toffs) was standing at the Castle Field Gate when a badger set out across the field.

"Tally Ho," cried Cecil and sounded his hunting horn. The horn attracted not the huntsmen, but the hunt saboteurs. Upon sighting the animal they approached it with a view to driving it back underground in the very copse from which it had just escaped a savage mauling.

That was the last thing they could achieve did they but know it. This was a mature, young, boar badger who had travelled far in search of a mate. At dawn he had found a sett and taken refuge in it. Five minutes ago Old Brock, the resident male had sniffed out the intruder and driven him off with well-boxed ears in no uncertain manner. A savage boar badger is savage indeed and Old Brock was a masterly fighter.

The young boar, suitably chastised but very irritable, was now making for a disused sett he had found in the night on the other side of Castle Field. Nothing was going to stop him from reaching it. A t the sight of the hunt saboteurs barring his way he squealed and snarled in the same way that Old Brock had squealed and snarled at him. He bared his teeth and charged the nearest pair of legs.

"Mind where you're bloody goin' will yer?" yelled Joe Breakitt, as Will Wreckham ran up him backwards in his efforts to get out of the way. Both fell and rolled in a fresh cowpat, bringing down Colin and Sandra Simpson in the muck.

Several others got in front of the badger but he continued steadily on his fixed course, growling, squealing and snarling as he went.

"I told you they were savage," said young Ken Snaith. "One of them killed twenty of my dad's hens last week, I don't know why we're trying to protect the varmints." Just then the cross-country runners came in sight. Spurred on by Cecil's hunting horn they pursued the badger at full pelt. The saboteurs fell upon them and a major fistfight ensued. Showing no preference at all, the badger bit three hunters and three saboteurs.

To save his own skin, Josh Bunnylove, the well-known animal rights activist, caught the badger a glancing blow with his banner. The moment was recorded for posterity by a hunt-supporter with a long lens on his camera. The pictures were splashed all over the tabloids and Josh Bunnylove retired from public life, a broken man; his "street cred" gone forever.

When almost everyone had received a black eye and everybody was covered in cow's muck the police arrived.

Inspector Percy Fearnought had both sides rounded up and then, standing well up-wind, read them the main points of the new Act which made the badger a protected species. He let the hunters off with a warning on this occasion and cautioned the saboteurs as to their future behaviour on private land.

The executor, Binky Makeoff, consulted his colleagues, charged an exorbitant fee, and ruled that provided the cross-country run and the tweedy hike continued, the agreed proportion of the estate income could still be paid into the Gastronome Club's account.

The Gastronome Club's members continued to abuse their stomachs, livers and kidneys in their traditional manner, the saboteurs joined forces with an anti-fox hunting clan in the next county, the young boar persuaded a young sow to come and share the empty sett with him, and peace returned to the Midchester countryside.

Next Month: The Tea Break

Marilyn Hill-Smith, Mickie Driver, Janet Beale and Victoria Yellop gave St Dunstan's a musical stroll down memory lane on 6 March courtesy of the Not Forgotten Association.

BEER OF THE MONTH

by Colin Williamson

Paradox Ale

Paradox Ale comes from BrewDog, a micro-brewery led by James Watt and Martin Dickie in Fraserburgh, Scotland. They are committed to hand crafted ales with a contemporary twist. In this case, the result is a superb imperial stout that was overall winner of the Grampian Food Forum in 2007. Paradox is finished off and matured in Whisky casks for three months to give it a unique flavour. The casks are acquired from some of Scotland's most prestigious whiskies and the beer is released in small numbered batches. Batch 005 was matured in casks from Speyside, specifically Glen Moray, Batch 009 uses casks from Ardberg in Islay. This ale is very strong, (between 10.5 and 12 per cent ABV) and the manufacturers recommend it be sipped, like a fine malt whisky, rather than drunk like a beer. Paradox can be found in Oddbins and Tesco or ordered online from the brewer at www.brewdog.com.

Ten Answers

Answers to quiz on page 11

1) Bury St Edmunds; **2)** St Pancras; **3)** Archbishop of Canterbury; **4)** Snakes; **5)** Money; **6)** St Dunstan; **7)** St Dunstan; **8)** Saint Swithin; **9)** St Michael; and **10)** *Some Like it Hot*.

Ray Hazan reports on the drift of the Computer Club

More Snow Expected – Grit Your Teeth!

WEATHER CONDITIONS prevented a full compliment of 26 attendees at the first Computer Club meeting of this year on 4-5 February. Those who were able to make it brought with them enthusiasm in full, sufficient to fill the empty places!

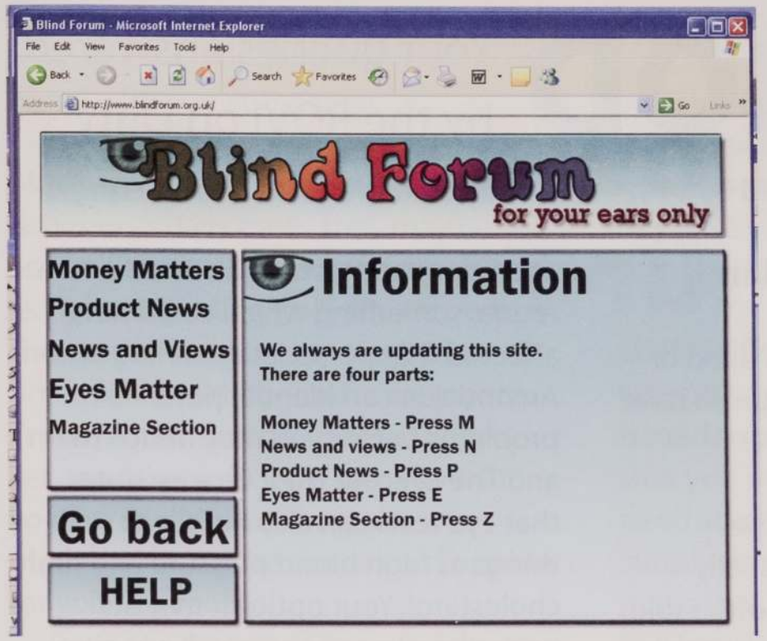
As usual, there were new web addresses to pick up, one being www.fm.com where you can search for and play any item of music. You cannot download from this site.

We were grateful to have a ROVI led session during which the Trekker Breeze by HumanWare, was passed around (pictured left). This is a handheld talking GPS device, designed specifically for the visually impaired. It can only give you guiding instructions if the journey has been previously recorded – not a matter of typing in a postcode and off you go! It must also be emphasised that it is a secondary mobility aid and the long cane or guide dog is still the primary aid required to warn you of obstacles, etc. The cost is £485 plus £10 postage, though HumanWare will ask visually impaired buyers to sign a VAT exemption form. Their UK sales office can be contacted on 01933 415800.

The club also was brought up to date with various telephone and time devices.

Our regular sessions with Brad Croshaw and Michael Crawford were loquacious affairs! Just when a silence threatened, we were off again! General advice was to stick to Windows XP for the time being. Windows7 is being beta tested, but it is still better to stick to the familiar established version.

An equally noisy affair was the buffet supper on the Wednesday evening. Although a delicious



A talking website from St Dunstaner John Taylor.

Chicken Biryani was consumed within the hour, it was another two hours before the party broke up. This is to be partially blamed on Ernie Bignell who recited two monologues, which was no mean feat in view of the mature grape juice which flowed generously.

Our thanks, as always, to Joan Beevers, Janis Sharp and Brad Croshaw for their indomitable service! Harry Beevers thanked everyone and cemented his praise with that certain Yorkshire humour, for which he is famous.

Harry again came to the fore on Thursday afternoon with a golden quiz. Fifty questions based on computer terminology had teams bonding, upset by their lack of knowledge, and hating their hindsight! "Of course we knew that – why didn't we think of it?" Thank you, Harry.

St Dunstaner John Taylor of Worthing has been retired for a while now. He has found a novel way to remain active and play his part in helping others by creating a website of which he is very proud, www.blindforum.org.uk. Although in its infancy, John's website has helpful hints and links to other useful sites and is geared to the visually impaired by being audio based. You can e-mail him on contact@blindforum.co.uk.

If you have missed any radio or TV programmes then the listen again application from www.webbie.org.uk is essential. It is much easier to use than the I-Player and has more facilities than just the listen again aspect.

The club members were delighted when they learnt of the tribute earned by the IT team in London, as described in last month's Review. Their work is deservedly recognised. Well done all!

The next meeting takes place at St Dunstan's Ovingdean on Wednesday, 30 September-Thursday, 1 October. In the meantime, our thanks to our regular helpers.

ASK ROD

Your queries answered by the ROVI on Duty

ROVI on Duty **Tel: 01273 391447** **E-mail:** rovionduty@st-dunstans.org.uk

Keep visiting the optician after diagnosis

Since you were registered as Blind or Partially Sighted how many times have you been to the optician?

In many of our intro weeks, the Rehabilitation Officers for Visually Impaired People (ROVIs) are often told by new St Dunstaners that they have been discharged from the hospital eye clinic as nothing more can be done medically. This may be the case, but this does not mean that you should not be getting your eyes tested regularly.

Opticians, also known as Optometrists check the health of your eye. So even though you have been registered as Blind or Partially Sighted, due to Age Related Macular Degeneration for example, this does not mean that another problem will not occur. Ask yourself this, would you no longer go to the dentist because one filling had been completed? We have had at least one case where a St Dunstaner arrived for their introduction week having not been to the optician since their diagnosis. During this intro week, they were advised to still get their eyes tested. Upon returning home, that person in question visited their optician and was told that they also had a torn retina, something which could have affected that person's remaining vision. An optician can identify potential problems before you may notice them and The Eyecare Trust Charity states that eye tests can also highlight such things as high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Your optician may still prescribe glasses; these will not cure your sight problem, but if you have some remaining vision, glasses could maximise the vision which you do have.

If getting to the opticians has become more difficult since your sight loss, there is now also the option of having your eyes tested at home. To do this, the RNIB recommends contacting your usual optician first to find out if they are able to do home appointments. If they are not able to, they may well be able to recommend someone. If this isn't the case, other places to try for information are your Primary Care Trust, your local library, NHS Direct or Citizens Advice Bureau. The cost of the eye test should be the same as you would pay if you were actually at the optician, therefore as you are registered blind or partially sighted, your test is free. If you ask for a home assessment, try and ask for identification before letting the optician into your home, or try and arrange for a friend or relative to be at home with you at the time.

Although opticians deal with sight issues on a daily basis, they may not be as familiar as a ROVI with such things as sighted guiding, so if you do go to the optician and find yourself in an unfamiliar building, ask for assistance. Try to remember the sighted guide session from your intro week so that you are in control of how you are guided, making the trip as comfortable for you as possible.

If you also have hearing loss, asking for a longer appointment may help in case you require more time to hear what is being asked of you. Similarly, if you know your eyes become tired quickly don't be afraid to ask for a break. Obviously, we hope that there are no further problems with your eyesight, but having regular tests will ensure any problems can be dealt with as soon as they arise.

UNUSED EQUIPMENT

Do you have any equipment that was issued to you by St Dunstan's ROVIs that you no longer use? Whether you need some assistance, instruction or simply no longer have a need for any items that we issued to you, contact ROD on 01273 391447 and we'll see if we can help. Many items can be reissued to another St Dunstaner if you no longer use them, but we'd like to make sure your needs are still being met as well

From The Craft Workshop

THE INNER GARDEN at St Dunstan's Ovingdean has recently gained a new feature which has been mounted on the outside wall of the Craft Workshop. Uniting the skills of four St Dunstaners, it is a real tri-Service triumph. RAF St Dunstaner Tony Elphick, Army St Dunstaners Joyce Charlton and Elsie Scullion, and Roedean Wren Marise Falkingham all worked on this clay tile project featuring relief birds and flowers on a blue background. With a dark blue perimeter, a circle of spring songbirds descend on an enticing flower patch with a mix of multi-coloured blooms.

Photograph copyright: Sally Hancox

DO IT? ASK IT?

IT Help Telephone: 01273 391432 E-mail: rehabit@st-dunstans.org.uk

Auto Text

Auto Text is a great feature which does away with the need to repeatedly type out commonly used phrases or paragraphs in every document or letter you type. It works slightly differently in Guide and in Microsoft Word, but the idea is the same: Set up a phrase (or longer) as an Auto Text and you are then able to insert the whole thing whenever required using a brief shortcut.

Guide comes with a few preset Auto Texts. Among them are "Yours Faithfully", "Yours Sincerely" and "Kind Regards." To use these Auto Texts to sign off a letter you are writing in Guide, type the letters yf, ys or kr, depending on which you want, and then hold down the Alt key (to the left of the spacebar) and tap the right arrow key. The full text should appear.

To create your own Auto Text, for example to set your name up as an Auto Text here's how:

For GUIDE

1 From the main menu choose Letters and Documents.
2 Tap 4 for Auto Text and then tap the down arrow until you hear 'Add New Auto Text.'
3 Tap Enter to begin and, when prompted, type the short code for your name, which could be your initials.
4 Tap Enter again, and then type your name, (which could also be a whole sentence or paragraph).
5 Finally, tap Escape to save your new Auto Text.

For Microsoft Word

1 Type the sentence, phrase or paragraph you wish to set as an Auto Text into a blank document.
2 Select the text by holding Ctrl and tapping A.
3 Hold the left Alt key and tap F3. A box will appear asking you to name the new Auto Text. Give what you have typed a short name that you will remember, for example "addr" if you are setting your address as an Auto Text.
4 Tap Enter to store your Auto Text in Word.

To insert the full text at the current cursor position in any Word document later on, type the name you have given the Auto Text and tap F3.

Welcome to **St Dunstan's**

Alfie Allen of Lisburn, County Antrim served as a Telegraphist in the Royal Navy from 1939 to 1946.

John Bevan of Barton-on-Sea, New Milton, Hampshire served in the Royal Engineers from 1942 to 1947.

John Brantom of Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1940 to 1946.

Michael Brown of Hove, East Sussex served as a Telegraphist in the Royal Navy from 1946 to 1948.

Gordon Chapman of Chiseldon, Swindon, Wiltshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1966 to 1975.

Stefan Ciesla of Chessington, Surrey served as Sergeant in the Polish Air Force from 1943 to 1944.

Charles Clarkson of Silsden, Keighly, West Yorkshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1947.

Melvin Delaney of Barnsley, South Yorkshire served in the Yorkshire and Lancashire Regiment and the Duke of Wellington's Regiment (West Riding) between 1964 and 1973.

Joseph Etherington of Preston, Lancashire served in the Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire) from 1953 to 1956.

Joyce Fleet of Brewood, Staffordshire served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1945 to 1946.

Bettina Flower of Cuckfield, Haywards Heath served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

John Gerrard of Forres, Morayshire served in Burma and India with the Royal Artillery from 1939 to 1946.

Winston Greatorex of Whitby, North Yorkshire served in the Royal Artillery, Royal Army Ordnance Corps, and Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers between 1940 and 1946.

Ronald Greenwood of Portsmouth, Hampshire served in the Royal Marines from 1927 to 1945.

Norman Hagen of Mansfield, Nottinghamshire served in the Royal Navy from 1947 to 1954.

Derek Hall of Minehead, Somerset served in The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment) from 1944 to 1946.

Andrew Hussey of Greenwich, London served as Able Seaman in the Royal Navy from 1952 to 1962.

Albert Jones of Kingshurst, Birmingham served in the General Service Corps and Royal Ulster Rifles between 1947 and 1949.

George Kelly of Blackpool, Lancashire served in North Africa and Italy with the Royal Engineers from 1941 to 1947.

Douglas Lewis of Sutton, Surrey served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1941 to 1946.

Beatrice Marshall of Birdwell, Barnsley, South Yorkshire served in Scotland with the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1942 to 1946.

Vernon Perry of Pennant, Llanbrynmair, Powys served in the Royal Navy from 1955 to 1990.

Albert Pugh of Swindon, Wiltshire served in the Dorset Regiment, Tank Regiment, South Staffordshire Regiment, Royal Artillery and Royal Army Service Corps between 1940 and 1966.

Charles Rance of Worthing, West Sussex served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1940 to 1946.

Henry Riley of Blaenau Ffestiniog, Gwynedd served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Bernard Thomas of Worcester, Worcestershire served in the Royal Artillery from 1941 to 1946.

Leonard Waugh of Stockbury, Sittingbourne, Kent served in the Royal Air Force from 1949 to 1950.

Victor Williams of Haywards Heath, West Sussex served in the Royal Navy from 1941 to 1946.

Family News

SILVER ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:
Eric and Meg Marsh of Chorley, Lancashire on 24 March.

RUBY ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:
Bernard and Pat Bradnum of Willen Park, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire on 22 March.

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:
Bill and Carole Kennedy of Walton, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire on 21 March.

John and Shirley Russell of Maidstone, Kent on 21 March.

Norman and Florence Spencer of Morecambe, Lancashire on 21 March.

Robert and Anne Strickland of Fareham, Hampshire on 21 March.

Charlie and Shirley Daly of Epping, Essex on 22 March.

DIAMOND ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:
Sir Colville and Lady Rosamund Barclay of Winchester, Hampshire on 17 March.

Sylvia and Jack Dorey of Marton-in-Cleveland, Middlesbrough, Cleveland on 19 March.

BLUE SAPPHIRE ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:
Maxwell and Joan Ash of Sidmouth, Devon on 4 March.

Betty and Bill Nairn of Hawkesbury Upton, Badmington, South Gloucestershire on 25 March.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to:
Paul Rydeard who passed out at Pirbright on 6 March. Aged 23, he has joined the Royal Signals. He is the nephew of Maria Pikulski of Leyland, Preston, Lancashire.

Cheryl Danson who has been made an OBE for services to sport. Having played netball at an international level, she is chairman of England Netball. She is the daughter of John and Sheila Ager of Luton, Bedfordshire.

DEATHS

We regret to announce the death of:
Myra Deane on 16 February. She was the wife of St Dunstaner John Deane of Preston, Lancashire.

Edna Brown of Upton Warren, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire on 17 February. She was the widow of St Dunstaner Victor Brown.

Valarie Quayle on 17 February. She was the wife of Robert Quayle of Bognor Regis, West Sussex.

June Hawes of Minnis Bay, Birchington, Kent on 19 February. She was the widow of Francis Hawes.

Muriel Pritchard on 21 February. She was the wife of Douglas Pritchard of St John's, Worcester, Worcestershire.

Muriel Goodall of Little Dunham, King's Lynn, Norfolk on 23 February. She was the widow of Andrew Goodall.

James Entwisle on 24 February, aged 102. Readers may recall that Jim and his wife Margaret celebrated their 79th wedding anniversary in May last year. His son-in-law is St Dunstaner Fred Simpson of Chorley, Lancashire.

Jean Jones of Sutton, Surrey on 24 February. She was the widow of Reginald Jones.

Joyce Wilson on 25 February. She was the wife of St Dunstaner James Wilson of Millom, Cumbria.

Sheila Ostle of Cockermouth, Cumbria on 11 March. She was the widow of St Dunstaner Isaac Ostle.

In Memory

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

Kathleen Franck
Women's Auxiliary Air Force
Kathleen Mary Franck of Thistleberry, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire died on 6 February, aged 92. She joined the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in 1941 where her duties included making models, some of which were used for planning the Dambusters raid. Discharged in 1946, she later became a teacher as well as raising a family. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Ken Westcott
Royal Air Force
Kenyon Cecil Westcott of Alcombe, Minehead, Somerset died on 12 February, aged 88. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1941, serving in South Africa and the Middle East. Discharged in 1946, he returned to the family greengrocers and fishmongery business. Our sympathy goes to his widow Lorna and all the family.

Dennis Bird
Royal Air Force
Dennis Gordon Bird of Callington, Cornwall died on 16 February, aged 83. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1943, serving in Ceylon and later Singapore after the Japanese surrender. Discharged in 1947, he worked as an engineer on the buses for London Transport. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

John Guy
Royal Navy
John Edward Guy of Derby, Derbyshire died on 16 February, aged 83. He joined the Royal Navy in 1943 serving on Atlantic Convoys and in the Far East. Demobbed in 1946, he worked for Hoover, later branching out independently in domestic appliances. Our sympathy goes to his widow Doreen and all the family.

Cyril Luxton
Royal Air Force
Cyril Luxton of Hove, East Sussex died on 16 February, aged 88. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1940 and was posted to the Middle East. Demobbed in 1946, he worked in insurance.

Leonard Simpson
Merchant Navy
Leonard Simpson of Whickham, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear died on 16 February, aged 96. He worked in a colliery before joining the Merchant Navy in 1929, qualifying as a gunner during the Second World War. He sailed mainly on tankers before discharge in 1977. Our sympathy goes to his widow Miriam and all the family.

Robert Ridgeon
Royal Engineers
Robert Ridgeon of Worksop, Nottinghamshire died on 18 February, aged 91. He joined the Royal Army Service Corps in 1940 but transferred to the Royal Engineers in 1943. Demobbed in 1946, he worked on railways at Worksop. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Patrick Green
Royal Norfolk Regiment
Major Patrick Edmund Green of Felixstowe, Suffolk died on 24 February, aged 93. He joined the Royal Army Pay Corps in 1937, transferring to the Royal Norfolk Regiment when commissioned in 1943. He served around the world before being discharged in 1961. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Alan Simper
Royal Navy
Alan Ivor Simper of Dunstable, Bedfordshire died on 24 February, aged 84. He joined the Royal Navy in 1943, serving with his twin brother on armed merchant ships. Demobbed in 1946, he then worked in sales for electrical and insurance companies. Our sympathy goes to his widow Marie and all the family.

Roy Beavan
Royal Army Ordnance Corps
Roy Beavan of Helmshore, Rossendale, Lancashire died on 28 February, aged 80. He joined the General Service Corps in 1947, soon transferring to the Royal Army Ordnance Corps. He became as a Physical Training Instructor leaving as Sergeant in 1949. In civilian life, he worked as a chemist. Our sympathy goes to his widow Catherine and all the family.

Arthur Impey
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment
Arthur Edward Impey of Luton, Bedfordshire died on 2 March, aged 95. He joined the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment in 1932, serving in the UK and overseas. During the Second World War, he was taken prisoner in Singapore and held at Changi Gaol. Discharged in 1946, he worked for Vauxhall and other firms. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Robert Stanton
Royal Navy
Robert Percy Stanton of Clapham, Bedford, Bedfordshire died on 4 March, aged 88. He joined the Royal Navy in 1939, later serving in the Fleet Air Arm at HMS *Daedalus* working with Swordfish and other aircraft. Discharged as Chief Air Fitter in 1958, he worked in insurance and for the London Brick Company. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Lawrence Cook
King's Own Royal Regiment
Lawrence Cook of Garstang, near Preston, Lancashire died on 7 March, aged 85. He joined the King's Own Royal Regiment as a Boy Soldier in 1938. He played clarinet with the band, serving in London during the Blitz and later in Gibraltar. Discharged in 1948, he worked for ICI but later set up a café and a bakery. Our sympathy goes to his widow Ivy and all the family.

George Fuller
Royal Air Force
George Albert Fuller of Reigate, Surrey died on 8 March, aged 82. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1943, serving as a gunner on Halifax and Lancaster aircraft. Discharged in 1948, he became a test inspector for Vickers Armstrong working on a range of aircraft that included Concorde. Our sympathy goes to his widow Dorothy and all the family.

Alan Mitchell
Royal Army Ordnance Corps
Alan Mitchell of Congleton, Cheshire died on 10 March, aged 62. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1967. He joined the Royal Army Ordnance Corps as an 18-year-old in 1964, serving in the UK and Germany. During this time, he was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis which aggravated defective vision. Discharged in 1966, he returned to the UK and after training at St Dunstan's took up wrought-iron work and stool making. A keen gardener, he was an active member of St Dunstan's Fishing Club, joining many a seabound session. He was also a prize winning participant in St Dunstan's Bowling Club tournaments and regularly attended the summer camps in Lee-on-Solent. He enjoyed music and played the Hammond organ. Our sympathy goes to his son Steven and all the family.

John Barnfather
Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers
John Barnfather of Whitehaven, Cumbria died on 12 March, aged 82. He joined the Royal and Electrical Engineers in 1944 and served in Edinburgh and Austria. Discharged in 1948, he worked in the motor trade. Our sympathy goes to his widow Marjorie and all the family.

Tom Hill
Royal Air Force
Thomas Alexander Hill of Lewes, East Sussex died on 12 March, aged 79. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1947 and served at RAF Padgate, West Kirby and Innsworth. Discharged in 1949, he worked in retail. Our sympathy goes to his widow Patricia and all the family.

Bob Alty
Royal Engineers
Robert James Alty of Widnes, Cheshire died on 15 March, aged 88. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1941. He was an asbestos worker before joining the Royal Engineers in 1940. Serving with the 73rd Chemical Warfare Company, he was injured when a detonator exploded, losing his right eye and suffering wounds to his hand. Subsequently, he trained in Braille and shorthand typing at St Dunstan's in Church Stretton and specialised as a telephonist. He joined ICI as a telephonist remaining with the firm until 1978. He was a keen gardener and active member of St Dunstan's Gardening Club, organising trips during his time as Chairman. He also helped with the local Scouts. Other interests included wine making, languages, walking, picture framing, and computers. He was also an avid traveller, visiting all parts of the globe. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Christopher McKinnon
Royal Signals
Christopher John McKinnon of Poulton-Le-Fylde, Lancashire died on 15 March, aged 62. He joined the Royal Signals in 1962 and represented the regiment in several sports. Discharged in 1968, he worked for a firm providing amusement machines and later ran a nursing home. Our sympathy goes to his widow Marilyn and all the family.

John Scaife
Royal Air Force
John Arthur Scaife of Ovingdean, Brighton died on 15 March, aged 91. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1940 and specialised in Air Sea Rescue. Demobbed in 1946, he ran his own painting and decorating business. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Reg Webb
Army Catering Corps
Reginald Emrys Webb of Pencoed, Bridgend, Mid Glamorgan died on 16 March, aged 81. He joined the Army Catering Corps in 1946 and served in the UK. Discharged in 1948, he worked in tailoring and later for NAAFI. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Frederick Landles
Royal Navy
Frederick George Landles of Blackburn, Lancashire died on 17 March, aged 80. He joined the Royal Navy in 1947 and served on HMS *Berghead*. Discharged in 1949, he worked for the local authorities as a Committee Clerk. Our sympathy goes to his widow Etta and all the family.

Jack Morley
Royal Air Force
Jack Morley of Darnall, Sheffield, South Yorkshire died on 17 March, his 86th birthday. He was a messenger boy for the Home Guard during the worst of the Sheffield Blitz before joining the Royal Air Force in 1942. Qualifying as a Wireless Operator Air Gunner, he served around the UK and flew on sorties over Germany. Discharged as Flight Sergeant in 1946, he worked as a railway engineer, silversmith and fireman. Our sympathy goes to his brother St Dunstaner Arthur Morley and all members of the family.

France bestows highest honour on WWI Henry

BRITAIN'S OLDEST surviving veteran of the First World War was awarded one of France's highest honours on 16 March in recognition of his services to promoting peace. St Dunstaner Henry Allingham, who at 112 years old is also the country's oldest man, was presented with the Legion d'Honneur medal by Ambassador Maurice Gourdault-Montagne in a ceremony at the French diplomat's London residence. In 2003, Henry was previously presented with the order of "Chevalier" but this time he was made an "Officier", an effective promotion.

It was an emotional moment for Henry. "I am so happy that I can be here with you today, it means so much to me," he said afterwards. "I never thought in my wildest dreams that such a thing could happen."

Henry's grandson David Gray, who flew in from Michigan added: "Despite his years, he still enjoys a joke and is as sharp as ever. He's determined to ensure that today's generation does not forget the sacrifice of those who fought in World War I and World War II. I'm delighted for him to be receiving this mark of such gratitude from the French people."

Applause also came from Veterans Minister Kevan Jones who attended the ceremony. He said Henry had visited schools to help children "remember the sacrifice thousands of British soldiers made in World War I and ensured that they understand the debt of gratitude we owe them." The minister added that the Legion d'Honneur was "a wonderful tribute to Henry's bravery and commitment."

Photograph: Katie Collins/ PA Photos

Henry with Ambassador Maurice Gourdault-Montagne in London.