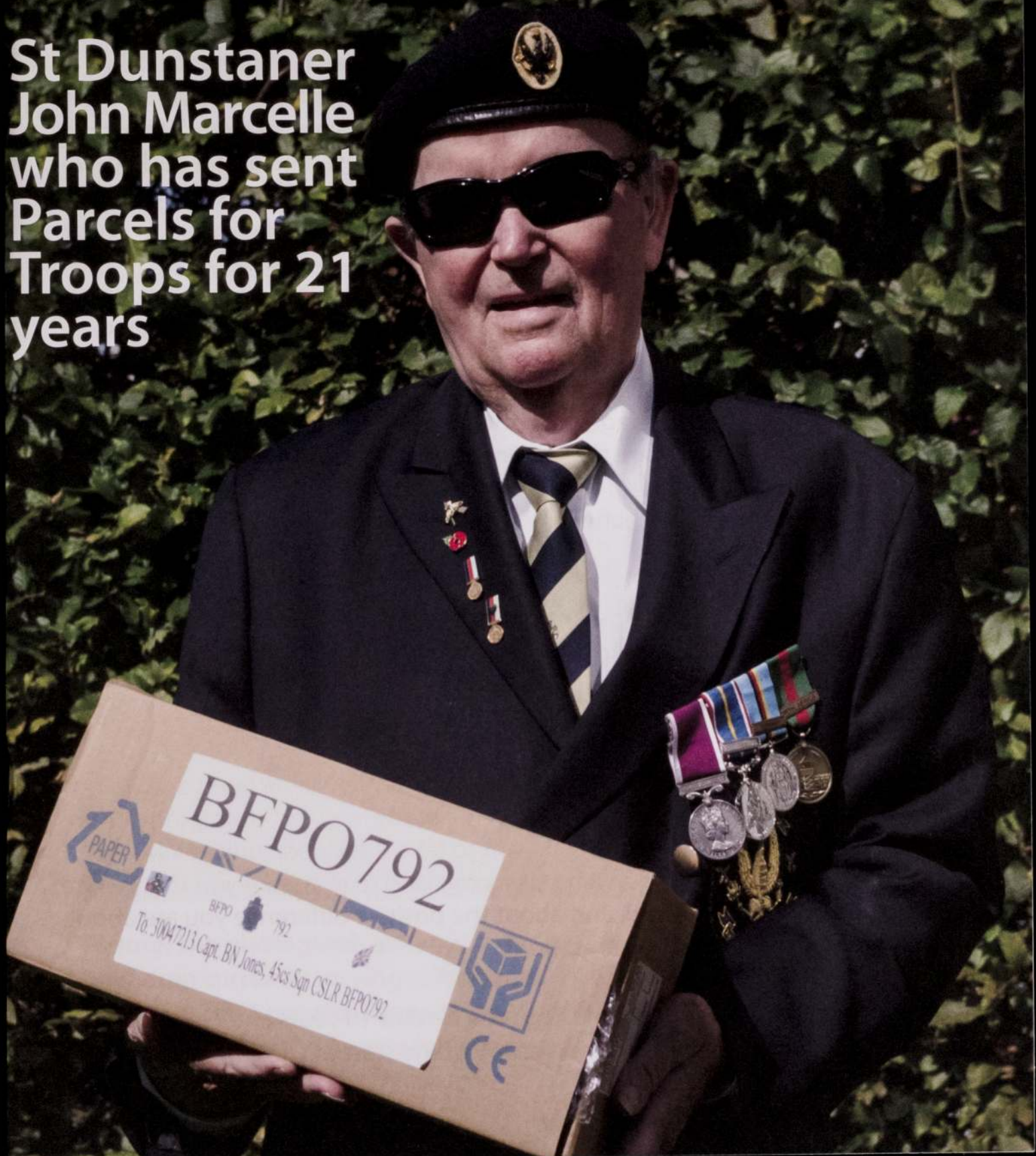


St Dunstan's October 2011 Review

St Dunstaner
John Marcelle
who has sent
Parcels for
Troops for 21
years



From the Chairman

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

In past Reviews we have been very open in the communications about the progress and development in Future Focus, the project to look at the brand of the charity and how it can be more effective in raising awareness, increasing funds and attracting new beneficiaries.

At the recent trustees meeting we received a strategic update from the senior management team and the various naming options were considered. The trustees were supportive of the strategic approach presented and we asked that more details and clarification on certain points be further developed. We will update you as soon as possible.

I must confess that this is the time of year I like least. It might all go back many years to when autumn brought that familiar but uncomfortable cloud called 'going back to school' after those long, carefree, balmy summer holidays. The nights are drawing in, the leaves are beginning to fall – I spent a couple of hours in the garden two days ago picking up leaves and already it looks as if I didn't! –and the hard facts are that summer is over and winter is a-comin' in. For some reason the thought of winter is much worse than winter itself, for in reality the contrast that the change in seasons brings is one of the delights of living in this country.

All those fresh bracing mornings, and warm cosy evenings in front of the fire, to say nothing of a visit or two by Jack Frost to put a really different crispy gloss on everything, and then the snowdrops and the daffodils making a welcome return. I'm feeling better already!

By the time you read this our long awaited third Centre will be open and doing brisk business. I know the Llandudno staff is already in place, chomping at the bit and impatient to get stuck in. So I want to take this opportunity to wish all of you working at Llandudno a warm welcome, and to re-assure you that we are very excited about your arrival, and about the positive difference you are about to make to our very special organisation.

World War I and II between them lasted for a total of 10 years and two months. October 7, 2011 marks the 10th anniversary of the start of the current war

in Afghanistan, and between March 2003 and April 2009 (over six years) significant numbers of British military forces were deployed in Iraq.

With St Dunstaners already from these two conflicts, and not forgetting that we have also helped young men who have lost some of their sight, but not enough to qualify as St Dunstaners, we are all too aware of the human costs of these conflicts.

It is also sobering to recall that while 380 young British service people have lost their lives over the past 10 years in Afghanistan, 657 security personnel died in Northern Ireland in the 10 years from 1971. I conclude that it is a sad fact that war, in one form or another, is here to stay.

Wars create casualties, including blindness, and until someone is clever enough to stop that happening we need to ensure that St Dunstan's continues to thrive.



Picture: The photograph above is from Capt. BN Jones, 45 Close Support Squadron currently serving in Afghanistan. 45 Close Support Squadron is a sub unit of 2 Logistics Support Regiment RLC. Capt Jones features in the Review linked to the Parcels for Troops sent by St Dunstaner John Marcelle.

St Dunstan's Calendar.

October

Dance Week	2nd – 8th
Widow's Week	9th – 15th
Golf at Rusper	15th - 16th
Computer Club	19th - 20th
Amateur Radio Club.	21th - 29th
Bowling Club	30th - 13th Nov

November

Cenotaph	12th – 13th
Writers' Forum	19th
Craft Days	14th – 15th

December

Music Week	4th- 10th
Christmas Concert, Marylebone	6th
Christmas Concert, Brighton	8th

St Dunstan's Review October 2011 No 1,017



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On the cover:
St Dunstaner John
Marcelle who has sent
Parcels for Troops for 21
years.

Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

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Noticeboard.

Dates for your diary and useful information.

The Building – St Dunstan's Short Story Competition 2012.

They say everyone has a book in them, but for the 2012 St Dunstan's Review Short Story competition we want to find out how many people have a great short story in them.

We invite you to send a fictional work on the theme: The Building – if a building could tell its story what would it be.

So please get super creative and think up an interesting and intriguing history to a building you know, or make one up and create a history for it. What would the building reveal if it could speak? Who has passed through its doors and what has the building witnessed?

All submissions should be an original work and not previously published. The competition is open to St Dunstaners, or members of the Diana Gubbay Trust, their wives, husbands, widows or widowers. The judge's decision will be final.

Prizes will be announced later this year, and the winner will have their work published in the Review next year.

Please follow these steps when submitting entries for the competition:

- 1) Entries should be typewritten and should not exceed 1,500 words.
- 2) Only one submission per person.
- 3) Entries must be received by the Editor, St Dunstan's Review, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD by 16 January 2012.

St Dunstan's VIP Diaries for 2012.

St Dunstan's VIP Diaries for 2012 are now in stock. To purchase please telephone Nathan Clements on 01273 391441 or write to him at St Dunstan's, Greenways, Ovingdean, Brighton BN2 7BS. We offer the following:

A4 VIP diary at £6.80 - A6 pocket VIP diary at £3.95
A3 VIP wall calendar at £3.65 - A4 VIP address book at £7.50
A4 VIP Telephone book at £7.50

Chance to Buy A DVD of HMS Sultan Summer Camps.

Familiar Faces, the DVD from the Summer Camps at HMS Sultan, 2001 - 2011, can be purchased from St Dunstan's John Lappin. Requests for the DVD should be made no later than 12th November and should be accompanied by a cheque for £3.00, made payable to St. Dunstan's Summer Camp and stating the address to which the DVD should be sent.

Of this fee, £2.50 will be allocated to Camp funds, the remainder being used to defray production costs. DVDs will be delivered during late November. In the meantime, the current version will be updated to include new faces.

Each DVD is a slideshow of photographs of Campers, 'Dogs' and other helpers, Head Office visitors, Naval staff etc... with a musical background of well-known marches. The running time is approximately 20 minutes. Cheques should be sent to John Lappin, 9 Langdale Avenue, Outwood, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF1 3TX.

A Night To Remember.

St Dunstan in the West, Fleet Street, London EC4A 2HR will hold a night of Words and music for Remembrance on 9 November from 7pm. Funds raised on the night will go to St Dunstan's and the Afghanistan Trust.

Tickets can be purchased on the door for £15, or in advance for £12.50 from www.gottickets.com/event/134632. Concessions are available. Enquiries can be made by email remembernovember2011@gmail.com

Heroes Past and Present – Appeal from the Royal British Legion.

To commemorate 90 years since the formation of the Royal British Legion, the charity is looking for people who have served in conflict zones to tell their story.

They are looking to create a reference book for secondary schools and create a website that will enable your story to be told for posterity. They would like to interview those who have served in the conflicts listed below, enabling you to tell your story on video, or audio, or through a written account. They are looking to record the accounts of men and women who have served their country and how the affects of conflict have influenced your life.

In particular they are looking for people who served in:

Palestine 1920-1948 - Malaya 1948- 1960 -
Yangtze Incident 1949- 1951 - Korea 1950-1953
Mau Mau Uprising 1952 – 1960 - Canal Zone Emergency 1954
Cyprus 1955 – 1959 - Suez 1956
Indonesia - Malaysia 1962-1966 - Dhofar 1962-1975
Aden 1963-1967 - Northern Ireland 1969-2007
Falklands 1982 - Gulf War 1 1990-1991
Bosnia 1992 - Sierra Leone 2000
Afghanistan Ongoing
And Iraq 2003-2009

For further information go to website: www.heroespastandpresent.org.uk

Giving in Memory.

We are always extremely grateful for the gifts people make to St Dunstan's in memory of loved ones. We are often asked for collection envelopes to be given out at funerals. If you would like a collection envelope in memory of a loved one please contact Rosalind Parry, Tribute Fund Officer, St Dunstan's, FREEPOST WD2, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London, W1A 4XB, telephone number 020 7616 7953, email rosalind.parry@st-dunstans.org.uk.

Letters to the Editor

As we welcome your letters please do send them in to us. They could be in response to an article in the Review, or something you feel to be of interest to your fellow St Dunstaners.

You can send letters by post to St Dunstan's Review, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD. Please mark them Letter to the Editor.

Or if you prefer please send an email to Catherine Goodier at email: catherine.goodier@st-dunstans.org.uk

Dear Catherine

Just to say how much I enjoyed the Review, as usual, and was particularly interested and encouraged by the article on Charles Bonnet Syndrome, as I found myself among those who have experienced it. It happened during the first few months of my vision deterioration and, until I got somewhat used to it, found it initially quite disturbing.

I began to see buildings, bridges, hedges, trees, and flowering shrubs in all sorts of odd places! The first time I really knew there was something very wrong with my sight was when a huge mansion house suddenly appeared, straddling the road across the glen. I felt compelled to shout out, to warn my dear wife, that we were about to invade someone's living room without an invite! The house was perfect in every detail - even to the pointing in the brickwork! I just closed my eyes, realised this was some trick of the mind, and it all disappeared.

There were many subsequent visions - more houses, all perfectly built and solidly set up in the most unexpected locations! Trees and bushes of various varieties joined the gallery, all with buds and blossoms in the depth of winter.

I thought I must be going slightly bonkers, but told my wife, and we had a good laugh about it, and when I mentioned it to one eye consultant he said he considered it was a sign of impending blindness!

By now my sight had worsened, and even trying to go out walking, with my

white cane, was a problem, as I kept going off the pavement to avoid non-existent trees and bridges that suddenly sprung up in my path!

Then I got my guide dog, and she resolutely plodded on, through blooming hedgerows and hump-backed bridges, and I plodded alongside, without the need to try to avoid these non-existent obstacles.

One type of vision (for want of a better word) that really caused my heart to leap was the (imaginary) sight of us in the car careering downhill, through houses and obstacles, doing a virtual Cresta run while my wife placidly drove along a quiet and perfectly level country road.

I am happy to say that, for some time now, the CBS effects seem to have disappeared, and I no longer enjoy the flowers and blossoming bushes in mid-January, or the thrills of downhill skiing in the summer. But I can certainly sympathise with those who still suffer from the syndrome. It certainly is very comforting to know that having CBS does not indicate that one is going ga-ga.

Thanks for the article and for the Review.

Sincerely,

John Hutchinson.

Response from the Editor

Dear John

Thank you so much for your letter.

I was pleased to read that you found Hilary Brown's article so beneficial. I have received a large number of extremely positive comments about her article from St Dunstaners, and their wives who are relieved to find an explanation to these visions.

We extend our thanks to Hilary.

With warmest wishes Ed

Dear Editor

Further to my published letter in September's Review I have now realised that my comments regarding the Royal British Legion, and the white poppy, were incorrect and for that I unreservedly apologise.

To cause offence to another wonderful organisation was furthest from my mind. I relied upon my memory instead of checking the facts and for this I wish to apologise to all those people that I might have offended.

To quote from page 23 of 'Keeping Faith', The History of The Royal British Legion by Brian Harding 2001.

Quote

1934 saw a new symbol on sale: the white poppy. The sellers were members of the Women's Co-operative Guild, which had been founded in 1933. Unlike the Legion's red poppies they were not sold to raise funds for benevolent purposes but to signify belief in 'sacred cause of Justice and the freedom of the World' - the words inscribed on the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior. The Legion was more than a little puzzled since this was cause of those who had fought and suffered in the war and for whom it sought the nation's remembrance and support through the red poppy.

However, the Peace Pledge Union, formed the same year also adopted the white poppy and it continued to be on sale in November each year, the contrast in colour suggesting that the Legion's red poppy was in some way a glorification of war - a sad irony in view of the origins of the 'Flanders Poppy' and the Legion's firm belief that the way to peace lay through the remembrance of past sacrifice, which the poppy symbolised.

Unquote

Once again I apologise for my error.

Sincerely

Jack Pulfer

Centre to Centre Marchers set off from Ovingdean to Llandudno.

After months of training and planning three intrepid St Dunstaners set off on their Centre to Centre March. They are Billy Black who served with the Royal Highland Fusiliers, Chris Lee of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Corps and Charlie Eastwood who served for almost 23 years with the Royal Signals.



Picture: Head of Centre Services Helen Emmerson hands over the 'key' to Llandudno.

Starting from the Ovingdean Centre on 5th September they were cheered on their way by a group of keen supporters after Helen Emmerson, Head of Centre Services handed them the 'key' to Llandudno.

They are following a 327 mile route that will take them from Ovingdean to finish at the Llandudno Centre at 10am on Monday 19th September, when they will open the Centre to their fellow St Dunstaners. Enroute they stopped at St Dunstan's HQ in Harcourt Street where they were met by Chief Executive

Robert Leader, President Ray Hazan and the members of staff based there.

The support vehicle was driven by Stewart Graham and Cpl Jonathan (JJ) Davies, who also took it in turns to march with the guys. Stewart, a freelance outdoor pursuit's instructor has a long association with St Dunstan's as he and his father are sighted guides during St Dunstan's annual ski trip.

Cpl Jonathan Davies of 55 Off Platform Repair Company, 104 Forces Support Battalion REME was asked to take part by his CO, Major Ewen Cameron, a sighted guide during ski week and an escort at Cenotaph. Once again our thanks go to Graham Raphael of Motorsport Endeavour and Jonny Ions of Volkswagen for the loan of the VW Sharan.



Picture: Charlie Eastwood, Billy Black, Graham Raphael and Chris Lee stand by the VW Sharan at Harcourt Street.

As the Review goes to press they have just arrived at the Sheffield Centre to a warm welcome from the staff there. Harry and Joan Beevers walked the last half mile to the Centre with them. The tireless trio said they are holding up well and they have been buoyed up by the many messages of support they have received, including phone calls from St Dunstan's Chairman Major General Andrew Keeling. We will bring you a final update and photos in the November edition of the Review when we report on the opening of the Llandudno Centre.

21 Years of Sending Parcels for Troops

by Catherine Goodier.

Having served overseas with the 14th/20th (King's) Hussars, St Dunstaner John Marcelle knows the importance of parcels sent to troops from people back home. He has experienced firsthand the strength that can be derived from a message of support from a stranger.

A former Sergeant Major and tank driver, John served overseas, including postings in Tripoli and Benghazi in Libya. He knows what it is like to be away from family and friends and that's why today John from Romford spearheads an operation in Essex sending Parcels for Troops to Afghanistan.

We are proud to bring you an interview with John. We also include tributes sent from troops serving in Afghanistan who have received the parcels sent by John and his team.

John Marcelle begins: "I started to send parcels to members of my former Regiment, the 14th/20th (King's) Hussars in 1990 during the First Gulf War. I served with the Hussars from 1949 until 1972 and wanted to let them know that people in the UK were with them in spirit. I know how important the messages of support are, as during my time overseas I received parcels from my family, but it really boosted my morale when I received a message from a stranger. It let me know that people back home were thinking of and supporting us and we weren't alone, fighting in a foreign land without their support.

"Following cessation of hostilities I decided to carry on as we have troops everywhere. Again I sent parcels to my former Regiment and started to get teams together to work with me. Each time I did an interview in my local press about my work, I was inundated with calls from people who were eager to help.

"It really showed the support that's out there for the men and women of our

Armed Forces who put their life on the line daily and in no time at all I had nine teams that covered the whole of Essex. Over time we reduced the number to four and each team leader had a satellite team, which made it a much more efficient operation to manage.

After the terrorist attack on the twin towers and the start of the 9/11 wars we expanded our operation to include the Royal Logistics Corps as they are the lifeline to the frontline.

"During my service in the Sultanate of Oman I drove supplies through a minefield to Muscat and know the perils of their work. We now send around 200 parcels per month to Afghanistan to the King's Royal Light Dragoons, the Royal Logistics Corps, 45 CSR RM Commando and two Gurkha Regiments who serve with the Royal Engineers and the Rifles.

"Tesco in Romford has been fantastic as we hold regular Parcels for Troops days there. We are joined by Armed Forces personnel and veterans and members of the public give us goods to be included in the parcels. They also leave their messages of support. In one day we took £23,000 worth of stock, £900 in cash and £650 in Tesco vouchers. I want to thank Tesco and everyone who has donated goods or messages, and the many people who bring us their completed parcels. As my garage is constantly full my neighbours have loaned me their garage space. The goodwill is incredible.

"We send separate parcels for male and female troops as they obviously have different needs. People are often surprised that women serve on the frontline as they don't realise they man the guns onboard the helicopters, or drive the trucks to the frontline.

"My team leaders in Essex are Jo Cassidy, Pamela Bradford (Jo's mother) and Linda Cain. Jo's young children Taylor and Isabelle are also involved as they write numerous messages of support to the troops. I am always moved by the letters that come back and in particular the letters that go to Taylor and Isabelle. The message is always very fatherly to check they are doing their homework and planning for their future. I think it shows how the person who wrote it is missing their family. To all who may read this Review article please do not forget the

many young women who work beside the men on and behind the front line taking supplies forward and patching up the wounded on patrols."

Here we bring you messages from troops serving on the front line in Afghanistan, which demonstrate the importance of the work carried out by John and his team.

Four Testimonies to John Marcelle's Parcels for Troops

I am part of the 9th/12th Royal Lancers and currently working within the 3 MERCIAN Brigade Advisory Group. My team is thirty men strong and our role is to mentor the Afghan National Army (700 strong) by conducting patrols together, as well as putting them through various training serials and living alongside each other. The role is extremely rewarding as it is well known that they are our exit strategy as we will be handing over responsibility to them in the future. They are developing well and we have improved their understanding of the importance of winning over the hearts and minds of their local communities. We deployed in March 2011 and will return to the UK in October 2011.

John and his team have been exceptional in lifting my team's morale as we have lived in a small dusty Afghan National Army camp in the centre of Gereshk, Helmand Province. They have sent well over thirty parcels to us and keep us well stocked in toothpaste, toothbrushes, sweets, noodles, etc. The parcels also include inspirational letters that let us know people back home are supporting us. All of which is very important for soldiers out here and from all of us, we can't thank them enough.

Captain WNC Greig

I am Spr Gurung, part of 39 Armoured Engineer Squadron, 32 Engineer Regiment working with 3 Commando Brigade. My role is to work/assist with all the units deployed here in Herrick 14 using my combat engineering skills, building-roads, check points (CP) and patrol bases (PB).

Ref John Marcelle and his team, they have been exceptional. We operate from CPs and our living conditions are very basic. Let's say adaptation is the key word.

I came to know about John Marcelle and his Parcels for Troops from my friend. At first I was not sure whether to write him an e-mail. After coming into contact with him, 4-5 parcels were posted out. We were like little kids given a Christmas present. It contained all of the essential goodies and the letters from people back home in support of our work/effort were a real boost to morale. We can't thank them enough.

I am from Nepal and to know John (like a father figure) in my Herrick tour is unbelievable. Even though we have not met personally, it would be an honour to meet him. I cannot express in words how grateful we are.

Regards Ghanasayam Gurung (Sam)

Hello John

Thank you so much for the welfare parcel. I never realised how handy tea towels can be. It's amazing what you do for the troops and we can't thank you enough. It always brightens our day to receive a parcel and they always seem to come when you're having a bad day. So it brings some morale to the day too.

My name is Kim and I am a Royal Navy Medic on the frontline. I'm currently in a PB looking after 40 plus lads. I go patrolling every day with lads I'm working with, which are 2RGR The Gurkhas. They are fab to work with and being the only female here, they really look after me. The boys and girls are doing an amazing job out here and it's nice when we receive parcels from people like yourself. So again Thank you so much.

All the best Kim

"It has been wonderful throughout our deployment on Op HERRICK 14 to receive the parcels and messages of support from John Marcelle and his team. Their kind words have helped sustain the high morale and work rate that we strive for in our unit. We have been able to distribute the parcels to men and women stationed at various Patrol Bases and Check Points, and they too have been most appreciative. In particular it has been great to receive female specific parcels; there are a number of female soldiers in my Squadron and also

the wider Army deployed around Helmand Province who have let me know how grateful they are.

In sum, we wish to pass on our thanks to John and his team for their sterling efforts - it makes us very proud to know that they are thinking of us and the work that we do."

Captain Branwen Jones, 45 CS Squadron.

We finish with an email message from Sammy, (Spr Gurung) which was sent as the Review went to press and photography from Capt. BN Jones, 45 CS Squadron sent from Afghanistan.

Hey John, It's nearly there for us now we are flying back to bastion today, and in a week back to Germany,. I can't believe the tour is about to end,. Thank you for you support and kindness - we really appreciate you sending us the parcels. I hope the organisation will keep on doing it's good work. Lastly thank you once again Regards Sammy.



Picture: Some of the guys and girls meet Cheryl Cole on 14 September 2011 on her visit for the Pride of Britain Awards.

Working with Headley Court.

by Vanessa Young, Rehab & Training Manager, Ovingdean.

As we enter into the 10th year of war in Afghanistan we include an article from Vanessa Young, Rehab & Training Manager at Ovingdean to show how our work with young war blinded troops continues.

Here Vanessa writes of her work with DMRC Headley Court.

For 20 years there has been a close and successful working relationship between DMRC Headley Court and St Dunstan's for patients undergoing rehabilitation following injury or illness. This has involved Headley Court having access to St Dunstan's resources in a timely manner for patients with sight loss.

Quite how it started may have been lost in the mists of time! However, the initiative to commence skills training whilst the person is still at Headley Court arose twelve years ago when a young man who had lost all his sight was transferred to Ovingdean.

In the days leading up to his transfer, once his injuries had healed sufficiently for him to be mobile, he'd been given a bamboo cane by staff at Headley Court in order to help him to orientate himself on the ward. It was immediately clear that a ROVI's input at Headley Court during this time, in order to introduce a programme of mobility training, would have been hugely beneficial.

Since then we have provided advice and training on-site from a visiting St Dunstan's ROVI (Rehabilitation Officer for the Visually Impaired) as and when required. For example, as far back as 2003 I undertook indoor mobility training and ILS training at Headley Court with a young man who remained an applicant, and in 2005 carried out an intensive programme of outdoor mobility training there with a young woman who subsequently became a St Dunstaner. Since then we've provided a range of ROVI and IT assessments and training.

The frequency of this collaborative work has been variable depending on numbers of patients coming through the system with a vision impairment. The

current surge of patients injured in Afghanistan has brought an increase in the number of patients with injuries causing significant vision impairment.

The criteria for referral are:

- patients with partial vision impairment e.g. loss of one eye, hemianopia
- patients with substantial vision impairment affecting daily living, mobility, communication and vocational abilities

Referrals come to me as R & T Manager (Ovingdean) via St Dunstan's Admissions Department. Patients with partial vision impairment receive an assessment by a St Dunstan's ROVI as soon as practical. This may require only one meeting for general advice. Patients with a substantial vision impairment receive an initial visit by the R & T Manager. This may include a full ROVI assessment, or may provide the basis for one carried out by a ROVI during a subsequent visit. Ideally the initial visit takes place at Headley Court during the first 3-4 days of admission to assist with immediate orientation, increase independence and provide advice to other professionals. We aren't accompanied by a St Dunstaner on any of our visits.

Ongoing ROVI support and training is provided in a timely fashion as determined and agreed in treatment planning between St Dunstan's R&T Manager and Headley Court staff. Interdisciplinary treatment planning includes involvement of a ROVI and/or IT Instructor working in collaboration with Headley Court Occupational Therapy and Social Work departments. Suitability of the patient for extended training at St Dunstan's is a clinical decision, made in conjunction with the R & T Manager based on ROVI/IT Instructor recommendations.

ROVIs undertake home visits to continue training and ensure transference of skills in the home. ROVIs also advise re adaptations to houses, in particular with regard to kitchens, bathrooms and access. The R&T team works closely with our Welfare Service and Estates Department, and liaise with Army Welfare and other agencies involved in the treatment and rehabilitation of Headley Court patients/and Young War Blinded (YWB) St Dunstaners.

St Dunstan's ROVIs provide vision impairment awareness and sighted guide training to Headley Court staff. Similarly, our IT Instructors provide training

on accessible software to staff who are working with trainees. Last year we produced a set of guidelines for nursing patients with a vision impairment.

There is a reciprocal arrangement whereby Headley Court staff provide training to staff at St Dunstan's in the areas of ABI (acquired brain injury), MTBI (mild traumatic brain injury), PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) and compassion fatigue.

Particular challenges in relation to working with YWB individuals are around their level of sight which may change, sometimes dramatically, during their programme of training and the functional and psychological impact of this. In addition, there may be ongoing concerns and treatment relating to other medical conditions.

There are a multitude of issues going on in these young people's lives relating to their discharge from the Army and their consequent loss of career, the reaction of families and partners to their sight loss or other injuries and their stage of acceptance.

We work with youngsters who are double amputees, who may have symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder and who may have lost colleagues in the same incident which injured them. Memorial services and other events take precedence in the lives of these individuals, and there may be involvement by the press to be worked around.

Encouraging people to engage in training is a priority for our department, but we have to understand that timely intervention is not necessarily early intervention.

A number of trainees have been heard to say that they can concentrate on only one thing at a time, and may have to return to their training programme when there is less going on in their lives.

Despite these challenges we have had huge success stories over the years, with many people enjoying greater independence as a result of the training and equipment provided by St Dunstan's.

Fighting Spirit

We bring you a short interview with Cpl William (Billy) Drinkwater of the 1st Battalion Royal Anglian Regiment. Billy joined his Regiment in August 2002 and trained at Catterick. Soon afterwards he was sent to Iraq and he later did two tours in Afghanistan. It was during the second tour that he was injured by an IED on 31st January 2010 in a compound.

Billy was flown back to the UK and he went directly to RCDM Selly Oak/Queen Elizabeth Hospital for treatment and surgery to save his eyes. At Selly Oak he met St Dunstan's Simon Brown and Julie Shales, St Dunstan's Rehab & Training Manager who is based at the Sheffield Centre.

Speaking about that time Billy said: "Julie and Simon visited me almost as soon as I arrived at Selly Oak as I had only just undergone surgery and was still tender and on lots of medication. My eye surgeon, Wing Commander Scott, had told me that some people from St Dunstan's would visit but I'd never heard of it before. It's one of those things - you don't take any notice until you need something.

"What I remember from that initial visit was really helpful as they both reassured me and told me I could do anything I wanted to and my blindness wasn't the end of the world. Simon told me he'd been through a similar experience and I remember he gave me really good advice and left his contact details. I have since called on Simon for advice and I think the peer support aspect of St Dunstan's work is really important. Julie and Simon said I'd benefit from rehab and training at Ovingdean, they made it clear it was optional but it would be good for me to go to find out what was available.

"After I was discharged from Selly Oak I went to St Dunstan's and it was really useful to meet everyone there and I took a lot of inspiration from some of the things I was told by St Dunstaners. Paul Hartley was my ROVI and he went through the CCTVs and other technology which helped me a lot. The IT classes

were really useful and it was good to find out about the software programmes that were available.

"Life seemed to be one big round of rehab as after St Dunstan's I went to Headley Court for further rehab, which was totally different as it was all about reinstating a routine into my life and keeping occupied. It was very full on as you'd expect from a military establishment.

"After that I went back to Ovingdean to do more computer work. I used the gym every day and I can say that out of everywhere St Dunstan's has helped me the most. St Dunstan's was there right from the start and they knew exactly what I needed. Earlier this year I went on the annual ski trip and it was fantastic. Again it really helped as I got a break and it gave me a chance to reflect and assess everything I'd been through, learnt and achieved and focus on the future.

"In August St Dunstan's arranged for me to attend the Blinded Veterans Association Convention in Las Vegas with Simon Brown and Rob Long and I found the convention useful as it was good to meet other people who were blind and hear their stories and find out about their lives. It was very insightful and I came away feeling inspired. One of the things that has got me through is being around guys in similar positions who can talk me through things.

"The support from my family has also been incredible. It's one of the hardest things to be told that your son has been wounded as they didn't know what to expect but they have been really strong. They were also at Selly Oak right from the start and I am still grateful for everything they have done for me. My training from St Dunstan's means I haven't had to rely on my family but it's reassuring to know they are there for me.

"As I have to leave the Army and give up my military career that I was so proud of they've really supported me. My Welfare Officer Sue Cloke has been great. I've done lots of courses and am trying to build my own business in property development. I get bad and good days as it's not just about the physical injuries I sustained, it's the psychological ones that can get to you sometimes; if you don't contain them they make havoc on everything else. You've got to learn from your mistakes but one thing I know is that I'm not one to give up."

An Interview with Julie Shales, Rehab & Training Manager, Sheffield.

Much has changed since Sir Arthur Pearson founded St Dunstan's. In the UK women fought for and won the right to vote and now share full equality with men in the home and workplace. Man has walked on the moon and satellites orbit the earth to ensure such instant communications systems as the telephone or internet bring people across the globe together in seconds.

But one thing that remains unchanged is St Dunstan's commitment to be the first there to meet the soldiers returning from the battlefields and give them back their independence. Soldiers blinded on the First World War battlefields were visited in hospital by Sir Arthur or St Dunstan's staff where they were given a Braille watch, which symbolised their first step to independence.

It is a tradition that continued through the Second World War, the Mau Mau Uprising, Northern Ireland, the Falklands, the first Gulf War, Bosnia, Iraq and today with young war blinded soldiers returning from Afghanistan.

Here Julie Shales, Rehab & Training Manager at the Sheffield Centre speaks about her work with young war blinded soldiers who arrive at RCDM Selly Oak/ Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham. "As soon as the young war blinded troops started coming through to Selly Oak we were straight there as St Dunstan's hasn't lost the importance of providing immediate support.

"It's important to meet with the guys as soon as they arrive at Selly Oak as we can reassure them and their family. We can show that although they may have a long period of adjustment and rehabilitation ahead of them they can still go on to lead successful lives.

"It's vital to be there from the outset as they may otherwise start to rely on their family, rather than trying to adapt and do things for themselves. If you can get that in place and if there's a little bit of a spark there to succeed they will. And I've never come across one who hasn't got a spark. As long as you can grasp that and work with them they will be independent and move on and get in to college, or work, or whatever it is they want to do.

"We are very lucky as an organisation to have a good working relationship with RCDM Selly Oak/Queen Elizabeth Hospital. It was forged by David Habershon (RN), St Dunstan's Head of Admissions and Pensions. I am the link worker for St Dunstan's which means they will contact David Habershon as soon as someone with a vision impairment is admitted. He will email me and Helen Emmerson and I will liaise with the Army Welfare Officer and arrange a date and time to visit the young war blinded person. Working with the WO means I am able to visit the hospital outside normal visitor hours.

"I don't follow a format during that initial visit as it's very much about the individual. I'll go in and tell them about St Dunstan's, what we do and how we can help and promote their independence. My first thing is to find out what happened to them and try to get them talking and find out where they're at.

"I usually take a home visit kit which contains all the basics but I don't take any equipment to give to them until I get a feel for how they are. Quite often their family has been out to buy a talking watch and other equipment for them as it's their way of coping.

"Every visit is different. When the family is there I need to find out how they are, not just the injured person, as the family has obviously been affected. It depends who's present and what they ask. One visit might take 45 minutes and another 2½ hours as it depends on what they want to do and what they are able to do. It could be something simple like issuing them with a talking watch, or a liquid level indicator so they can pour their own water without having to ask for help. Or it could be to help them get out of bed and start moving independently using a sighted guide, or a guide cane to locate the obstacles.

"One of the first people I visited at the hospital who had returned from Afghanistan was Billy Drinkwater. Simon Brown came with me and it was really useful to have him there as Billy could speak with Simon about his experiences. As Simon lost one eye and much of the vision in his remaining eye after he was shot in Iraq he was able to tell Billy about the hospital appointments and what he could expect.

"I also work with the guys who won't go on to become St Dunstaners. Usually my initial contact with them is at their home after they've been discharged from Selly Oak, as the main concern wasn't their eyesight and staff at Selly Oak

probably thought they wouldn't qualify as St Dunstaners. We still help them by giving advice and training.

"One lad in Birmingham had lost the use of one eye and he suffered a lot from glare. Just assessing his vision and providing him with the correct UV glasses meant he could get out and about on his own with confidence. I had the same with another lad who had a big issue with driving, by getting him the correct UV glasses he was off. He's since left the Army and found work.

"I've been told by those who don't qualify for St Dunstan's how reassuring it is to know that if anything did happen we would be in their life, we are a safety net.

"After Selly Oak we pick up the rest of the training at Ovingdean. With the young guys there's usually intense rehab to be done. Louise Timms and the staff in her Sports and Recreation Dept play a vital role as engagement in sports is a crucial part of the rehab programme, both physically and mentally. When they're not doing IT or mobility training it gets them fit again and gives them something positive to focus on.

"Peer to peer support is also vital and it's great Simon Brown lives close to the Sheffield Centre as he was here for IT and mobility training at the same time Chris Nowell came through. Chris was wounded in Afghanistan when an RPG struck his FOB. I initially visited Chris and his wife Claire at home. When they came to the Centre Simon was able to chat to them and give them lots of positive support. It's important to incorporate the family into the rehabilitation at the Centre as it helps for them to see the facilities and find out about the different types of training on offer.

"It's great when I look back and see the progress these young men have made. I always try and make my first meeting a positive one and give reassurance that they can continue to live an independent life. It's fantastic to see, or read about, them months later and the goals they have achieved. It's great to see that Chris Nowell is climbing Snowden with his brother and members of their Regiment. Rob Long is happily married and at college and Simon Brown has successfully completed counselling and NLP courses. And to hear of Billy Drinkwater's successes.

By Royal Approval, St Dunstan's Archers at Windsor.

St Dunstan's Archery team showed their skill and enjoyed an outstanding day when they took part in the Tri-Service competition on 15th August in the grounds of Windsor Great Park. Using his contacts Clive Jones, a former Welsh Guardsman and St Dunstan's Archery Club Vice Chairman, secured the illustrious grounds of the Queen's Royal Household Cricket Club for the day.

The team, formed of Clive Jones, Pat Sidnell, Keith Lanchester-Harding, John Bower, Peter Hammond and Peter Price, took on elite teams from the Royal Navy, Royal Air Force, and the Army. St Dunstan's spotters were Linda Price, Joyce Bower, Brian Muggridge, Colin Dickinson, Imogen Lanchester-Harding, Phil Varden and David and Sue Habgood.

It was a close competition that was won by the Royal Navy, followed by teams from St Dunstan's, the Royal Air Force and the Army.



Picture: Taking Aim Archer Clive Jones with Spotter Brian Muggridge.

Speaking of the day Clive Jones said: "It took me a year to organise but everything went to plan on the day. The archery was yet again of a good standard, we at the club are not able to shoot 50 yards, so this shoot was slightly out of the norm for some of our archers. Under the circumstances and the situation we found ourselves in, the archers representing the Club and St Dunstan's shot extremely well, and should be congratulated for their efforts. I just hope that I have a committed team of a similar standard for the next event, which is already being planned.

"I would like to thank Her Majesty for approving the shoot. I would also like to make a very public thank you to the spotters, along with Major Alan Denman MBE, as he presented everyone with their trophies. I served with Alan and it was great to meet him again. My thanks go to Paul Green of St Dunstan's transport who drove the team to and from Ovingdean and to the team at Clickers Archery of Norwich and Graham Harris in particular."

One of the newest members to the team was Peter Price from Peterborough who only took up archery in 2011.

Peter said: "I tried archery while still serving in the Army, but that was just messing about on a field and many years ago. It was during my induction week at Ovingdean when I was introduced to archery that I became hooked. St Dunstan's gave me a contact for a local club near me, the Fenland Archery Club in Whittlesey. I spoke with the Club Chairman and they accepted me willingly and I joined in March this year.

"I purchased my equipment and I now practice two or three times a week at the club. The coaches are all used to teaching, or training with, someone with a vision impairment as they have all been trained by St Dunstan's coaches Sue Habgood and Colin Dickinson, who are also Development Officers with British Blind Sport.

"That meant the instructors at Fenland Archery Club knew what to expect when I arrived. I was the first and remain the only blind member of the club. My first time with St Dunstan's Archery Club was during Archery Week at Ovingdean, which took place in May this year.

"My wife Linda is my spotter and she accompanies me to all the tournaments

and club meetings. I couldn't do archery without someone acting as my eyes and safety guide. I'd recommend any St Dunstaners who think they would like to take up archery to contact St Dunstan's club. They could also contact a club where they live and explain the situation as most will be willing to take blind and partially sighted people. If in doubt contact British Blind Sport."



Picture: Peter Prices Primes His Bow for St Dunstan's Tri-Service Archery competition.

Note from Ed: I would like to thank Clive Jones and the team for including me in the day. I had a great time and I was deeply impressed with their professionalism, team work and concentration. It was a fantastic day. If you would like to find out about getting involved with St Dunstan's Archery Club please speak with David Habgood at Ovingdean, or your Welfare Officer.

Details for St Dunstan's Archery Club and British Blind Sport can be found at: www.st-dunstans-archery-club.org.uk and www.bbsarchery.org.uk



Photo: Spotter Colin Dickinson with Pat Sidnell.



Picture: End to a successful day.

Blinded Veterans Association (America) Hosts Recently Blinded Service Members at 66th National Convention.

by Tom Zampieri

Sixteen U.S. combat-blinded service members injured in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) or Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Afghanistan, joined by two new Project Gemini war-blinded St Dunstaners from Great Britain's Army, participated in the Blinded Veterans Association's (BVA) 66th National Convention at the Golden Nugget Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada, from 15th to 22nd August 2011.

The Project Gemini British recent war blinded service members from St Dunstan's were Cpl Rob Long with his wife Emmeline; Cpl Billy Drinkwater with his fiancée Alice Rose Ann Brown; and returning well-known honorary member of BVA Cpl Simon Brown, on his fourth trip over the pond to a BVA convention, with his partner Marika Kato. They were joined by 11 first-time American service member participants, five other returning OIF veterans, and more than 298 other BVA attendees. We were honored to have them as our special brothers in arms at the BVA convention.



Picture: Simon Brown and Marika Kato.



Picture: Billy Drinkwater with Fiancee Alice and Tom Zampieri.



Picture: Rob Long with his wife Emmeline and Tom Zampieri.

What started as a BVA initiative, known here as "Operation Peer Support" (OPS) beginning in August 2006 and in which new war-blinded service members and families were invited to participate in a week-long special program at the BVA convention, has recently grown into this very special transatlantic link with St Dunstan's. When the first OPS convention session began in 2006, a small group of eight recently wounded warriors went to Buffalo, New York, as part of the Association's 61st convention. The program has now included a total of 67 war blinded service members with 85 family members. Last year, with the help of Colin Williamson, Simon Brown, Louise Timms, Alison Bradley and Ray Hazan, from St Dunstan's a plan was crafted to exchange our veterans among the two organizations and Project Gemini quickly became a reality.

According to Tom Zampieri, BVA's Director of Government Relations, the chief aim of the Project Gemini exchange with St Dunstan's and BVA's ongoing Operation Peer Support is for our recently war blinded veterans from both countries to meet and gain strength, friendship, and knowledge about various rehabilitative services open for them, and to gain experience from many of BVA's longtime members. The annual BVA convention serves as one of the means by which such interaction begins to occur and which will hopefully continue long after the veterans leave to go home.

Our desire is to build the foundation for long-lasting, strong relationships that might be established between the members of BVA who were blinded in previous conflicts and those who have recently had a similar experience," said Tom. "Physical and emotional isolation is a huge issue for those who have

recently lost their sight, and perhaps only those who have gone through the experience themselves can truly understand the great challenges they are facing and can share stories of successful lives that were forged after the trauma."

Our new friends, Rob and Billy, and our old friend, Simon Brown, and their guests all seemed to enjoy making many new friends and discovering common bonds. They shared information on how their experiences related to those of our veterans, beginning with the process of initial rehabilitation and the recovery chapter of life—up to and including plans for future endeavors.

The week was not all classes or lectures, but also included social and recreational events. One such event showcased blinded veterans of several age groups jumping off a building, free falling hundreds of feet while attached to a safety harness. This was not something for the faint of heart, to be sure, but it was well done by Rob Long. This brave group went over to the sky jump at the Stratosphere Hotel on Wednesday evening. The Stratosphere is the tallest building in the U.S. west of the Mississippi River at 108 stories. The sky jump started at the 102nd story of the building resembling a tower and ended in a bull's eye painted on the ground at the base of the tower. Each did so safely and with great pride. The opportunity included some of our Vietnam War blinded veterans who could not sit idly by as youngsters jumped!



Picture: Rob Long gets ready for his bungee jump.

According to BVA's recent National Treasurer and OEF veteran Steve Beres, who travelled to the UK for the inaugural Project Gemini visit, activities such as the sky jump have great significance. "For many of us, part of the healing process after injury is the ability to get back into past activities and even to try some exciting new ones that we may not have considered prior to our loss of sight," he said. "At past conventions, we have participated in kayaking, whitewater river rafting, goal ball, and even skydiving, and, for those who enjoy activities that include a level of 'adrenaline rush,' this year was no exception."

For all those who participated in the jump, smiles abounded. We will see in which manner we get our "rush" next year at the BVA 67th National Convention in Galveston, Texas. At that time we will have an oceanfront to explore!

Today BVA has 11,450 members in all 50 states. There are 53 total chapters. The organization is excited about the new relationship being forged between St Dunstan's and BVA through Project Gemini.



Picture: Simon Brown left with Douglas Cereghin right who was a member of the inaugural Project Gemini in 2011.

Ten questions on...

The subject "Sea Captains" by Harry Beevers.

1. At the battle of Trafalgar in 1805, who was the captain of the flagship "Victory"?
2. Which Yorkshire-born sea-captain sailed on the "Endurance", "Adventure", "Resolution" and "Discovery" on his various voyages?
3. Featured in the works of Gilbert and Sullivan, Captain Corcoran was the captain of which ship?
4. Created by author J.M. Barrie, Captain Hook was the captain of which pirate ship?
5. And who was the captain of television's cartoon pirate ship the "Black Pig"?
6. Which Herman Melville novel features Captain Ahab and his ship the "Piquod"?
7. What part of his body did Captain Jenkins, Master of the "Rebecca" lose, thus provoking a war between England and Spain?
8. Sharing its name with a bird, what was the name of the ship of Sir Francis Drake when he set off on his voyage round the world in 1577?
9. What was the name of the famous novel in which Captain Smollett was Master of the ship "Hispaniola"?
10. In 1872 Captain Benjamin Briggs was Master of The "Mary Celeste", found abandoned in the Atlantic. Which renowned English author of detective novels renamed the brigantine "Marie Céleste" in a fictional story?

Answers on page 36

How to Impress the French!

St Dunstaner Douglas Bull looks back 60 years on a memorable visit to Chartwell.

It was about 10am on Sunday 29th October 1951. Rain had been falling solidly for almost two days and my wife Paddy, asked me: "How can we amuse Monique this afternoon?"

However, I should start at the beginning. So far it had been an eventful week. Monique was a charming French girl of 13 who had arrived to spend a fortnight's holiday with us, planning to improve her English and to help in the house.

At that time we had two daughters - Stephanie aged 4 and Julie aged 6. We had been having a busy time. On Wednesday we had met Monique from the train at Waterloo and had taken her on a ride around the sights of central London, before returning home to Blackheath. On Thursday there was a General Election. The outcome was a defeat for the Attlee Government and the return of Winston Churchill as Prime Minister, heading a Conservative majority. On Friday my wife took the girls to the shops and on Saturday it rained so much we all had a rest and listened to the wireless!

On that wet Saturday Paddy and I opted for a drive around Kent and decided on Chartwell, the home of Winston Churchill. I drove up to the entrance gates, which were slightly open, and as we were the only members of the public at the house we got out and peered through the gap. In those days the gates were opposite the front door.

Suddenly Mr Churchill came out of the front door, followed by a member of his staff, with a plate in his hand. We all drew back hoping we hadn't been seen. But the Prime Minister had spotted us and he beckoned saying: 'Come on in and see me feed the fishes!' We trooped in and followed Mr Churchill down a winding path. On each side were large fish tanks, each holding varying sized carp in the running water. The old man stopped at each receptacle, took some fish food from the plate and gave it to the carp.

With the task of giving the fish their Sunday lunch, Mr Churchill took us round the gardens, showing us the brick walls and lakes he had designed and constructed when landscaping his most beautiful property.

After about 90 minutes the rain started again and Mr Churchill repaired to his summerhouse by the rose garden. "You can wait here until the rain stops as I'm going in for my tea," he said.

Before he left, the Prime Minister playfully pinched Stephanie's cheek and told her: "You are a bonny little girl." And when we got home, Stephanie decided that she would never wash her face again after Mr Churchill had touched it! Monique was impressed. "In France we would never have the President showing any of us round his garden!"

Chartwell, which is open to the public, is at Mapleton Road, Westerham, Kent TN16 1PS Telephone: 01732 868381 email: chartwell@nationaltrust.org.uk Website: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/chartwell

Answers to Ten questions on... The subject "Italy" from page 34.

1. Thomas Hardy.
2. James Cook.
3. H.M.S. "Pinafore".
4. "The Jolly Roger".
5. Captain Pugwash.
6. "Moby Dick".
7. His ear.
8. The "Pelican", the ship had been renamed "The Golden Hind" by the time Drake returned to England in 1580.
9. "Treasure Island" by R.L. Stevenson.
10. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Beer of the Month.

by Colin Williamson.

Meantime London Porter

It was once said that this delightful beer was full of 'smoke, coal and spice' and that's a pretty good description. London Porter is brewed by one of Britain's youngest breweries, Meantime Brewing Company based in Greenwich. It is called London Porter because it was supposed to have 'refreshed the muscular men who toiled throughout the night in the Billingsgate, Smithfield and Covent Garden markets' and it really is a 'big beer'!

It is a crystal black beer which pours with a bubbly head and has a distinctive roasted malt nose which is very evident in the taste. Big chocolate malts give way to a lively hop bitterness which slowly disappears to leave a nice smooth smoky finish. This is a very complex and tasty beer which is quite strong, 5.5%, but very drinkable. An excellent beer which can be found in large stores and bought online.



Family News

Congratulations to:

David Lang, grandson of St Dunstaner Brian and Margaret Lang of Liverpool, who will study Chemistry at Durham University from October 2011. We wish him well.

Anniversaries:

Blue Sapphire (65th):

Raymond and Evelyn Dodd of Petersfield, Hampshire on 5 September.

Douglas and Tessie Knight of Churt, Surrey on 7 September.

John and Audrey Perfect of Yealmpton, Devon on 14 September.

Noel and Madge Bracewell of Preston, Lancs on 21 September.

Joan and Harry West of Poole, Dorset on 21 September.

Diamond (60th):

Syd and Doris Sharples of Penwortham, Preston on 8 September.

Robert and Audrey Matthews of Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire on 22 September.

Beryl and Arthur Wilson of Steyning, West Sussex on 22 September.

John and Lilly Price of Barking, Essex on 22 September.

Golden (50th):

Kevin and Margaret Beahan of Preston, Lancs on 2 September.

Kenneth and Yvonne Mawson of Paulton, Bristol on 2 September.

Joe and Valerie Stackhouse of Rushall, Walsall on 16 September.

Bob and Eileen Cotton of Brighton, East Sussex on 21 September.

Ernest and Margaret Castelow of Stockton on Tees, Cleveland on 30 September.

Thomas and Pat Ratcliffe of Hunstanton, Norfolk on 30 September.

Sandy and Pat Vise of Brighton, East Sussex on 30 September.

Silver (25th):

Reg and Eileen Goding of Brighton, East Sussex on 26 September.

We regret to announce the death of:

Edith Ann Bond who died on 19th June 2011, she was the wife of St Dunstaner Sydney Charles Bond.

Helen Bowyer who died on 13th August 2011, she was the widow of St Dunstaner the late Anthony Bowyer.

Doris Bye who died on 15 June 2011, she was the wife of St Dunstaner Stanley Bye.

Bessie May Davies (Betty) who died on 27th May 2011, she was the wife of St Dunstaner John Davies.

Mary-Celine Freeman who died on 28 August 2011, she was the wife of St Dunstaner Roy Freeman.

Gladys Reid who died on 29th August 2011, she was the widow of St Dunstaner the late William Reid.

Nina Joan Sibley who died on 1st August 2011, she was the wife of St Dunstaner William Sibley.

Muriel Wigglesworth who died on 24th January 2011, she was the widow of St Dunstaner the late William Wigglesworth.

Florence Ethel Wiltshire who died on 14 August 2011 aged 101. She was the daughter of St Dunstaner the late George Henry Wiltshire.

Welcome to **St Dunstan's**

Barbara Bahrynowski of west London served in the Polish Army from 1945.

Frederick Bennett of Gloucester, Gloucestershire served in the Royal Marines from 1935 to 1948.

Albert Bleach of Petersfield, Hampshire served in the Royal Sussex Regiment from 1939 to 1946.

Hugh Carey of Newton-Le-Willows served in the Royal Navy from 1944 to 1947.

Olive Cowley of Croydon, Surrey served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1940 to 1945.

Harry Cox of Gunthorpe, Nottingham served in the Royal Air Force from 1950 to 1952.

Edward Davey of Erith, Kent served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1941 to 1955.

Richard Davies of Scunthorpe, South Humberside served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1939 to 1946.

Kevin De Lacy of Hove, East Sussex served in the Royal Navy from 1946 to 1967.

Gerald Ellis of Weybridge, Surrey served in the Royal Air Force from 1939 to 1946.

David Faircloth of Reigate, Surrey served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1942 to 1946.

Frederick Ferguson of Bourne, Lincolnshire served in the Royal Air Force in 1946.

William Fisher of Lydney, Gloucestershire served in the Royal Air Force from 1957 to 1959.

Clarence Fletcher of Dronfield, Derbyshire served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Army Service Corps from 1943 to 1947.

Alan Garner of Prescot, Merseyside served in the Royal Marines from 1942 to 1946.

Tony Grant of Lincoln served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1978 to 1984.

Alfred Hill of Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire served in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve from 1941 to 1946.

Eryl Hughes of Abergele, Clwyd served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1947.

Peter Johnson of Winscombe, Avon served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1946.

Cissie Jordan of Rotherham, South Yorkshire served in the Women's Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1945.

Joseph Kearns of St Helen's, Merseyside served in the Royal Artillery from 1955 to 1961.

Alexander Keen of Maidenhead, Berkshire served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1939 to 1946.

Peter King of Boston, Lincolnshire served in the Royal Artillery from 1962 to 1971.

Reginald King of Clevedon, Avon served in the Middlesex Regiment (Duke of Cambridge's Own) and the Military Provost Staff Corps from 1939 to 1946.

Margaret Kitchin of Crowborough, East Sussex served in the Voluntary Aid Detachment from 1943 to 1946.

John Lanaghan of Washington, Tyne and Wear served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Signals from 1942 to 1947.

Francis Leyland of Liverpool served in the Royal Engineers from 1952 to 1957.

Wilfred Lindley of Hampton, Middlesex served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Donald Littlewood of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire served in the Mercian Brigade, the Prince of Wales's Division and the Royal Armoured Corps from 1967 to 1973.

Donald Orr of Bexhill-On-Sea, East Sussex served in the Dorset Regiment from 1939 to 1946.

John Pearson of Hampton, Middlesex served in the Royal Navy from 1940 to 1946.

Audrey Reekie from Aberdeen served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1944 to 1946.

Margaret Reeve of Prescott, Merseyside served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1943 to 1946.

John Rhoades-Brown of Waterlooville, Hampshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1947 to 1949.

Horace Ruddick of St Helen's, Merseyside served in the Irish Guards from 1945 to 1948.

George Scott of Kendal, Cumbria served in the Lancastrian Brigade and the Prince of Wales (South Lancashire Regiment) from 1950 to 1956.

Bernard Sharratt of Bedworth, Warwickshire served in the Royal Navy from 1948 to 1955.

Edward Smith of Bognor Regis, West Sussex served in the General Service Corps, the Suffolk Regiment, the Parachute Regiment and the Queen's Division from 1944 to 1978.

Roy Smith of Burnley, Lancs served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1950 to 1956.

Stephen Smith of Chertsey, Surrey served in the Royal Air Force from 1952 to 1954.

Matilda Stuart of Torquay, Devon served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1940 to 1944.

John Sutton of Wallingford, Oxfordshire served in the Royal Signals from 1953 to 1958.

Gordon Thomas of Exeter, Devon served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Army Service Corps from 1944 to 1948.

Alan Thomson of Inverurie, Aberdeenshire served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1954 to 1964.

Richard Waterton of Spalding, Lincs served in the Royal Air Force from 1939 to 1946.

Frederick Wells of Burnley, Lancashire served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1943 to 1946.

Betty Westwood of Newhaven, East Sussex served in the Women's Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Joseph Williamson of South Shields, Tyne and Wear served in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Service from 1940 to 1946.

David Wilson of Grangemouth, Stirlingshire served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1946.

Winifred Wilson of Kidderminster, Worcestershire served in the Women's Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Lewis Woodroffe of Worthing, West Sussex served in the Royal Fusiliers and the Royal Artillery from 1939 to 1946.

John Youden of Chichester, West Sussex served in the Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment), the Royal Artillery and the General Service Corps from 1945 to 1948.

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.

Antoni Antoniewicz, Polish Army

Antoni Antoniewicz of south west London died on 12th August 2011 aged 96. He trained as an Officer Cadet in the Polish Cavalry into which he was commissioned. He was wounded when the German occupation took place in 1939 and was placed in a PoW camp. He escaped a few times and was recaptured but finally made it to Italy on his final attempt at escape where he joined the 2nd Polish Corps under General Alexander in May 1945. He then moved to the UK where he was discharged in 1949 as a 2nd Lieutenant. Initially he worked as a dental mechanic and later had his own laboratory where he made his own equipment. Mr Antoniewicz set up a business with his brother who was a dentist before finally retiring in 1973. Widowed he leaves their two children.

Maurice Cannaby, Royal Engineers and the Army Cadet Force

Maurice Cannaby of Chepstow, Gwent died on 23rd August 2011 aged 78. He joined the Army apprentice college in Chepstow at the age of 15 and the Royal Engineers in 1948. He served all over the world including Germany, Korea, Suez, Cyprus, Kenya, Aden, Gibraltar and Northern Ireland. Notably he took part in the Christmas Island nuclear tests in the 1950s. Discharged as a WO2 in 1972 he remained with the Army for 17 years working with the TAVR on the permanent staff in Gloucester and was commissioned in this role. He left in 2005. Widowed in 2001 he leaves three children and grandchildren.

Reginald Claiden, Royal Air Force

Reginald Claiden of Goring by Sea, West Sussex died on 5th September 2011, aged 85. He joined the RAF in 1943 and served in India, Burma, Singapore and Malaysia before he was discharged in 1947. On discharge he joined the local government, serving with the police as a legal officer where he dealt with prosecutions. He leaves his widow Joyce, two sons and a granddaughter.

Leonard Clark, Royal Artillery

Leonard Clark of Polegate, East Sussex died on 30th August 2011 aged 91. He served in the Royal Artillery from 1940 to 1946 leaving as a Lance Bombardier. He carried out his training in Essex and was posted to 273 Heavy Ack Ack Battery (HAC). He served in London before taking part in the D-Day Invasions (D+6). He then fought through France, Belgium and on to Germany. At the end of the war he returned to civilian life and worked with British Rail as a booking clerk where he remained until he retired from his job at Euston Station at the age 60. He then became a postman until he was 69 when he finally retired. He was married to Emily in 1951 in Sydenham who sadly died in 1985. He married his second wife Florence in 1991 and she sadly died in 2009. He leaves his stepson.

Maurice 'Archie' Clarke, Royal Air Force

Maurice 'Archie' Clarke of Gillingham, Dorset died on 12th September 2011, aged 94. He joined the RAFVR in 1939 and subsequently mobilised as an orderly. He trained in the engineering branch at Gatwick when it was an RAF station, followed by further training at RAF Cranwell. He served in Rhodesia, the Middle East and South Africa. He was discharged in 1946, leaving as a Corporal. After the war he worked at Croydon Airport and later Heathrow for BOAC, later BA, on Viscounts, VC10 and various US aircraft; the work involved maintenance and spares. He retired at 60. He leaves his widow Margaret and a son and daughter.

William Cranmer, General Service Corps, the South Lancashire Regiment (the Prince of Wales's Volunteers), the Lancashire Fusiliers

William Cranmer of Dereham, Norfolk died on 16th August 2011, aged 88. He left school at 14 to work at a wholesalers in London before he joined the General Service Corps in 1942, moved to the South Lancashire Regiment four months later and eventually transferred to the Lancashire Fusiliers in 1943. He served in North Africa, Sicily and Italy and was discharged as a Fusilier in 1947. Following service Mr Cranmer returned to the wholesalers but he later worked in the retail trade, placing and receiving orders for a chain of 70 shops. Mr Cranmer's wife died in 1992 and he leave a son who lives in Kent.

Joseph Darcy, Royal Navy

Joseph Darcy of Plympton, Plymouth died on 7th September 2011 aged

93. He joined the Royal Navy in 1940 as a signalman, taking part in the Dunkirk evacuation and the D-Day landings. Most of the war he served in minesweepers and corvettes but his last ship, HMS Saumarez, was deployed to the Far East and the Indian Ocean. He was demobilised in 1946 and returned to Plymouth to resume work again as a bus conductor. Mr Darcy married in 1940 but was sadly widowed in 1994. He leaves a son and two grandchildren.

John Ellis Eastham, Royal Navy

John Ellis Eastham of Preston, Lancs died on 19th August 2011, aged 84. His first job was in a local engineering firm before he joined the Royal Navy in 1945 as a Naval Airman in the Fleet Air Arm. After new entry training at HMS Royal Arthur he completed his technical training and served at HMS Daedalus, the Naval Air Station at Lee-on-Solent, Hants. He was discharged in 1947. Following discharge he worked at Goss Press in Preston and then moved on to Nuclear Fuels where he stayed until retirement. He leaves his wife Doreen and two daughters and grandchildren.

Ronald Higgs, Royal Air Force

Ronald Higgs of Reading, Berkshire died on 31st August 2011, aged 88. He left school at 14 to work as an apprentice in Cheapside. He was bombed out in 1940 and completed his apprenticeship in Reading before he joined the RAF in 1942. After completion of his basic and specialised training he served at RAF Tempsford and 3 Group HQ at RAF Epping and then worked in the Cambridge area carrying out modifications on Lancaster bombers. Following a later posting to RAF Mildenhall, Mr Higgs was discharged as an LAC in 1947 and joined AE Felgate Ltd, an electrical company in Reading. He stayed with the company until his retirement as Managing Director in 1987. He leaves his widow Lilian and a son.

Frank Holmested, King's Royal Rifle Corps

Frank Holmested of Leatherhead, Surrey died on 26th August 2011, aged 99. He was first employed in a tea import business before he joined the King's Royal Rifle Brigade in 1937, training in Liverpool. He was mobilised in 1939 and in 1942 was posted to North Africa. He was in Egypt, Syria, Algiers and later moved to Italy and Austria. He was discharged as a Sergeant in 1946 and returned to the tea business, based at Plantation House in London. He later worked for the Land Registry in Croydon for the last six years of his working life. Widowed in 2001, Mr Holmested leaves his daughter, Marilyn.

Ronald Horspool, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and Royal Pioneers Corps

Ronald Horspool of Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands died on 2nd July 2011, aged 80. Ronald Horspool worked in the wholesale market and joined the Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineers in 1949; he transferred to the Royal Pioneer Corps a month later. He then transferred to the TA Royal Pioneer Corps in 1951 and was discharged in 1955. He returned to Birmingham and resumed employment in the farmers' market as a banana ripener. He leaves his wife Jean whom he married in 1956 and their three sons.

Violet Hutchinson, Women's Royal Air Force

Violet Hutchinson of Middlesbrough, Cleveland died on 8th August 2011 aged 89. She joined the WAAF in 1941, training at RAF Bridgnorth before moving to RAF Turnhouse near Edinburgh where she specialised as a Stewardess. She served in a variety of locations around the UK before she was demobilised in 1946 as Sergeant. After the war she worked for British Railways for 18 years. She leaves her husband Francis.

Ralph Jenkin, Royal Air Force

Ralph Jenkin of Boston, Lincolnshire died on 23rd August 2011 aged 93. In 1940 he joined the RAF specialising in administration. He served in a variety of locations in the UK before being transferred to the RAF Police. He completed his service at Defford in the Malvern Hills before being discharged in 1946. He returned to his post war employment with the coal office where he was made manager, subsequently leaving at 47 to set up his own business named Jenkin's Local Supplies, which he sold in 1983. He then became a Director of Boston United Football Club and retained a keen interest in the development of local footballers. Widowed in 2004 following the death of his wife Kathleen he leaves three sons and a daughter and grandchildren.

Caradoc Jones, Royal Artillery and the Royal Engineers

Caradoc Jones of Oswestry, Shropshire died on 29th August 2011, aged 94. Having joined the Army in 1940 he carried out his training at Park Hall Camp in Oswestry, before joining the Royal Artillery and spending 20 months with an Ack Ack Unit. In 1942 he transferred to the Royal Engineers and, specialising in Port duty with the ship, he served in North Africa including Algiers, Tobruk, Bizerta, and Tripoli. Mr Jones was involved in the invasion of Sicily and also spent some time in Cairo. He was sunk off Tobruk, and finally discharged as

a Private in 1946. Mr Jones went to Manchester following discharge where he worked for GEC for 30 years and later spent a brief period in Australia. He married Megan in Manchester in 1945 but she sadly died in 2008. He leaves two children.

Frank Lane, Royal Air Force

Frank Lane of Birmingham, West Midlands died on 1st September 2011, aged 92. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1937. After basic training he was posted to the RN on HMS Ark Royal as a flight mechanic with 821 Squadron. He served in the Mediterranean, UK home waters, the South Atlantic and Cape Town and Sierra Leone. He was posted to Malta where he spent three years and returned to the UK to Melton Mowbray. He was demobilised as a Corporal in 1946. In 1960 he moved to Aston University Birmingham where he was a Chief Technician in charge of two physics workshops. He was divorced in 1975 and he leaves two sons and two daughters and grandchildren.

John McEwan, Royal Air Force

John McEwan of Glasgow, Scotland died on 24th August 2011 aged 78. He enlisted in the RAF for National Service in 1954 and served at RAF Dishforth in Yorkshire. He was discharged as an AC1 in 1956. A painter by trade he travelled across the UK painting in railway hotels and on the ships in Glasgow before he moved to British Telecom where he worked for 15 years. Widowed in 2010 when his wife Jane died he leaves two sons, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

David Meek, Royal Artillery and the Royal Army Ordnance Corps

David Meek of Bridgend, Wales died on 17 August 2011, aged 77. He completed his National Service in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps as a driver from 1952 to 1954, serving in Germany and Belgium. He transferred to the Royal Artillery (TA) in 1954 and served until 1958. He became an HGV driver for Blue Line Transport. He leaves his wife Hilary, two sons and a daughter.

Stanley (Stan) Merricks, Royal Air Force

Stanley (Stan) Merricks of Maidstone, Kent died on 23rd August 2011, aged 90. He trained as a dental technician before joining the RAF in 1941, qualifying as an instrument maker. He served in England, Scotland and later India and Ceylon before being discharged as a Corporal in 1946. He subsequently resumed work as a dental technician in a local practice in Maidstone where he

remained until retirement at 67. He leaves his widow Connie whom he married in 1950 and their two children.

Kenneth Moss, Royal Navy

Kenneth Moss of Doncaster, South Yorks died on 1st September 2011, aged 85. He joined the Royal Navy in 1944, training as a Radar Plotter. Mr Moss served in HMS Nubian, a Tribal Class Destroyer, followed by HM Ships Glasgow and Cleopatra. He also served in LST3014 prior to being demobilised as an Able Seaman in 1948. He then worked for Pilkington Brothers, the glass manufacturer for 21 years. He then went to Cardiff University where he trained in Social Work and became a Social Worker in Doncaster until retirement. He was also a magistrate for 27 years. He leaves his wife Thelma a son and two stepchildren.

James O'Neill, Royal Irish Rangers and the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers

James O'Neill of Heston, Middlesex died on 22nd August 2011, aged 82. Born in Northern Ireland he joined the Army in 1947 as a regular soldier. He joined the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers in 1947, which in July 1968 became the 1st Royal Irish Regiment (King's Division). He trained in Northern Ireland at the Inniskillings Depot and served in various countries all over the world including Hong Kong, Malaya, Jamaica, Kenya, Berlin, Bahrain, Gibraltar and the Isle of Man, before completing his full engagement as a WO2 in June 1970. He joined De Beers, the diamond makers, which regularly employed ex-WOs in the security department and remained for 23 years. He leaves his wife Ruby whom he married in 1950 in the West Indies and a son.

Kenneth Richardson, Royal Air Force

Kenneth Richardson of Leigh on Sea, Essex died on 11th August 2011, aged 90. He joined the RAF at the age of 20 in 1941 as an airframe mechanic, serving in a maintenance unit in South Wales where he remained for the duration of the war. At the end of the war, Mr. Richardson returned to civilian life and recommenced his pre-war employment with his uncle in the pre-caste concrete business for a while until he moved into construction. He leaves his widow Eileen and their two children.

Nellie Sadler, British Red Cross

Nellie Sadler of Ware, Hertfordshire died on 1st September 2011, aged 98. She

joined the ARP and the British Red Cross as a volunteer and trained as a nurse. She then went to work for the Red Cross at Hasler where she stayed until the end of the war. Following discharge in 1946 as a Senior Nurse, Miss Sadler worked at the civilian Hertford County Hospital and remained in nursing until her retirement. She leaves her nieces and nephews.

Richard (Sam) Sellers, General Service Corps, Royal Army Ordnance Corps

Richard (Sam) Sellers of Preston, Lancs died on 14th July 2011, aged 84. He joined the Royal Army Ordnance Corps in 1946 for national service. After training he was posted to the M/T & Radio section at Bicester and then to Portsmouth, leaving as a Lance Corporal in 1948. After the war Mr Sellers worked for Lancashire Constabulary for 30 years as a mechanic and charge hand repairing police vehicles and motorbikes. He was widowed in 1993 following the death of his wife. He leaves his daughter and his good friend Dorothy.

Benjamin Salters, Merchant Navy

Benjamin Salters of High Howden, Tyne and Wear died on 7th August 2011, aged 83. He joined the Merchant Navy in 1943 and served as a cook in the Fort George, a munitions ship, and later with the British Tanker Company. As a seafarer he continued to serve in several ships after the war including the Aquitania, Queen of Bermuda and the Empress of Australia. Later he worked for a cargo carrying company followed by BP Tankers. He became a Chief Cook before he retired in 1989. He leaves his wife Annie whom he married in 1955 and a son and daughter.

Francis 'Frank' Simpson, Royal Navy

Francis 'Frank' Simpson of Wilmslow, Cheshire died on 10th August 2011, aged 86. He volunteered for the Royal Navy in 1943 and following training at HMS Raleigh in Torpoint, qualifying as a radar operator, he served in the frigate HMS Bligh and was involved with North Atlantic convoys and the D-Day landings. Shortly after D-Day Mr Simpson was injured in an accident onboard and lost his left arm. Medically discharged as an Acting Radar Operator in 1944 he became a plasterer in civilian life and later worked as a foreman for companies in London and Manchester until he retired in his 70s. He was widowed in 2008.

Jean Stedman, Women's Auxiliary Air Force

Jean Stedman of Cobham, Surrey died on 25th January 2011, aged 90. She volunteered for the RAF in May 1941 and trained as a cook at Melksham. She was then posted to a variety of RAF stations around the UK before she was demobilised as a Corporal in 1946. After the war she worked as a cook at Fairmile Marine in Cobham. Widowed following the death of her husband Jack she leaves a daughter and grandchildren.

Peter Verrall, Royal Navy

Peter Verrall of Salisbury, Wiltshire died on 30th August 2011, aged 87. He served in the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1946, leaving as a telegraphist. He spent time in the Mediterranean on board the frigate, HMS Inver. He was then posted to Sierra Leone in West Africa as a Telegraphist. He also served in Northern Ireland. He returned to the UK where he was demobbed. In civilian life he was employed at the Admiralty where he was again involved in communications from 1947 to 1953. He then transferred to the Foreign Office and worked for GCHQ in the Far East.

William Waldron, Royal Artillery

William Waldron of Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands died on 21st August 2011, aged 97. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1933 and when war broke out he went with the BEF to France. Evacuated from Dunkirk, he was then posted around the UK until he was sent to India and later Ceylon on airfield defence. He came home in 1945 and was demobilised in 1946. He worked for Dunlop until he retired in 1978. Widowed in 1998 he leaves four sons.

Alfred Waterer, Royal Armoured Corps

Alfred Waterer of north London died on 12th September 2011, aged 96. He left school at 13 to work in a wood furniture manufacturers' in Bethnal Green, later moving into the upholstery business where he completed his seven year apprenticeship. Called up in 1942 he joined the Royal Armoured Corps as a tank crewman, training near Warminster and at Catterick. He was deployed to North Africa, notably to Cairo, and then to Freetown, Sierra Leone. He then went to India via South Africa and subsequently to Burma where he was involved in the Arakan Campaign. He was discharged as an Acting Sergeant Tank Commander in 1946 and returned to the upholstery business in London. Mr Waterer was widowed in January 2010 following the death of his wife Hannah. He leaves a niece Patricia.

Maria Pikulski takes on the Final Frontier.

Hadrian's Wall was the best known frontier in the Roman Empire, built in 122 AD at the behest of the Roman Emperor Hadrian, to separate the Romans from the Barbarians. Today it is a popular tourist attraction, visited by people from all over the world.

Stretching from Bowness on Solway to Wallsend, the battles fought along its borders today no longer involve Legionnaires, distinctive with their red crests. They are keen walkers in their bright waterproofs as they take on the 84 mile trek. One walker who signed up to do battle, and won, is St Dunstaner Maria Pikulski, from Preston. From Sunday 31st July until Saturday 6th August she was joined by fellow members of Galloway's Blind Society: Janine Webster, David Harris, John Edwards, Bille Davies. James Coulton and his dad Vic manned the support vehicle, transporting tents and cooking equipment from site to site. There were three sighted guides: Richard Hughes, an escort for St Dunstan's at the Cenotaph, Ian Riley and his son Andrew, who also helped to organise the epic walk.

Maria said: "We set off from Wallsend at Newcastle and finished in Bowness. Staying at the camp sites added an extra 24 miles to our walk but we still managed to walk around 20 miles a day. It was like being back in the Army as we walked with our rucksacks; mine was filled to 65 litres which is probably around 35lbs. It was a great week and we were so pleased when we found out that we had raised around £500 for St Dunstan's. We're already planning our challenge for next year, which might involve riding a tandem, something I've never done before."



Picture: From left to right Maria Pikulski and her team.