

June 2010

# St Dunstan's Review



Forces Sweetheart provides  
musical escape for Ex-POWs

# From The Chairman

Your message from Major General Andrew Keeling, CB, CBE, RM



Well, that was quite a month! Who would have thought this time last month that we'd now have a new Con-Lib Coalition Government, or that the few days immediately after the election would have played out as they did? Not me, and that's for sure. This certainly is not the appropriate publication for political views or arguments, but let's just hope that the new rash of what seems to me like good old-fashioned Common Dog, decency and a strong desire to do what's best for the country rather than

any particular political party, wins the day and lasts the course.

I've had a couple of trips to St Dunstan's Ovingdean recently. It's always an uplifting experience to see the beating heart of our organisation and to be reminded of the wonderful work that happens in Brighton and in Sheffield, and of the dramatically positive effect it all has on St Dunstaners. The Ex-POW Reunion was well attended as usual and was an amusing and humbling evening. The Group welcomed their

new President, General Sir Peter de la Billière, who gave a moving talk about the courage and example of the membership. Lady Bridget de la Billière was there too, as was Lady Pru Gingell – no stranger to Ovingdean or to this remarkable gang of old warriors – and both were warmly welcomed.

I also had the pleasure of attending when Admiral Sir Jonathon Band (one of our new Vice Patrons) and his wife, Lady Sarah, visited Ovingdean for the first time. They much enjoyed it and will, I know, be staunch supporters.

Meanwhile, I have started my personal campaign to join the St Dunstan's

sponsored bike ride from Ypres to Paris over four days in early September. I have to confess to being a little saddle sore at this early stage of my conditioning, but I am hoping that will all fade away as I accumulate more training miles on my trusty steed. If the event raises some awareness about the need for us to raise money to help pay for our new Centre at Craig-y-Don, Llandudno, and some money too, the aches and pains - to say nothing of my temporarily rather bow-legged gait! – will all have been worthwhile.

## St Dunstan's Review

June 2010

No 1,002

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Cover Story: St Dunstaner Bob Dixon with songstress KAS during the Ex-POW Weekend. Full report on page 24 And don't forget it's Armed Forces Day on 26 June.



Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

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# St Dunstan's Calendar

## JUNE

Archery (II)	Until 6
Writers Forum (V)	15
Bisley Fundraising Shooting Event	9
50-Year-Badge	
Holders Reunion	17-20
Golf Club (III)	19-20
Ladies Week	20-26
Blind Heroes Week	21-26
Brighton Street Collection	24
Armed Forces Day	26
St Dunstan's Seaside Saunter	26
St Dunstan's Family Fun Day	26

## JULY

Writers Forum Weekend	1-3
British 10k	11
History Week (I)	18-24
Golf Club (IV)	25-26
Royal Marines Band Concert	28
HMS Sultan	30-7 August

## AUGUST

HMS Sultan	Until 7
Race Week	1-7
Mazda London Triathlon	7-8
VJ Day 65th Anniversary	15
Fishing Club	15-20

Writers Forum (VI)	17
Golf Club (V)	21-22
Activity Week	22-28
Archery (III)	28-5 September

## SEPTEMBER

Archery (III)	Until 5
Ypres to Paris Cycle Ride	8-12
Dartmoor Yomp	10-12
History Week (II)	12-18
Golf Club (VI)	18-19
RMA Lympstone	18-19
Freedom Trail Trek	18-26
BUPA Great North Run	19
Writers Forum (VII)	21
Physiotherapists Weekend	24-27

## OCTOBER

RM Commando Challenge	9-10
Widows Week (II)	10-16
In Touch with Art	13-14
World Sight Day	14
Golf Club (VII)	16-17
Fishing Club	17-22
Writers Forum (VIII)	19
Computer Club (II)	20-21
Trafalgar Day	21
Amateur Radio (II)	22-30

# Noticeboard

Dates for your diary and useful information

## ST DUNSTAN'S BLIND HEROES WEEK

In the lead up to Armed Forces Day, St Dunstan's will again hold Blind Heroes Week from 21-26 June, to honour those who have served and lost their sight in the service of their country.

We have a series of street collections taking place in Sussex and are looking for volunteers to give up just two hours of their time to help support Blind Heroes Week. If you or your family or friends would like to help, we'd love to hear from you.

Collections are taking place at:

Tuesday 22 June	Worthing
Wednesday 23 June	Haywards Heath
Thursday 24 June	Brighton & Hove
Friday 25th June	Lewes & Eastbourne

We will supply everything you need, all we ask you to bring is a smile and enthusiasm! If you are interested in helping in any of these locations, please telephone the Fundraising Team on 01273 391406.



## DO YOU LIKE TO BE BESIDE THE SEASIDE?

.....then why not join us on for an 8-mile "Seaside Saunter" along Brighton's Seafront to raise money for St Dunstan's! On Saturday 26 June, we are hosting a Family Fun Day in the grounds of St Dunstan's Ovingdean.

The fun starts at 11am with the Seaside Saunter, a jolly walk, and everyone is welcome to join us for a day of free activities for the whole family.

To register for the Seaside Saunter, telephone 01273 391406, e-mail [fundraising@st-dunstans.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@st-dunstans.org.uk), or go to [www.st-dunstans.org.uk/seaside](http://www.st-dunstans.org.uk/seaside). This is a leisurely walk open to people of all abilities.

To join the Family Fun Day, just come along to St Dunstan's Ovingdean from 12noon, there will be a host of activities for the whole family at this fete. The grounds will be alive with exciting activities, bands, stalls, raffles and refreshments. All are welcome, so why not head to Brighton and enjoy all the fun. Don't forget to bring your friends and family.

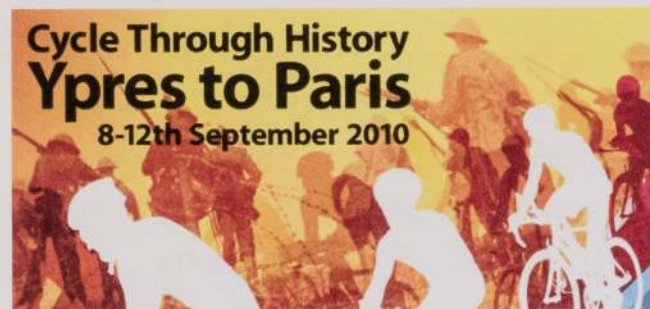
If you would like to help out on the day or if you have any unwanted quality goods or items we can use on our stalls please contact Melinda Dixon. She can be contacted on 01273 391455 or via e-mail [melinda.dixon@st-dunstans.org.uk](mailto:melinda.dixon@st-dunstans.org.uk).

## **BAND FALL IN FOR NOVEMBER DANCE**

The next Dance Week runs 21-27 November at St Dunstan's Ovingdean. The band playing for the Gala Night on 26 November has been confirmed as the Band of The Prince of Wales's Division, with Director of Music Captain Sean Riley. If you wish to attend the St Dunstan's Dance Week it is advisable to book as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. Contact Jackie Castle on 01273 301422. Dance Club organiser David Schofield can be contacted on 0115 932 3517.

## **CALLING ALL CHINDITS**

St Dunstaner Ben Gascoigne would like to hear from anyone who served in the Chindits, particularly the 1944 Operation. If you were a Chindit, please telephone Barbara Sweeney at St Dunstan's on 020 7616 7922.



## **GET ON YOUR BIKE FOR ST DUNSTAN'S**

St Dunstan's has joined forces with Action Challenge to create an exclusive Cycle Through History tour, for 8-12 September. This inspiring trip takes in 345km of Belgian and French countryside, stopping at the historic Menin Gate Memorial and other First World War landmarks along the way. Riders will cycle through the beautiful Somme Valley and on to Paris.

Participants will need to raise a minimum of £1,000 in sponsorship which includes a registration fee of £100. For more details, visit [www.st-dunstans.org.uk/get\\_involved/bike\\_rides/ypres\\_to\\_paris\\_8th.html](http://www.st-dunstans.org.uk/get_involved/bike_rides/ypres_to_paris_8th.html).

## **FOUNDER'S DAY 2011**

St Dunstan's Founder's Day 2011 will be held at St Dunstan's Sheffield on Friday 25 March next year. The Founder's Day Awards will be presented in the Palmer Room. Full details of categories and nomination procedures were published in the May issue of St Dunstan's Review. Nomination forms can be obtained from the President's Office at St Dunstan's, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD.

## **NATIONAL EYE HEALTH WEEK**

The UK eyecare sector is joining forces with charities and healthcare professionals to launch National Eye Health Week 2010 which runs from 14-20 June. Under the banner "Vision Matters", the campaign aims to communicate the importance of eye health and the need for regular sight tests to people from every walk of life.

Organisations across the UK are staging a whole range of activities to support the campaign. For healthy eyes, eat well, don't smoke, and wear eye protection in bright sunlight, they advise. Details of events in your area can be found on their website [www.visionmatters.org.uk](http://www.visionmatters.org.uk).

## **ESCAPE WITH MICK AND MARTYN ON MOUNTAINOUS TREK**

Mick Monaghan and Martyn Webb, stalwart St Dunstan's supporters, are organising a team of volunteers from the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (SPVA) to undertake a fundraising trek (18-26 September 2010) in aid of St Dunstan's. They will be following a historic WWII escape route known as the Freedom Trail.

The trail follows the wartime route taken by escaping groups across one of the hardest terrains in Europe, over the central Pyrenees into Northern Spain. It was established originally for fleeing Frenchmen attempting to reach North Africa to join the Free French Forces. This arduous mountainous trek takes four days to complete and the team aim to be fully self-sufficient throughout.

Mick and Martyn are looking for a fit, intrepid St Dunstaner who might like to accompany them on this challenge. Any volunteer would need to be properly prepared and equipped to tackle the trail. Costs will be in the region of £300 (plus equipment). Please contact Mick Monaghan by telephoning 02392 702477 or 07790 491384 or by e-mailing [mick.monaghan@hp.com](mailto:mick.monaghan@hp.com).

## IN TOUCH WITH ART

In Touch With Art is a conference examining international perspectives on equal access to museums for people with vision impairment. It runs 13-14 October 2010 at the Sackler Centre, Victoria and Albert Museum, London. The event is Europe's leading conference about museums, heritage and people with vision impairment and brings together experts from Europe and North America. It's a unique opportunity to debate best practice, take part in discussions about contemporary issues and enrol in study visits to London's leading museums.

On Wednesday 13 October, speakers from the UK, US and Continental Europe will present best practice case studies and engage delegates in discussion about contemporary issues. Thursday 14 October offers the opportunity to explore disability equality and access for visually impaired people at London's major museums, to develop audio description skills, or to enrol in accredited visual awareness training.

The closing session of the conference will discuss a Conference Resolution with recommendations for decision makers, in response to the United Nations Convention on the Rights

of Persons with Disabilities (which came into force in July 2009). In Touch with Art is for museum and heritage professionals, local organisations and social workers, policy makers and funders, and anyone interested in equal access to museums for vision impaired people.

Early booking fee for the conference is £120 for the first day (13 October) and £60 for the second day. These fees apply for all bookings made before 16 July 2010. After this date, the cost of the first day of the conference will increase to £140, the second day's conference cost will remain the same.

For full details of the conference programme, invited speakers, and registration form, visit our website [www.st-dunstans.org.uk/about\\_us/in\\_touch\\_with\\_art/](http://www.st-dunstans.org.uk/about_us/in_touch_with_art/). For more information about the conference, please contact the Events Team on 020 7723 8368 or e-mail [itwa@st-dunstans.org.uk](mailto:itwa@st-dunstans.org.uk).

## FORMAT CHANGES

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

## LORD'S COMMENTARY IS BALL BY BALL

Marylebone Cricket Club (The MCC) continues to provide a dedicated ball-by-ball commentary for blind and visually impaired cricket fans at Lord's cricket ground this summer.

The Club's team of volunteer commentators will be providing the service in-ground to blind and visually-impaired visitors to Lord's, and online around the world at [www.lords.org](http://www.lords.org). Commentary is being provided for these matches:

### Friday 25 June

MCC Universities Challenge Final

Saturday 26 June Eton v Harrow

### Sunday 27 June

MCC v Pakistanis Twenty20

### Tuesday 20 July

England Women v New Zealand Women

### Tuesday 27 July

Inter-Services Twenty20 Tournament

### Sunday 12 September

Village Cup Final

### Monday 13 September

MCC Schools v English Schools Cricket Association

Headsets and receivers can be obtained from the Head Steward's Office behind the Mound Stand, or from any Lord's steward. In addition, during international and county

matches at Lord's, commentary from the BBC is available to blind and visually-impaired fans through the headsets and receivers. The service from both MCC and BBC is totally free of charge. Tickets can be purchased online at Lord's website or by calling their Ticket Office on 020 7432 1000.

## LISTENING BOOKS GO DOWNLOADABLE

A new audio book service, Downloadable, has been launched by Listening Books. The service will allow members to download titles to an iPod or MP3 player to be enjoyed anywhere, anytime. Over 2,300 books are available from Listening Books, a UK charity which has nearly five decades experience providing audio books for people who find it difficult or impossible to read due to illness or disability. Their audio books are available through the post, on CD, or can be downloaded or streamed via the internet. Members can choose from a range of options to find the service that best suits their needs. Membership costs begin at £20 per year. All titles are either commercially sourced from the best publishers, or recorded in-house. For more details, visit their website at [www.listening-books.org.uk](http://www.listening-books.org.uk) or telephone 020 7234 9522.

A selection of your comments from the 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.



Is this William Smith in Regent's Park?

## Is that my Grandfather by St Dunstan's Clock?

The man on the front of the April Review could well be my grandfather, Mr William Smith. He used to climb stairs to wind the clock every day and Auntie Ruby, being the baby of the family sisters, went with him. My grandfather and grandmother worked at St Dunstan's in Regent's

Park and my mother, being older than Auntie Ruby, helped in house until she went out to work with her elder sister, Rene. My grandfather worked in the gardens and stables and became Head Gardener.

Auntie Ruby is often pictured at St Dunstan's as a little girl and she is now 97 years young. She can't see very well these days but she still likes to receive the Review. It is a shame that there are no pictures of the family members.

Julia Hunt,  
Worthing, Sussex

## Disappointment at Review's lack of Dunkirk spirit

I am writing to say how disappointed my husband, John Painter, was after listening to this month's tapes of St Dunstan's Review. He heard no mention made that this year was the 70th Anniversary of Dunkirk, which he considers a turning point of the War. He was 20 years old at the time

and his Battery was the left hand Guns of the small peninsula around the beaches, from which he and 14 of his Gunners had to swim out to the waiting boats.

This was during the last 24 hours of the official evacuation. John is now nearly 91 years old and remembers it all too clearly.

Mary Painter,  
Chichester,  
West Sussex

## Cooking for life

During March, the week leading up to Easter, I was privileged to be invited to St Dunstan's Ovingdean to continue with my induction into Independent Living Skills (ILS).

This trip was to enable me in producing sustenance as I needed to when my wife was either not well and indeed needed assistance herself or away from home and having to leave me with sandwiches.

The skill that I was taught very efficiently now enables me to produce hot delicious food with no health hazards such as scalding or near amputations. Indeed, I produced a beef casserole, jacket potato, chilli con carne, and a cheese sandwich. The highlight of course being the syrup

sponge followed by a cup of coffee to wash it down. Mouth watering already? It should be, the meals were wholesome and delicious.

Of course, I was only the learner labourer and ROVI Joanna was the inspiration and driving force behind my achievement. Thank you, Joanna.

Also my mentor in IT was kind enough to give me some of her time, and certainly increased my thunder with Microsoft. Thank you, Teresa.

All of the staff at St Dunstan's are so dedicated - we are so lucky - if only the people in the other Service industries were so endowed. My thanks to Kim, Claire Green and all staff at St Dunstan's including those restaurant people who would be an inspiration to outside restaurants.

Brian Ritchie,  
Chelmsford, Essex

## Coming to terms with CBS

I read with interest the letter from Roger Elgood in the April issue of your magazine about Charles Bonnet Syndrome. I gave a talk on the same subject to the Norfolk Branch of the RAMC Association in May. Charles Bonnet Syndrome or CBS describes a condition in which people with severe visual problems begin to see

things that they know are not there and are not real. Sometimes called visual hallucinations, the images can take the form of patterned lines or detailed pictures of people or buildings and can be either black and white or coloured. These images can be enjoyable or frightening.

Opticians should be familiar with the signs and symptoms of CBS. They can then treat patients with information as well as provide a compassionate attitude to anxious patients who are reluctant to discuss the phenomenon because they think people will think they are mentally unstable.

When my eyesight deteriorated last year, after an unsuccessful cataract operation, I was referred to St Dunstan's. This resulted in my being accepted as a St Dunstaner and Kath and myself went to St Dunstan's Ovingdean for an introductory course in January. This included assessment of my degree of sight loss and resulted in lots of good advice.

On our first day there I mentioned to our senior ROVI (Rehabilitation Officer for the Visually Impaired) that I saw, in my imagination, colours and other images such as brick walls, trees and people. I was told, "Oh, that's Charles Bonnet Syndrome. Your brain has realised that it can't get any visual response to messages so it's trying

other means of sorting things out. It will probably go away eventually but there is no telling when."

It is now May - and so far my brain is still trying to come to terms with the problem. I am finding it very difficult to come to terms with the condition - things change every couple of hours. I see different colours ranging from dark chocolate, through yellow, blue, purple and then it all turns to steam-like being in a steam room.

I am always asking Kath if she can see brick walls, people, colours, etc. Just lately, as well as crowds of people, I am visited by a small girl in a red coat - nothing to do with Schindler's List!

A neighbour of ours, an elderly widow, is suffering the same. She sees battlefields and soldiers in strange uniforms which she says reminds her of WWI. She finds this very unpleasant, especially as she lives alone.

As a psychiatric nursing officer of over 30 years experience, I am beginning to wonder if some of the blind patients with whom I came into contact were suffering from CBS and may not really have needed to be incarcerated in a mental hospital. At no point in our training was Charles Bonnet Syndrome ever mentioned.

**Alex Whitelock,  
Wymondham, Norfolk**

# Balancing the Books

**Ted Bunting** finds the mystery behind the final fate of a homeless man makes a compelling thriller

## The Echo

Author: Minette Walters

Reader: David Thorpe

Category: Adult Fiction:

Crime Fiction

Duration: 10 hours, 12 minutes

Catalogue number: 11059

Like the trail of wheat grains that lures the plump bird into the trap, so the intriguing mystery of the dead man in Mrs Powell's garage encourages the reader to willingly enter a romantic, improbable, but strangely attractive world.

Not that the story is romantic in the boy meets girl sense, it most certainly is not! It is a sordid tale of missing persons and pathetic lost souls, and the language employed is often more suited to the barrack-room than to polite society. And the book is almost completely devoid of humour too, the only time I smiled was when a mother observed, "Money can't buy happiness, dear", and her daughter replied, "Nor can poverty." But nevertheless this is the most compelling story I have encountered for many a day. For

those with a taste for such things it is deliciously complex and packed with philosophy too, even though many of the characters are drunks, criminals, or lacking in education. There is poetry in addition, lines from William Blake whose name had been borrowed by the derelict who died in the garage. Wanting to know who he really was is just one inducement to follow the storyline to its conclusion. For my money the journey is most rewarding; sometimes it is so easy to forget that curiosity killed the cat.

This novel is also available in braille for loan or sale from the RNIB National Library Service, Stockport. Call RNIB Customer Services on 0303 123 9999 or e-mail [helpline@rnib.org.uk](mailto:helpline@rnib.org.uk).

It can also be borrowed on two-track audio cassette (ten tapes) from Calibre. Their catalogue number is 4705 and the reader on this 14 hour version is Marion Scott. Calibre can be contacted by telephone on 01296 432339 or by e-mail on [enquiries@calibre.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@calibre.org.uk).

## Ten questions on... "The month of June"

St Dunstaner **Harry Beevers** hopes to bug your brain with a selection of summer inspired teasers

- 1) The traditional verse, "In May I sing all day, In June I change my tune, In July I fly away," refers to which bird?
- 2) Why is the date 9 June 1862 significant to Newcastle United fans?
- 3) "O my love's like a red, red rose that's newly sprung in June", are words written by which poet?
- 4) Which American graduated last in his class at West Point in 1861 and died suddenly on 25 June 1876 at the Battle of Greasy Grass Creek?
- 5) Harriet, considered the oldest animal in the world in captivity, died in an Australian zoo in June 2006
- aged 175. What kind of creature was Harriet?
- 6) Which vegetable has a variety named June Star?
- 7) Which new coin went into circulation in the UK on 9 June 1982?
- 8) The song "June is busting out all over" appears in which Rogers and Hammerstein musical?
- 9) Which significant event, code-named Operation Barbarossa, began on 22 June 1941?
- 10) The A22 tank which came into service in the British Army in June 1941 was known by what name?

**Answers can be found on page 33.**

## Blind explorer Michael reaches the North Pole

INTREPID St Dunstaner Michael Scholes reached the North Pole on 15 April despite extreme weather and treacherous conditions as the ice cap broke up around the group during their trek. Mike's report on his polar experience hasn't defrosted yet, but if you want to find out what he did on his return to the UK, turn to page 22. We also have a polar interview on page 29.



### Tip-top support

A Malton couple raised funds for St Dunstan's by selling seedlings they had cultivated on 3 May. Stella Scott and her husband sold the seedlings and bric-a-brac at a Table Top Sale in North Yorkshire, raising £30 to support blind ex-Service men and women. They

also distributed leaflets about the charity. "We appreciate the wonderful work you do for ex-Service people, and in particular for our friend Vera Everatt," said Stella. WAAF St Dunstaner Vera of Llangadog, Dyfed was delighted to hear of their success.

### Lancashire campaigner

Barbara Rudman has been campaigning for St Dunstan's in Todmorden, talking to Sixth Formers and organisers of the local Agricultural Show. The new Mayor, Margareta Holmstedt, will hold a coffee morning on June 26 as part of Blind Heroes Week.





St Dunstaner Norman Perry was amongst Veterans representatives who laid wreaths at the Cenotaph to commemorate those who secured peace in Europe.

## Veterans mark 65th anniversary of VE Day!

**A**ROUND 200 Veterans of the Second World War assembled in London to mark the 65th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day (VE Day) on Saturday 8 May. St Dunstaners were among those present, along with an estimated 2,000 spectators. His Royal Highness The Prince

of Wales led the national service of commemoration at the Cenotaph. The Duchess of Cornwall also attended as did representatives of the government, Defence Chiefs, representatives of World War II associations and veterans of the conflict. Also attending the service were current

personnel from the three Armed Forces, and members of the public.

The Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Portsmouth (Royal Band) provided music under the direction of Lieutenant Colonel Nick Grace, assisted by The Buglers of the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Portsmouth

(Royal Band). As they played, Veterans marched onto Whitehall carrying their National Standards, including St Dunstaner Arthur Carter, escorted by Major Adrian Golland.

Prayers were led by the Venerable (Air Vice Marshal) Ray Pentland, the RAF's Chaplain-in-Chief and, after The Last Post, one minute of silence was observed. Following Reveille, Prince Charles laid the first wreath, and in turn St Dunstaner Norman Perry, escorted by Gordon Grey, stepped up to the base of the Cenotaph to lay a St Dunstan's wreath.

A reading was given by Laura Crooks, 25, the granddaughter of Norman Bowie, an 89-year-old former bomb disposal expert from Newcastle, who was liberated from a German Prisoner of War Camp on VE Day. There were further prayers and a reading

of The Exhortation from Laurence Binyon's poem *For The Fallen*.

VE Day marks the official end of hostilities in Europe for the Second World War on 8 May 1945, following the formal unconditional surrender of German Forces. It was an occasion of national celebration, yet also sombre reflection for

those who would not return. The 2010 service of commemoration sought to celebrate the achievements of the United Kingdom, Commonwealth and their allies in their victory against fascism, while paying tribute to the 580,406 UK and Commonwealth Forces and 67,073 UK civilians who lost their lives during six years of conflict.



St Dunstaner Arthur Carter and other Standard Bearers await the Royal Marine Bugler's signal.

# Handless Group gripped by everyday tale of country folk

**S**T DUNSTAN'S BLIND and Handless Group returned to St Dunstan's Ovingdean for their annual reunion on 5-11 May. Gwen Obern and Billy Griffiths, MBE were joined by Bob Osborne for merriment and reminiscence, two factors that were not necessarily mutually exclusive. All three St Dunstaners lost limbs in addition to being blinded during the Second World War.

The pinnacle of the Reunion came on 8 May, when they were joined by friends and supporters for their annual luncheon in the Winter Garden. Guest enjoyed the impeccable service that has become PBK's hallmark.

There was a different treat in store as Billy



**Emmerdale Producer Tim Fee with his lifelong friend St Dunstaner Billy Griffiths, MBE.**

Griffiths had invited a friend to talk about his meeting with HM The Queen. It was with some trepidation that St Dunstan's Deputy Chief Executive (Service Delivery) Lt Col Jeremy Hinton introduced this guest of honour. He revealed that Tim Fee had been responsible for crashing an airliner, blowing up a post office, demolishing a chimney,

and running up a deadly body count in various car crashes and accidents. All of this carnage occurring within the rural calm of a Yorkshire village called Emmerdale. Tim went on to explain that he had been line producer on the popular television programme for nearly 20 years.

It had been his pleasure to escort Her Majesty



**Helen Lewis enjoys a joke with Gwen Obern, Chairman of St Dunstan's Blind and Handless Group, in the Winter Garden at St Dunstan's Ovingdean.**

The Queen throughout her visit to the village where the show is filmed. In between introducing members of the cast and crew, there was a recreation of an episode where the local Post Office was blown up.

Final words of the evening went to Gwen Obern who expressed her joy at being back at St Dunstan's. It was like coming back to her family she said to everyone present.



**Bob and Joan Osborne are greeted by St Dunstan's Deputy Chief Executive Lt Col Jeremy Hinton.**

# St Dunstaners show high degree of brotherhood

**Bob Strickland** reports on the Masons Weekend 2010

SOME 18 FREEMASONS, made up of St Dunstaners, Carers and helpers, travelled to St Dunstan's Ovingdean for our Annual Masonic gathering during the weekend of 23-26 April. Most arrived on the Friday afternoon and, after our welcoming meal, we met up in the lounge and had a drink talking over events that had taken place over the previous year. It was nice seeing old faces and meeting some new ones. It was also very nice for our wives and partners to catch up again. This year was marred by the passing of some of our Brethren, namely, Worshipful Brothers Bob Crossan, Geoffrey Law, and Brother Alex Scott. All three will be sadly missed.

On Saturday at 10:45am, we gathered in the ballroom for our AGM and under the guidance of our long standing Secretary, Worshipful Brother Ron Freer, we planned events for the afternoon meeting at the Masonic Temple in Brighton.

Again, this year it was our turn to do the ceremony, which was a Demonstration of the Second Degree. Worshipful Brother Billy Miller acting as Worshipful Master for the main ceremony and Worshipful Brother Bob Strickland finished the demonstration by doing the 2nd Degree long working tools and the 2nd Degree Tracing Board. Everything went extremely well and the

Temple Lodge were suitably impressed with our work.

The whole meeting was very good and the after proceedings at the festive board were excellent. We arrived back at Ovingdean around 10pm.

At the AGM Committee meeting it was agreed that we would do a Demonstration of the 3rd Degree Ceremony next year. Worshipful Brother Keith Roberts volunteered to do the first half and Worshipful Brother Ernie Bignell will be doing the Traditional History. The President for next year's dinner will be Worshipful Brother Bob Strickland.

On the Sunday, we had our usual formal dinner

with our ladies and also guests from The Temple Lodge, Meridian Lodge, and Seaford Lodge, together with their ladies. Acting President for this year's dinner was Brother Clive Jones.

The honoured guests this year were The Provincial Grand Master of Sussex, Right Worshipful Brother Kenneth Eastwood Thomas of the Sussex Province and his lady, together with St Dunstan's President Ray Hazan and his lady Roberta. Both gave great and humorous replies to their toasts. Everyone remarked on how good the food and service was.

At the meal, a collection was made with all the Masons present giving generously towards funds for St Dunstan's.

Our grateful thanks go to Worshipful Brother Ron Freer for all his hard work in organising the weekend, and to

Worshipful Brother Don Oliver for keeping notes on the meeting.

Those in attendance at the meeting were (in alphabetical order) Worshipful Brother Ernie Bignall, Worshipful Brother Nick Chambers (SW), Worshipful Brother Arthur Carter, Worshipful Brother Arthur Cox, Worshipful Brother Morris Evans (IG), Worshipful Brother Ron Freer (Chaplain), Worshipful Brother Alan George, Worshipful

Brother Maurice Geere, Worshipful Brother Doug Greggor, Worshipful Brother Frank Hookham, Brother Clive Jones (JW), Worshipful Brother Tom Lang, Worshipful Brother Billy Miller (WM), Worshipful Brother Don Oliver, Worshipful Brother Kevin Rimmer, Worshipful Brother Keith Roberts, Worshipful Brother Robert Strickland (SD), and Worshipful Brother Colin West (JD) (Grand Officer).

## Tee off for 2010

by Pam Crossan

The play went well on 17-18 April when St Dunstan's Golf Club returned to Rusper Golf Club in Newdigate, Surrey.

The sky over Rusper (close neighbour Gatwick Airport) had fallen silent due to the volcanic ash cloud lingering high above. Nature reasserted itself,

so St Dunstan's golfers were accompanied by birds singing instead of the usual jets.

What a great weekend to start a year of golf! It was good for everyone to meet up again out in the sunshine after the long cold winter.

# It's fun to run in London!



St Dunstaner Sue Eyles and her guide Curstie Watts cross the finish line.



Maria Bullingham, wife of Terry, ran the Marathon for a cancer research charity.

FOUR ST DUNSTANERS ran in the first Virgin London Marathon on 25 April. All of them completed the 26 mile run with aplomb, though Mike Scholes, straight back from the North Pole, was disappointed with his time of 3 hours, 45 minutes. Iain Millard improved on his time with 5 hours, 20 minutes, followed by Billy Black at 5 hours

and 32 minutes, while Sue Eyles made it home in 6 hours, 21 minutes. Maria Bullingham, wife of St Dunstaner Terry, finished in 6 hours, 42 minutes. Amongst St Dunstan's supporters, Douglas Hamilton finished in 4 hours, 25 minutes, Jon Foxall in 4 hours, 49 minutes, Iain Taylor in 5 hours, 2 minutes, and Rachel Jones was there in 5 hours, 27 minutes.



Top left: Alex and Iain Millard in Docklands. Top right: Steve and Billy Black keep running. Above: Iain Taylor keeps the faith. Far right: The grandson of a St Dunstaner, Jon Foxall keeps up the pace after 16 miles. Inset right: Rachel Jones breezes through Greenwich.



# Changing of the guard in the Ex-POWs camp

**T**HERE WERE some changes in store when St Dunstan's Ex-Prisoners of War Group held their Annual Reunion at St Dunstan's Ovingdean on 30 April to 2 May. The weekend unites St Dunstaners who were taken captive during time of war. Most endured the labour camps of Burma-Siam under deadly conditions imposed by Japanese Forces, others were

held in European camps during WWII, while Billy Orr was a POW during the Korean War.

The gathering began in good spirits when friends old and new met in the Blue Room. Some seemed to expect St Dunstaner Stefan Ciesla to still have snow on his shoes having been held as prisoner for two years by the Russians in a Siberian labour camp.

The AGM was opened on Saturday morning with St Dunstan's President Ray Hazan filling in as major domo. There was a tribute to St Dunstaner POWs who had passed away during the last year and also to the group's late President Air Marshal Sir John Gingell.

Chairman Billy Griffiths, MBE and Secretary Tom Hart both announced that they were stepping down from their respective roles after 30 years. FEPOW St Dunstaner Sydney Tavender agreed to step into the breach and was unanimously elected as new Chairman and Secretary. He welcomed the continuing support of Beryl Gardener.

The evening saw ranks swell as St Dunstaners Ron Freer and Henry



KAS, Forces Sweetheart with St Dunstaner Bob Cass who was taken prisoner in the Western Desert.



St Dunstan's Ex-Prisoners of War Group after their AGM. At the back are Stefan Ciesla, Robert Cass, Bob Dixon, Billy Orr, Peter Brice, and Charles Blockley. In the front are Sydney Tavender, Tom Hart, Bill Griffiths, MBE and Joe Hirsh.

Sheridan joined the throng. St Dunstan's Chairman Major General Andrew Keeling introduced guests that included Lady Pru Gingell and her daughter. The guest of honour was General Sir Peter de la Billière who said he was delighted to accept the nomination to become President

of St Dunstan's Ex-POW Group, recalling his first meeting with his predecessor, Sir John.

He went on to speak about the nature of courage and how he found that giving his grandchildren a copy of Billy Griffiths's biography was a great cure for "whinging".

Tom Hart made some closing comments, saying that he had enjoyed every moment of his time as Secretary of the Ex-POWs Group. He thanked everyone for their support.

Sunday morning saw everyone reassembled for the Divine Service in St Dunstan's Chapel,

conducted by Fr Martin Morgan. He reiterated the example set by the EX-POW Group and his belief in St Dunstan's as a "caring" home. The Exaltation was read by Tom Hart and *The Last Post* was played by Royal British Legion trumpeter Heidi Watkins.



Heidi Watkins, County of Sussex Trumpeter to the Royal British Legion, played *The Last Post*.

The evening slipped into more relaxed mood as KAS, Forces Sweetheart entered the lounge to sing a selection of tunes made popular by Al Jolson, Glen Miller, and Vera

Lynn. St Dunstaners David Cranson and Joan Morgan couldn't resist a quick dance. After taking her bows, KAS

spent time chatting with some of the Ex-POWs and other St Dunstaners who had been in the audience.

## Memorial Service for FEPOWs

ST DUNSTANER Alex Whitelock attended a Service of Remembrance in memory of Far East Prisoners of War on 16 May. The Service was held at Our Lady & St Thomas of Canterbury Church in Wymondham, Norfolk which was built in 1952 to be a permanent Memorial to those who suffered as prisoners

of war and internees of the Japanese during the Second World War.

Alex, who served in the Royal Army Medical Corps, had been training for deployment to the Far East towards the end of the war, but that mission was stopped after the atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. However, he

was soon sent out there to work with former POWs who were being returned home from Changi and other camps.

Also attending the Service was General Sir Richard Dannatt, GCB, CBE, MC, Vice Patron of St Dunstan's. "He came over and introduced himself when he saw my St Dunstan's badge," said Alex.

## Seafarers award for Nigel

ST DUNSTANER Nigel Whiteley of Peacehaven received the Seafarers' President's Award at Mansion House in London on 14 May. It was presented by The Right Honourable Lord Mayor of the City of London, Alderman Nick Anstee.



The Right Honourable Lord Mayor of the City of London, Alderman Nick Anstee presented Nigel with a certificate signed by the Seafarers UK President, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh.

The Royal Navy St Dunstaner was applauded for his support of Seafarers in the Eastbourne area and his role in re-establishing a concert by The Band of The Royal Marines in the local calendar.

There was also an award for the Royal Marines Director of Music, Lieutenant Colonel Nick Grace, BMus(Hons), FLCM, LRSM, RM, who conducted the annual

concert at St Dunstan's Ovingdean last year.

Seafarers UK is the nation's leading maritime charity, looking after people from the Royal Navy,

Royal Marines, Merchant Navy and fishing fleets, along with their families. It has been a long term supporter of St Dunstan's work with men and women who served at sea.

# Admiral on the ship!

**W**HEN AN Admiral goes by, there is only one thing a Wren can do – and that's salute! Sheffield St Dunstaner Sheila Rodman was on the spot when Vice Patron Admiral Sir Jonathon Band made a tour of inspection at St Dunstan's Ovingdean on 12 May. Everything was shipshape as Sheila told him a little of her days keeping aircraft flying in the Fleet Air Arm. The Admiral also spoke with skilled St Dunstaners in the Craft Workshop including Frank Tinsley, Peter Hammond, Matthew Rhodes and John Nunney who had a variety of projects underway.

Admiral Band retired from the Royal Navy as First Sea Lord in 2009. He and his wife, Lady Band, also had a go at acoustic rifle shooting in the Sports Hall.



Sheila salutes Admiral Band outside the Gym.



Peter Hammond demonstrates his skill in shaping soapstone into a sculpture of a salmon.

St Dunstaner **Jamie Cuthbertson** talks with Britain's best known natural history film-maker at the North Pole

# Chatting with Sir David

**WHEN ST DUNSTANER** Jamie Cuthbertson headed to the top of the world to run in the North Pole Marathon, he encountered famed naturalist Sir David Attenborough. As it turned out, Jamie and Mike Scholes were not the only people in the Arctic with a connection to St Dunstan's...

**Jamie:** OK. We arrived in the North Pole and unbeknownst to us in the plane following us there was a team from the BBC and I'm now sitting next to Sir David Attenborough. It's not every day you bump into anyone of note at the North Pole.

**Sir David:** *Chuckle!*

**Jamie:** If you could tell us a bit about what you're doing up here, Sir David? We just discussed the North Pole Marathon, but I guess you're not doing the North Pole Marathon?

**Sir David:** Certainly not! I wouldn't do one under normal conditions and doing one up here

would scare the life out of me. I wouldn't last for one thing. I wouldn't last 100 yards let alone a marathon!

**Jamie:** The noise outside is a goal scored in the football match taking place outside. I believe you are up here for a follow on to *The Living Planet*?

**Sir David:** We're making seven one hour programmes called *The Frozen Planet* and it's about both polar regions, north and south, and it's about the natural history, and about changing climate, and exploration. So it's about all aspects of the polar regions.

**Jamie:** How long will your filming take to make these seven programmes?

**Sir David:** Well, we've had seven crews working for three years so far and it will not be finished until this time next year and it probably won't go out until October 2011.

**Jamie:** That's a far longer time planning period than most of us at home would ever realise. Is that how most of *The Living Planets* are made?

**Sir David:** They've been raising the bar on natural history programmes for a long time. I started in 1952 and they were terrible programmes really...

**Jamie:** "He says proudly..."

**Sir David:** No, they were, they were with black

and white cameras and 405 lines and no synchronous sound, so you couldn't really speak on film as it were, so nobody could hear what you said, and they were grainy pictures. Now it gets better and better every year and the international standards are very high. You've got to be better than that, you've got to lead them if you can.

**Jamie:** In your stint up here at the North Pole, what areas are you going to be covering?

**Sir David:** Here, because there isn't much here except snow and ice, but we want to start the first of the series saying, I mean I've already been on the South Pole. I was there two months ago, but I need at one stage to say "I am at the North Pole." Now you may say, "Well you could do that anyway, and people couldn't tell if you were and whether you weren't." And that's absolutely true, but on

Photograph copyright: Jamie Cuthbertson



**Jamie chats with Sir David Attenborough, 83, who has visited both North and South Poles.**

the other hand I would like to think that if people see me saying that, absolutely blank like that, they would believe it is true. So we've come all this way so I can say that.

**Jamie:** Wonderful! Mind you, I think that's entirely laudable, as you say, in the sense you could go anywhere.

**Sir David:** That's right

**Jamie:** ...and indeed one of the groups of people that have done some fundraising for my efforts coming here was a bunch

of kids at an after-school club and they intimated that wouldn't it be wonderful if a), I met Santa because we're heading up that direction and we've engineered a meeting with Santa, and equally we will be able to hold up our flags and say we've actually been at the North Pole and in addition we will have done hopefully a marathon by the end.

**Sir David:** Well good for you. I couldn't do a marathon to save my life.

**Jamie:** You're welcome to join us if you wish.

**Sir David:** That's a very generous offer but I won't actually bother to take it on.

**Jamie:** Can I ask you one last thing? You mentioned earlier when we were chatting about St Dunstan's, and obviously my efforts are towards supporting St Dunstan's in this particular thing. You mentioned you had a personal connection?

**Sir David:** Yes, my father-in-law, my wife's father was gassed in 14-18 war and he recovered his sight partially, but by the 1940s his sight because of the damage by the gas was deteriorating and he became totally blind. He was Chief Chemist at Shell, so he had access to a lot of technology of all kinds and he was very active in using that and getting Shell to support him, so that the Talking Books and quite a lot of other things he did. He carried on as Chief

Chemist with Shell for quite a long time even though he was blind.

**Jamie:** Do you mind mentioning his name?

**Sir David:** John Oriel.

**Jamie:** Well, thank you very much for your time, I hope it hasn't kept you from a cup of tea or something.

**Sir David:** There's a lot of time up here.

**Jamie:** When do you head back?

**Sir David:** Well it depends when we get the shots done. At the moment you might think it's good that the temperature is only 14 degrees below, but the trouble is if it is only 14 degrees below there's a lot of mist and clouds and not the sort of clear skies that accompany 40 degrees below.

**Jamie:** So what would your ideal be for good filming?



**Jamie and Santa.**

**Sir David:** Our ideal would be much colder than this, and with sunshine so that we can get aerial shots and so on. We haven't got that here, so it's not too good.

**Jamie:** Do you have access to a helicopter for doing the aerial shots?

**Sir David:** Yes indeed.

**Jamie:** Fantastic. Thank you very much!

**Sir David:** Well good luck in the marathon. I'm astounded that anyone should do it.

**Jamie:** Well, I'm astounded that I'm as stupid as I am to come and do it. Thank you.



# Reunion Round-Up

The Central London Reunion was held at the RAF Club in Piccadilly, London on 22 April. There were 26 St Dunstaners and two widows present and Air Vice Marshal Richard Kyle, CB, MBE was the Member of Council presiding. Royal Air Force St Dunstaner Robert Eddison responded for everyone gathered.

The Leeds Reunion returned to the Thorpe Park Hotel, on 6 May. Momentarily, it was a chance to forget the hullabaloo of the General Election, as 27 St Dunstaners and four widows enjoyed a meal of that started with Cream of Vegetable Soup, followed by Pan Fried Chicken, and Butterscotch Profiteroles. The presiding Member of Council was Royal Engineer St Dunstaner David Stuttard, who



**Welfare Officer Jo Gray arranged a small gathering for Polish St Dunstaners in her area on 11 May. They all met at The White Eagle Club, Tooting, London. WWII veterans Antoni Antoniewicz, Czeslaw Knopp, and Stefan Ciesla are pictured with Jo.**

spoke of St Dunstan's family ethos and progress at Llandudno. REME St Dunstaner Corporal Simon Brown responded, providing both laughter and points for reflection in his speech.

The Edinburgh Reunion moved to a new lunchtime slot on 10 May. There were

16 St Dunstaners gathered at the Marriott Hotel, Edinburgh and Iain Lumsden was the Member of Council presiding. The response was given by St Dunstaner Jamie Cuthbertson, recently returned from his Arctic marathon. He is due to embark on a Land's End to John O'Groats cycle run this month. After

an entertaining speech, Jamie proposed a toast to "Absent Friends".

The sun was out for the Eastbourne I Reunion held at the Hydro Hotel on 12 May. There were 25 St Dunstaners and six widows attending. St Dunstan's President Ray Hazan represented the Council and the response was given by REME St Dunstaner Ernie Bignell.

The sun was still shining in South Wales the following day. There were 30 St Dunstaners and three widows at the Cardiff Reunion which was held at the St Mellons Hotel and Country Club on 13 May. Birthday congratulations were voiced for Royal Engineer St Dunstaner Adrian Neat as those assembled tucked into Parma Ham and Red Onion Tartlet, Roast Beef and all the trimmings, and an Open Apple Tart. David Knowles, CBE was the Member of Council

presiding and the response was given by RASC St Dunstaner Chris Ottewell.

## **PBK's Brighton Reunion Butternut Squash Soup**

The recent Brighton Reunions got off to an acclaimed start when PBK served a Butternut Squash Soup that had taste buds tingling and diners clamouring for more. Many of the guests were keen to get their hands on the recipe to try at home.

Here, PBK's Trevor Richardson lifts the lid off their secret files, revealing that like much good food, the

Butternut Squash Soup is a simple treat that can be prepared with ease in the home kitchen.

### **Ingredients**

2 Butternut Squash  
454g (1lb old English)  
Carrots  
1 Large Sweet Potato  
½ Onion  
Salt & Pepper to Taste  
Vegetable Stock

### **Method**

Peel all the vegetables and remove seeds from both of the squash, dice and put in a large pot and cover with stock. Simmer till fully cooked and blend using a hand blender or food processor. Return to the stove and adjust the consistency of the soup and season to taste.

## **Ten Answers**

Answers to the June quiz on page 14.

1) Cuckoo; 2) It's the date referred to in the traditional song *Blaydon Races*; 3) Robert Burns; 4) George Armstrong Custer. The battle was also known as the Battle of the Little Bighorn; 5) Tortoise; 6) Cabbage; 7) 20 pence coin; 8) *Carousel*; 9) The invasion of the USSR by Germany; and finally, 10) Churchill tank.

# ASK ROD

Your queries answered  
by the ROVI on Duty

ROVI on Duty Tel: 01273 391447 E-mail: rovi@dunstan.org.uk

## St Dunstan's ReVision Weeks

In March, a ReVision week was run at St Dunstan's Ovingdean, providing an Intro Week style course for people who have been St Dunstaners for ten years or more, so they can benefit from an updated assessment of their needs in relation to their sight loss, review of equipment available and an updated look at St Dunstan's and the services it provides. St Dunstaners Clive Woods and Andrew Bull comment on their experience of their ReVision week.

"I attended the ReVision course at St Dunstan's Ovingdean," writes Royal Marine Clive Woods, aged 85. "It consisted of a series of meetings that covered most of the things St Dunstan's offers, as well as one-to-one sessions with a designated, highly experienced ROVI (Rehabilitation Officer for Visually Impaired People).

"In talking to you, the ROVI is able to ascertain your individual sight impairment for the purpose of being able to help you with today's gadgets and modern technology, so making

your life easier and less frustrating than it may be at the moment. I found these meetings with my ROVI helpful, enjoyable and very important.

"The other meetings were group sessions - a tour of the Craft Workshop was especially interesting, and I was surprised by how many hobbies and crafts were on offer.

"There was also a visit to the Sports and Recreation department, where I had a try out at bowls and archery. The best for me was the acoustic rifle shooting. I was really amazed when I managed to hit the target - it was good fun and a very enjoyable evening.

"Another group session, sighted guiding, was really helpful as a sighted person was shown how to guide a blind person around awkward places.

"In all, I found the week very helpful, positive, well planned and well thought out. It could be of great benefit to all St Dunstaners who are able to attend."

St Dunstaner Andrew Bull, aged 47, also felt fortunate to participate in

the one week ReVision course. "I lost my sight in November 1983, age 20, whilst serving in West Belfast as a result of IRA terrorism," he said. "After being hospitalised, I was sent to St Dunstan's in 1984 for rehabilitation and training. Having not been back to St Dunstan's for 25 years or more due to work and family commitments, it was nice to be contacted by St Dunstan's and their staff inviting me to undertake and participate in a revision week to bring me up to date as to what support and hi-tech equipment is available to the St Dunstaners.

"I have to say that I found the revision course not only worthwhile but very positive and the whole itinerary professionally well structured. I found the sporting and outdoor pursuits really brilliant, in particular the archery and the audio rifle shooting.

"The information regarding talking bus stops and timetables for using public transport. I was amazed by the hi-tech gadgets that can help you even more and give you even greater independence, especially within the home, particularly cooking in the kitchen. One piece of equipment which I found a terrific help was the Pen Friend labelling device.

"I must stress that not only has this revision course paid dividends for me,

but I can honestly say the same for the other St Dunstaners that were on the course as well. More importantly, I have met some wonderful people this week and made so many friends and this is purely down to St Dunstan's and the expertise and professionalism of the staff.

"I would also like to thank and commend all of the ROVI team in all of their endeavours and hard work. Once again I cannot thank St Dunstan's enough and I would just like to say to any St Dunstaner who has the opportunity or is lucky enough to be invited to take part in this superb revision course, to grab it with both hands and enjoy it as I did and the many others."

If you joined St Dunstan's prior to April 2000 and feel that you would benefit from attending a ReVision week then please discuss this with your Welfare Officer.

## UNUSED EQUIPMENT

Do you have any equipment that was issued to you by St Dunstan's ROVIs that you no longer use? Whether you need assistance or simply no longer have a need for any items, contact ROD on 01273 391447 and we'll see if we can help. Many items can be reissued to another St Dunstaner if you no longer use them.

# My days at St Dunstan's

**S**COTTISH NOVELIST Andrew O'Hagan, author of *The Life and Opinions of Maf the Dog*, and *of His Friend Marilyn Monroe*, has revealed how he started his career writing for St Dunstan's Review.

"It was really my first job that woke me up to other people's experience," he said in the Observer Magazine of 2 May. "At this little office off the Old Marylebone

Road, I began to feel that my personal history was melding with something larger and more compelling, history itself, and I credit that realisation with giving me my start.

"I found my voice, as they say, in an office full of elderly people who looked after blind ex-servicemen. To tell you the truth, I had grown up in a pretty crazy environment, a life that may have given me a shaky sense

of personhood, but St Dunstan's, where I went to work a few months after arriving in London, showed me other lives, other stories, other voices and other rooms, a set of experiences that taught me how to think and write beyond the young person's great community of one."

The full feature can be read online at The Guardian's website by visiting <http://tinyurl.com/2bjcsss>.

## BEER OF THE MONTH by Colin Williamson



### Thwaites Wainwright

A golden ale celebrating the Lake District's most beloved author, this combines beautiful fruit flavours with a subtle sweetness. This ale is very refreshing and light which makes it a perfect session beer. Tipping the scales at 4.1 per cent ABV, it's perfect after a long walk. A sketch of Alfred Wainwright appears on the label, resting against a rock taking in one of the beautiful vistas that characterise the Lakeland Fells. With his rucksack by his side and his favourite pipe in his mouth, he is probably looking forward to a pint or two of Wainwright beer! Available from Waitrose, EH Booth, Sainsbury and Tesco.

# Welcome to St Dunstan's

**Irene Adamson** of Worthing, West Sussex served in the Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service from 1949 to 1950.

**Arthur Adlem** of Hungerford, Berkshire served in the General Service Corps, Dorset Regiment, and Royal Berkshire Regiment (Princess Charlotte of Wales's) between 1947 and 1953.

**Cyril Armshaw** of North Baddesley, Southampton, Hampshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1947.

**Gavin Brownlie** of Deans, Livingston, West Lothian served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1952 to 1955.

**David Cockayne** of Garforth, Leeds served as Senior Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force from 1949 to 1951.

**Ernest Day** of Cambridge, Cambridgeshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

**Dennis Elkins** of Hilperton, Trowbridge, Wiltshire served in the Somerset Light Infantry (Prince Albert's) and Royal Signals between 1939 and 1946.

**Patrick Fenoughty** of St Brelade, Jersey served in the Royal Artillery from 1941 to 1960.

**Thomas Ferguson** of Toothill, Swindon served in the Royal Air Force from 1954 to 1983.

**William Harley** of Kelty, Fife served in the Royal Air Force from 1951 to 1955.

**George Harrop** of Orwell, Royston, Hertfordshire served in the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and Royal Army Ordnance Corps between 1940 and 1946.

**Dennis Hatch** of Yate, Bristol served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1945.

**Alain Henry** of Upminster, Essex served in the Royal Artillery and Royal Green Jackets between 1972 and 2000.

**Kenneth Humphries** of Diss, Norfolk served as Leading Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1947.

**Lt Col Donald Jones** of Winchester served in the Royal Engineers from 1944 to 1969.

**John Jones** of Oswestry, Shropshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1938 to 1946.

**Yvonne Kingdon** of Eastleigh, Hampshire served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1938 to 1945.

**Charles Leister** of Bengoe, Hertford, Hertfordshire served in the Royal Navy from 1946 to 1948.

**Fay Longman** of Walberton, West Sussex served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1942 to 1945.

**Thomas Miller** of Shotley Gate, Ipswich served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

**John Mott** of Hersham, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey served in the East Surrey Regiment, Royal Army Ordnance Corps, and Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers between 1941 and 1946.

**Michael Moxham** of Bath, Avon served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1947.

**Peter Mulvihill** of Ramsbottom, Bury, Lancashire served in the Royal Air Force from 1946 to 1949.

**David Norton** of Poole, Dorset served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1948 to 1950.

**Charles Payne** of Swindon served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps and Royal Army Service Corps between 1952 and 1959.

**Kenneth Poller** of Kingstanding, Birmingham served in the General Service Corps and Army Catering Corps between 1946 and 1949.

**Thomas Preston** of Watford served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers between 1941 and 1946.

**John Quinn** of Lydiate, Liverpool, Merseyside served in the General Service Corps and the South Lancashire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's Volunteers) between 1945 and 1948.

**John Rees** of Duffryn Rhondda, Port Talbot, West Glamorgan served in the Merchant Navy from 1943 to 1946.

**John Rix** of Lowestoft, Suffolk served in the Army Catering Corps from 1956 to 1958.

**Gordon Rowe** of Topsham, Exeter, Devon served in the Royal Armoured Corps from 1941 to 1946.

**Kenneth Sendall** of South Croydon, Surrey served in the General Service Corps and Royal Army Service Corps between 1943 and 1947.

**Kenneth Spencer** of Southampton, Hampshire served in the Royal Navy from 1941 to 1965.

**Arthur Thomas** of Rainford, St Helens, Merseyside served in the General Service Corps and Royal Signals between 1944 and 1947.

**Colin Ward** of Brigg, South Humberside served in the Royal Air Force from 1948 to 1950.

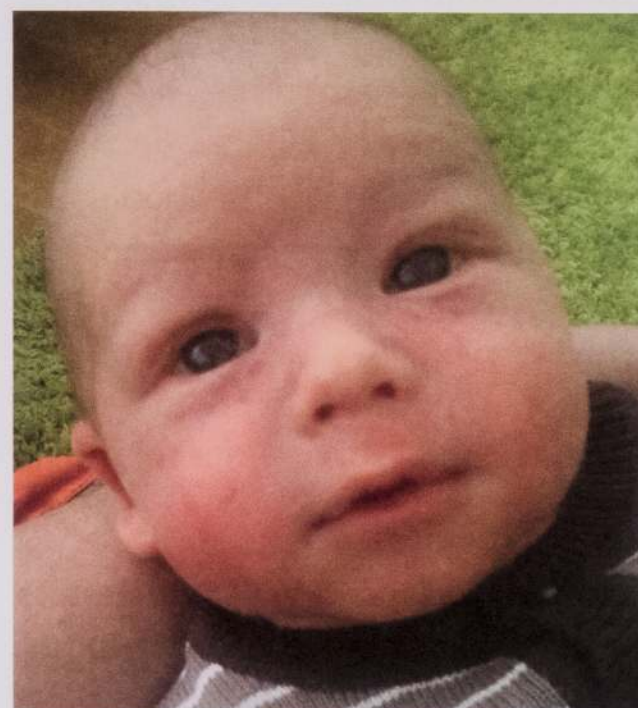
**Stephen White** of Leyland, Lancashire served in the Merchant Navy from 1942 to 1947.

**James Wright** of Penn, Wolverhampton served in the Royal Engineers from 1956 to 1961.

# Family News

## BIRTHS

**Congratulations on the birth of:** Lucy, weighing in at 5lb, 8oz on 23 April. She is the first child of Andy and Helen Yeung, of Newcastle-Upon-Tyne. Helen, a former nurse at St Dunstan's Ovingdean, is the daughter of Royal Navy St Dunstaner Terry Bullingham of Smethwick, West Midlands.



Adam Anthony Nowell on 17 April (above). Weighing 7lb, 13oz, he is the son of Chris and Claire Nowell of Dronfield, Derbyshire. He is a brother for Luke, aged 2½. St Dunstaner Chris served in the King's Royal Hussars and was injured in a rocket attack while stationed in Afghanistan.

## RUBY ANNIVERSARIES

**Congratulations to:** Alistair and Anne Reid of Stonehaven, Aberdeenshire on 9 May.

## DIAMOND ANNIVERSARIES

**Congratulations to:** Ernest and Norma Phillips of Walmley, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands on 29 April.

Joseph and Anne Tapper of Thornton Clevelys, Lancashire on 29 April.

Len and Lily Waugh of Stockbury, Sittingbourne, Kent on 6 May.

## BLUE SAPPHIRE ANNIVERSARIES

**Congratulations to:** Victor and Pauline Wainwright of Gravesend, Kent on 4 May.

William and Rose Lockert of Brighton on 15 May.

## PLATINUM ANNIVERSARIES

**Congratulations to:** John and Elsie Beauchamp of Peacehaven, East Sussex on 4 May.

John and Winnifred Tibble of Basildon, Essex on 20 May.

## **SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES**

### **Congratulations to:**

Lewis and Doris Dale of Hunstanton, Norfolk who celebrated 73 years together on 21 May.

Jim and Phyllis Adderley of Newton Poppleford, Sidmouth, Devon who celebrated 64 years of marriage on 4 May.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS**

### **Congratulations to:**

Kerry Reed of Caergeiliog, Anglesey is continuing to develop her computer skills and has been awarded an OCR Level 2 Certificate for IT Users (CLAiT). The Level 2 course represents a considerable challenge as it requires a much deeper understanding of the

operation of the computer and of the programs running on it.

## **DEATHS**

### **We regret to announce the death of:**

Maurice Mathé on 24 April. He was the husband of Veronica Mathé of Felpham, Bognor Regis, West Sussex.

Joyce Hassam on 26 April. She was the wife of Leonard Hassam of Warminster, Wiltshire.

Barbara Robertson on 26 April. She was the wife of Douglas Robertson of Lower Holbrook, Ipswich, Suffolk.

Sylvia Amps of Cambridge, Cambridgeshire on 28 April. She was the widow of Clifford Amps.

# **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.**

### **John Ainsworth**

#### **Royal Army Ordnance Corps**

John William Ainsworth of Thetford, Norfolk died on 22 May 2008, aged 74. He joined the Royal Army Ordnance Corps in 1953 and served in Germany. Demobbed in 1956, he later worked as production manager

for a firm manufacturing electric bulbs. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

### **Major Maurice Macdona, MC Royal Artillery**

Major Maurice Lester Macdona, MC died on 30 March, aged 95. He

joined the Royal Artillery in 1940 and was commissioned later that year. Having fought in Holland, Germany, France, Belgium, and Luxembourg, he was awarded the Military Cross in 1946. In civilian life, he worked in the UK and Rhodesia for an insurance company, National Employers Mutual. He enjoyed stained glasswork and silversmithing. Our sympathy goes to his widow Eileen and all the family.

### **Jean Gilchrist**

#### **Women's Royal Naval Service**

Jean Vera Gilchrist nee Malcolm of Edinburgh died on 8 April, aged 84. She joined the Women's Royal Naval Service in 1947 and became a wireless instructor. After being discharged as Petty Officer in 1950, she joined Marconi at their research laboratories near Chelmsford. She served further with the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve from 1952 to 1953 before becoming a full-time wife and mother. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

### **John Foreman**

#### **Royal Air Force**

John Charles Foreman of Bath, Somerset died on 11 April, aged 89. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1941 and served as a cook in the UK and Europe. Discharged as Leading Aircraftman in 1946, he worked as a surveyor and later in manufacturing. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

### **John Ellson**

#### **Royal Navy**

John Edward Ellson of Finedon, Northamptonshire died on 13 April, aged 86. He joined the Royal Navy in 1942 and served as Acting Leading Stoker on Arctic Convoys before being discharged in 1946. In civilian life, he was actively involved with a number of Service charities, particularly the Federation of Allied Combatants, and in 2004 became one of the few non-Catholics to be awarded the Knighthood of the Order of St Gregory the Great. He was also made a Freeman of the City of London in 1999. Despite his visual impairment, he was a correspondent for the Evening Telegraph, reporting on church council meetings, charity events, and flower shows. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

### **Martin Williams**

#### **Royal Air Force**

Martin Edward Williams of Mere, Warminster, Wiltshire died on 13 April, aged 73. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1956 and served in Libya. Demobbed as Leading Aircraftman in 1958, he became a hair stylist and later a maintenance man. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

### **Gerry Bowyer**

#### **Royal Signals (TA)**

Gerald William Bowyer of Eastbourne, East Sussex died on 15 April, aged 83. He joined the General Service

Corps in 1945, then transferred to The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment and then to the Royal Army Pay Corps. Having served in Namibia, Singapore, and India during the Partition Riots, he was released to the Reserve in 1948. He re-enlisted in the Royal Signals (TA) in 1950, serving until 1952. In civilian life, he supplied refrigeration equipment and later amusement machines. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

**Donald Edwards**  
**Royal Artillery**

Donald Frank Edwards of Aylesford, Kent died on 17 April, aged 93. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1940 and was commissioned the following year. He served in North Africa, Italy, India, and Singapore. Discharged as Captain in 1946, he ran his family business, a glasshouse nursery. After selling it, he managed a business selling flowers in Covent Garden. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

**Vicky Knight**  
**Auxiliary Territorial Service**

Victoria Iris Knight nee Kirsop died on 20 April, aged 87. She joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1938 and specialised in catering. Having served around the UK, she was discharged in 1940 and then worked in an aircraft factory for the duration of the war. Raising a family, she followed her husband on various

Royal Navy postings over 25 years. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

**Edna Thomas**  
**Auxiliary Territorial Service**

Edna Dora Thomas nee Cox of Heathfield, East Sussex died on 20 April, aged 91. She joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1943 and served with an ack-ack unit. Demobbed in 1946, she worked as a secretary in Canada and the UK. Her interests included embroidery and art. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

**Joan Pendle**  
**Women's Auxiliary Air Force**

Joan Kathleen Pendle nee Prangnell of Horndean, Hampshire died on 21 April, aged 87. She joined the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in 1942 and served around Plymouth, driving lorries. Demobbed in 1944, she raised a family and also worked as a hairdresser and as a post lady. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

**Horace Dockerill**  
**Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers**

Horace Dockerill of Heacham, King's Lynn, Norfolk died on 22 April, aged 89. He joined the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in 1943 and served as an instrument mechanic in India and the UK. Demobbed in 1947, he worked for the Gas Board and was a keen member of their rifle shooting

team. Our sympathy goes to his widow Olive and all the family.

**Bill Brown**  
**Royal Army Ordnance Corps**

William Charles Montrose Brown of Portsmouth, Hampshire died on 23 April, aged 95. He joined the Royal Army Ordnance Corps in 1934 and took pride in parading at the Coronation of King George VI in 1936. He served in the UK, Palestine, and North Africa. Demobbed in 1947, he settled in Egypt for a couple years before returning to the UK to work as a school caretaker and operate a taxi firm. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

**Arthur Derrick**  
**Royal Norfolk Regiment**

Arthur Derrick of Luton, Bedfordshire died on 23 April, aged 79. He joined the Northamptonshire Regiment in 1948 and transferred to the Royal Norfolk Regiment the following year. He served with their Corps of Drums in the UK and Germany. Demobbed in 1950, he worked as a motor mechanic but later became a driver, working on the buses and for Marks & Spencer. Our sympathy goes to his widow Olive and all the family.

**Jim Ryan**  
**Royal Air Force**  
Wing Commander James Anthony Ryan of Hungerford, Berkshire died

on 23 April, aged 83. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1945 and was commissioned the following year. He served in the Far East on Flying Boats and later flew Meteors and Vampires. He became Chief Instructor at RAF South Cerney and was promoted to Squadron Leader in 1956. Further promoted to Wing Commander in 1963, he was discharged in 1975. Our sympathy goes to his widow Christine and all members of the family.

**Rose Fisher**  
**Women's Royal Army Corps**

Rose Margaret Fisher nee Faulds of Bicester, Oxfordshire died on 24 April, aged 75. She joined the Women's Royal Army Corps in 1953 and served in Guildford and at RAF Stanmore Park. She left the Army after marrying and raised a family. Later, she worked for the MOD before becoming a market trader. She enjoyed walking, swimming, music, and gardening. Our sympathy goes to her husband Thomas and all the family.

**Jack Pearce**  
**Royal Air Force**  
Jack Pearce of Dereham, Norfolk died on 24 April, aged 89. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1941 and served in the UK and Bombay. Demobbed as Leading Aircraftman in 1946, he worked as a mechanic. Our sympathy goes to his widow Jean and all members of the family.

**Charles Bragg****Royal Navy**

Charles Bragg of Ferring, Worthing, West Sussex died on 29 April, aged 84. He joined the Royal Navy in 1942 and served on various ships including HMS *Victory*. Discharged as Able Seaman in 1946, he worked for the NHS as a handyman. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

**Eric Kloss****Royal Air Force**

Eric John Kloss of King's Lynn, Norfolk died on 29 April, aged 80. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1947 and served as Junior Technician in the UK and Suez Canal. Discharged in 1955, he worked as a carpenter. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

**Roy Armstrong****Suffolk Regiment**

Roy William Armstrong of Walthamstow, London died on 30 April, aged 81. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1952. He worked for the GPO before joining the Suffolk Regiment in 1946. He was wounded in Palestine in 1947 and subsequently contracted Eales Disease which caused his loss of sight. Discharged in 1949, he came to St Dunstan's three years later and trained as a capstan lathe operator. In later years, he would become a warehouse assistant, eventually becoming manager before retiring. While training at St Dunstan's

he met his future wife, Kathleen, (the cousin of late St Dunstaner Bill Shea) and they shared a conviction for the teachings of the Salvation Army. His interests also included writing, bridge and gardening. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

**Robert Hammond****Royal Signals**

Robert William Hammond of Roydon, Diss, Norfolk died on 1 May, aged 87. He joined the Royal Norfolk Regiment in 1942, and soon transferred to the Royal Signals as a despatch rider. Having served in Bombay and on the North West Frontier, he was discharged in 1947. In civilian life, he set up a car hire business, later working the land before running a village shop and Post Office for 34 years. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

**Benjamin Colley****Leicestershire Regiment**

Benjamin Elias Colley of Malvern, Worcestershire died on 2 May, aged 87. He joined the Worcestershire Regiment in 1942 and transferred to the Leicestershire Regiment the following year. He later deployed to Burma, serving behind enemy lines with the Chindits, the Special Force assembled by General Orde Wingate.

**Frederick Healy****Royal Army Ordnance Corps**

Frederick John Healy of Tunbridge

Wells, Kent died on 2 May, aged 91. He joined the Royal Army Ordnance Corps in 1940 and served around the UK. After landing on Sword Beach on D-Day, he advanced through Belgium and Holland to Germany. Demobbed in 1946, he worked as a grocer, but later became an electrical engineer with the Thorn Group. Our sympathy goes to his widow Marjorie and all members of the family.

**Bill Kennedy****Royal Air Force Police**

William Edward Kennedy of Walton, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire died on 3 May, aged 74. He had been a St Dunstaner since 1990. Having joined the Royal Air Force in 1957, he trained for police duties and served around the world in Hong Kong, Germany, and Northern Ireland. He suffered an injury in 1977 which led to the removal of one eye. Discharged as Sergeant in 1979, he lost his remaining sight with the onset of diabetes. Our sympathy goes to his widow Carole and all the family.

**Ronald Swain****Leicestershire Regiment**

Ronald Eric Swain of Edgware, Middlesex died on 3 May, aged 84. He joined the Hampshire Regiment in 1944 and was deployed to Italy. After transferring to the Leicestershire Regiment, he was wounded in Greece, suffering a gunshot wound

to his arm. Discharged in 1946, he worked as a carpenter in the building trade apart from six years when he served in the Merchant Navy. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

**Major Eddie Bennett****Royal Army Ordnance Corps (TA)**

Major Stephen Edward Bennett of Stisted, Braintree, Essex died on 4 May, aged 92. He joined the Royal Army Ordnance Corps (TA) in 1939 and was embodied on the outbreak of hostilities. He served in North Africa and Italy. After the War, he rejoined the TA and was commissioned in 1951. He was transferred to the Reserve of Officers in 1962. In civilian life, he worked in banking and property. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

**Peter Goodwin****Royal Air Force**

Peter Norris Goodwin of Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire died on 4 May, aged 85. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1943 and trained as a navigator. Having served in the Far East, he was demobbed in 1948 and worked in banking. His interests included computing and jazz music. Our sympathy goes to daughter Shirley and all members of the family.

**Patricia Davis****Auxiliary Territorial Service**

Patricia Davis nee Allin of Whitby, North Yorkshire died on 5 May, aged

91. She joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1941 and was initially posted to the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. She was later deployed to Egypt as a secretary in Cairo. After completing a tour duty in Jerusalem, she was discharged in 1945. In civilian life, she worked as a secretary and shorthand typist, and became a full-time housewife when she married her late husband, Jack. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

**Cecil Wright**  
**Royal Air Force**

Cecil Victor Wright of Ovingdean, Brighton died on 5 May, aged 99. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1931 and trained at Hendon before being posted to RAF Calshot to work on flying boats. During the Second World War, he joined a squadron supporting the 8th Army in the Western Desert. Demobbed as Technical Sergeant in 1945, he worked as a tram and bus driver in South East London, then later joined an electrical firm. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

**George Bensley**  
**Royal Air Force**

George Ernest Bensley of Ascot, Berkshire died on 7 May, his 90th birthday. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1940. Having served in Palestine and the UK, he was demobbed in 1946. In civilian life, he worked as a motor mechanic,

completing 36 years with the AA. Our sympathy goes to his widow Valerie and all the family.

**Peter Slade**  
**Army Air Corps**

Peter Slade of Prestatyn, Clwyd died on 7 May, aged 89. He joined the Royal Fusiliers in 1939 and served around the UK as a driving instructor. He transferred to the Army Air Corps in 1945 and was discharged the following year. In civilian life, he worked on the buses in London until he was 65, then worked on coaches in the Lake District for eight years. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

**Margaret Morrow**  
**Auxiliary Territorial Service**

Margaret Morrow nee Armstrong of Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria died on 8 May, aged 86. She joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1941 and served around the UK. Demobbed in 1945, she became a full-time wife and mother, raising four children. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

**Thomas Milward**  
**Intelligence Corps**

Thomas Andrew Barr Milward of Alfreton, Derbyshire died on 10 May, aged 96. He joined the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry in 1940 then transferred to the Intelligence Corps the following year. After serving in Northern Ireland, Algeria and Italy,

he was demobbed in 1946. In civilian life, he worked for several local authorities. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

**Jim Knowles**  
**Royal Navy**

Jim Knowles of Darfield, Barnsley, South Yorkshire died on 11 May, aged 84. He joined the Royal Navy in 1943 and specialised in maintaining Landing Craft. Discharged as Petty Officer in 1946, he worked for the haulage firm Foster Roberts and later Ford's Heavy Truck division. Our sympathy goes to his widow Margaret and all the family.

**Stanley Hayward**  
**Royal Artillery**

Stanley George Hayward of Fakenham, Norfolk died on 12 May, aged 87. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1942 and served in Egypt, Sicily, Italy, France, and Germany. Demobbed in 1947, he worked in industry and lost an eye in a factory accident. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

**Bob Beswick, MBE**  
**Royal Army Medical Corps**

Robert Beswick, MBE of Southgate, London died on 13 May, aged 90. He joined the Royal Army Medical Corps in 1939 and served in the UK, West Africa, and Gibraltar. Demobbed in 1944, he became a chartered

surveyor and worked for the government in various boroughs. He was active in the Royal British Legion and was awarded the MBE in the 1994 Birthday Honours for serving as Vice Chairman of their North London War Pensions Committee where he helped other veterans with tribunals and appeals. Our sympathy goes to all members of the family.

**Sidney Bowden**  
**Queen's Own Royal**  
**West Kent Regiment**

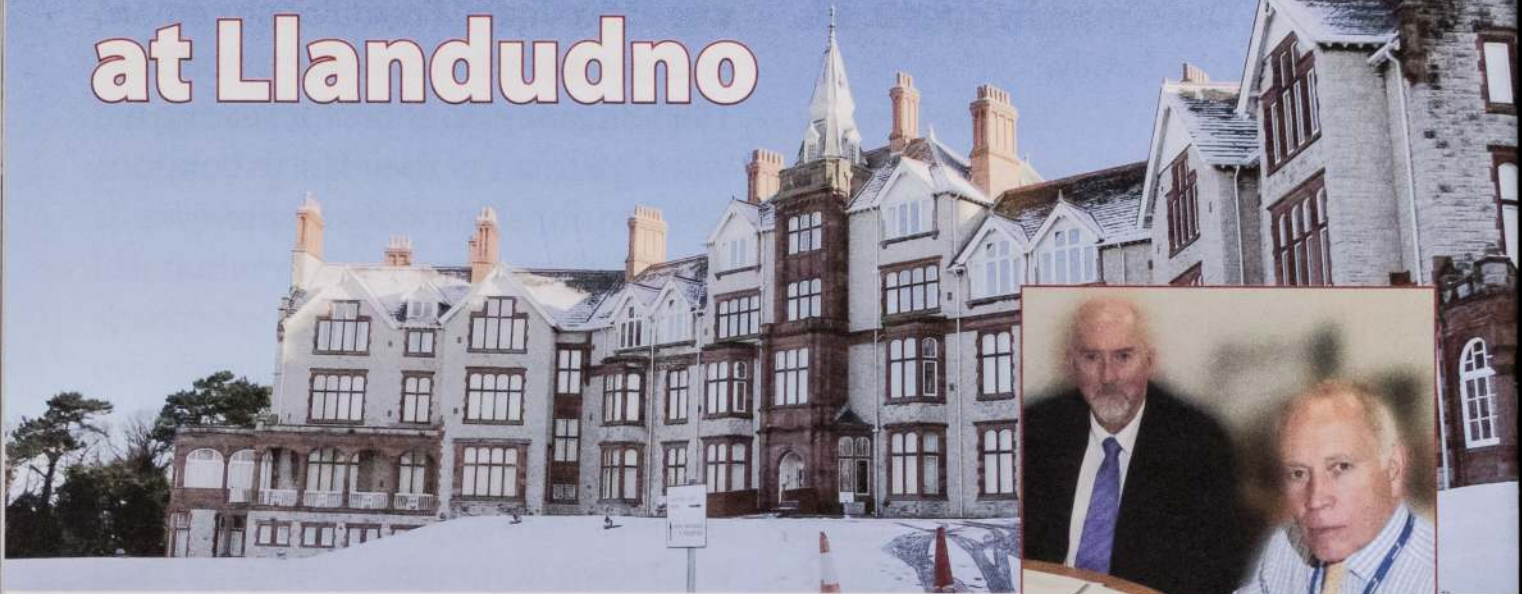
Sidney George Bowden of Bognor Regis, Sussex died on 17 May, aged 89. He joined the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment in 1938 and served in the Middle East and Mediterranean. Discharged in 1946, he worked for a printing firm. Our sympathy goes to all the family.

**George Breeden**  
**Royal Army Service Corps**

George Ernest Breeden of Braintree, Essex died on 19 May, aged 83. He joined the General Service Corps in 1945 and soon transferred to the Royal Army Service Corps. He trained at Ballykinlar, and was posted to Essex with a Tank Transporter Unit. After serving further at Yeovil, he was demobbed in 1948. In civilian life, he worked in the motor trade for Ray Powell Motors. He was a member of the Horticultural Society. Our sympathy goes to all the family.



# Building work starts at Llandudno



Construction has commenced at Craig-y-Don (above). St Dunstan's Chairman Major General Andrew Keeling (inset right) signs the contract with advice from our Project Manager Mick Byrne.

**S**T DUNSTAN'S IS pleased to announce that construction work developing the new centre at Llandudno commenced on 17 May. Local contractors Wynne Construction have been appointed to carry out the refurbishment of the former North Wales Medical Centre to prepare it for 2011.

"We are delighted to be underway with the refurbishment and hope to be up and running

and in a position to open St Dunstan's Llandudno Centre in the Autumn of 2011," said St Dunstan's Chief Executive Robert Leader. "The new facility will help ensure that we are reaching more blind ex-Service personnel in need of our specialist assistance. It will enable them to access bespoke services and support, equipping them with the skills to lead full and independent lives. We have been overwhelmed by the welcome received from

the people of North Wales and look forward to becoming part of the local community."

The new Centre will provide rehabilitation and training, teaching independent living skills, such as getting around safely, navigating a kitchen, and IT skills. It will also include specially adapted leisure, dining and accommodation facilities catering for everything from residential training weeks to nursing and respite care.