

St Dunstan's

October 2009

Review



Photograph: BBC/Steve Schofield

Wounded in Afghanistan

St Dunstan's Review

October 2009

No 995

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Cover Story

Royal Irish Ranger Andrew Allen was blown up by an improvised explosive device while serving in Afghanistan. Blinded, he lost his right leg immediately and surgeons had to amputate his left leg to save his life.

Back in Britain, recuperating at Selly Oak Hospital in Birmingham, he let a film crew follow his recuperation and rehabilitation for a documentary, Wounded which was broadcast recently on BBC1. More about Andrew on page 24.

St Dunstan's Review is available in large print, braille, MP3CD, via e-mail and on floppy-disc. If you wish to change Review format, or combinations thereof, contact Simon Rogers on 020 7616 7934 or e-mail simon.rogers@st-dunstans.org.uk.

Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

St Dunstan's Review is published monthly by **St Dunstan's** an independent future for blind ex-Service men and women, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD. Website: www.st-dunstans.org.uk. A company limited by guarantee No. 189648, registered in England. Registered Charity No. 216227 (England & Wales) and SCO39411 (Scotland). **ISSN 0036-2808**. Unless otherwise stated all photographs are copyright of St Dunstan's. Printed by Newnorth.

Calendar

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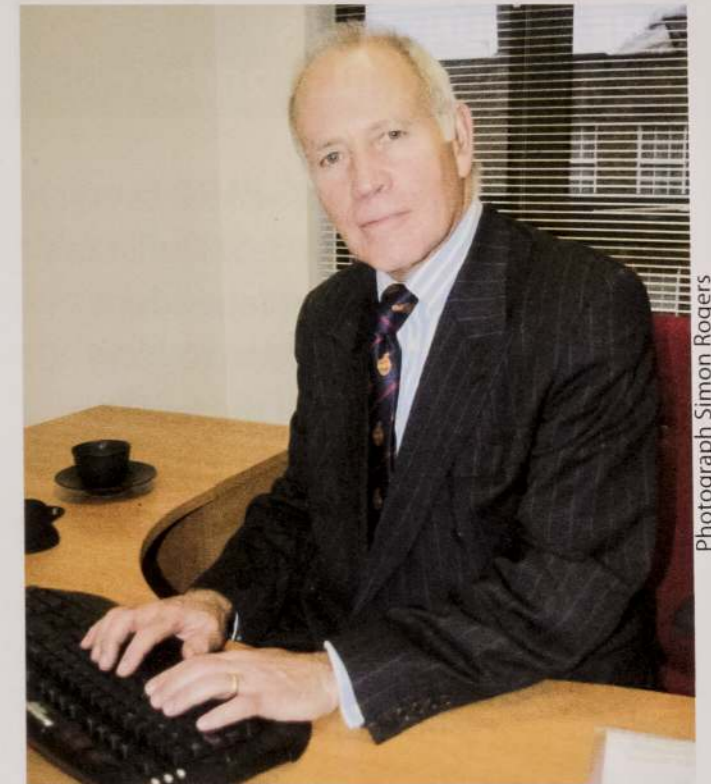
Your message from St Dunstan's Chairman, Andrew Keeling

From the Chairman

One of the particularly nice things about being Chairman is that each week I receive a number of cards and letters from St Dunstaners and their families thanking different parts of the organisation, or maybe the organisation as a whole, for what we do. This message is also frequently reflected in letters to the Review. While there is never room for complacency it is very reassuring to know how much our efforts are appreciated. So this is really just to thank all those of you that write in to assure you that your messages are very much appreciated.

In the same vein I would like to congratulate the staff on two particular recent achievements: firstly the formal recognition by the Brighton and Hove City Teaching PCT that St Dunstan's Ovingdean is the only one of 27 nursing homes in the city to have been rated "Excellent", and secondly that St Dunstan's has been re-accredited as an Investor in People. Both of these reflect great credit on the staff as a whole.

I would also like to thank all those responsible for the Review itself – those that write articles and letters, turn it into a very readable, informative and entertaining "house" magazine.



Photograph Simon Rogers

My last point relates to a certain letter in the August Review from a gentleman north of the border concerning my own totally inaccurate description (in the July Review) of a small hillock in Wales (otherwise known as Snowdon). His letter also contained a veiled suggestion that I should at least attempt to reach the summit of a certain real mountain in a more far-flung region of these islands. Your challenge is noted Sir, and I hope to have more to tell on this within a month or two!

Noticeboard

THE ST DUNSTAN'S BI-ENNIAL SURVEY 2009

THANK YOU FOR TAKING PART: Every alternate year since 2003, St Dunstan's has commissioned an independent research company, Clariant, to carry out a survey to ascertain the level of satisfaction that St Dunstaners express with our services. This is over and above the Nine-Month Satisfaction Survey and covers the whole spectrum of war blind and non-war blind St Dunstaners, widows and widowers. Out of some 800 names, Clariant randomly picked a total of 200 interviewees.

Firstly, St Dunstan's is very grateful to those who responded to the list of over 60 telephoned questions. Their participation is much appreciated.

The questions were almost totally unchanged from the previous survey in order to preserve a level playing field! The overall satisfaction expressed was exactly the same as two years ago at 95.8 per cent.

The degree of satisfaction with individual services was as follows:

	2007	2009
Admissions	90per cent	96per cent
Welfare	92per cent	95per cent
Grants	92per cent	97per cent
Transport	94per cent	97per cent
Ovingdean	96per cent	94per cent
Sheffield	90per cent	99per cent
Introduction week	99.2per cent	97.6per cent
Training	95.2per cent	96per cent
Estates	89per cent	92per cent
Communication	88per cent	94per cent
Review	88per cent	90per cent
Reunions	95per cent	95per cent

Many of the comments made were requests of one sort or another, such as to change format of the Review. St Dunstaners are reminded that they can put these requests to their Welfare Officers at any time and do not need to wait for a survey.

RL Hazan,
St Dunstaner Services Manager

PREPARING FOR POSSIBLE SWINE FLU OUTBREAK

READY FOR ANY EVENTUALITY: As part of St Dunstan's preparation for any possible swine flu outbreak the following letter is being sent with all confirmation booking letters.

Dear St Dunstaner/visitor

As I am sure you are aware, the Government expect the country to be hit by a Swine Flu pandemic this year. All care homes including Ovingdean have been told to draw up contingency plans to ensure that residents and staff are protected as far as possible from this virus.

As initial symptoms are those of ordinary flu we must insist that any St Dunstaners/visitors to Ovingdean who present any symptoms of flu prior to their admission, refrain from attending. We have instructed our drivers that if they arrive to collect a St Dunstaner/visitor for a trip to Ovingdean and find that person symptomatic of flu, then they are not to bring them in to Ovingdean.

Any St Dunstaner/visitor who arranges their own transport to Ovingdean and who is found on admission to be suffering from flu, will be asked to return home immediately.

I am sure that you will understand the reason why we have had to take such action and ask for your support and co-operation in our attempts to ensure that all St Dunstaners are protected from this virus as much as possible.

Jackie Greer, RGN,
Head of Care

In the case of any outbreak our local Health Protection Unit will guide us and advise us on any actions necessary, and unfortunately this may include cancellation of bookings or outings at short notice.

You can get more information about flu symptoms from www.nhs.uk and the Swine Flu Information Line on 0800 1 513 513. If you are in Northern Ireland dial 0800 0514 142.

Alternatively, contact your GP or call NHS Direct on 0845 4647 in England, NHS 24 on 08454 24 24 24 in Scotland or NHS Direct Wales on 0845 4647.

IT'S IN THE POST ...

INDUSTRIAL ACTION: We would like to apologise to everyone who received their copy of St Dunstan's Review later than expected last month. Our usual delivery pattern was disrupted by industrial action within Royal Mail. We hope normal service will be resumed this month, though circumstances remain beyond our control.

AN AFTERNOON OF MUSIC

IN AID OF ST DUNSTAN'S: New Sussex Singers will be performing a selection of songs and popular choral pieces inspired by Henry Allingham's lifetime. The concert will include *We'll Meet Again*, music from *West Side Story*, and choral works by Elgar and Parry.

The concert will be at St Nicholas' Church, Dyke Road, Brighton on 18 October at 15:30. Admission is free, with a retiring collection in aid of St Dunstan's. Please call the Fundraising department on 020 7616 7965 to confirm places or e-mail fundraising@st-dunstans.org.uk.

VETERANS ADVICE IN SCOTLAND

VETERANS UK TOUR MAJOR CITIES: The SPVA will be running a series of advice days in Scotland this month. They will have staff on hand to offer advice on benefits, the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme, War Pensions, housing, and more. They will be at the following locations between 10:00-15:00:

Edinburgh, Castle Street on 6 October;

Glasgow, Argyle Street near Marks & Spencer on 8 October;

Aberdeen, St Nicholas St on 13 October.

THE DEEP SEA ANGLING CLUB

BACK FOR MORE DESPITE WEATHER: This year so far has been a terrible one weather wise with more trips being cancelled that we had booked in advance. We cannot beat the force of Mother Nature.

The latest trip at the beginning of September was called off by the skipper as we were travelling to Aberystwyth for three planned days of fishing. This was due to the remnants of a tropical storm hitting the Welsh coast and the high winds were due to last for a week.

The club is going to try out a new system for people to experience sea fishing in that we are going to open up the trips to non-club members who would like to go fishing. This will be on a first come first served basis after our members have booked in.

Our next trip is out of Ilfracombe and will be wreck fishing if possible. The dates are 16-20 November with fishing on the 17th, 18th and 19th.

If any St Dunstaner is interested then please contact Peter Moore on 01594 560241 or Stan Bowers on 07810 504632. You can also e-mail Peter on pmka@btinternet.com.

We look forward to hearing from you.

HEALING FOR THE NATIONS

REMEMBRANCE DAY 2009 BRITISH-AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP CONCERT: America's VA-National Medical Musical Group (MMG) will be performing in an Armistice Day concert in London. Subtitled "*Hands Across The Sea - For Humanity*" it follows a concert in Washington DC. The London "*Healing for the Nations*" concert celebrates British-American friendship and its contributions to humanity. The event is sponsored by the MMG, the British-American Parliamentary Group, and the Royal British Legion. Members from the British Parliament Choir Group and the European Doctors and Royal Philharmonic Orchestras will also participate.

Broadcaster Andrew Neil and actress Jane Asher co-host the evening, while actor Michael York and Members of Parliament contribute readings.

The event will honour the memories of fallen heroes from both nations. The concert will be held at Central Hall, Westminster, Storey's Gate, London on 11 November. Doors open at 18:30 for a 19:30 start. Tickets are available for £10, £15, and £20. A booking fee may apply.

Tickets can be purchased from See Tickets by telephone on 0871 220 0260 (calls charged at 6p per minute) or online at their website at <http://tinyurl.com/mce9ak>.

WHAT'S A TINY URL?

EASY LINKS FOR WEBSITES: Last month's issue of St Dunstan's Review featured our first "Tiny URL" and there are a few more in this edition.

The term URL stands for Uniform Resource Locator and describes the way in which a computer locates and retrieves information, usually a website. Lately, a number of websites that may be of useful interest to St Dunstaners have had complicated addresses, particularly if the information is one page out of several hundred. For example, to find a specific page in one government website requires the web surfer to key in 96 individual characters. That might leave the most highly skilled touch-typist feeling slashed and dotted by the time they worked through it.

The Tiny URL system allows us to provide readers with a web address that is more manageable, with fewer characters to type, and it will take the web surfer directly to the page under discussion. This minimises the need to search through multiple layers of website. Anyone interested in the VA-National Medical Musical Group will go straight to their details on See Tickets rather than having to locate them in between Ronan Keating, Arctic Monkeys and Babyshambles.

AREA REUNIONS

CHARGE FROM 2010: Reunion lunches continue to be hugely popular and provide a special opportunity for St Dunstaners to meet in their local area. As a result, there are now 35 lunches held annually throughout the country, an increase of 17 over the past five years.

Inevitably these events come at a price and, following a wide ranging survey of 30 events this year, St Dunstaners voted overwhelmingly in favour of a small personal contribution to defray the costs. As a result, from January 2010 it has been decided to levy a charge of £10 per head for all those attending.

Details on the administration of this new scheme will be included in the usual invitations sent to St Dunstaners and separate arrangements will be made for St Dunstan's Ovingdean permanent residents who attend the Brighton reunion.

POLISH THOSE SHOES

SECOND DANCE WEEK LOOMS: David Schofield is looking forward to seeing all members of the St Dunstan's Dance Club in the ballroom at St Dunstan's Ovingdean on 16 November at 09:30 for a welcome speech and a lesson with Margaret Banks. The week's programme will be outlined in this session.

VIP LARGE PRINT DIARIES



Easy to use,
large print
diaries.

AVAILABLE FROM REHAB & TRAINING: Large print 2010 diaries can be ordered via Stephen Miles at St Dunstan's Ovingdean. The A6 pocket diaries cost £3.60 while an A4 desk diaries cost £6.50. Cheques should be made payable to St Dunstan's. Phone Stephen on 01273 391478 or write to him at St Dunstan's Ovingdean, Greenways, Ovingdean, Brighton BN2 7BS.

MOBILE SIGHT LOSS UNIT

ON THE ROAD: Action for Blind People's Mobile Sight Loss Information Service will be in Oxford and Lancashire during the week commencing 5 October. Then from 12 October they cover Buckinghamshire and Lancashire. Finally, in the week starting 26 October they will be in Devon and Northumberland. Each location can be confirmed at <http://tinyurl.com/ntp523> or by calling their helpline on 0800 915 4666 nearer the time.

RETURN OF ROUGH GUIDE

ACCESSIBLE BRITAIN: The popular *Rough Guide to Accessible Britain* returns in a second edition. It's not available in the shops, and supplies are limited. Produced by The Rough Guides and Motability Car Scheme, the 2009 Guide contains over 175 inspiring ideas for great days out, a wide range of reviews by disabled visitors, something for everyone from parks and museums to scenic journeys, and detailed information on accessibility features.

The guide is available free of charge to Blue Badge or Disabled Person's Railcard holders, though you will need to specify which local authority issued the Blue Badge or quote your Railcard number. Otherwise, the cost is £6.99 (inc p&p) for everyone else. It is also available in large print, audio, and braille versions. To order a copy visit www.accessibleguide.co.uk or call 0800 953 7070, 8am to 8pm daily.

AD SHOWS IN WALES

COMEDY PERFORMANCE: There will be an audio described performance of *Absurd Person Singular* by Alan Ayckbourn at the New Theatre, Cardiff on 10 October at 14:30. Then on 15 October at 19:30 they have Lee Hall's comedy *The Pitman Painters*. Call 029 2087 8889 for details.

CHRISTMAS CAROL SINGING

DO YOU HAVE A SONG IN YOUR HEART: Come along and support St Dunstan's at a Christmas Carol singing event at Brighton's Churchill Square Shopping Centre on Thursday, 17 December. Are you part of a choir local to Brighton who would like to volunteer a couple of hours? E-mail fundraising@st-dunstans.org.uk or call 020 7616 7965 for more information.

NOMINATE A SECRETARY FOR ST DUNSTAN'S GOLF CLUB

GOLF ELECTIONS: Please do not forget the AGM prior to the October Festival at Sim Lounge in the Brighton Marina on 17-18 October. This will also include nominations for the Secretary and Captain designate, for which there is a volunteer who has been press-ganged into office with the King's Shilling at the bottom of a mug and with the aid of a bunch of ex-matelots.

There will be a prize-giving to go along with the trophy winners at the October Festival. So please open up your dusty wallets and bring a prize with you. If everybody brings a prize, everybody will receive a prize. Will the trophy winners of last year please return them, or better still bring them along to the AGM and indoor golf competition.

Les Trout, Secretary

TAX HELP FOR OLDER PEOPLE

FREE PROFESSIONAL HELP: A national charity called TaxHelp for Older People (TOP) offers free professional help on tax matters to older people on low incomes. They define "older" as around 60 years of age and "low" as an annual household income of up to around £17,000 net. This tends to encompass those becoming pensioners, bereavement, people on multiple small income sources, etc, areas where the tax system is fallible or complex and incomprehensible. They also specialise in the completion of self-assessment tax returns or tax repayment claims where help is required entering the figures on paper, quite apart from understanding what information may be required.

The TOP service is provided by Tax Volunteers from the tax profession who give their time and expertise free to the scheme, running tax surgeries in local premises such as Age Concern or libraries, or by home visits where needed. All interviews are private and confidential, easily booked by calling the national helpline on 0845 601 3321. Their staff will fix an appointment for clients at the most convenient time and place in their locality. More information can be found on their website at www.taxvol.org.uk, by post via TaxHelp for Older People, Pineapple Business Park, Salway Ash, Bridport, Dorset DT6 5DB or e-mail taxvol@taxvol.org.uk.

BBC AD GOES ONLINE

AUDIO DESCRIPTION ON IPLAYER: The BBC has announced that around 25 hours per week of the BBC's audio-described programmes are now available on BBC iPlayer. Audio description describes what is happening on screen using the gaps between dialogue in programmes. This helps visually impaired viewers to better follow what is happening.

Audio-described programmes from a variety of different genres are available including dramas, such as *Doctor Who*, *Being Human* and *EastEnders*; comedy including *Little Britain* and *Jam And Jerusalem*; and children's programmes such as *Tracy Beaker* and *The Sarah Jane Adventures*. There are also plans to extend the coverage of the service to include more of the BBC's weekly broadcast audio described programmes in the future.

To access the service, users need to go to the "Audio described" category in BBC iPlayer and select the programme they would like to play from the list of the audio-described programmes available from the last seven days.

The BBC is the first broadcaster in the world to include audio-described TV programmes for blind and visually impaired audiences in its video-on-demand service. Visit the iPlayer website to try it for yourself at <http://tinyurl.com/p27qro>.

CHECK THAT CHOLESTEROL

DIABETES AND CHOLESTEROL DON'T MIX: If you have diabetes, high cholesterol could increase your risk of having a heart attack or stroke, which could be life threatening. As well as monitoring blood glucose, blood pressure and weight, it is also important to keep a check on your cholesterol number.

To reduce the risk of heart attack or stroke, if you have diabetes, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) recommends your total cholesterol number is below 4.0mmol/L. They also recommend that your "bad" (LDL) cholesterol number is 2.0mmol/L, especially if you have another risk factor for heart attack or stroke, such as being a smoker or overweight. This is particularly important if you are over 40 years old.

If you have diabetes, ask your nurse, doctor or pharmacist if your total cholesterol level is less than 4.0mmol/L, and ask how you can keep it below the NICE-recommended level.

Cholesterol is a type of fat (also referred to as a lipid) found in all of us. In fact, it is an essential compound whose important roles include making cells (the body's 'building blocks') and hormones (which act as important chemical messengers in the body).

Cholesterol is transported around the different parts of the body by proteins. Our body makes its own cholesterol in the liver but a small amount is obtained from our diet.

It is important to note that there are two types of cholesterol. So-called "bad" cholesterol, known as low density lipoprotein (LDL) and "good" cholesterol known as high density lipoprotein (HDL). "Bad" LDL-cholesterol can block up arteries, whereas "good" HDL-cholesterol carries excess cholesterol away from our arteries and back to the liver, where it is broken down and recycled.

The proportion of these two types of cholesterol in our blood is an important health factor. Raised cholesterol is not an illness in itself, but it is associated with a number of diseases. Diabetes UK and Pfizer are currently offering a free information booklet which can be obtained by telephoning their automated answerline on 0800 068 0436. More details can also be found on www.lesscholesterol.co.uk.

READ NUGGETS

GENERAL INTEREST MAGAZINE: St Dunstan's *Nuggets* is available for blind readers in braille and audio CD. Each issue carries an eclectic mixture of subjects. If you would like a copy, call Roberta Hazan on 020 7616 7933.

DEBATE ON FUTURE OF CARE SERVICES IN THE UK

CONSULTATION UNDERWAY: The Department of Health has launched a Green Paper to debate future provision for care services in the UK. It spotlights challenges faced by the current care system and argues the need for radical reform to develop a National care service that is fair, simple and affordable for everyone.

Within the Green Paper, they set out a number of questions asking everyone to provide their views about how they think Government can develop a care and support system fit for the 21st century. The consultation started in July and runs until 13 November.

Respondents are invited to participate in a variety of ways. Public leaflets and postcards containing three questions have been distributed to GP waiting rooms, pharmacies and other public outlets. They can be sent back to the Department of Health, postage paid.

The dedicated Care and Support website offers full and condensed versions of the Green Paper, with space for people to leave comments and discuss the issues. The website is at www.careandsupport.direct.gov.uk and the Green Paper can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/nykv7h>. There is also a stakeholder online forum hosted on the site.

People can contact the Green Paper team via an e-mail form on the website or by writing to Green Paper Team, Room 149, Richmond House, 79 Whitehall, London SW1A 2NS.

There has also been a series of roadshow events around the country and these continue in the following towns:

Exeter	7-8 October
Castlepoint Shopping Centre, Bournemouth	10:00-18:00, 9-10 October
Central London	14-15 October
Croydon	16-17 October

CELEBRATE ST DUNSTAN'S BEST

SPIRIT OF ACHIEVEMENT: Your nominations for the best achievements of St Dunstaners, other members of St Dunstan's Family, and volunteers are wanted for the 2010 Founder's Day Awards. There are seven categories of merit recognising the spirit of endeavour encouraged by our founder Sir Arthur Pearson. Full details were published in the May Review and nomination forms can be obtained from the President's Office by telephone on 020 7723 5021, or by writing to Ray Hazan, President, St Dunstan's, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD. Nominations should be submitted to the President's Office by 30 November 2009.

REMEMBERING THE GREAT WAR GENERATION

MOD ANNOUNCES PLANS FOR NATIONAL EVENT TO MARK THE PASSING OF THE WORLD WAR ONE GENERATION: The Passing of the World War One Generation will be formally marked in a national event at Westminster Abbey on Armistice Day, Wednesday 11 November at 10:45 in the presence of Her Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh.

The service will recognise not only the military contribution in World War One but also that of the civilian population.

This year saw the passing of the three remaining veterans of World War One living in the UK; St Dunstaner Henry Allingham, aged 113, and Harry Patch, aged 111, in July, and 108 year old William Stone in January.

"With the passing of the three remaining World War One veterans resident in the UK this year it is imperative for us to remember the sacrifice made by this incredibly brave generation. This event will bring the nation together to pay their respects, and ensure that their endeavours are never forgotten," said Veterans Minister Kevan Jones.

Millions of men and women from across the Empire served in the UK

Armed Forces during World War One, a war which saw more than a million British and Commonwealth troops lose their lives.

The World War One Generation included those associated with the horrors of the trenches, those engaged in duties at sea and in the air, and those working back home in vital support roles. The war left an enduring impact on those serving and on the nation as a whole. The passing of this generation is a significant milestone in our nation's history.

Attendance at the service will be by invitation only, but the congregation will consist of a broad cross-section of the population of the United Kingdom, with links to the War. The Lord Lieutenants in each county will nominate people to represent their areas. In addition, attendees will include members of the Armed Forces and the Government, Ambassadors, High Commissioners and other VIPs.

Although the passing of Henry Allingham might seem to close the door on the First World War Generation, St Dunstan's has a continuing commitment to 14 widows of St Dunstaners who served during the 1914-1918 conflict. They shared the consequences of their husbands' wartime service through good times and bad and in turn, St Dunstan's recognises that contribution through its welfare and housing services.

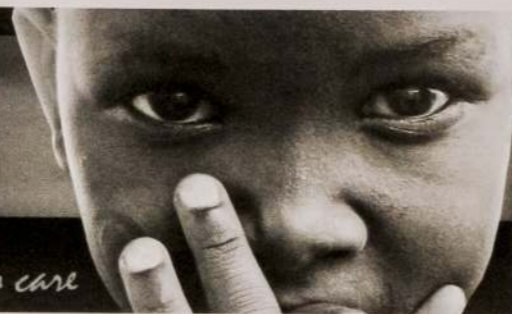
World Sight Day 8 October 2009

VISION
2020
THE RIGHT TO SIGHT



gender eye health

equal access to care



GENDER IS GLOBAL MESSAGE FOR WORLD SIGHT DAY 2009

DEALING WITH AVOIDABLE BLINDNESS AND VISUAL IMPAIRMENT: World Sight Day (WSD) is an international day of awareness, held annually on the second Thursday of October to focus attention on the global issue of avoidable blindness and visual impairment. The theme of World Sight Day 2009 (WSD09) is Gender & Eye Health – equal access to care. This year, the day falls on 8 October with campaigns in Botswana, Canada, Trinidad, and Iran.

Nearly two-thirds of blind people worldwide are women and girls. In many places, men have twice the access to eye care as women. Equal access to eye care could substantially reduce blindness in poor countries.

Simple and effective strategies as championed by Vision 2020: The Right to Sight can and do successfully address this inequity. Vision 2020 is dedicated to eliminating the main causes of avoidable blindness by the year 2020 by facilitating the planning, development and implementation of sustainable

national eye care programmes based on disease control, human resource development, infrastructure and technology, incorporating the principles of primary health care.

They add that 80 per cent of blindness is avoidable, that is to say it could be prevented, cured or treated. An estimated 45 million people worldwide are blind, and 269 million are vision impaired. Further, 90 per cent of blind people live in low-income countries.

The world's leading cause of blindness is cataract, something that is curable by a simple, cost-effective operation.

On 8 October, Vision 2020 are encouraging organisations around the world to plant a tree to commemorate WSD09! They are also asking individuals to send them a photograph of two people of different genders – one of whom is blindfolded. They hope to combine all the images and create an international photo montage! Photographs can be e-mailed to communications@v2020.org.

The Vision 2020 website can be visited at www.v2020.org.

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

Letters to the Editor

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



Photograph courtesy of Leonard Rees

Leonard Rees and other soldiers in Brehman, Germany towards the end of the Second World War.

Anyone here from my old crew?

This is a photograph of myself, when I was a tank driver during World War II. I am pictured with Infantry aboard near the Bossum-Brehman area in Germany. I was wondering if anyone else in the photo might be a St Dunstaner like myself. I am on the extreme left with my co-driver/ gunner Eric Spafford, deceased, who

is wearing goggles. It was taken near the end of the war in 1945.

**Leonard Rees,
Swansea, West Glamorgan**

Who creates our heroes?

The most abused and devalued word in the English language these days is "Hero". I would guess there were many like me who squirmed

when we heard from the August Review, with incredulity, that we were blind heroes. Who decided to create our heroes? These days we call millionaire footballers and cricketers heroes for doing something with a ball. Now we are also joining this lot. It is all nonsense.

I for one am not a blind hero. We who served in WWII are lucky to be members of our charity as survivors, happy to be still around. How many members in our charity today are totally blind? They are sadly in decline. The majority of our membership now have impaired eyesight such as macular degeneration, which the writer has, caused through age, which of course has nothing to do with one's Service life.

To keep this subject in some perspective, every year in this country over 30,000 people are killed and injured on our roads. This figure alone eclipses all the killed and wounded of our forces in all the wars we have been engaged in this past 64 years. On an average day, ten people are killed on the roads of the United Kingdom.

If a man is killed or wounded in a war action they do not automatically become a hero, no more than a man who is killed or maimed in a coalmine explosion or any other industrial accident. If people volunteer to serve this country, if they should become a casualty, it is all part of the job, it always was, until now.

One real hero, in my estimation, was Odette Churchill, a female secret agent who operating in occupied Europe, was captured and tortured by the German Gestapo. To get her to talk they amongst other horrors, pulled out all her



A real hero. Odette with FEPOW St Dunstaner Bill Griffiths at the 1986 Ex-Prisoners of War Reunion.

finger nails and still she remained silent.

The men in the bomber crews of the RAF in WWII, who night after night flew in nothing more than "tin coffins" over enemy territory to bomb German cities. If they were lucky to return, they had seen fellow comrades shot down in flames. It took guts and a lot of courage to fly out on the next mission. In

the course of the conflict 50,000 men in Bomber command lost their lives. As one arm of all the services in the war, these men suffered the highest percentage of killed and wounded of any of our services.

Another example was how British army prisoners of war of the Japanese endured many years of brutality, starved by their captors, who

violated every code of the Geneva Convention, and still did not bow to their oppressors. Men who survived today still bear the scars of those years so long ago. These three examples illustrate heroism at its very highest level.

In every one of these examples, the maxim of the times was what you did was to grin and bear it, as there were no others to turn to. So St Dunstan's please desist from calling us heroes for wearing a service uniform or being fortunate to be members of St Dunstan's.

**C.J. Hannaway,
Brighton**

• Mr Hannaway makes a very interesting point about the use of language. May I first say that I am sorry that we made anybody feel uncomfortable by our use of language particularly any St Dunstaner. I would like to explain our use of headline, its purpose and whom it was intended.

One of the beauties of the English language is that it evolves, changes and develops. The word "hero" has many definitions but I like "one greatly regarded for achievements or qualities". Within this meaning there is a sense of giving to another, not the recipient who is the arbiter of the moniker.

We used the "Blind Heroes Week" headline to achieve the greatest influence with the general public and as such were deliberately seeking to be impactful. St Dunstan's is an organisation that does wonderful work but has kept its light under a bushel for too long and has faded from the public's consciousness.

With the rise of Help 4 Heroes, the Royal British Legion having a "Festival for Heroes" and as pointed out, others being called heroes, the word's meaning is changing. Though its wide use still has power to catch people's attention and

that is why we used it, to highlight the worthy cause and to garner support and donations for St Dunstan's. Fundraising is sometimes, by necessity, a blunt instrument in a crowded marketplace competing against the multitude of clamours for our attention. We always carefully review our messages and the effectiveness of campaigns, as our aim is to maximise long-term sustainable income for St Dunstan's.

**Andrew Jones,
Director of Fundraising
& Communications,
St Dunstan's**

Submariners' cruise

I am a member of the London Branch of The Submariners Association. I know I should have told you about this much sooner, but on Armed Forces Day the Branch hired a launch on the Thames leaving from Waterloo Jetty. We had lunch on board then did a short cruise up and down the river. When passing

The Submarine Memorial on the Embankment, The Still was sounded on the Bosun's Pipe, followed by the command "Face starboard". The Pipe "carry on" was sounded and we continued up past the Houses of Parliament.

**Tony Eldridge,
Watford, Hertfordshire**

Pressure release

As a newcomer to St Dunstan's I read with interest Hilary Brown's article about Charles Bonnet Syndrome. This is the first time that I have been given a chance to express my own feelings as a CBS victim. Since the 1760s there must have been thousands of explanations that have been put forward many times. As there appears to be no known cure it won't harm to express my own theory.

The first comes as a daydream; when we dream at night we see visions of many things. These are visions no one else can see. Who knows what a blind person sees

in their dreams? Is it a visual dream? I see all sorts of things with CBS, but all of these things are in the day time.

Our brains must be full of millions of items stored over the years (CBS doesn't affect the young) and it is nature's way of using this as a pressure release valve.

I was about to blame all the tablets that most of us take on a daily basis. But they didn't take tablets in the 1700s.

**Stuart Lewis,
Ely Bridge, Cardiff**

St Dunstan's Drivers go the extra mile

Regarding Patrick Sidnell's letter in the August Review and the responses published last month, I think the point may have been missed.

My interpretation is that he was more concerned about the burden this change places on the drivers. The transport staff do an excellent job; not only do they drive the vehicle but they

often have to act as carer or provide "personal" assistance for passengers during the journey. I'm not an expert in time and motion studies but I can see the new process taking a long time. Also, the driver may not get a decent rest; while they may not be driving during the meal break, they are certainly still working. Add the long stopping time to the journey and that's a very long day for both passengers and drivers.

Personally, I have absolutely no issue with paying for meals for myself and my partner during the journey, but I would like to point out that we do pay for accommodation per night - the day you arrive you are paying the full rate and only receiving one meal in the evening. The small additional cost could be a problem for those existing on a small pension, or those who've lost their sight early in life and don't yet have a pension and have to manage a tight budget.

Perhaps management could consider reviewing the process to make it easier for the drivers and the journey shorter for passengers.

I would like to take this opportunity to say a very big thank you to St Dunstan's transport drivers, who I think provide a consistently high standard of service - and always go that extra mile for St Dunstaners. Pun deliberately intended.
**Jane Pittaway-Hampson,
Sale, Manchester**

Help the drivers to help us

I would like to write about my experiences with the drivers of St Dunstan's who collect us and deposit us safely to our destinations. They do an excellent job making sure we are well looked after en route? When we reach our break stop, this is where they come to the fore, taking us into the service stop, finding toilets, asking each individual what they would like to eat,

etc. Then back on the road. Drop-offs made on the way with luggage, dogs and other family members. And on it goes, with the driver being on the road for hours.

My question is, why, when St Dunstaners' wives or husbands are accompanying the St Dunstaner do they, in my experience, just let the driver do all the work? Do they not do it at home? Do they not go out together, and if they do, how do they manage without someone to wait on them?

Also, in my time travelling to and from St Dunstan's Ovingdean, it is not the St Dunstaners who continually moan and complain about silly things. One demand was "Can you please close the window as my husband is visually impaired and doesn't want to feel the cold!" We were in a traffic jam for miles, it was a really hot day and the driver needed some fresh air, asking if it was ok. No one said anything.

So, all I am saying is give the drivers some well deserved applause. They do a grand job for all of us, and a damn good one. Next time you travel with St Dunstan's please remember they are our life-line and we should not take advantage of this. They teach us to be independent, and partners please help if you can; the driver will be more able to cope if you do.

**Wendy Kane,
Pleasley Vale,
Nottinghamshire**

Over the moon

May we use the wider scope of the Review to express our gratitude to the Chairman for his letter, and the kind thoughts therein, and to the staff at St Dunstan's for the gorgeous flowers, with which Doreen is still over the moon. A thousand thanks to all your kind wishes sent on our Diamond Wedding Anniversary.

**William (Billy) and
Doreen Miller,
Hazelmere,
High Wycombe**

Balancing the Books

Ted Bunting on an inspirational account of endurance

Some Other Rainbow

Author: John McCarthy and Jill Morell

Readers: Christopher Scott
and Joan Walker

Catalogue no: 010360

Duration: 22 hours, 12 minutes

On 17 April 1986 television reporter John McCarthy was kidnapped in Beirut by Islamic Jihad. Over five long years later, when the world heard of his release I remember thinking how much I would like to learn all about his story. How, I wondered, would one occupy the interminable empty hours, days and years? How to remain physically and mentally fit? How might one keep one's dignity and self-respect in dirty and degrading conditions?

What would be the best attitude to adopt toward one's captors? What, in a nutshell, is the secret of survival?

Well, although it has taken me a decade and a half to discover some of the answers, at least I am now able to tell you that the book is even more interesting than I had ever imagined it might be. Until I had heard it, I had not considered the anxieties of John's family, friends, or Jill Morell for more than a fleeting moment. Everyone knew they must be worried of course,

as John McCarthy himself said "I knew I was alive but they didn't." However, I had no conception of the vast amount of work which they performed whilst John was a hostage. For me though the most fascinating part of this most human of tales deals with the period after the release; coming to terms with freedom, relearning how to relate to people, acquiring the confidence to trust again; problems we ordinary mortals have happily never needed to face. What life has provided for our co-authors since they stepped out of the limelight I have no idea, but I thank them for allowing me to share an important part of their history and I hope fortune has smiled upon them.

As ever, this title can be obtained from RNIB Talking Books in Peterborough. *Some Other Rainbow* is also available for loan and sale in Braille from the RNIB National Library Service Stockport. It comes in 12 volumes of Braille grade 2. The title is also available online to subscribers of the RNIB BookStream book club.

To make use of any of these services call the RNIB Customer services on 0303 123 9999 or e-mail helpline@rnib.org.uk for terms and conditions.

Ten Questions on...

The subject of Islands

Harry Beevers is our Man Friday

- 1) Holy Island off the North East coast of Northumberland is also known by what name?
- 2) Grand Cayman in the Caribbean is the largest of the Cayman Island group; which is the smallest?
- 3) Which island in the Channel Isles was the last feudal state in Europe until its people voted for democracy in 2006?
- 4) Famous for her beauty, what was the name of the Greek goddess of love who is said to have been born on the island of Cyprus?
- 5) Which sci-fi adventure novel written by Michael Crichton and subsequent film were set on the island of Isla Nublar?
- 6) Which island, once notorious for being a pirate stronghold, lies 20 miles out to sea from Barnstaple Bay in Devon?
- 7) Who is the head of the defence force on the island of Puerto Rico?
- 8) *Notes from a Small Island* is a book written by author Bill Bryson; to which island does it refer?
- 9) Which Pacific island is famous for its tall stone statues?
- 10) Famous because of its former prison, which island was once known as the Isle of Pelicans?

Answers can be found on page 39.

Sharon Talbott

Sharon Talbott, one of our Area Welfare Officers for East Anglia died on 13 September at St Elizabeth's Hospice, Ipswich following a long illness. Sharon joined St Dunstan's in October 2006 quickly establishing herself as a hardworking and well liked member of the Welfare Team. She was very thorough in her approach to her work and always keen to ensure that St Dunstaners she came into contact with had her best efforts in supporting them in resolving issues and challenges they faced.

Sharon was a resourceful and determined person who overcame her own challenge of profound deafness to qualify as a Social Worker. Within St Dunstan's she neither disguised nor made an issue of her disability, but got on with her work in a measured and effective manner making a positive contribution at all times.

Sharon is sorely missed by her husband Mark, sons Daniel and Stephen, and grandson Brandon. She is a great loss to the Welfare Service and we shall miss her presence in the team.

Barry Porter,
Director of Welfare and Grants

Dame Vera opens new lab



Copyright East Grinstead Observer

St Dunstaner Bill Foxley joined Forces Sweetheart Dame Vera Lynn and Falklands veteran Simon Weston at the opening of a new tissue culture lab at the Blond McIndoe Research Centre. Bill and Simon both suffered intensive burns during service. The lab will focus on research into repairing eye injuries, burns, and chemical damage.

Texas Scramble at Rusper

YET ANOTHER brilliant couple of days for ruining a good walk by hitting golf balls anywhere and everywhere and a buggy race around the course which was won by a lady driver. All this frolicking at Rusper Golf Club on 15-16 August inadvertently exhausted all the guides.



Photograph copyright Paquita Oliver

Don Oliver and Golf Club Captain John Powell.

The weather as always, which seems to be gifted to us, was perfect. An individual Stableford was played on 15 August and Graham Johnson was the eventual winner with 16 points. Runner

up was John Nunney, ten points, and third was Club Captain John Powell with two points (Guess who played the most golf?). Sunday, 16 August was

the annual Captain's Day. And his choice of competition was a Texas Scramble which was very much appreciated by the maddening crowds, photographers and the players. It was a very hard fought contest. The winning team was Graham Johnson and John Nunney, second were John Powell and Derek Roden, and the tail-enders in third position, were the awesome Geoff Collins and his motley gang. Trophies were again engraved by Marked and Sparkling of Fareham for free and prizes were donated by Donald Oliver.

Model was two years in making

ST DUNSTANER Doug Rogers of Colchester, Essex spent two years constructing this detailed model of *Northskelove 1643* currently on display at St Dunstan's Ovingdean. "It goes to show, even if you are visually impaired, there is still a lot you can do if you put your mind to it," he said. "I used to do military modelling but as my sight went I couldn't paint them so well. It was my good lady who put me onto the idea of making ships. The touch is still there and I enjoyed doing it." The highly detailed model is made

from wood, brass and cardboard, assembled "plank on plank". It is the third that Doug has constructed and he has embarked on a fourth.

"I've also been making model aircraft, but a friend comes round to put the decals on otherwise I wouldn't know which way they go up."



Copyright Aaron Buckland

Doug Rogers with Deena Davies.

A kiss for David

ST DUNSTANER David Schofield and Glenys Holmes entered a *Simply Ballroom* Competition recently. They came third in the Cha Cha and third in the Rumba. The certificates were signed by tango dancers Vincent and Flavia from *Strictly Come Dancing* and presented by ex-Page 3 Girl and actress Linda Lusardi who gave David a kiss.



Copyright Ann Strickland

St Dunstaners Bob Strickland and Gerry Jackson and their wives kept St Dunstan's flag flying at Eastbourne Air Show in August.

Don wins

ST DUNSTANER Don Bagley of Pendeford, Wolverhampton took first prize in a Midlands dressage contest in Shrewley, Warwickshire.

Last link to WWI combat

A ROYAL NAVY veteran living in Perth, Australia is the UK's last witness to combat during the First World War. He's lost his sight and hearing, but 108-year-old Claude Choules retains a confident and lively disposition. Claude was born in Worcestershire in 1901 and served in Australian Forces during WWII.

Life after Afghanistan

ANDREW ALLEN has let the world in on his rehabilitation in bravely stark fashion. For the first time, the Ministry of Defence has allowed TV cameras to follow wounded soldiers from the moment they were flown back to the UK, right the way through their treatment at Birmingham's Selly Oak Hospital and its Defence Rehabilitation Centre at Headley Court.

photograph: BBC/Steve Schofield



Royal Irish Ranger Andrew Allen works hard at Headley Court to adapt to his new prosthetic legs.

With enormous public interest in the medical care given to injured soldiers, *Wounded* broadcast last month on BBC1 stands as a unique documentary which shows the reality behind the headlines when British soldiers are reported "very seriously wounded" in Afghanistan.

The harrowing, yet ultimately inspirational film opens with 19-year-old Royal Irish Ranger

Andy Allen, who is blown up by an improvised explosive device (IED). Losing his right leg instantly, he sustained severe burns to his face and eyes. Within 48 hours he was flown back to Birmingham's Selly Oak Hospital where a team of NHS and military medics battled to keep him alive.

With Andy unconscious, his family conducts

a bedside vigil. His mother, Linda, always at his side, talks with searing honesty about her concerns for her son when he comes round and finds out that he has lost both legs and is blind as a result of burns to his eyes.

The documentary also follows 24-year-old Paratrooper, Lance Corporal Tom Neathway,

who remained fully conscious after an IED exploded when he moved a booby-trapped sandbag. Both his legs were blown off and his left arm was damaged so badly that it had to be amputated. Five weeks after the blast, Tom is shown plotting a return to his regiment.

Surviving their injuries is just the beginning. Andy and Tom who face months of rehabilitation at Headley Court. Here they join a community of wounded soldiers who, with determination and a healthy dose of squaddie humour, urge each other on. Slowly, they start rebuilding their lives and make plans for the future.

Andy is just desperate to be allowed home to Belfast as his girlfriend Natalie has just had a baby. His greatest wish is that his eyes heal enough for him to see his newborn son.

As their burns and plastic surgery consultant Lieutenant Colonel



Ranger Andrew Allen before being injured.

Steve Jeffrey explains in the film, it would be completely unnatural for any severely injured soldier not to be devastated. "One minute they're in Afghanistan, the next they're waking up and they haven't got legs, an arm or whatever," he says, "but I've noticed that those guys that are in a stable relationship seem to do better."

Andy's recovery was hampered by the damage to his sight, which in turn affected his ability to adjust to the loss of his legs.

He admits on camera to being scared and reluctant to get on with his rehabilitation, while realising that it is his fastest route home. It takes eight months before his family and friends are eventually able to welcome him back to Belfast. A cataract operation gives him enough sight to help with mobility and see his baby son; it's a significant boost for a young man who faces a further two years in and out of the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre at Headley Court in Surrey.

Fete proves a fun day

IT WAS the first fete for a few years but the flocks of people who flurried in to St Dunstan's Ovingdean on 12 September were a fabulous validation for the fortitude and perseverance of the volunteers who brought it all together. St Dunstaners were at the thick of things, some manning stalls, others just taking a stroll and enjoying some friendly company. The Dave Masters Band struck up a mellow soundtrack for the afternoon and inbetween public service announcements from DJ Stu there were displays of martial arts, popular dancing, and a tug of war. There was some rapid trading going on as well. St Dunstaner Michael Brown cleared the Craft Workshop stand of its stock, Joyce Charlton took charge of the books and Betty Chalmers had a nice line



Joyce Charlton covered the sale of books and DVDs.



Betty Chalmers was in charge of the popular soft toys.



Our exceptional Tea Ladies: Betty Hagger, Daphne Broughton, Maureen Barnard, and Rose Hunt.



Michael Brown did well with Craft Workshop items.



A happy Arthur Walton.



Kerry gets Billy's bump.



St Dunstaners Arthur, Mansel, Eric, and George.



Stan Grimsey meets up with some old friends.



Burgers from Vladimira.

New stage in life for Billy Whizz

ST DUNSTANER Billy "The Whizz" Baxter started the stage of his life by going back to school last month. He is studying drama at Cambridge Regional College. "I am overjoyed, and very much looking forward to the challenge," said Billy. "I am the first ever blind student to attempt this course, so no pressure."

Billy has received plaudits for his performance in Wilburton Theatre Group's production of *What A Turn Up*. He has also taken his alter ego Belinda Scratchpole onto the West End stage with burlesque performers from blind theatre group Extant. The Army St Dunstaner will also be joining them overseas for some shows in eastern Europe.

David comes to the end of St D's drive



Arthur Lowe was one of many St Dunstaners wishing David Vinall a happy retirement.

AFTER 17 YEARS and 78 days on the road, making sure St Dunstaners and their families get safely from one place to another, David Vinall has put his foot on the breaks. He retired as the charity's Transport Manager at the end of August. St Dunstaners and colleagues wished him all the best for the future during a presentation at St Dunstan's Ovingdean.

David revealed his plans to travel to India and Nepal for awhile, adding that he wouldn't be missed with Neil Morgan and Gary Norman at the helm in Transport.

Actually, David will be back behind the wheel in the future. When he returns to the UK, he will join St Dunstan's team of bank drivers, providing additional cover when demand is high.

REUNION 09



John Spence became a St Dunstaner in 1959 after being a POW in Korea.

There were two special presentations at the first official Northern Ireland Reunion held at La Mon Hotel and Country Club, Castlereagh, Belfast on 2 September. St Dunstan's President Raymond Hazan chaired proceedings which brought together ten St Dunstaners and one widow. St Dunstaner John Spence of Ballycastle, County Antrim received his St Dunstan's 50-Year-Badge. John was taken prisoner during the Korean War while he was serving with the Royal Ulster Rifles. The second presentation was to Christopher Redman of Enniskillen, County Fermanagh who received The Pingat Jasa Malaysia medal recognising his service in Malaya. St Dunstaner



Chris Redman received his Pingat Jasa Medal from our President.

Alan Nichols responded on behalf of everyone present.

The Kent Reunion held on 8 September at Charts Hill Golf Club, Biddenden, Kent united 34 St Dunstaners and six widows. Lord Low of Dalston, CBE was the member of St Dunstan's Council presiding, while St Dunstaner Roy Hughes responded for those present.

There were 43 St Dunstaners and five widows at the Norwich Reunion on 15 September. St Dunstan's Chairman Major General Andrew Keeling, CB, CBE presided at Barnham Broom Hotel, Norwich, Norfolk. St Dunstaner Barbara Evans made an eloquent response for those gathered.

Drumming up support



South East London Army Cadets reached St Dunstan's Ovingdean with distinction.



The Corps of Drums struck an impressive note.



Matt and cadets on the clifftops of Seaford.

ARMY CADETS from South East London made a bold attempt to reclaim the St Dunstan's Cadet and Youth Challenge trophy on 5-6 September. One group cycled from Folkestone to St Dunstan's Ovingdean, joined on the final leg by St Dunstaner Harry Beevers. A second group marched with Matthew Rhodes and Colin Williamson from Seaford to Ovingdean. Both groups converged at St Dunstan's national centre where their newly formed Corps of Drums demonstrated their adept precision in the Inner Garden.

Ripping ride in Ripon

SEA CADETS from TS *Kelly* in Hebburn rolled up at Lightwater Valley Theme Park in Ripon, North Yorkshire to ride Europe's biggest roller coaster for a 13-mile journey. Theme park managers allowed them free access for the challenge. Somehow, they managed to convince St Dunstaners Gary Tomlinson and Christopher Lee to join them for on 6 September. "We were crushed and

Photograph: Lightwater Valley



Gary Tomlinson and the TS Kelly cadets hold tight.

went through sheer terror," said Gary. "The g-force was throwing us everywhere. I clung on like a limpet mine and

sea cadets know about those, but respect where respect is due as those Geordie's did the whole half marathon."

Leigh Squadron on track

AIR CADETS from 316 Leigh Squadron ATC pulled on their running shoes and took to the track at Leigh Sports Stadium on 12 September to take part in St Dunstan's Cadet and Youth Challenge. The 14 cadets and four adult instructors completed 54 laps of the running track with a combination of running, walking, relay races, three-legged races, egg

Photograph copyright Brenda Williamson



Maria and Colin join Leigh Squadron for a quick march.

and spoon races and a blindfolded obstacle course. They were joined

by St. Dunstaner Maria Pikulski and her friend Lisa Boardman.

You are what you eat

Patricia Walton on why it is best to eye-up a good diet

I AM ALWAYS struck by the fact when I am at St Dunstan's Ovingdean that people on our table at meal times do not eat vegetables or salad. They pour masses of salt on their food.

You are what you eat, and a healthy diet will benefit your eyes. Vegetables, especially the green variety, greens, cabbage, spinach, broccoli, are essential. Carrots being good for your eyesight isn't just an old wives' tale. They contain beta carotene which has been proven to benefit your eyesight. There doesn't seem to be much to salad, but again it is very good for you. Even that watery lettuce has nutrients that are worth eating.

Not convinced? Why not replace the lettuce with raw baby spinach?

The biggest cause of blindness in this country is Age Related



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**I yam what I yam.
Popeye was right,
spinach is good for you!**

Macular Degeneration (ARMD). Supplements like lutein can make a difference and many ophthalmologists recommend this valuable resource. Then there's Omega-3 which can be found in sardines, mackerel, and pilchards. Everyone knows fruit is

full of vitamin C and must be part of our five-a-day intake. I understand kiwi fruit is particularly rich in vitamin C but we also need potassium and this can be found in bananas.

The Royal College of Ophthalmologists has conducted extensive research on the harmful effects of smoking on the eyes. It's something to avoid. A little alcohol can be good, but avoid binge drinking as it can contribute to diabetes with devastating consequences for your eyes. As does sugar, which is very tempting but too much is just not good. The same with salt. Excess salt can cause high blood pressure and if not checked can lead to strokes.

I'll end the gloom there and add what an Asian GP told me recently: "Avoid hurry, worry and too much curry!"

My visit to a stately homo

Evelyn Lucas recalls meeting the Naked Civil Servant

QUENTIN CRISP was enthusiastically contemplating home just off the Fulham Road in London, to live permanently in the United States. As he was over seventy years old and had lived there for forty years, I thought this was very brave of him. That was before I went to his home to meet him. After that I came to the conclusion he had been very brave to have stuck it out there for so long.

His home was one room. I'd read about it, of course, but I couldn't resist saying as I looked around, "So this is the famous room." He couldn't resist trotting out his well-rehearsed reply, "Yes. It's the most documented room since Anne Hathaway's cottage."

Dust lay like charcoal-grey snow-drifts. Towers of yellowing old newspapers and out-of-date telephone directories abounded. "Do you collect phone books?" I asked. "No, I just don't throw them away. There's a difference," he answered. I didn't ask him if he collected small tables. Inexplicably there were many, one on top of another, round every wall, and topped by more yellowing newspapers. There was not a sign of a book, yet I was soon to discover he was very well-read and well-versed on every subject that came up.

His single divan bed was heaped with clothes. There was no sign of a wardrobe. As he was so very courteous to me I didn't like to ask him if they stayed there while he slept. He moved some of the clothes to one side to make a space for me to sit down. Then, with a flourish he took one of the garments, a dark brown cloak, and laid it on the space in true Sir Walter Raleigh style.

"Don't want you to soil that smart suit, do we?" he observed thoughtfully. As a matter of fact, I had by now got used to the dust. His room was not dirty - just eccentric.

With great style he invited me to enjoy a mug of what he called "artificial coffee". I had a wrapped chocolate biscuit in my handbag, so I produced it and broke it in half. "How lovely," he said. He produced a saucer for my half and took the top off a tin for his half.

Mauve-tinted hair, slightly but carefully made-up face, and elegantly dressed in dark jacket and purple open-necked shirt, this certainly wasn't the background you'd have pictured for Mr Crisp.

I say "Mister Crisp" because he referred to anyone we talked about as either Mr, Mrs, or Miss. Apart from God, who was "You Know Who." I did succeed in

persuading him to call me Eve, and before I left I asked him to sign his book *The Naked Civil Servant*. He dedicated it "To Eve".

The only article which wasn't dusty was the telephone. It didn't get a chance to collect dust as it rang constantly. I noticed how exceedingly polite and gracious he was to all his callers, even though some were obviously a nuisance.

Apart from a cooker, the only other items in the room were two black and white television sets, for some reason at right angles to each other. Did he watch much? "Well, more now that I'm in the smiling and nodding racket," he explained, smiling slightly.

There followed a dissertation on television. He explained that if you look at television from the front, it appears to be a tiny little square on which people and events jostle for a few minutes of screen-time. If you look at it from the back, it's a great arid waste in which producers, like farmers in a dust-bowl, are saying "What now?" He must have eavesdropped on a production meeting I thought, he was so right.

He had formed an opinion that television people spent money with gay abandon - excuse the pun. He was asked to go to Plymouth to talk to Miss Bakewell. He was in Southampton at the time. They sent a taxi to collect him, take him to Plymouth and return him afterwards to Southampton. "They don't care what they spend." Such extravagance baffled him.

To illustrate this further, he invented a scenario. There is a rumour that a woman has made the largest patchwork quilt in the world. Someone in Television will say "Get her." The programme secretary will say, "She's in the Antarctic." "Get her." This woman's fare will be paid and she will be flown in. She will arrive at the studio and someone will say "We have Mrs Point Blank here, who has made the largest patchwork quilt in the world." Mrs Point Blank will lean forward from among all the other people there, to chat. She will begin "What I would like to ..." and someone else who has just finished speaking will interrupt her and say "Oh, I forgot ..." Mrs Point Blank will never get to speak because they've run out of time. She will be taken back to her hotel and flown back to the Antarctic, where she will be known thereafter as "The Patchwork Quilt Woman" and may well go on to write a book about it.

I asked him if he thought he would be happy living in New York. "I'm convinced," he said, "that happiness rains down from the skies in America." Everyone in America was rich, and everyone was handsome. They all had lovely smiles. Above all, everyone was handsome. They all had lovely smiles. Above all, everyone was eager. Success in England, particularly if you appear to be frivolous, inspires envy. Whereas the more frivolous your success is, the more they like you in America. To them it inspires hope. Hope grows on trees there. I frivolously said I'd always thought this was the land of Hope and Glory.

Yes, he'd thought so too when he was young. In fact, during WWII he had felt very patriotic and wanted to go into the Services. Not that he dreamed of marching at the head of a column of men, but he could have helped dole out the margarine. But alas they turned him down and gave him a certificate declaring him unfit for military service because he "suffered from sexual perversion." He also had a certificate from the Ministry of Labour stating "totally exempt", without stating why. He said this was the first instance of mercy he ever received from any organisation. I asked him to explain what was merciful about this. He'd worked it out that someone there had thought he wouldn't want to present a certificate giving the reason. So they deliberately left it off.

Patriotic or not, joining up had not been the first thing on his mind when War was declared. He'd nearly had a fit in case he couldn't get any more henna. So he went out and bought two pounds of it. He then proceeded to do a commercial for henna, for me - how each strand of hair became like a 15 amp bulb, and so malleable... He quickly returned to the subject of America. Above all, he loved the pace of life there. "Here, if someone invites you out, you recoil at the thought of the journey. You say 'Oh, but you live in Pinner!' In America you whisk here and whisk there at a tremendous pace."

He decided to give me a rundown of one of his recent days in America. It

left me exhausted but filled him with admiration. It went something like this: He was in New York. Would he like to go to San Francisco for the day? He arrived at eleven o'clock at night. They said it was only seven-thirty in the evening by their time, so he had to be taken out that evening. He eventually got to bed in the early hours. Next day he had an interview at eleven in the morning, lunch with some journalists at twelve noon, a party at four in the afternoon which lasted until seven o'clock. At eight o'clock he was taken to the studio where he was on/off/on/off television until a quarter to midnight. Then he flew back to New York.

I wondered how difficult he would find it getting permission to live there permanently. He did confirm that he'd had a bit of a gruelling time from immigration officials. They asked him if he was a practising homosexual. "I got a little huffy," he said. "At the age of seventy, one doesn't need to practise." He was a tiny bit worried that his age might go against him. They knew he wanted to go there to die. "The Americans prefer forward-looking people who are going there to create," he explained. He aimed to become a resident alien, whatever that was. What worried him was that he might live to be ninety. "Modern science is so unkind," he declared.

Well this was over 30 years ago. I wonder if he found Paradise. I hope so. He was such a gentle man.

By popular demand, it's back for better or verse

POETS' CORNER

The Inheritance

by Derick C. Marygold

T'was on a dull and dismal day
I heard a letter was on its way.
This was supposed to bring good cheer
As soon as it arrived here.
I wondered what it could be
That could possibly fill me with such glee.

At last it arrived here
That missive of good cheer.
With some trepidation I had it open
To gaze upon, what had been spoken.
I had to go to a solicitor's office
To find out if it would add to my coffers.
He asked about this and that
And checked upon fact, after fact.
To check that I was really he
The right beneficiary.

Then came the news, it was quite a shock,
A rich uncle had left me the lot.
A million pounds, so he said.
I thought, I was standing on my head.
I went home in a daze
Not knowing where to gaze.
A rich uncle, he must be
Well hidden in the family tree.
Of any rich uncle, I had no knowledge
To have belonged to his college.
Though I looked, and could not find

Any rich uncle, who could be so kind.
So off to bed to sleep on it
To see if that would do the trick.
In my dream I did tend
To see how I was going to spend.
To keep the amount in one's thoughts
A figure with so many noughts.
A million pounds, I was in such a state
I couldn't believe it to be my fate.

At last the day arrived
To receive the said amount,
It had arrived in my bank account
Then I saw that the amount was not right
For the Inland Revenue had had a bite.
There was still a lot of work to do
To satisfy the faithful few.
Some to put to work to earn its keep
Even when you are sound asleep.
To the family I looked to have a share
So that they did not just stand and stare.
I then did look, for some parity
To help my favourite charity.
Then to number one I did turn
To see how much I would burn
Before it all went up in smoke
That would really be a joke.

Before I got it really settled
All this rush had got me nettled
Then with a bump, feeling supreme
I find, it was only a dream.

EYES WRITE!

by Sheila Rodman

Way back in 1944 when I became a WREN,
I never thought to find that kind of comradeship again.
So what a nice surprise it was that when I lost my sight
St. Dunstan's came and rescued me from my unhappy plight.
A door was opened wide for me and what a joy
It's been to find so many friends are now arriving on the scene.

My lovely Welfare Lady was the first to give advice
And now the help that I receive I class beyond all price.
Because of typing skills I have, I'm training on IT,
Creative Writing being the goal that I pursue, you see.

So many of us there are now who wish to learn this skill,
Communications being the need we're aiming to fulfil.

The Workshop down at Ovingdean was bursting at the seams
And what has happened here is quite beyond our wildest dreams.
The Sheffield Training Centre is growing all the time
And those of us who live up north can see it in its prime.
It's extra nice for me because I'm Sheffield-born and bred;
At Ranmoor Church just up the road my mum and dad were wed.

Now those of us who go to Fulwood get to meet the friendly staff,
Working hard at our machines and getting quite a laugh.
Our patient tutors guide us through our many ups and downs,
Frustrations and the memory loss which cause so many frowns.

Our gratitude must go to all of those who keep us going
And where we'd be without them there is no way of knowing.
So thank you to St. Dunstan's and to everyone concerned
We'll do our best to make good use of everything we've learned.

I'm sure I'm right in saying just how lucky we all are
Congratulations, St Dunstan's, you really are a star!
We wish you all the best of luck with everything you do
For helping all the likes of us to see our problems through.

ASK ROD

Your queries answered
by the ROVI on Duty

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

A guide to pouring

For many people preparing a hot drink is a daily task, undertaken without cause for concern, but for some individuals with a visual impairment the accurate pouring of hot liquids can be quite a skill. However, there are many techniques, strategies and pieces of equipment available which can enable someone to become more confident when preparing a hot drink. These are Ask ROD's top ten tips with regard to pouring hot liquids with safety and accuracy.

1. If you find that your kettle has become too heavy to lift and pour, try searching for a smaller simple option. There are many small kettles such as travel kettles on the market which are much lighter and easy to use.
2. When purchasing a new kettle ensure that you familiarise yourself with it by initially pouring cold liquids. This will allow you to get used to the shape and style of the kettle as there are many different models and each tend to differ in spout style and length.
3. Resting the spout of the kettle lightly on the cup can enable the user to ensure the water is entering the cup. A bump-on or strip of tactile plastic fitted around the underside of the spout can also be used to act as a guide.
4. Pouring hot liquids on a tray or the draining board can reduce the risk of burns to your legs as it will contain or channel away any spills.
5. Another method of measuring liquids is to measure the amount required when cold (for example a cup of water), and transfer it into an empty kettle to boil. It can then be returned back into the cup.
6. There are a wide range of liquid level indicators available to aid an individual to judge the amount of fluid entering the cup. These items are available in different styles and most beep, vibrate (or both) as a signal to the individual to stop pouring. Most indicators have a second stage which allows the user to also judge the amount of milk entering the cup.

7. Colour contrast is important when using your remaining vision to judge the level of the liquid. It is much easier to see the liquid level rising when pouring from a teapot into a white cup, rather than a brown liquid into a dark coloured cup.
8. Accurately positioned task lighting may be beneficial when using your remaining vision to judge the liquid level.
9. Ping pong balls are useful when judging the level of liquid. When dropped into an empty cup they will float as the liquid level rises and therefore be seen or felt as they become close to the top.
10. Dycem non-slip matting is very useful for individuals who find it difficult to keep a tray level as it provides a non-slip surface.

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.

BEER OF THE MONTH

by Colin Williamson

Crabbie's Alcoholic Ginger Beer

This is a delightful ginger beer with a four per cent ABV which makes it high enough to be discernable but doesn't overpower the drink. It has a wonderful golden colour and pours with a fizzy head which remains to the finish. It's ginger with a bit of spiciness and slightly fruity (I could be talking about myself here!). You can definitely taste the ginger once it hits the back of your throat. I have tried some real ales that use ginger to a lesser or greater extent in the brewing process to give the beer a more interesting flavour but this is by far the best.

Crabbie's use a distinctive elephant trademark on the neck of the bottle. This stems from the Scots merchant adventurers who pioneered trade with countries from the Far East and where the company still buy their ginger from. Available in some Netto stores, large Tesco's and Morrisons.

Ten Answers

Answers to quiz on page 21.

- 1) Lindisfarne; 2) Little Cayman; 3) Sark; 4) Aphrodite; 5) Jurassic Park; 6) Lundy; 7) Barack Obama, President of the USA; 8) Great Britain; 9) Easter Island, also known as Rapa Nui; and 10) Alcatraz.

Remembering Mary: A Lasting Tribute

BEA NICHOLSON has wonderful memories of her mother Mary Kirk, a former Wren and St Dunstaner. "Mum embraced life and was independent to the end, with a sharp mind and an ability to relate to people from all walks of life."

After Mary passed away in March 2008, Bea and her siblings decided that a St Dunstan's Tribute Fund would be a perfect way to remember such an inspiring lady.

Mary became a St Dunstaner in her later years, after her sight deteriorated as a result of macular degeneration. She was most impressed by the help and encouragement St Dunstan's offered her and went on to become a keen supporter of the organisation.

So far, Mary's friends and family have donated £1,700 to the Fund and they plan to make further donations as and when they can.

Peace and tranquillity

What's more, as part of the process, they will be presented with a pavior, bearing the name of their loved one, which will be laid to form part of a new St Dunstan's memorial pathway at the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA) in Staffordshire.

"This will serve as a lasting tribute to Mum's memory and a token of appreciation for the ongoing work of St Dunstan's," said Bea. "The peace and tranquillity of the NMA makes for a lovely setting and we look forward to visiting next year once the pavior is in place."



Mary Kirk still lives in her family's heart.

St Dunstan's Tribute Funds are open to anyone who wishes to establish one in memory of a friend or loved one. For more details, or to request an information leaflet, please contact our Tribute Fund Manager Daniel Carter on 0207 616 8365 or via e-mail using daniel.carter@st-dunstans.org.uk.

Welcome to St Dunstan's

Stanley Baldwin of Uckfield, East Sussex served in the General Service Corps, Royal Armoured Corps, Carabiniers, and Dragoon Guards between 1942 and 1947.

John Biss of Bath served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Gerald Bowyer of Eastbourne, East Sussex served in the General Service Corps, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, and Royal Army Pay Corps between 1945 and 1948, then with the Royal Signals from 1950 to 1952.

William Braund of Higham, Alfreton, Derbyshire served in the Welch Regiment from 1939 to 1946.

Joseph Chandler of Flint, Clwyd served in the Royal Welch Fusiliers from 1953 to 1957.

John Cooper of Scunthorpe, South Humberside served in the Fleet Air Arm from 1943 to 1946.

Raymond Eaves of Broughton, Kettering, Northamptonshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

David Forshaw of Haydock, St Helen's Merseyside served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

Kelvin George of Hackney, London served as Leading Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force from 1960 to 1964.

Denis Green of Fulham, London served in the General Service Corps and Royal Artillery between 1946 and 1948.

Gordon Harvey of Fairlight, Hastings, East Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Arthur Hewitt of Northampton, Northamptonshire served in the Fleet Air Arm from 1943 to 1946.

Robert Hewitt of Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire served in the Royal Fusiliers and Royal Engineers between 1939 and 1946.

Kenneth Kennedy of Bedford, Bedfordshire served in the Merchant Navy from 1941 to 1946.

Edward King of Solihull, West Midlands served in the General Service Corps, Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry, and South Wales Borderers between 1945 and 1948.

Ronald Kirby of Kingsbridge, Devon served as Able Seaman in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1946.

Dennis Lane of Maidstone, Kent served in the Royal Navy from 1945 to 1948.

Alfred Marsh of Bognor Regis, West Sussex served in the King's Royal Rifle Corps, Middlesex Regiment, and Royal Army Service Corps from 1940 to 1946.

Marlene O'Hagan of Washington, Tyne and Wear served in the Women's Royal Army Corps from 1969 to 1971.

Anne Parker of Bourton-on-the-Water, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service between 1942 and 1946.

Noel Payne of South Croydon, Surrey served as Signalman in the Royal Navy from 1941 to 1946.

Richard Pennell of Birdham, Chichester, West Sussex served in the Royal Armoured Corps and Royal Army Service Corps between 1950 and 1955.

Kenneth Razzell of Orpington, Kent served as an Air Mechanic in the Royal Navy from 1944 to 1946.

Ronald Shelton of Monmouth, Gwent

served as Flight Lieutenant in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1947.

Harold Stubbings of Rhos-on-Sea, Colwyn Bay, Clwyd served in the Royal Engineers from 1940 to 1946.

John Walkinshaw of Rowhedge, Colchester served in the Royal Artillery from 1939 to 1946.

Anthony Whitelaw of Bristol, Avon served as an Air Mechanic in the Fleet Air Arm from 1981 to 1985.

Gloria Williams of Hailsham, East Sussex served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1944 to 1945.

Sherlock Wilson of Alnwick, Northumberland served in the Royal Air Force from 1951 to 1978.

CORRECTION

Contrary to last issue, **Thomas Latham, MM** of Billingham, Cleveland served in the Middlesex Regiment from 1940 to 1945.

Family News

BIRTHS

Congratulations on the birth of:
Francois Wessels on 8 June. He is the son of Don and Maatje Wessels of Somerset West, South Africa.

Chloe Jean Davy on 13 August. She is the first great-grandchild of Leslie and Jenny Davy of Harold Wood, Romford, Essex.

WEDDINGS

Congratulations to:
Carol Patrick who married Gary Meadows in Haywards Heath on 7 August. She is the daughter of Doris Madgwick of Crawley, West Sussex and the late Frank Madgwick.

Siobhán Lockhart who married Matthew

Woodrow at St Ethelreda's Church, Hatton Garden, London on 5 September. Siobhán is the grand-daughter of Alf Lockhart of Ovingdean, Brighton.

RUBY ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Denis and Maureen Packham of St Germans, Saltash, Cornwall on 13 September.

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

John and Hilda Barnes of Rubery, Birmingham, West Midlands on 29 August.

Michael and Janet Cook of Lickfold, nr Petworth, West Sussex on 29 August.

John and Ellen Copland of Dumfries, Dumfriesshire on 3 September.

Laurence and Pat Harris of Stourbridge on 15 September.

DIAMOND ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

Frank and Joyce Pitt of Cirencester, Gloucestershire on 27 August.

Stanley and Connie Merricks of Maidstone, Kent on 3 September.

Jack and Pamela Netherstreet of Bromley, Kent on 3 September.

Harold and Sarah Simmons of Northfield, Birmingham on 3 September.



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Anne and Richard Franklin of Thatcham, Berkshire on 3 September. The Wren St Dunstaner and her husband (above) received a message of congratulation from Her Majesty The Queen.

John and Marjorie Norman of Cambridge, Cambridgeshire on 5 September.

William and Irene Barker of Darlington, County Durham on 10 September.

Leslie and Jean Simpson of Rottingdean, Brighton on 17 September.

Laurence and Peggy Wright of Rushden, Northamptonshire on 17 September.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to:

Barrie Hathaway of Amlwch, Anglesey on earning the OCR Level 1 Certificate for IT Users (New CLAiT) on 10 September. The Royal Navy St Dunstaner completed his computer studies at St Dunstan's Sheffield.

Lucinda Neal who earned a BA degree at the University of Warwick. She is the grand-daughter of Alf Lockhart of Ovingdean, Brighton.

DEATHS

We regret to announce the death of:
Edith Lewis on 6 June. She was the wife of Douglas Lewis of Sutton, Surrey.

Margaret Wood on 14 August. She was the wife of Royal Navy St Dunstaner Arthur Wood of Barnsley, South Yorkshire who subsequently passed away on 16 August. An obituary features in In Memory.

Enid Shorter of Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex on 16 August. She was the widow of Leslie Shorter.

Emilie Fullard of Thundersley, Essex on 30 August. She was the widow of Royal Scots St Dunstaner Bob Fullard.

Muriel Bickerdike on 8 September. She was the wife of Arthur Bickerdike of New Moston, Manchester.

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.

William Snead

Royal Army Ordnance Corps

William Snead of Yardley, Birmingham died on 23 June, aged 85. He joined the General Service Corps in 1942, shortly transferring to the Royal Army Ordnance Corps. Having served in the UK, he was demobbed in 1947 and later worked for Sun Alliance. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Ronald Street

Royal Air Force

Squadron Leader Ronald Street of Cotifo, Bensafrim, Lagos, Portugal died on 9 July, aged 86. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1941 and trained as a pilot in Canada. Commissioned in 1943, he flew Tiger Moths and Harvards before

moving to a Hurricane Squadron. After the war, he flew Dakotas during the Berlin Airlift and later converted to bombers and reconnaissance. Retiring in 1966, he joined the BA College of Air Training and later worked for a charter company. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

Frederick Nippers

Royal Corps of Signals

Frederick Charles Nippers of St Mellons, Cardiff died on 11 July, aged 88. He joined the Royal Corps of Signals in 1938 and was later attached to 1 Airborne Division. Having served at Arnhem and in Germany, he was discharged in 1946. Later, he worked for the Inland Revenue. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Arthur Wood

Royal Navy

Arthur Ellis Wood of Atherley South, Barnsley, South Yorkshire died on 16 August, aged 87. He joined the Royal Navy and served on a mine sweeper. During the Dieppe Raid, his ship cleared a path for raiding ships. Discharged in 1946, he worked in open cast mines. His wife passed away two days earlier. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Zygmunt Kulbacki

Polish Resettlement Corps

Zygmunt Kulbacki of Fulwood, Preston, Lancashire died on 18 August, aged 88. A musician by trade, he was deported to Russia when hostilities broke out in 1939. Come 1941, he was released to join the Polish Army which was sent to Iran where it came under British Command. Serving in Iran, Iraq, Palestine, Egypt, and Italy, he transferred to the Polish Resettlement Corps in 1947 and was demobbed in 1948. In civilian life, he was a farm worker, waiter, and later joined Leyland. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Thomas Gray

Royal Artillery

Thomas Gray of Gloucester, Gloucestershire died on 19 August, aged 90. Having joined the Royal Engineers in 1939, he transferred to the Royal Artillery the following year. He was discharged in 1941 after being blinded by a searchlight that was shone at him. In civilian life, he worked

as a shipyard fitter then as a research engineer. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

Ingram Blenkarn

Royal Army Service Corps

Ingram Shaw Blenkarn of Hogs Back, Puttenham, Surrey died on 21 August, aged 92. He joined the Royal Army Service Corps in 1940 and was commissioned the following year. Having served in North Africa and Italy, he was deployed in Belgium and Holland before being demobbed in 1946. He enjoyed rugby.

Norman Walker

Royal Artillery

Norman William Walker of Thornton Cleveleys, Lancashire died on 21 August, aged 91. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1939 and served around the UK before being deployed in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. Discharged in 1946, he worked as a builder and later as foreman at a Mother's Pride bakery. He also worked as a driver. Our sympathy goes to his widow Anne and all the family.

Joseph Harrison

King's Own Royal Regiment

Joseph Harrison of Cannock, Staffordshire died on 23 August, aged 93. He joined the Worcestershire Regiment in 1940 and transferred to the King's Own Royal Regiment in 1941. He served in North Africa and the Middle East, before being sent

behind Japanese lines with the Chindit expedition. Discharged in 1946, he worked as a dairy manager, miner and ran a grocery shop. Our sympathy goes to his widow Joan and all the family.

Leslie Bunce
Essex Regiment

Leslie Thomas Bunce of Felixstowe, Suffolk died on 24 August, aged 86. He joined the Essex Regiment in 1938 and served in the UK, Italy, and Greece. Demobbed in 1946, he worked as a blacksmith and later in the wrought iron business. Our sympathy goes to his widow Elsie and all the family.

Eric Prebble
Royal Air Force

Eric Ernest Prebble of Walton Bay, Clevedon, Avon died on 24 August, aged 86. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1942 and flew Wellingtons in the Middle East. Discharged in 1945, he worked at power stations around the UK and later trained workers overseas. Our sympathy goes to his widow Hazel and all the family.

Albert Griffin
Royal Engineers

Albert Charles Griffin of Polegate, East Sussex died on 31 August, aged 87. He joined the Royal Engineers in 1939 serving around the UK on airfields and AA sites. Discharged in 1946, he worked for the GPO, later BT. Our sympathy goes to his widow Joan and all members of the family.

Peter Lanham
Royal Engineers

Peter Victor Lanham of Haywards Heath, West Sussex died on 3 September, aged 92. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1940. Having been commissioned in 1943, he transferred to the Royal Engineers and served in Wales, France, Germany, Italy and Yugoslavia. Demobbed in 1946, he worked for local government as a civil engineer. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Ronald Austin
Royal Air Force

Ronald Edwin Austin of St Budeaux, Plymouth, Devon died on 4 September, aged 84. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1943 and served in Wellington and Stirling Bombers. After being injured in Norway and crash landing in Yorkshire, he was comatose for three months, losing sight in one eye. Discharged in 1945, he resumed work as a boiler maker and later became an instructor with the Air Cadets. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Leslie Westley
Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

Leslie Thomas Westley of Birmingham, West Midlands died on 4 September, aged 78. He joined the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in 1952 and served in Egypt and Cyprus. Demobbed in 1954, he worked as a draughtsman and machine tool designer. Our sympathy goes to his widow Constance and all the family.

Jack Anderson
Royal Air Force

John Anderson of Denton, Greater Manchester died on 6 September, aged 94. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1988. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1940 and served as Corporal with Coastal Command. Stationed around the UK, he completed a tour of duty in the West Indies. In 1945, he lost his left eye in an explosion when a Liberator crashed at Lossiemouth. Discharged in 1946, he became a lift inspector. A keen cook, he also played piano. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Leslie Hough
West Yorkshire Regiment

Leslie Hough of Sowerby Bridge, West Yorkshire died on 6 September, aged 90. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1997. Having worked for the Co-op, he volunteered for the West Yorkshire Regiment in 1939 and was posted to the Far East where his Battalion formed part of Lieutenant-General Slim's Division. He was captured during the retreat from Burma in March 1942 and remained a prisoner of the Japanese for the remainder of the Second World War. The privation he experienced while captive would ultimately cause his loss of sight. Discharged in 1945, he returned to the UK and became a postman, working for Royal Mail until 1978 when his sight rapidly deteriorated. His interests included photography. Our sympathy goes to his widow Eileen and all the family.

Trevor Lewis
Home Guard

Trevor Lewis of Pontprennau, Cardiff, South Glamorgan died on 8 September, aged 85. He joined the Home Guard in 1941 but was injured during a training exercise, losing sight in his left eye. After being discharged, he worked as a porter at Cardiff Infirmary for 38 years. His interests included bowls. Our sympathy goes to his widow Alice and all members of the family.

Frederick Ward
Gloucestershire Regiment

Frederick Thomas Ward of Oldbury, West Midlands died on 10 September, aged 87. He joined the Army in 1940, manning guns on merchant ships with the Maritime Royal Artillery. He served in India and Egypt, then in Italy and Normandy with the Gloucestershire Regiment. Discharged in 1946, he worked at a foundry making cylinder castings. He enjoyed walking and gardening. Our sympathy goes to his widow Edna and all the family.

Harold Ireland
Royal Air Force

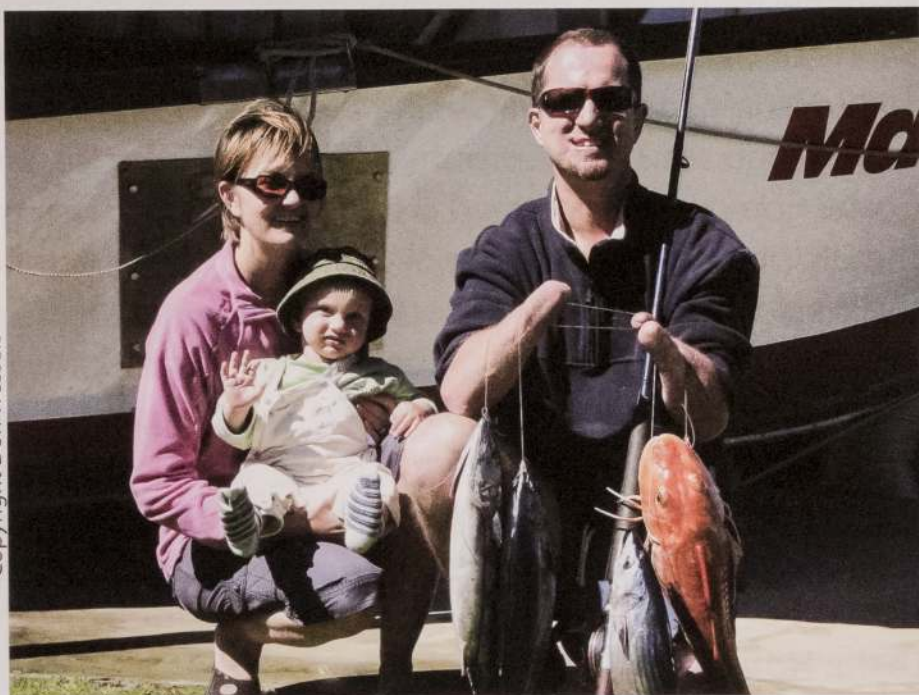
Harold Ireland of Throckley, Newcastle-upon-Tyne died on 11 September, aged 88. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1941 and served in Singapore and Bombay. Demobbed in 1946, he worked as a landscape gardener, later consulting with the Community Service scheme. Our sympathy goes to his widow Elsie and all the family.

Don's greatest catch

SOUTH AFRICAN St Dunstaner Don Wessels amazed veteran fishermen with his sea angling skills.

Skipper Johan Smal told readers of *Ski-Boat* magazine that he was skeptical when blind and handless Don signed on as a crew member fishing off Arniston (Waenhuiskrans) last October. Back in August 1988, Don was injured by an anti-personnel mine explosion in Angola.

"Don had no hesitation to engage," wrote Johan. "He played the fish, which happened to be in a real fighting spirit, like a pro, quickly bringing it to the side of the boat so that it could be lifted in.



Copyright Don Wessels

Expert fisherman Don shows off his catch to wife Maatje and son Matteo. (Unknown to them all, there is a fourth member of the family in the picture. Turn to Family News on page 42 for details.)

Being his first Katonkel he was very eager to immediately feel what the fish looked like but had to wait until it was dead as the treble hooks of the lure and razor sharp teeth of a struggling

Katonkel was too much of a risk. In total, he boated six Katonkels and concluded the day with a Cape Gurnard. Watching him enjoy the trip with such passion was overwhelming."



Copyright Stan Bowers

Colin gets a bite

ST DUNSTANER Colin Williamson caught a shark weighing just over 100lbs on a recent fishing trip. It took Ron, Colin and the Skipper to lift the denizen of the deep who was released back into the sea.