

St Dunstan's Review

March 2010

No 999

Photograph: Simon Rogers



Prince William takes first shot at
future of St Dunstan's Llandudno

Cover Story

Which way is the target?
HRH Prince William
found out how a blind
ex-Serviceman can
master a bow and arrow.
St Dunstan's Andrew
Seivewright provided a
few tips. More on page 19.



Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

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Calendar

MARCH

Bowling Club (I)	14-27
Writers Forum (II)	16
Founder's Day Awards	26
Clocks go forward	28
Widows Week (I)	31- 7 Apr

APRIL

Widows Week	Until 7
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Easter	2-5
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Brighton Marathon	18
Writers Forum (III)	20
Masonic Weekend	23-26
Anzac Day	25
Virgin London Marathon	25
Ex-POW Reunion	30-2 May

MAY

Ex-POW Reunion	Until 2
Blind & Handless Reunion	5-11
VE Day	8
Gardening Week	9-15
Golf Club (II)	15-16
Writers Forum (IV)	18
Feast of St Dunstan	19
Frogmore House Open Day	20
Archery (II)	29-6 June

JUNE

Archery (II)	Until 6
Writers Forum (V)	15
Fishing Club	6-11

Your message from St Dunstan's Chairman, Andrew Keeling

From the Chairman

I was interested to see in the Spring 2010 edition of *Legion* (the RBL's house magazine) that Peter Cleminson, the current National Chairman, encouraged his members to "do their bit". That is exactly what I want to do here now.

Robert Leader, our Chief Executive, sent us all a very clear message about "Facing the Future" in the February Review, and spelt out very clearly that as an organisation we cannot ignore the effects of the rapidly changing world that we live in. In short we have to find ways of doing more with less. He also asked for your support, and I know he will not be disappointed.

I believe strongly that an important part of the secret of our future success is an increased awareness of St Dunstan's around the country. Robert and his staff are already working hard on this but I feel sure that you, the St Dunstaners, also have the opportunity to make a difference here. So I am strongly encouraging you to do whatever you can within your family, your friends and your community to pass the word about St Dunstan's, and where possible to drop some pretty heavy hints about signing up with our Fundraising department as supporters.

Thousands of beneficiaries doing this around the country could make a real difference – but it won't happen until we make potential donors aware of the opportunity they have to help us.

I suspect Ges Laker will get a mention elsewhere in this edition, but I just want to pay a public tribute to him myself. Last week Ges, a retired Royal Navy PTI and Field Gunner, completed a 12½ month, 6,300 mile walk around the shores of this lovely island to raise awareness about us and money for us. Thank you Ges – that is a fantastic achievement, and we are so proud that you chose to do it for St Dunstan's.

No doubt our introduction to Wales at Llandudno on 22 February will also be covered in these pages, but I want to formally record my thanks to HRH Prince William for honouring us with his presence, and for taking such a close interest in our organisation. I also want to thank all those that worked so hard to create a very special day. I feel that our fundraising is making good progress, and hope that you do too.

Noticeboard

MORE ON FACING THE FUTURE

A MESSAGE FROM ST DUNSTAN'S CHIEF EXECUTIVE: In last month's Review I explained that, in order to support increasing numbers of St Dunstaners in these economically difficult times and into the future, the Senior Management Team and I have carried out a review of the ways in which we provide our services. The review identified a number of cost saving initiatives to help secure the maximum sustainable long term benefits for current and future St Dunstaners and its recommendations were accepted by members of the Council at their meeting last month.

This month's Review gives me the opportunity to tell you more about the changes that will be implemented over the coming months.

It is a fact of life that the only way in which a labour intensive organisation, such as St Dunstan's, can make significant savings is by reducing staff costs and the measures we are taking have involved making a number of posts redundant. We have tried throughout, however, to make sure that there is minimum impact on St Dunstaners.

In January this year, in order to reduce the need for compulsory redundancies, we introduced a Voluntary Redundancy Scheme. As a result of this, a number of people will be leaving us, the majority on a voluntary basis but a few posts will have been made compulsorily redundant. St Dunstan's has always valued the professionalism and dedication of its staff and the process is being handled as sensitively as is possible. The changes will be made over a period of time to enable the service to adapt.

As part of the review, we identified different ways of structuring the Organisation in order to reduce costs, and there will be some changes to the senior management structure. Jeremy Hinton, Deputy Chief Executive Operations, Yvonne Smithers, Deputy Chief Executive Resources and Richard McCrow, Secretariat Manager will all be leaving in July this year. Clearly, this will necessitate changes for those currently reporting directly to both Jeremy and Yvonne; Barry Porter will become Director of Welfare Services, David Arthur will become Director of Estates and Planning, and it will be necessary to recruit a Director of Finance and Information Services. All

these will be members of my Senior Management Team.

The background to these changes has been the worldwide financial crisis and the fact that our income and expenditure are out of balance. These cost saving measures, together with increased fundraising activity, will ensure that our income and expenditure are gradually brought into line and that we will be able to open our Llandudno Centre in 2011, without which we would not be able to respond to the needs of our ever increasing numbers.

The past eighteen months or so has been a difficult and unsettling time for us all, but the changes we are introducing have resulted from extensive consideration of all possible options. It has been very clear, however, that if we are to continue to help more blind ex-Service men and women and open the new Centre in Llandudno, we needed to do this.

All staff have now been informed of the changes and I wanted to ensure that St Dunstaners and other beneficiaries were updated on what was happening. I hope you will find my explanation helpful and that it will reassure you that we will continue to honour the promises made and to deliver the high level of service that we have all come to expect of this great Organisation.

Robert Leader
Chief Executive

TAX CODE ADMIN ERROR

NO CAUSE FOR WORRY: The Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (SPVA) have informed St Dunstan's Pensions department of an administrative error whereby HM Revenue & Customs have notified pensioners with War Pensions, which are tax-free, of a new tax code.

HM Revenue & Customs has recently introduced a new National Insurance and PAYE system and is using it to issue notices of tax coding for the first time. The new system has highlighted discrepancies in old records and some people have received inaccurate or multiple tax codes. HM Revenue & Customs say they are aware of the problem and apologise for any inconvenience caused.

If you receive any correspondence with regards to this, please contact HM Revenue & Customs directly by telephoning 0845 070 3703.

WAR PENSION CHANGES

PENSIONS SUPPLEMENT: Revised War Pension rates come into effect on 12 April 2010. If you would like details when they become available, please telephone Inderpal Kallah at St Dunstan's Headquarters on 020 7723 5021 or e-mail inderpal.kallah@st-dunstans.org.uk, stating if you prefer print, braille, tape, CD or electronic formats.

GOVERNMENT PROMISES BETTER COMPENSATION LEVELS FOR INJURED TROOPS

LEGISLATION REQUIRED: Injured Service men and women have been promised higher levels of payment after the Secretary of State for Defence agreed to implement all the recommendations of a comprehensive review of the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS).

The review, published last month by the Ministry of Defence, was conducted under the independent chairmanship of former Chief of the Defence Staff, Admiral The Lord Boyce. He examined the scheme's basic principles, through the levels of compensation for injured personnel, to the methods used to evaluate claims. The review found several areas where the scheme could be improved and the Defence Secretary, the Rt Hon Bob Ainsworth MP agreed to carry out the recommendations made.

The main changes include:

- Increasing the tax-free, index-linked Guaranteed Income Payment (which is paid for life) to reflect the lasting effect of more serious injuries, likely promotions, and extended retirement ages
- The top level of award, already doubled in 2008, will remain at

£570,000, but all other award levels will be increased

- Those with the most serious multiple injuries will continue to receive full tariff value for each injury, up to the maximum £570,000. The rules below that will change so that all injuries in a single incident will receive some compensation (rather than the first three injuries as now)
- The maximum award for mental illness will be increased
- A new fast interim payment will be introduced so those injured can receive some compensation before the entire claims process is complete
- A new expert medical body will be created to advise on compensation for particular injuries and illnesses, such as hearing loss, mental health and genital injury
- The burden of proof will remain largely as it is, but improvements will be made in cases of illness and where records have not been properly maintained
- The time limits by which claims must be made will be increased
- Improvements to communications with Service personnel and their families, focusing on how the scheme works, what payments

they might be entitled to, and the calculations behind them.

The Armed Forces Compensation Scheme provides compensation for injuries, illness and death arising from service since 6 April 2005.

For injury and illness, the scheme provides a tariff-based lump sum for pain and suffering in recognition of the sacrifice made on the Nation's behalf. For the more seriously injured it provides a Guaranteed Income Payment, payable on discharge, which is tax-free and index-linked for life.

The scheme also makes payments in the case of death to widows, widowers, civil partners, eligible partners, and to dependant children. The Armed Forces Compensation Scheme, unlike its predecessor, makes payments to injured personnel while they are still in service.

Implementation of the review will involve legislation, which will take time to deliver. However, changes will exceptionally apply to all those who have received compensation under the AFCS, going back to 2005.

NEW DATE FOR MARINES BAND

CONCERT MOVED BACK: Due to operational commitments, the Royal Marines Band Concert at St Dunstan's Ovingdean will now be held on 28 July.

TROOPING THE COLOUR

DRAW: Trooping the Colour will be held on 12 June with the Grenadier Guards taking centre stage. It is possible that St Dunstan's will be allocated tickets. Any St Dunstaner or Gubbay Trust Beneficiary wishing to go should send their name and address to Liz Humphrey, St Dunstan's, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD by 29 May. A draw will determine the final allocation of tickets. Tickets are limited to two per applicant. Those attending will be responsible for their own travel and accommodation expenses.

BRILLE POCKET WATCH

FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED: If anyone is interested in a distinguished tactile, wind-up pocket watch, we have four available. Please contact Barbara Sweeney on 020 7616 7922.

LET'S YOMP AGAIN

GET WALKING: The 2010 Once A Marine Always A Marine Dartmoor Yomp will be held over the weekend on 10-12 September. Based around Princetown, the main event is a 15-mile trek across the southern part of Dartmoor. Participants will be expected to cover their own expenses. For more details of the weekend, get in touch with Stan Bowers by e-mail on stan.bowers1@btinternet.com.

CANCELLATIONS

PLEASE KEEP US INFORMED IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND A FUNCTION: Illness or unanticipated emergency appointments may sometimes prevent St Dunstaners from attending reunions or events at Ovingdean.

People are frequently unaware that St Dunstan's still has to pay for previously ordered meals if they are not cancelled. This can be the cause of quite unnecessary expense to our charity.

Would you please help us by telephoning, as far ahead as circumstances permit, your Welfare Officer, in the case of a reunion, or the lounge desk at Ovingdean, if you are unable to attend, whatever the reason.

NEW AT RACING SIGHT

TIPS, FIXTURES AND NEWS FROM THE TRACK: Daily racing tips, racing fixtures and ante post betting have been key features of www.racingsight.co.uk since it went online. The comprehensive guide to horse racing is run by St Dunstaner Edd Francis who has now added audio coverage of the day's racing, courtesy of Paddy Power, and quick access to online facilities from leading bookmakers. The website is designed to be visually impaired friendly.

REVIEW DERBY SWEEPSTAKE

SWEEPSTAKE 2010: The Epsom Investec Derby will be held on 5 June. As usual, the Review is running its annual Sweepstake. The draw is open to all St Dunstaners, beneficiaries of the Diana Gubbay Trust, widows and widowers. Tickets remain 30p each and will be issued consecutively to a maximum of 25 (costing £7.50). Cheques should be made payable to St Dunstan's. Loose money should not be sent unless it is registered. We are unable to take orders by telephone. The closing date is 2 June and the draw will be made that day.

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

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

SIGN UP FOR HMS SULTAN

THE DOGS ARE BACK: Anyone wishing to attend the Summer Camp at HMS *Sultan* should contact Organising Secretary Dave Burrows on 02392 550532 or e-mail DCB119399@aol.com. Dates for the Camp are Friday, 30 July to Saturday, 7 August 2010. The closing date for applications is 4 May.

VISIT FROGMORE HOUSE

ROYAL MAUSOLEUM: The beautiful landscaped gardens and 18th-century lake of Frogmore House will be opened to the public in support of St Dunstan's blind ex-Service men and women on 20 May, courtesy of Her Majesty The Queen.

Tickets will be sold on a first come, first served basis. Tickets are priced at £4.50 for the gardens which are open between 10:00 and 17:30, although last admission is 16:30. Refreshments will be available on the day and visitors can bring picnics. For more information and to purchase your ticket, go to www.st-dunstans.org.uk/events or e-mail fundraising@st-dunstans.org.uk or telephone 020 7616 8368 or 020 7616 7965.

Please note only assistance dogs will be permitted on the day. Wheelchair users may require assistance touring the gardens.

METRO NATIONAL ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS IN JUNE

ATHLETIC CHALLENGE: Blind and visually impaired athletes are invited to take part in the 34th Metro Athletics Championships to be held at the Mile End Stadium, East London on 26 June. There will be medals, trophies, and prizes and a free pack lunch for all. Electronic timing will be used to record performances which may come in useful for those athletes trying to register their best times to be included in the GB team for 2012 Para Olympics.

For further details including entry forms and accommodation, please contact Alan Whetherly on 07958 078021 or e-mail alanwhetherly@gmail.com.

NEW TOP DOG AT GDBA

EX-NAVY MAN TAKES CHARGE: Richard Leaman, OBE has been named as the new Chief Executive of the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association. He takes over later this month from Bridget Warr who is leaving the charity after six years.

Richard has previously worked in the Royal Navy and was awarded an OBE in 1994 for disaster relief services after Hurricane Andrew and was recently appointed a Companion of the Order of the Bath for his work on NATO's new maritime strategy.

TALKING NEWSPAPERS JOIN UP WITH RNIB

CHARITIES LINK UP: Two organisations for blind people have pooled their resources. National Talking Newspapers and Magazines (NTN and M) officially joined the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) Group in February.

NTN and M will maintain its individual brand identity, workforce and board of trustees. However, fundraising and marketing staff will join RNIB. The two organisations say they will work closely together to develop technology and improve access for blind and partially sighted people to national newspapers and magazines.

Balancing the Books

St Dunstaner **Ted Bunting** on a big bawdy bestseller

Blott on the Landscape

Author: Tom Sharpe

Reader: Arthur Bush

Category: Adult Fiction:

Humorous fiction

Duration: 9 hours, 15 minutes

Catalogue no. 2860

Once upon a time there was the Hall, a large ugly pile, rather like Lady Maud who was born in it and wishes to see it preserved for future generations. But her husband, the wicked St Giles, refuses to consummate the marriage. He has no time for bed sports with his wife (he is into sadomasochism and has a woman in London who ties him up from time to time). As for the Hall, Sir Giles wants it demolished to make way for a motorway so that he can get a big bag of gold in compensation.

So which, if either of them sees his or her ambition fulfilled? Does the "trouble-shooter" from the ministry bring Lady Maud satisfaction? Or does Sir Giles's blackmail tip the balance in his favour? And what about the mysterious chauffer-gardener Blott?

There is no limit whatever to what he would not do for his beloved Lady Maud. This adult fairy story is not intellectually demanding by any means, but provided you treat it as you would Jack and the Beanstalk, say, you will certainly find out how it finishes.

This title is available on seven cassettes at Calibre Audio Library, 01296 432 339 and also from the RNIB's BookStream Club. Call RNIB Customer Services on 0303 123 9999 or e-mail helpline@rnib.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.

Memories of Sir John

I learned with true sadness from the pages of The Review of the December death of Sir John Gingell, one of St Dunstan's closest friends and helpers.

I knew him well as Black Rod and had good cause to thank him for his kindness and consideration. For I was a BBC State Occasion commentator for radio and as such did the State Opening of Parliament eight years in a row.

So Sir John was a "new boy" as Black Rod and I, a relative veteran of State Openings when I first met him in his House of Lords office to gather material for my commentary, he an Air Chief Marshal of The Royal Air Force and me a former lowly

National Service Senior Aircraftman.

I shall never forget his first appearance as a leading player at that great state occasion. Black Rod's most famous role is to stride the corridor which runs down the spine of The Palace of Westminster from the Bar of the House of Lords to the door of The House of Commons to knock three times, before being admitted to the Commons chamber to summon the MPs to the Lords to hear the Queen's speech. The commentator must time himself to the second, so as to finish speaking just as Black Rod raises his rod to bang on the door.

Unfortunately, and to my growing dismay, Sir John reached the Commons door in world record time

and (whew) by leaving out much I had planned, I was a split second ahead of the KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK. Thinking ahead to ensure perfect timing on the return walk, I ditched whole cards of notes and prompts only to discover that Sir John, when with the entire Commons in tow, had slowed to a dawdle and I had much unexpected filling to do!

Twelve months went by and there I was again in Black Rod's office for my BBC commentator's briefing. "How did it go last year?" he asked. I told him in no uncertain terms, though mindful of my lowly rank. "Why don't we find a stop watch now and walk it both ways together?" suggested the Air Chief Marshal. "You can show me what pace I should

be doing. Would that help?" And we did just that, attracting many a curious gaze, especially as the Parliamentary giant and the diminutive broadcaster passed through the bustling Central Lobby.

Sir John was interested in the critical nature of the commentator's task as I showed him the places where the shouts of "Hats off, strangers" and "Make way for Black Rod" took place and how I had to guess from my tiny black and white tv monitor at my commentary position in the Lords when to stop so that I didn't talk over these commands - or the all-important knocking on the door. Back in Black Rod's office I gave Sir John my heartfelt thanks.

"Please think nothing of it, John," he replied with that gentle smile of his. "We RAF chaps must stick together." What a truly wonderful man!

**John Hosken,
Brentwood,
Essex**

Ten questions on...

The subject of Marriage

"I do" isn't one of the answers to the latest round of questions from **Harry Beevers**

- 1) Which member of the Royal Family was married near Balmoral in 1992?
- 2) Which member of The Beatles pop group married Cynthia Powell?
- 3) HM The Queen's first important announcement as she toasted Charles and Camilla at their wedding reception was to give the result of which major sporting event held that same afternoon?
- 4) Who was the Hungarian born actress who married nine men between 1937 and 1986 including the hotelier Conrad Hilton and Barbie doll designer Jack Ryan?
- 5) In this country, where did ladies usually wear their wedding rings during the 16th and 17th centuries?
- 6) In Arthurian legend, what item was presented to King Arthur by his father-in-law as part of Guinevere's dowry?
- 7) The headlines in an issue of the newspaper "Variety" in 1956 read, "Egghead marries Hour-glass": who were the husband and wife?
- 8) According to Dr Johnson, "A second marriage is a triumph of hope over ...", what?
- 9) Which Hollywood star and World War II pin-up, married the son of the Aga Khan?
- 10) How many marriages did King Henry VIII and his sixth wife Catherine Parr have in total?

Answers can be found on page 37.

US Blind Soldier becomes Company Commander

AN AMERICAN soldier has become the first blind officer to lead a company. Captain Scott M Smiley, who lost his sight serving in Iraq in 2005, assumed command of the Warrior Transition Unit at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in New York.

Photo by Tommy Gilligan, copyright US Army



US Army Captain Scott M. Smiley salutes 1st Sgt Deon E. Dabrio during the US Army Warrior Transition Unit Change of Command Ceremony at West Point.

After receiving medical attention following his tour in Iraq, Smiley was transferred to the Fort Lewis, Warrior Transition Unit in Washington, where he began his recovery and return to active status.

"There were some very long dark days, physically and mentally, but I just had to keep pushing on," he said. "I wanted to take care of myself physically, mentally and spiritually. I just did not want to give up because of something that negatively

happened to me." Smiley attributes his strength and drive during his recovery to his family, faith and friends. "It was all of this which allowed me to put one foot in front of the other and has allowed me to accomplish everything that I have done to get to where I am today."

Since then, he has been an instructor with the academy's Behavioural

Sciences and Leadership department, teaching a leadership course to third-year cadets. At West Point, Smiley now takes command of a company that he personally understands.

"I know what they are going through. I understand the dynamics of the company, how it works and areas of concern that need to be improved," Smiley said.

John 'Jock' Carnochan

JOCK CARNOCHAN PASSED AWAY on 19 January. He was a mobility instructor and sports organiser for St Dunstan's from June 1966 to August 1989, but continued to be an escort and friend to many St Dunstaners for years after.

Jock served in the Royal Navy, enduring three shipwrecks during the war. He then transferred to the Submarine Service as a physical training instructor. At St Dunstan's, Jock introduced and organised sports days and he initiated skiing in the charity, which continues to grow each year.

The following tributes speak eloquently of



Wally Lethbridge with Jock at a Blind Handless Reunion.

what he meant to many St Dunstaners.

Terry Bullingham writes:

"My initial meeting with John Carnochan - or Jock as he liked to be known - was during the aftermath of the Falklands War in August 1982, in his capacity as my Mobility Instructor. As former Chief Petty Officers, we had an instant rapport and I consider myself

very fortunate to have received over 100 hours of individual long-cane tuition from him. Very much a 'people person', he clearly enjoyed his job and I found his enthusiasm both infectious and inspirational.

"Whilst still serving, I secured a post at the Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovilton. One of my tasks was to provide conducted tours around the exhibits. I well remember his meticulous attention to detail when familiarising me with the aircraft, hazards, and various display cases. Visitors were subsequently quite surprised at my ability to navigate the exhibition halls, but it was all due to Jock's thoroughness.

"Upon discharge from the RN, I became a social worker in Aberdeen. I was able to transfer the navigational skills that Jock had instilled in me to travel independently throughout the city.

"Jock and I became friends beyond the rehabilitation processes, and it was very reassuring to know he was at the end of a 'phone line if the need arose. In retrospect, my career as a blind person was probably influenced by Jock more than any other. We salute you, Jock, and trust you have a happy reunion with other former 'shipmates' who 'crossed the bar'."

In later years, he guided St Dunstaners **Jerry Lynch** and the late Fred Bentley on their return to the battlefields of Normandy. Jerry described him as the consummate escort. "In many ways, he was like a father figure to me. He was the perfect escort and always made sure that I had everything I needed. He gave up a lot of his time to help me and other St Dunstaners."

Andy Bull writes:

"How saddened I was on hearing of the death of our wonderful and gentle friend Jock Carnochan. I first met Jock at



St Dunstan's Chairman Lord Fraser shares a joke with Bill Phillips and Jock during the 1970 Sports Day.

St Dunstan's Ovingdean in 1984. When my family and I arrived at St Dunstan's we were all greeted with such warmth and friendliness, we were introduced to many of the staff, and one in particular who stood out immediately was none other than Jock Carnochan.

"I will always remember Jock saying to my family, 'Don't worry about the size of this place because the next time you see Andy he will be not only running around this building but he will be

taking you and showing you all around.' I had to admit to myself I didn't really appreciate or share Jock's confidence or reassurances at the time. Then again I was only just gone 20 years of age. Being newly blinded, how quickly I was to excel with the tutoring and shepherding hand of Jock.

"One thing I learned as I got to know Jock as each day passed, was he never forced the pace or pushed his mobility training skills onto you. If I had been out on the town the night before



Jock Carnochan put Andy Bull through his mobility paces after he was blinded in the Army.

and was a bit hungover, as they say, Jock would always leave a message at the lounge desk, 'Just tell Andy to give me a shout whenever he's ready.' While everyone else went into panic mode nothing ever fazed our Jock and that is why I loved him so.

"To me, Jock was like a second father or as some of the other St Dunstaners described him like a shepherd and we his flock. I remember when Jock was taking me through my mobility training, should it be outside or inside the building, he would sometimes say to me, 'Just stand still and wait there, Andy, for a moment.' Because Jock,

seeing one of the elderly St Dunstaners struggling a bit, would quickly assist them and have a little chatter. Now I know why the others called him their shepherd, always looking after his flock and keeping them from harm's way.

"I have so many fond and fun memories that I shared with Jock, like no doubt the many other St Dunstaners who were fortunate to have met this kind and gentle man.

"I will never forget you old friend, for all that you taught me and gave me back my independence. I will toast you with one of your favourite whiskies, Glenmorangie."

Editor's note:

"As an ex-Serviceman himself, Jock knew exactly the right tone he could take with us, when to coerce, when to pull back. We certainly respected all he said to us.

"In his 23 years of service and beyond with St Dunstan's, Jock influenced the lives of many hundreds of St Dunstaners. He will be remembered with fondness."

The funeral took place at Tunbridge Wells Crematorium on 15 February. His grandson Niall McCarthy played a lament on the pipes. Over 50 people attended, including St Dunstaner Jerry Lynch, to whom Jock was a faithful escort, St Dunstan's President Ray Hazan, and old friends Jock Scott, (born in the same village as Jock) Jimmy Andrews, and Peter Westbrook.

We extend our sincere condolences to his partner Beryl and all members of the family.

Cold taster for Mike's trek

Photo courtesy of Argus Newspapers



Determined to go one! Mike and team on the run.

ROYAL NAVY St Dunstaner Mike Scholes of Lindfield, Haywards Heath, West Sussex wasn't taking it easy when he braved the blustery weather that characterised the Sussex Beacon Brighton Half Marathon on 21 February. There were over 6,000 runners taking part. Despite his loss of sight Mike is usually pretty swift, but this time, he was also pulling a hefty pack on a wheeled sledge which slowed his progress in the face of wind, rain, and hail. Guided by Louise from Haywards Heath

Harriers, he was flanked by David Bradford, a top rated runner, David Tynnan, and Adrian Riley, a former Royal Marine. Further complications occurred when the first wheel came off after eight miles. Mike and team finished around 2 hours and 32 minutes. This act of endurance will stand Mike in good stead when he sets off on a trek to the North Pole next month.

RAF St Dunstaner Iain Millard, running with Alex White completed the 13-mile run in 2 hours, 17 minutes,

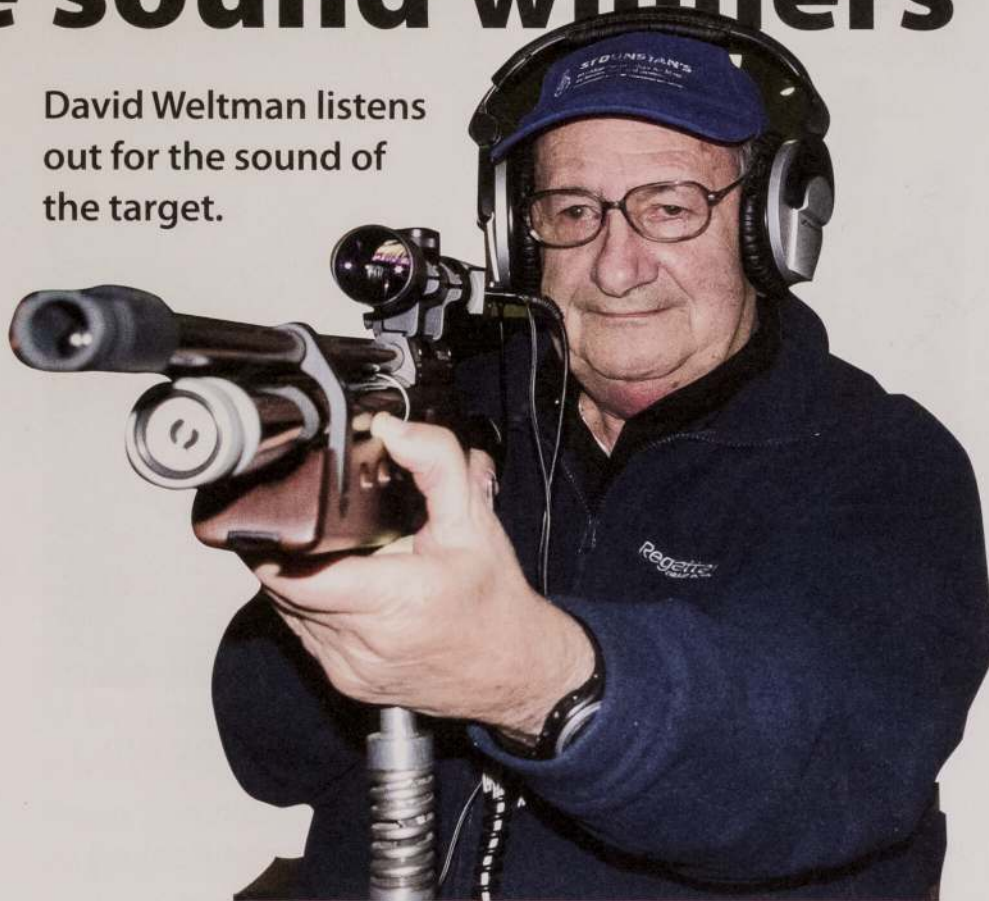
while Billy Black, who served in the Royal Highland Fusiliers, came in at 2 hours, 26 minutes. He was running with running with Steve Murphy. Wren St Dunstaner Sue Eyles, guided by Curstie Watts, finished in 2 hours, 42 minutes. Iain, Billy and Sue are all preparing for April's London Marathon.

There were another 12 people running the Brighton Half Marathon in aid of St Dunstan's, notably Lewis Risley who finished in 1 hour, 23 minutes. He came 74 out of 6,065. We thank them all for their support.

Brighton's first full Marathon will be held in April. Amongst those running for St Dunstan's will be Richard Pike, who many know as a Rehab Worker with Devon Social Services. Anyone wishing to support Richard can find more online at <http://tinyurl.com/yas9rqx>.

Box are sound winners

ST DUNSTAN'S Gun Club played host for a shooting weekend against members of the Wiltshire Acoustic Rifle Club from Box, Chippenham, on 13-14 February. It was a rematch for both teams using rifles with an acoustic sight mounted on the barrel. Contestants listen on headphones for a sound that tells them if they are on target.



David Weltman listens out for the sound of the target.

by Zillah McMullan

Sunday as individual prizes were contested. This time Karen Price came first with 194, Nicky Morris was second, David Weltman third, and John Watts fourth.

The next round was a "Nominated Score" contest, with each shooter trying to anticipate their result to the nearest point. Nicky Harris had another win for Box, while John Watts

came second. Prizes were presented by Zillah McMullan who added some Easter Eggs to the medals.

The Gun Club also presented Karen, Nicky, and Ralph Belamy, the Range Coaching Officer from Box, and their driver Fran, with souvenir boxes made in the Craft Workshop. These contained a St Dunstan's pen and an Easter Egg.

A return match will be organised later this year.

Shooting started Saturday afternoon, after a practise round it was straight into the competition. The Box team came first with Nicky Morris and Karen Price scoring 190 and 193 apiece.

St Dunstaners David Weltman and John Watts came second with scores of 170 and 171, while Cliff Ford and George Oliver came third with 145 and 129.

The winning streak continued for Box on

St Dunstan's is coming to Wales! A Royal visitor discovers how the new centre at Llandudno will change the lives of blind ex-Service men and women for the better

Prince William sees bright future for blind in Wales

Simon Rogers reports direct from Llandudno

HE MIGHT NOT have hit the target during a friendly archery duel with a totally blind Welsh Guardsman, but HRH Prince William hit the mark on how a development in North Wales will improve the lives of blind ex-Service men and women.

HRH Prince William of Wales got a taste of what St Dunstaners will find when the Charity's third centre opens in Llandudno late next year. He spoke with St Dunstaners who have already experienced rehabilitation and



Photograph: Eifion Williams, Welshot Imaging

Prince William wears spectacles that simulate the sight that is left for Corporal Simon Brown.

training at the existing locations in Sheffield and down south in Brighton.

On 22 February, The Prince took a break from his own Service duties in Anglesey, where he

is training as a search and rescue helicopter pilot, to visit the site that is being developed as St Dunstan's new base in north Wales. His appearance left no doubt that St Dunstan's



Prince Pavlos of Greece and St Dunstan's President Ray Hazan meet Prince William at Craig-y-Don.

is coming to Llandudno. He was greeted by the Lord Lieutenant for Clwyd, Trefor Jones, CBE, who introduced him to representatives of the local community such as the Mayor of Llandudno, Cllr Janet Jones, the High Sheriff of Clwyd Henry Robertson, Dilwyn Roberts, Leader of the Conwy County Borough Council and Local MP and Welsh Assembly Member Betty Williams.

St Dunstan's Chairman, Major General Andrew Keeling was next to be presented and he made further introductions to Prince Pavlos of Greece, St Dunstan's President Ray Hazan with his wife, Roberta, and Chief Executive Robert Leader.

The Prince was shown plans for the refurbishment and extension of the building at the heart of the 18-

acre estate at Craig-y-Don, Llandudno. Deputy Chief Executive Lt Col Jeremy Hinton and Robert Owen of Owen Ellis Architects elaborated on how the building will be restored and expanded to provide world class care and rehabilitation for visually impaired Service men and women.

Originally opened in 1902 as the Lady Forester Convalescent Home, the stone building has also been used as a private medical centre. Enjoying an advantageous position on the eastern hillside, there are three floors and basement areas. Two wings curve outwards from a central reception area and there is an ornate wood panelled dining hall at the back. It has been closed for nearly five years.

Plans call for the reinstatement of the Grand Dining Hall, 30 new en suite bedrooms, space for IT training and rehabilitation resources,

and an extension that will house a gymnasium, craft studio, pottery room, training kitchens, and facilities for high dependency care.

However, a more personal demonstration was waiting along the hall in the Sun Lounge, a conservatory area that had been set up as a mini-resource centre by staff from St Dunstan's Sheffield and Ovingdean. Here, The Prince met 31-year-old REME St Dunstaner Simon Brown, from Morley, West Yorkshire, who was blinded by a sniper in Iraq.

Simon's distinctive red, white and blue, Union flag, glass eye was deemed to be "very patriotic". The cheeky Corporal added "I'm trying to get an invite to your wedding." The Prince replied "Oh, you'll have to wait a while yet."

There was some banter about Villa's state of play in the football leagues as Simon explained how some magnifying equipment supplied

by St Dunstan's helped him keep up with other students when studying for a City and Guilds Certificate. Sheffield ROVI Supervisor Julie Shales demonstrated how a liquid level indicator restores independence in the kitchen.

Llandudno St Dunstaner Keith Roberts, aged 77, had more adaptive technology. "I was demonstrating a new type of scanner where you can slip the document in and it reads

it back to you," he said. "I was over the moon. The Prince, actually put on a pair of goggles to make him see how I see."

A further demonstration came from 24-year-old Army St Dunstaner Craig Lundberg, of Walton, Liverpool who explained how bump-ons allowed him to navigate a computer keyboard with ease. RAF St Dunstaner Kerry Reed, aged 48, from Holyhead, told how she had been supported as she studied for an IT



Prince William shares a joke with Royal Navy St Dunstaner Ted John, MBE in the Grand Dining Hall.



Photograph: Simon Rogers

Prince William, with Prince Pavlos and St Dunstan's Sports and Recreation Manager Louise Timms, learns how Welsh Guardsman and avid archer Clive Jones uses a tactile sight when preparing to take a shot with his bow.

qualification. The Prince also learnt of the varied creative activities taking place within the Craft Workshop and the adrenalin rush experienced by St Dunstaners taking part in the Skiing trip. "I bet they go hell for leather," he said.

Moving back outside, The Prince was introduced to St Dunstaner Clive Jones, aged 35, who served in the Welsh Guards

before being blinded in an assault. Clive, totally blind, showed off his prowess as an archer, using a tactile sight.

There was a moment of hilarity as The Prince put on a blindfold and had a go himself with a few tips from St Dunstan's Sport and Recreation Instructor Andrew Seivewright. "Where's Arthur?" called The Prince as he raised the bow. "Over here Sir, but please don't shoot me," replied Sun photographer

Arthur Edwards. The Prince shot two arrows blindfold and missed on both occasions. Removing the blindfold, he tried a third shot and missed again. "This is too much humiliation," he said. "It's pretty difficult when you can see the target, so I can imagine how hard it is when you can't."

The Royal party moved back inside where the Prince spoke further with St Dunstaners David

Stuttard, Dennis Williams, from Rhyl, and Ted John, MBE. And while the embarrassment of not hitting the archery target might have been fresh in his mind, it didn't stop Prince William saying he was game for another blindfold challenge, this time using an acoustic rifle. St Dunstaner Barrie Hathaway, aged 55, of Amlwch, Anglesey pointed out, that the Prince's Uncle, the Duke of York had competed against St Dunstaners when he opened the refurbished annexe at Ovingdean. Barrie suggested a similar contest in the north Wales town of Bangor.

Before the Prince departed, The Chairman thanked him for taking an interest in the development of the Llandudno project.

"We are delighted that the Prince has shown his support for St Dunstan's and has had the opportunity to see firsthand the work we do," said St Dunstan's

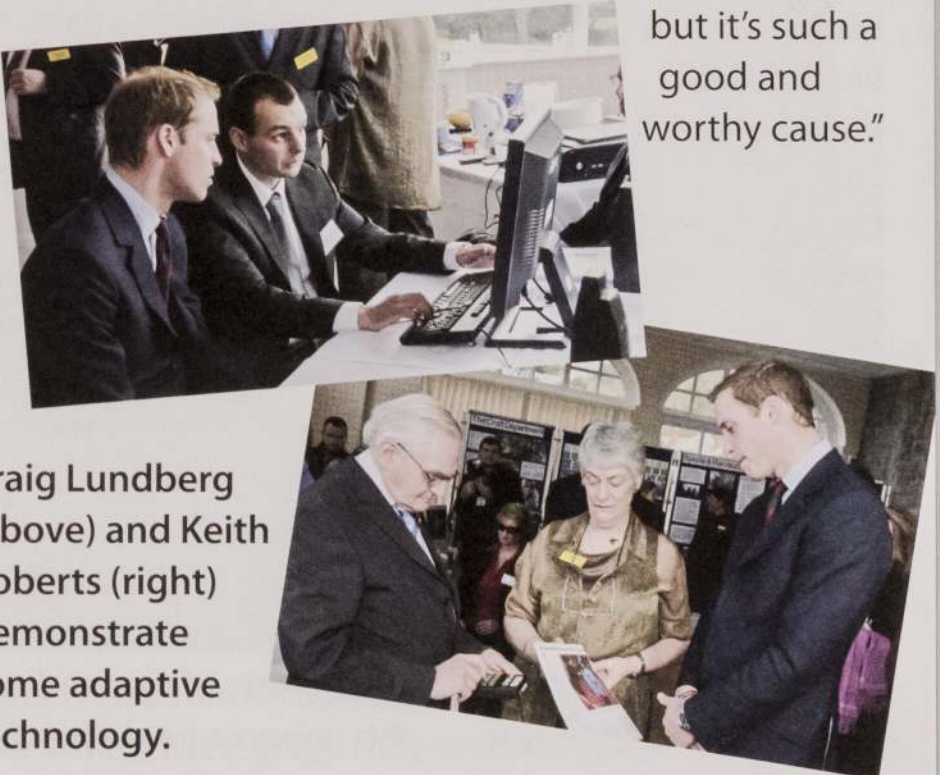
Vice Patron General Sir Richard Dannatt who was also present. "Young men and women from our Armed Forces whose sight has been damaged, as well as St Dunstaners who have Served and lost their sight in later life, will benefit hugely from the new Centre. Using the latest techniques and equipment available, the Centre will provide vital practical and emotional support to those struggling after losing their sight. There will also be sporting, social and training activities with a strong focus on rehabilitation. St Dunstan's offers a

superb community spirit and camaraderie that are both so important in adjusting and going on to lead a fulfilling life."

There was similar excitement from Mayor of Llandudno, Cllr Janet Jones. "Prince William was absolutely wonderful," she said. "So down to earth and a lovely man. It was quite cold up there and I had my robes on, and he said to me 'You must be the warmest one in the line'. He is such a nice person. "I'm just so pleased the beautiful building is going to be used again. It is going to need a lot of support with funding,

but it's such a good and worthy cause."

Photographs: Eifion Williams



Craig Lundberg (above) and Keith Roberts (right) demonstrate some adaptive technology.



“Biggest walkies” are over for one man and his dogs

Ges Laker, Phoebe, and Sumo finish epic trek round Britain to support blind Service men and women

A LIFELONG AMBITION was fulfilled on 13 February when one man and his dogs completed what some have called “the biggest walkies ever.” Former Fleet Air Arm Field Gunner Ges Laker and his black Labradors, Phoebe and Sumo came full circle and finished their mammoth trek around the coastline of Britain. Over 378 days, they have walked around 6,500 miles.

Ges embarked on the walk in support of St Dunstan’s, enthusiastically telling people about the charity’s commitment to Service veterans who have lost their sight.

“I have been dreaming of this walk for over ten

by Simon Rogers

years and now is the time for me to give something back,” said Ges.

So far, around £10,000 has been raised by the efforts of Ges and his supporters. As he

walked towards the Hampshire pub where his walk began in the frosty January of 2009, friends crowded on to the street to applaud his return. St Dunstaners Nigel Whiteley and Gerry Jackson were amongst the first to offer their congratulations, as were Chairman Andrew Keeling, Chief Executive Robert Leader and local MP Mark Hoban. There was a strong Fleet Air Arm contingent including friends such as Jim Andrews and landlord Martin O’Grady

who had a welcome pint of bitter ready for the returning walker.

“It has been an absolutely fantastic experience and I have some very good memories but I definitely don’t fancy doing it again,” said Ges. “The only luxury item that I carried was a wind-up radio.”

Even through the deep freeze of recent months, Ges and his dogs slept most nights in a tent that he carried in a backpack. Some areas had a clear

path, having been developed for holidays or industry, but others, Scotland in particular were “pretty much as God made it. I could have used a machete to get through in some places.”

However, he was also struck by the kindness of strangers who helped along the way.

A father of two, Ges, aged 54, joined the Royal Navy as a 15-year-old, travelling the world as a Technician and PTI. After leaving the service,

he set up a landscaping business and has plans to resume work in this line. He’s a keen rugby fan and friends from Locks Heath Pumas had been kidding him that he would be expected to play that afternoon.

The other key members of the team were eight-year-old Phoebe, named after the first ship Ges served on, and one of her 20 offspring, three-year old Sumo. Quite what they will make of life in a house after a year on the road remains to be seen.



Ges Laker, Phoebe and Sumo received a heroes’ welcome as they came full circle and returned to the Jolly Farmer where their 6,500 mile walk began.

Patrick Sidnell reports on the first archery contests of 2010

A record breaking week!

ST DUNSTAN'S ARCHERY CLUB enjoyed a week of record breaking indoor competition in the McKinley Sports Hall at St Dunstan's Ovingdean from 16-23 January. We were sorry to be without our Club Chairman, David

Poyner, who was in hospital. We wish him well and that he will soon be back on the shooting line with us. Also missing was Doug Rogers who had to stay home to look after his wife, Jo. Once again, our best wishes are with them both. Similarly, our thoughts also go to another club member, Terry Ottewell, who also has been in hospital for an operation and is slowly recovering at home.

However, we were very pleased to welcome back our Vice-Chairman, Clive Jones who was recovering from an injury.

The week began on Saturday with equipment being checked and set up. Afterwards coaching and practice took place.

Sunday, we had two visiting teams, in the morning Hellingly Archery Club and in the afternoon, Southampton University Archery Club. Hellingly AC won by 234 points, Southampton Uni AC by 50 points. Well done to both Clubs.

On Monday, we shot for the Laurie Austin Trophy, the competition was a Portsmouth round.

1st John Bower
2nd Patrick Sidnell (who set a new Recurve Tactile club record)
3rd Adrian Neat

That evening, the Club AGM took place in the Winter Gardens. The meeting was chaired by our President, Major (Rtd) Wendy LeGassick, MBE.

The President requested that all in attendance give some thoughts to those members who were unable to be there due to ill health. The elected committee were Chairman David Poyner, Vice-Chairman Clive Jones, Secretary David Habgood, Treasurer Sue Habgood, Records Officer Phil Varden, and Equipment Officer Alan Holden with Committee Members Patrick Sidnell, Peter Hammond, and Keith Lanchester-Harding.

The Equipment Officer announced he was resigning due to health reasons, but withdrew his resignation when David Habgood agreed to work alongside Alan on the manual tasks.

Tuesday's competition was a Worcester round for The Longhill Trophy.

1st Patrick Sidnell

(breaking the Recurve Tactile Club record)
2nd Leslie George
3rd John Bower (who broke the club record for Totally Blind Recurve)

Wednesday was used as a coaching day, but it was back to the competitions on Thursday. This time, the round was a FITA 18 with a Handicap adjusted score.

1st John Bower (who set a new club record for Totally Blind Recurve)
2nd Adrian Neat
3rd Keith Lanchester-Harding

On the same day, Peter Hammond set a new club record for Totally Blind Compound and Patrick Sidnell set a Club record for Recurve Tactile.

Friday morning's competition was Norman's Shoot, sponsored by St Dunstaner Norman Perry. This is a FITA 25 round for archers who achieved a handicap of less than 70 last year. The

results were judged on Handicap adjusted scores.

1st Peter Hammond (who set a new record for Totally Blind Compound)
2nd Keith Lanchester-Harding
3rd Patrick Sidnell (who set a new record for Recurve Tactile)

Friday afternoon the remaining members shoot a FITA 25.

1st John Bower.
2nd Leslie George.
3rd Eileen Thompson.

On Friday evening, the club presentations took place in the Blue Room. We were very pleased to have in attendance our Vice-President Tom Hart and Mary Frith.

Our Lady Paramount was Mary Frith who presented the medals and trophies.

The Winners
Laurie Austin Trophy
John Bower

The Longhill Trophy
Patrick Sidnell

The Gaygan Gold Trophy
Keith Lanchester-Harding, for the second year running.

The Tactile Gold Trophy
Patrick Sidnell

The Handicap Improvement Medal
Patrick Sidnell

On the Saturday, we welcomed Ditchling Archery Club for a Portsmouth round. The match lasted all day with Ditchling AC winning by 89 points. Well done, Ditchling!

The week was very successful with a large number of club records being broken. The standard of archery in the Club is improving each year thanks to the coaching staff and the archers' dedication.

A number of the spotters and volunteers travel a great distance and give up their holidays to support us. Our thanks to them and the coaching staff for making the week so special.

Gerry Jones, Mark Brewin, and John Taylor share their enthusiasm for getting away from snowbound Britain

It's a nicer icer in Italy!

A GROUP OF ST DUNSTANERS returned to the wonderful village and ski resort of Canazei in the Italian Dolomites for another round of skiing during 16-23 January writes **Gerry Jones**. We arrived at 16:00 on Saturday and by 19:00 we had all been fitted with boots and skis, received our lift passes, assigned a guide for the week, unpacked, been given our bright yellow ski jackets, had one or two drinks and sat down to our evening meal. It would have been a great plan to get an early night ready for our first day's skiing, but no, we had a lot to talk about; we had all got a year older since we last met and there was a lot of catching up to do.

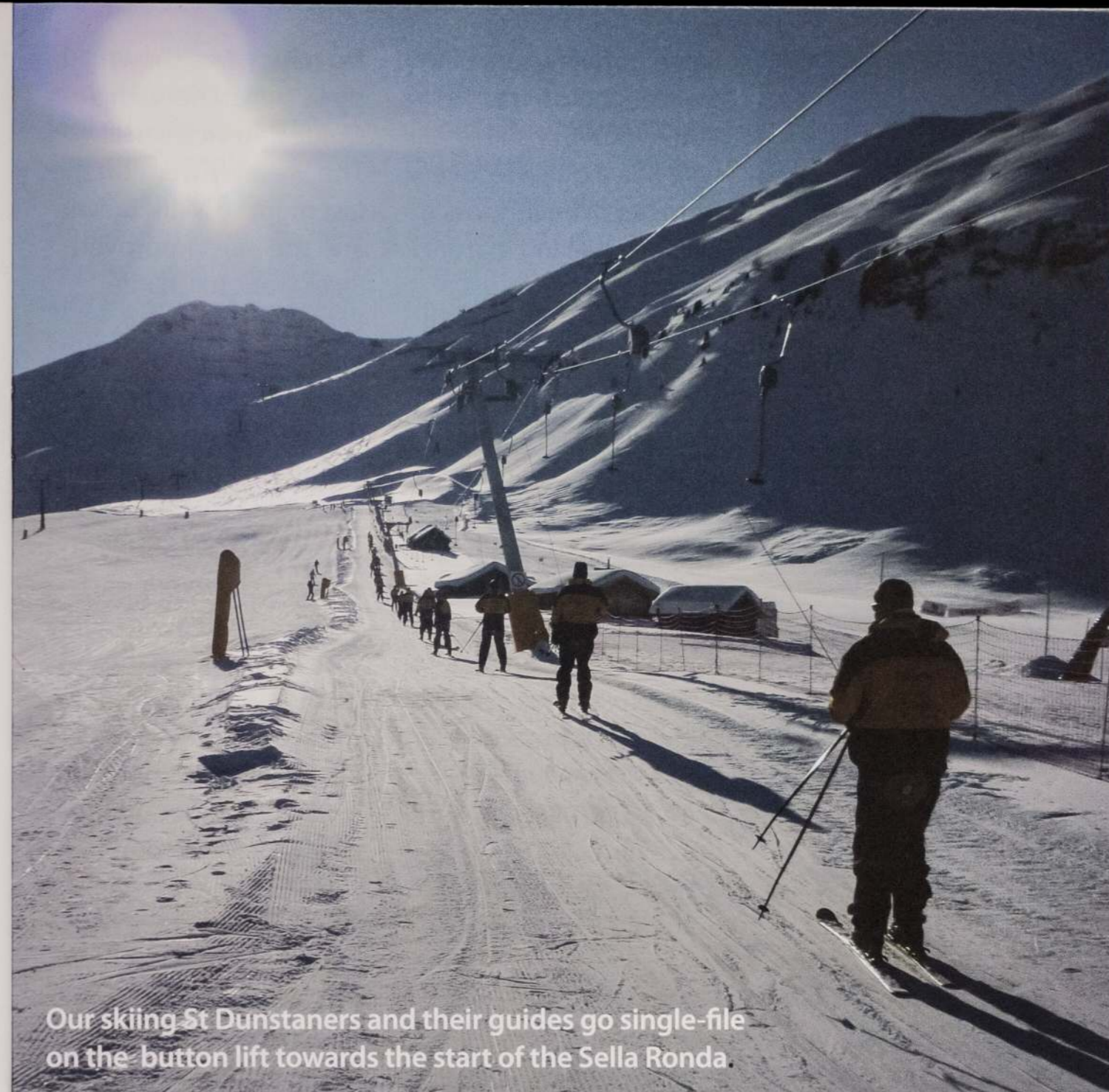
There were several new members to the group: Billy Black, a Scot living in Peterborough who has promised to take English speaking lessons before next year's trip; Brian Eldridge with his wife Margaret were really up for the week's experience, unlike Allan Acutt and Loraine who found their open toed

sandals totally unsuitable for the snowy conditions and better suited to South African barbeques.

The guides, not for the first time on our trips, soon kitted them out and they were marched off to get skis. Billy, guided by Mick Shepley, did exceptionally well. By the end of the week he was skiing on the main slopes of the "Bowl". Brian also did well and mastered the drag lift whilst Margaret did a lot of walking around the listed tourist routes and visited a couple of other villages. Allan and Loraine both

tried their feet at skiing and found the fun they wanted, but had enough by Tuesday. They also spent the time tripping around and about.

The more adventurous amongst the group completed the Sella Ronda, a route of some 25 miles, twice during the week. There was no problem picking the right day to do this as we had a week of glorious sunshine and the best snow conditions that we have probably ever encountered. This high class group consisted of St Dunstaners Steve Sparkes, Mark Brewin, Gary Lomas, Jamie Weller, and Sports and Recreation Manager Louise Timms (who has made great leaps forward in her skiing prowess). The Guides, Ewen Cameron, Eddie Edwards, Arthur



Our skiing St Dunstaners and their guides go single-file on the button lift towards the start of the Sella Ronda.



Photographs copyright Martin Blank

Our assembled blind skiers and the volunteer guides who kept them on track.



St Dunstaner Billy Black quickly found his ski-legs.

Bloomfield, Stewart Graham and Vicki Stewart, who we were all delighted to see back amongst us, escorted this group. We were grateful to Stewart as he filled in at the last moment when Dusty Miller had Service commitments.

I thank Guide Martin Blank on his 22nd trip for taking me on and helping out so much with the organisation of the flights. Thanks also to Peter Zamudio, who

came from his home in Switzerland on this, his 30th trip. We wish his wife Mia a quick recovery from her ill health. Vince Stone, travelling in from Germany, was his usual thoughtful and cheerful self and helped out with Nathan Jones in looking after Allan and Loraine. John Taylor, being told by his guide Tom Paterson to be more aggressive, immediately flattened the first blonde female he could find, (only joking folks). Neil Graham told Geoff Wherry that he wasn't ready for the chair lift on day one. To prove him wrong, Geoff completed the button drag lift 26 times - a distance of six miles or thereabouts! Needless to say they hit the chairlift the next time!

There are too many in the group to mention everyone, but we all had a great time, with much fun and frolicking, plenty of banter and wicked sarcasm. Nominations for the Staveley awards increased in number each night.

No mercy was shown by St Dunstaner to his Guide and vice versa. The Staveley went on the last night to Mark Brewin and the Most Improved Skier went to Charlie Eastwood who was guided throughout the week by new guide Laura Perken-Ball. She also completed the traditional blindfold ski at the end of the week. We hope she enjoyed the experience of skiing with our group after being given the nickname of Laura Longcoat. Our smallest jacket still came down to her knees! For goodness sake Laura, eat your pasta! Charlie received his miniature Cow Bell, the actual trophy being left in the UK by last year's winner Gary Lomas; you can guess whose name is being nominated on the first Staveley list next year! We toasted absent friends: Carl Williams, Maria Pikulski who is suffering with a back injury, John Patterson, and Peter Walker recovering after a major operation. Let us hope that they all can make it next year.

The hotel was top class and Mara and her staff looked after us in such a warm, friendly and professional manner. Annaleise in the Ski Hire was her usual friendly and helpful self and Jean Paul, her son, came to have a few drinks with us on the last evening. The Lift Company once again did us proud with passes at a reduced rate, and Franco, our autobus owner met us at Venice with a nip of grappa which got our Italian experience off to a "warm and glowing" start.

The week is epitomised by St Dunstaner Charlie Daly, who at the age of 75 years, never missed a day's skiing, was up for breakfast by 8:30 am, had his first glühwein by 10am on the slopes and then skied into the afternoon. He only fell once during the whole week and was then found holding forth in the bar until midnight. Conclusion: don't come on this trip if you want a relaxing holiday!

The week is made possible by St Dunstan's, and without it we would

have no Guides. No Guides, no skiing! The Guides are without doubt the best there are, most professional, our cares and worries are removed and nothing is too much trouble. The only rule which is a must for a St Dunstaner is, that once you have your ski boots on you do exactly what your guide says until you take them off again, even if this does mean you buy that extra beer!

Other friends and family who also joined in the merriment of the week: Kelly Daly, Caroline Barefoot, Margaret

Eldridge, Jake Rudham, Andy Antcliff, Tony Savage, Annette Savage, and Kevin Shelermine. As ever, our thanks go to Brian and Babs Druce for their gracious support.

OH MY GOD, the airport is shut! It's carnage on the road and rail networks, the gritters and snow ploughs can't cope with the conditions **writes Mark Brewin.** I'm sweating, really sweating, and worrying, what if? No it'll be fine, it'll all be ok! What's the panic? Well,





Charlie Eastwood was dubbed Most Improved Skier.

it's the countdown to the annual St Dunstan's ski trip and I'll walk a frozen Channel Tunnel if need be to get there!

So after a fair few hours travel the day before and a short kip at Gatwick Travelodge, we started to form up at the RV that was the Easyjet check-in desk. How did I know the group had made it? Easy, we were the ones laughing, joking, taking the mickey out of each other and all donning broad cheesy grins.

After a great first night,

we got stuck in. Gerry Jones welcomed us all and introduced some new faces. He explained the Stavelys and outlined the plan of action. I got talking to a great guy called Billy Black.

So on to Champac, who could break their guide first then? What are those things strapped to my feet called again? Ah yes, skis! Wahoo! I'm back! Even though we'd had a fairly hard first night chatting and catching up, the one thing I immediately noticed was the beaming smiles and

that familiar sound of laughter. It's going to be a very short week again I thought. What fun!

Once we got our ski legs back, we split up into groups, some skiing for the first time, others taking their learning to the next level, whether that is the button bar or the chair lift. We are all constantly learning, developing and pushing the envelope further, challenging ourselves in one way or another. Thankfully, we have the expert tuition and eagle-eye of the guides without whom the trip would be a non-starter. They are a hugely professional bunch who fill you with confidence in their abilities (although I do think most are ever so slightly mad, but they probably need to be to put up with us lot!).

The skiing conditions were absolutely perfect this year, blue sky, sun out, plenty of snow and loads of "Wahoo's!" as we snaked down the mountainsides.

Apparently onlookers can't quite comprehend what's going on and have a look of disbelief on their faces as a blind bloke and his guide overtake them going down the slopes. Some of us did the Sella Ronda this year, once clockwise and once anti-clockwise for good measure. Jamie Weller wimped out on the second go round, as he had an imaginary friend to meet up with and still won't admit that he and his guide got tactically misplaced. The rest of us, me and my guide Arthur, Steve Sparkes with his guide Cam, and Gaz Lomas guided by Eddie, cracked on and completed the 40ks or so. We'd earned that *apres ski* that day.

We soon reached Gala Night, where does that week go to? The staff at the hotel really make an effort with us all. They pretty much know all our names and are very friendly and warm natured. They always put a good bash on for us with great food and

in return we show our gratitude with bagpipes! It really is a good night.

And then it's Friday, our last day skiing for another 12 months but also thankfully those Stavely awards. These are a recap of funny events that have taken place during the day. The winner being the person who cocked up the most. Their prize is a horrible, nasty drink and the privilege to wear a stupid looking hat on the slopes the next day. It's great fun as we all try to stitch each other up, eh Jamie!

There were many achievements this year with people skiing for the first time or now with no sight. Billy, skiing for the first time ever, skied down to the village which is a huge feat in itself. Brian strapped skies to his feet for the first time in 40 years and was mastering Champac by the end of it. Allan not only discovered what a snow plough manoeuvre on skis is, but also discovered what snow

is, as he'd travelled from South Africa to take part. John Taylor challenged the chair lift and won. It's right steep at that section of Champac and he spat it out. Not only can't he see, but he's in his 70s. How cool is that! And Charlie Eastwood, who only wiped out his guide once this year, got over to Belvedere ski slopes and conquered them, gaining himself the Cow Bell for Most Improved Skier.

There's many a story that we can all share about the St Dunstan's Ski Trip week, but all I can suggest is that you give it a go and you'll then understand why we witter on for weeks afterwards to anyone who stands still for half a second.

WHAT A WAY to start the year, writes John Taylor. Heavy snow fall, cars abandoned, schools closed. Panic buying in the shops. One would think that something big was soon to happen. Sure enough, it was!

We St Dunstaners were preparing ourselves for the annual ski trip to the north Italian Alps. Come 16 January, a 30 plus party of St Dunstaners and their guides left Gatwick for the ski resort of Canazei high in the Italian mountains. The conditions could not have been better with blue skies, rich snow covered ski slopes, and a temperature of minus 4.

The weather turned out to be perfect all the week and the conditions on the slopes for skiing were the best ever experienced. As a novice beginner, I could not have asked for anything more. It was good to see new members trying their hand at skiing for the first time.

A warm welcome always awaits us at the hotel and the ski and boot shop as we have been going there for years, so the first day is taken up with greetings, sorting out of rooms and the fitting out of ski boots and skis, this done to relax and have a welcome drink in the bar.

With no sight, and this being my third attempt, the first task was to regain confidence on the slopes and to ascertain how much I had remembered from last year. Tom, my guide, soon worked out what my weaknesses were and what he had to do to improve my overall skills. Thanks to him, they improved a hundredfold by the Thursday. That's when he took me down the Red Run.

Due to the perfect weather conditions, the experienced skiers were able to ski the Sella Ronda twice, clockwise and anti-clockwise. This is a large mountain top route which takes all day to complete, so very well done to them.

The Stavely hat is presented every evening after supper to the one who has made the silliest remark or done the most stupidest thing over the last 24 hours. That person then has to wear the hat for the next day when it gets handed to the next nominee. The hat is a base ball style cap with a

large peak and two horns sticking out of the top, and is also covered with badges of all sorts. One can imagine the looks you get when walking through the streets wearing the hat.

The last day was soon upon us and you wonder where the week has gone. This is also the day when the new guides have to ski down the slopes blindfold to experience what it is like for blind people like myself. They are truly amazed that someone with no sight can accomplish such a feat and it's a thrill they will never forget.

Thanks to Gerry Jones and his team of helpers, to all the ski guides who look after us so admirably. Without them, we could not be there. And to St Dunstan's for all the encouragement given to all the members what ever their pursuit.

So like all good ski parties there was lots of good fun on the slopes and in the bar. So till next year, keep fit and keep well.

DO IT? ASK IT?

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

Windows 7 – Do I Need It, Should I Upgrade?

Few can have escaped the news that Microsoft has released a new version of Windows – Windows 7 – and if you have read the many positive reviews about it then your expectations may be high. But think before you jump! If what you're using now does what you want then why change? Would you change your washing machine just because there is a new spin cycle on a newer one, or change your car because it doesn't have cup-holders?

It's true Windows 7 does have many positive features. It is restyled and there are advantages over Windows Vista if you are purchasing a new system. But there are also disadvantages, particularly if you are just thinking of upgrading the operating system on your PC.

Windows 7 offers a re-styled user interface, it promises greater security, easier sharing of files and fewer errors, but many of the changes are visual.

For St Dunstaners using computers, a chief disadvantage of Windows 7 is the fact that Outlook Express and Windows Mail no longer exist. If you want e-mail, you have to download a

copy of a new program called Windows Live Mail from the internet, and then learn a new set of commands in order to control it. Other problems with Windows 7 are that some programs and pieces of equipment will not work with it, and some PCs just won't be powerful enough. Many manufacturers will provide upgrades to their products to make them compatible, but usually at a cost. For example, the majority of the copies of Supernova that we have issued will not work with Windows 7 – there is an upgrade available but it costs £175!

What are we doing at St Dunstan's Ovingdean and Sheffield training centres? We have no immediate plans to change over to Windows 7. This is not because we don't think it is any good, but because we know that what we already have is easily good enough. Our current training machines, running other versions of Windows, do everything we need them to for now, and your computer will probably do the same.

So, in summary, our current advice is: however good Windows 7 is, there is no compelling reason to rush out and buy it.

Janis Sharp and IT Team

ASK ROD

Your queries answered
by the ROVI on Duty

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

Touching the subject of Braille

Braille can be described as a system of raised dots which can be read with your fingers. It is a code based on six dots arranged in two columns of three. The space that the six dots occupy looks similar to a domino and is known as a Braille cell. By taking out some of these dots, Variations on which of the six dots are present are created and this is the way that Braille is able to represent all the letters of the alphabet and punctuation. In addition to this, Grade 2 Braille encompasses shortforms of common words and frequently used groups of letters (such as common endings of words, for example, ing).

Braille can be used for pleasure reading, reading letters and also around the home to label items such as packets of food, medicines, CD's, build up a personal address and phone book and to play cards or board games (RNIB sell playing cards and games embossed with Braille). Electronic Braille displays can also enable a Braille reader to access information on a computer. Information from the computer can also be read aloud to you but of course

Braille has an extra advantage for those with a significant hearing loss or people who are Deafblind who would struggle with talking books or speech software on a computer.

Many people believe that Braille is dying out or is a skill that is rarely needed now. I think it is fair to say that the demand for learning Braille has reduced over recent years and this is likely due to the increasing use of computers and scanners for accessing print. However, from time to time St Dunstan's ROVIs are still asked to teach Braille and if a need is demonstrated for it, this is something we might do at either of St Dunstan's Ovingdean or Sheffield centres.

Be under no illusion; learning to read or write Braille is a skill which usually takes quite a while to acquire. It requires much dedication and like most things, the more frequent tuition and practise you can get, the faster you will tend to learn. For this reason, it is often best to first seek out local sources for learning Braille. Sometimes your local voluntary society for Visually Impaired People will run a teaching group where a handful of people will learn Braille together.

This can be a really nice, supportive way to learn with regular lessons and is also a good opportunity to get out and about and socialise at the same time. RNIB also offer a range of Braille training courses.

Aptitude for differentiating one dot from the next is an ability which will vary from person to person. Large hands would not preclude a person but sensitive hands or skin really is advantageous to help feel the subtlety in Braille. Therefore, the very first step for an interested party should be to get your hands on some Braille (ideally with a teacher) for some basic tactile investigation of the Braille system.

Some people only want to be able to read Braille and some want to learn to write in Braille too. There are various ways of writing the most common being the Perkins Braille which is a little like a heavy typewriter.

If you are interested but unfamiliar with Braille, we have Braille alphabet cards available to take away in the Rehabilitation and Training departments at St Dunstan's. These offer a taste of the size and height of standard Braille dots. If you are on line, you can find out more at www.rnib.org.uk/braille or by discussing it with our ROVI on Duty on 01273 391447.

UNUSED EQUIPMENT

Do you have any equipment that was issued to you by St Dunstan's ROVIs that you no longer use? If so, contact ROD on 01273 391447. Many items can be reissued to another St Dunstaner if you no longer use them.

BEER OF THE MONTH

by Colin Williamson

Daleside Blonde

A very refreshing ale from Harrogate that has been fermented warm then lagered (cold stored) to produce a mellowness not too dissimilar to premium lagers. It pours a lovely golden colour with a soft fluffy white head. Quite a low ABV for a top fermented beer, only 4.3, which makes it a great session beer. Quite hoppy with hints of sherbet and citrus. The flavour is dry and fruity with a soft bitterness. It won the Silver Yorkshire Champion Beer Award from CAMRA in 2003. Available in the Yorkshire area and most major supermarkets.

Ten Answers

Answers to quiz on page 12.

- 1) Princess Anne;
- 2) John Lennon;
- 3) The Aintree Grand National;
- 4) Zsa Zsa Gabor;
- 5) On their thumb;
- 6) The Round Table;
- 7) Author Arthur Miller and film star Marilyn Monroe;
- 8) Experience;
- 9) Rita Hayworth;
- and finally, 10) Ten, Henry had six, Catherine four.

Welcome to St Dunstan's

John Bennett of Alconbury, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

Beatrice Brooks of Urmston, Manchester served in the Royal Air Force from 1950 to 1954.

Selwyn Burden of Rugeley, Staffordshire served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1956 to 1963 and then in the Royal Air Force from 1966 to 1984.

John Cantwell of Bodicote, Banbury, Oxfordshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1970 to 1979.

Albert Cheetham of Alvaston, Derby, Derbyshire served in the General Service Corps and Royal Engineers between 1943 and 1947.

Sidney Clark of Gosport, Hampshire served as Lieutenant Commander in the Royal Navy from 1938 to 1971.

Raymond Clough of Morecambe, Lancashire served in the Royal Air Force from 1946 to 1949.

Richard Commins of Flint, Clwyd served in the General Service Corps and Pioneer Corps between 1943 and 1946.

Arthur Cowan of Blundell Sands, Liverpool served in the Pioneer Corps from 1940 to 1945.

William Coysh of Southwick, Brighton served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Gwendoline Dangerfield of Wickford, Essex served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1942 to 1945.

Queenie Davies of Portslade, Brighton served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1943 to 1945.

Derek Ellis of Penmaenmawr, Gwynedd served in the King's Royal Rifle Corps from 1939 to 1946.

Olive Farmer of Bishops Cleeve, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1944 to 1949.

Laurence Firth of Kerry, Newtown, Powys served in the General Service Corps and Royal Army Medical Corps between 1943 to 1947.

Fourness Furnival of Ruthin, Clwyd served as Senior Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force from 1954 to 1956.

Albert Giddings of Whittlesey, Peterborough served in the General Service Corps and Royal Army Ordnance Corps between 1946 and 1949.

Kenneth Howells of Port Talbot, West Glamorgan served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1949 to 1950.

William Hughes of Pontarddulais, Swansea served in the South Wales Borderers and Royal Army Ordnance Corps between 1953 and 1958.

Kenneth Lindup of Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands served in the Coldstream Guards from 1938 to 1946.

Joyce Lucas of Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands served in St John Ambulance from 1939 to 1946.

Terence McDermott of Thornton Cleveleys, Lancashire served in the Royal Navy from 1946 to 1948.

Carl Mackenzie of Plymouth, Dorset served in the Royal Army Medical Corps in 1982.

Michael Man of Downpatrick, County Down served in the Royal Air Force from 1965 to 1979.

Margaret Morrison of Nairn, Morayshire served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1942 to 1946.

Alwyn Morton of Middlesbrough, Cleveland served in the Sherwood Foresters (Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment) from 1940 to 1946.

Albert Nelson of Southgate, Crawley, West Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1950 to 1953.

Catherine Nunn of Dersingham, King's Lynn, Norfolk served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1941 to 1944.

Walter Pritchard of Prescot, Merseyside served in the Royal Signals from 1939 to 1946.

Iris Ray of Bournemouth, Dorset served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1942 to 1945.

Dennis Sarginson of Scunthorpe, South Humberside served in the Army Air Corps from 1979 to 1990.

Alan Saunders of Crawley, West Sussex served in the Royal Marines from 1940 to 1945.

Arthur Skinner of North Kessock, Inverness, Inverness-shire served in the Royal Navy from 1939 to 1946.

John Stanier of Thornton-Cleveleys, Lancashire served in the Royal Engineers from 1947 to 1949.

Kenneth Stinchcombe of Stonehouse, Gloucestershire served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1951 to 1953.

Thomas Tandy of Ewell, Epsom, Surrey served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1945.

Geoffrey Treadgold of Farndon, Newark, Nottinghamshire served in the Royal Navy from 1941 to 1946.

Ronald Ward of Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1948 to 1950.

John Williams of Merthyr Tydfil, Mid Glamorgan served in the Royal Navy from 1947 to 1949.

Barbara Wood of Cardiff served as Corporal in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

Family News

BIRTHS

Congratulations on the birth of:

Sophie Ella Brownlee on 11 February. She is the great-granddaughter of Cliff and Phyllis Fisher of Ower, near Romsey, Hampshire.

DIAMOND ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to:

William and Maureen Parry of Portmadog, Gwynedd on 11 February.

Joseph and Doris Wilshaw of Newcastle, Staffordshire on 18 February.

Kenneth and Margaret Passman of Seamer, Stokesley, North Yorkshire on 20 February.

George and Mary Gregson of Bamber Bridge, Preston, Lancashire on 25 February.

DEATHS

We regret to announce the passing of:

Margaret Godson of Hayle, Cornwall on 16 December. She was the carer of late St Dunstaner William Oates.

Edna Abbott on 17 January. She was the wife of Royal Navy St Dunstaner Edwin Abbott of Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire.

Queenie Scott on 21 January. She was the wife of St Dunstaner Fred Scott of Lancing, West Sussex.

Eileen Copas of Peacehaven, East Sussex on 28 January. She was the widow of Joseph Copas.

George Clark on 29 January. He was the husband of WAAF St Dunstaner Olwen Clark of Neath, West Glamorgan.

Winnifred Brown on 2 February. She was the wife of St Dunstaner John Brown of Purley, Surrey.

Betty Tales on 3 February. She was the wife of St Dunstaner Donald Tales of Sheffield, South Yorkshire.

Doreen Brooks of Gunnedah, New South Wales, Australia on 13 February. She was the widow of Francis Brooks.

Marjorie Tucker of Roffey, Horsham, West Sussex on 15 February. She was the widow of Arthur Tucker.

Rosalie Jackson on 17 February. She was the eldest daughter of Julia Richards of Bournemouth, Dorset and the late Thomas Richards.

Mavis Coates of Sherborne, Dorset on 23 February. She was the widow of Royal Navy St Dunstaner Norman Coates.

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.

Bill Chown

Royal Army Service Corps

William Henry Chown of Exeter, Devon died on 8 June, aged 93. He joined the Royal Army Service Corps in 1940 and served in France, Italy, and Egypt. Demobbed in 1946, he worked in the building trade. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

Albert Stanbridge

Australian Army

George Albert Stanbridge of Davistown, New South Wales, Australia died on 23 June, aged 92. He served as Lance Corporal in 2/19 General Transport Company from 1940 to 1945. Our sympathy goes to his widow Sheila and all members of the family.

William Oates

Pioneer Corps

William Richard Oates of Hayle, Cornwall died on 2 October, aged 89. He joined the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry in 1940 then transferred to the Pioneer Corps in 1941. Having served as Corporal, he was demobbed in 1946. In civilian life, he worked for the County Council in Cornwall.

Denis Noone

Royal Air Force

Denis Patrick Noone of Birch Green, Skelmersdale died on 17 December, aged 87. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1943 and served as a flight engineer. Discharged in 1944, he worked for a firm producing textile machinery. Our sympathy goes to his widow Joan and all members of the family.

John Firth

Royal Tank Regiment

Major John Liddell Firth of Castle Douglas, Dumfries & Galloway died on 21 December, aged 79. He joined the Royal Artillery for National Service in 1949. In 1951, he remained in the Army as an Officer Cadet at Sandhurst and was subsequently commissioned into the Royal Tank Regiment. Having served in Germany, Malaya and the UK, he retired in 1985 and set up a painting and decorating business. Our sympathy goes to his widow Joy and all the family.

John Trenchard

Small Vessels Pool

John Cluer Trenchard of Swanpool, Falmouth, Cornwall died on 30 December, aged 90. He served in

the Royal Air Force as an Aircraftman II during 1939. He later joined the Admiralty's Small Vessels Pool, and became part of the network of volunteer sailing crews being used to deliver boats around the UK and overseas under the auspices of the Merchant Navy. In civilian life, he was a solicitor and also continued with sailing. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

John Corney
Royal Air Force

John Douglas Corney of Abergele, Conwy died on 15 January, aged 90. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1940 and served in South Africa, Tobruk, Lebanon and Cyprus. Discharged in 1946, he worked for Vickers Armstrong and later moved to Canada. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

Lt Col Noel Cowley, OBE
Royal Hussars (Prince of Wales's Own),
Royal Armoured Corps

Lieutenant Colonel James Noel Cowley, OBE of St Minver, Wadebridge, Cornwall died on 17 January, aged 97. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1980. He worked as a salesman before joining the Royal Army Service Corps in 1932. After six years serving around the UK as a driver and mechanic, he was released to the Reserve as Acting Sergeant. However, with the prospect of war, he was recalled in 1939 and posted overseas as part of the British Expeditionary Force. Inevitably, he returned to the UK in May 1940 and

after a spell as Quartermaster was posted to the RAC OCTU at Sandhurst. In turn, he was commissioned into 24 Lancers in 1941. Having been promoted to Major, he suffered a head injury during the Normandy Landings and was evacuated to the UK. Resuming duty as a Captain, he transferred to 9 Lancers and was posted to HQ Eastern Command. He regained the rank of Major before transferring to the 10 Hussars and joining the British Army of the Rhine. His duties moved towards a diplomatic vein, and in 1955 he was posted to Budapest, Hungary where he combined the role of Naval and Military Attaché. Subsequently, he was in the city when the Hungarian Revolution erupted the following year. Despite the violence on the streets, he distinguished himself by maintaining reconnaissance and sent a series of eye-witness reports back to the UK. His work under hazardous conditions was recognised in 1957, when he was awarded the OBE. He served further as a Military Attaché in Tel Aviv and returned to the UK a few months before his retirement in 1961. In civilian life, he worked for George Wigg, the Paymaster-General who was a close confidant of Harold Wilson and instrumental in exposing disgraced MP John Profumo. Lt Col Cowley was feted further for his actions in Hungary in 1987. He was given the Freedom Fighters of Hungary Award but declined an invitation to Berlin for the presentation. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

Arthur Chapman
Royal Air Force

Arthur Frederick Chapman of South Woodlands, Brighton died on 18 January, aged 76. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1952 and served around the UK as Leading Aircraftman. Discharged in 1954, he worked in engineering, in retail, for the local authority, and as a Care Assistant for St Dunstan's at Pearson House. His interests included bowls, football, and darts. Our sympathy goes to his son George, daughter Jeanette, and all members of the family.

John Firth
Royal Air Force

John Firth of Brighouse, West Yorkshire died on 18 January, aged 89. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1941 and served in the UK, Egypt, Palestine, Malta, Bahrain, and Tripoli. Demobbed in 1946, he worked in construction, later starting his own business. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Charles Paxton
Royal Navy

Charles Frederick Paxton of Holbrooks, Coventry, West Midlands died on 19 January, aged 85. He joined the Royal Navy in 1942 and became a crewman on Landing Craft. Demobbed in 1946, he later ran a garage selling second-hand cars. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Norman Galletly
Royal Air Force

Norman Arthur Galletly of Plumpton, Lewes, East Sussex died on 20 January, aged 86. He joined the Royal Air Force

in 1942 and served on flying boats and air sea rescue. Demobbed in 1946, he worked in the laundry business. Our sympathy goes to all of the family.

Bill Crabb
Manchester Regiment

William Palmer Crabb of Leigh-on-Sea, Essex died on 21 January, aged 90. He joined the Middlesex Regiment in 1940 as a machine gunner. Transferring to the Manchester Regiment, he served in India and Burma and was involved in the Battle of Kohima. Demobbed in 1946, he resumed work in the building trade. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Bill Hughes
Royal Artillery

William Stanley Hughes of Old Colwyn, Colwyn Bay, Clwyd died on 21 January, aged 89. He joined the Royal Artillery (TA) in 1937 and was embodied in 1939, serving with the British Expeditionary Force. After serving in India, Ceylon and Burma, he was discharged in 1946. He then worked in central heating. Our sympathy goes to his widow Muriel and all the family.

Ted Pugh
Royal Army Service Corps

Albert Edward Pugh of Moredon, Swindon, Wiltshire died on 21 January, aged 88. He joined The Dorset Regiment in 1940, and in turn transferred to the Tank Regiment, South Staffordshire Regiment, and the Royal Artillery before discharge in 1946. He re-enlisted with

the Royal Army Service Corps in 1949 and was discharged as Sergeant in 1966. He later worked for the Post Office. Our sympathy goes to his widow Gweneth and all the family.

Doris Cutler

Women's Royal Army Corps

Doris Ruth Cutler of Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire died on 22 January, aged 79. She joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1948 and served as a PA. When the ATS disbanded in 1949, she continued with the Women's Royal Army Corps but was discharged in 1950. The following year, she enlisted in the WRAC(TA) and rejoined the regulars in 1954. After serving as Warrant Officer in the UK and Germany, she was released to the reserve in 1975. She later worked for the local council. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Lawrence Howell

Royal Navy

Lawrence Wilcox Howell of Ovingdean, Brighton died on 22 January, aged 87. He joined the Royal Navy in 1940 and served in South Africa and on Atlantic Convoys. Demobbed in 1946, he set up his own roofing company. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Kenneth Malone

Royal Engineers

Kenneth Francis Malone of Tamworth, Staffordshire died on 22 January, aged 84. He joined the General Service Corps in 1943 and soon transferred to

the Royal Engineers. Having served in Europe and the Far East, he was discharged in 1947 and resumed his engineering apprenticeship. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Della Linford

Women's Auxiliary Air Force

Della Linford nee Wingell of Middleton Cheney, Oxford, Oxfordshire died on 25 January, aged 94. She joined the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in 1939 and served at RAF Finningley. Demobbed in 1941 after she married, she raised a family and later worked for the MOD. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Roy Hayter

Royal Navy

Roy Clive Hayter of Troon, Ayrshire died on 26 January, aged 67. He joined the Royal Navy in 1952 and trained as an Air Artificer. He was involved with the introduction of Phantom F4Ks and the Sea Harrier project management team. Leaving the Service in 1986, he worked in aviation and for the Department of Transport. Active in disability affairs, he advised Strathclyde Police and the Scottish Parliament on disability issues for several years. Our sympathy goes to his widow Margaret and all the family.

Lt Ronald Hornsby

Leicestershire Regiment

Lieutenant Ronald Ernest Hornsby of Uckfield, East Sussex died on 27 January, aged 90. He joined the North Staffordshire Regiment in 1940 and was

sent to OCTU in Scotland. Commissioned into the Leicestershire Regiment in 1941, he deployed to North Africa but suffered shrapnel wounds to his head. Discharged with the honorary rank of Lieutenant, he worked as an artist and later formed an advertising company. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

William Hughes

Royal Artillery

William Christopher Hughes of Oakington, Cambridge died on 30 January, aged 72. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1961 and served as Gunner in Germany and the UK. Discharged in 1970, he worked for the Land Settlement Association and went on to firms making industrial and farm equipment. Our sympathy goes to his widow Beryl and all the family.

Frank Pitt

Royal Army Service Corps

Francis John Pitt of Poulton, Cirencester, Gloucestershire died on 30 January, aged 86. He joined the Royal Army Service Corps in 1942 and served in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. Demobbed in 1947, he worked as a driver, later turning his hand to roofing. Our sympathy goes to his widow Joyce and all the family.

Leonard Fulker

Royal Army Service Corps

Leonard James Fulker of Borehamwood, Hertfordshire died on 31 January, aged 89. He joined the South Lancashire

Regiment in 1940, then transferred to the Royal Army Service Corps in 1942. Having served in France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany he was discharged in 1946. In civilian life, he worked as a driver. Our sympathy goes to his widow Lily and all the family.

Dennis Martin

Royal Navy

Dennis Everie Martin of Liskeard, Cornwall died on 31 January, aged 89. He joined the Royal Navy in 1940 and served in the Middle East and supporting Atlantic convoys. Invalided out in 1935, he worked as an exhibition manager. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Ted Storey

Royal Navy

Edmund Hopper Storey of Carrville, Durham, County Durham died on 2 February, aged 86. He joined the Royal Navy in 1941 and served as a gunner on corvettes and minesweepers. Discharged in 1946, he ran his own confectionary-tobacconist-newsagent shop in Durham. Our sympathy goes to his widow Hilda and all the family.

Kenneth Downton

Royal Navy

Kenneth Charles Downton of Luton, Bedfordshire died on 3 February, aged 86. He joined the Royal Navy in 1942. Having served in the UK and India, he was demobbed in 1946. He then qualified as a surveyor and worked for the county council in London until retiring. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

Tug Wilson**Royal Navy**

Cecil Wilson of Southwell, Nottinghamshire died on 4 February, aged 90. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1958. He worked in agriculture as a general labourer before joining the Royal Navy as a 17-year-old in 1936. Serving around the UK and overseas, particularly a spell in Malta, he boxed for his unit and also trained in submarine detection. In due course, the outbreak of war had him sailing for the Far East. He was on a supply ship, the *Fu Woo*, part of a flotilla that came under sustained attack on Friday 13 February 1942. The ship was sunk and the survivors spent three-days in the water before being picked up by a Japanese vessel. Taken to Banka Island, he was initially made to clear logs from the local airstrip. His next few years were spent on forced labour as a prisoner in Palembang Camp, Sumatra during which time he endured beriberi and privation that would eventually cause his sight loss. Liberated in 1945, he returned to the UK and set up his own window cleaning business until his sight deteriorated. After becoming a St Dunstaner, he trained for industry and entered the field of light engineering with firms such as Hawker Sidley and Armstrong Patents. He remained a keen gardener through the years, growing flowers and vegetables, and also made his own beer. Other interests included woodwork and toy making. Our sympathy goes to his widow Dorothy and all the family.

Penny Markham**Women's Auxiliary Air Force**

Elsie Markham nee Murden of Broadstairs, Kent died on 8 February, aged 92. She joined the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in 1942, serving around the UK. Demobbed in 1946, she travelled extensively with her husband, particularly the Middle East, recording those days in several self-published books such as *My Life Has Been A Fairytale*, *Forget Me Never*, and *My Dream Came True*. She also wrote a slim volume entitled *Children's Stories*.

John Harding**Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve**

John Bryan Harding of Marlow, Buckinghamshire died on 10 February, aged 88. He joined the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve in 1940 and trained in Cambridge and Canada. Commissioned in 1943, he flew Harvards and Spitfires. Discharged as Flight Lieutenant in 1946, he worked in Air Traffic Control at Heathrow, later moving to the local authority in Buckinghamshire and then the National Trust. Our sympathy goes to his widow Betty and all the family.

Leslie Bratley**Royal Engineers**

Leslie Walter Bratley of Kettering, Northamptonshire died on 11 February, aged 90. He Joined the Royal Engineers in 1940 and served in North Africa, Italy, France, Holland, Belgium, and Germany. Demobbed in 1946, he set up a building business specialising in plumbing and heating. He enjoyed DIY

and bricklaying. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

Alan Stretton**Royal Navy**

Alan Albert Stretton of Wigston, Leicestershire died on 12 February, aged 84. He joined the Royal Navy in 1943 and served on HMS *Bugloss* and HMS *Rifleman*. Discharged in 1946, he worked in a knitwear factory and as a capstan lathe operator in an aircraft factory after losing his sight. Our sympathy goes to his widow Monica and all members of the family.

Oskar Nowak**Polski II Korpus**

Oskar Alfred Nowak of Hoyland, Barnsley, South Yorkshire died on 14 February, aged 82. He joined an infantry battalion, 65 Pomorski Baeon, Piechoty, part of Polski II Korpus (2 Polish Corps), in 1945. Discharged in 1947, he worked in steelworks and then for Tarmac on road construction and building sites. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

Norman Pearce**Royal Navy**

Norman William Pearce of West Mersea, Essex died on 14 February, aged 92. He joined the Royal Army Service Corps (TA) in 1939 and was then called up for the Royal Navy in 1940. After training at HMS *Drake*, he sailed for Hong Kong but was sunk by enemy action in the South Atlantic. Badly injured, he was invalided out of the Service in 1941. In

civilian life, he worked for the DHSS. Our sympathy goes to his widow Barbara and all the family.

Charles Gilmore**Royal Air Force**

Charles Henry Hartley Gilmore of Exeter, Devon died on 15 February, aged 89. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1940 and trained as a radio operator. Invalided out in 1942, he worked for Norwich Union Insurance Company before joining the Civil Service.

Tess Rowlands**Women's Royal Army Corps**

Theresa May Rowlands nee Newton of Bebington, Wirral, Merseyside died during February, aged 65. She joined the Women's Royal Army Corps in 1965 and trained as a Mess Caterer. After serving in Salisbury, she left on compassionate grounds in 1966. She cared for her mother, raised a family, and held various jobs. She was a guide dog owner and enjoyed decorating, reading, embroidery, knitting and gardening. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

St Dunstaner Legacy Gifts

We are grateful to the following St Dunstaners, who left bequests to the charity in their Wills:

"Allen" Tom Allenby Vickers

9 November 2009

James Harold Lowman

28 September 2009

Dance Club Forties night casts undefinable magic!



THE LATEST GATHERING of St Dunstan's Dance Club finished their week with a gala Forties Night in the lounge at St Dunstan's Ovingdean on 12 February. Nearly 50 people put five days of lessons and practise into action against the music of organist Phil Brown. Not everyone was sure how to interpret the Forties theme, but Ron Price hit the mark sporting a period GI uniform. Behind the keyboards, Phil Brown's RAF shirt maintained a timeless style, while St Dunstaners David Schofield and Arthur Turner had both gone for the spiv look with premium nylons on hand.

by Simon Rogers

In fact, Arthur had a nice line in wristwatches tucked into his waistcoat.

There was also room for experimentation as some hardy dancers tried a Sally Ann Cha-Cha to the beat of *Sex Bomb* by Tom Jones. They took

to the floor with gusto. Many other favourites trailed across the evening such as the *Emmerdale Waltz*, several mambos, a rumba, and a tango.

The evening closed with a dance that allegedly has originated in the days of the Blitz, conceived by band leader Al Tabor and a Canadian officer, namely the *Hokey Cokey*.

The Dance Club will put their right foot in again come 21-27 November.