

In Touch



Jan 2020

Charity No 211042

Centenary Edition 2 of 10

Toc H—1922 to 1929



In Hoc Signo Vinces

"(In this sign thou shalt conquer)"

For ten years since the War Toc H has stood pledged to remember the Sacrifice of its Elders Brethren and, maintaining their spirit of Fellowship, to carry forward their unfinished tasks in Service.

"Death is becoming creative." The little group of pioneers in 1919 has grown into a world-wide Family in 1929 -with 440 units at home and 220 overseas.

What shall the history be of Toc H in the next ten years?

*"The Lord's hand is in this thing.
It is the King's business and
requires haste."*

(see Centenary volume 3)

FRIENDSHIP SERVICE FAIRMINDEDNESS WITNESS

**By Toc H MEMBERS (*Past and present*) for Toc H
MEMBERS (*Present AND FUTURE*)**

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IN TOUCH

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EDITORIAL

In this second issue of In Touch celebrating our centenary Jo has brought together a wide-ranging review of activities in the 1920's a decade of growth and development. It is in these years that Toc H gained momentum in taking the vision forward, a vision that remains as important a hundred years on as it was in the beginning.

The expansion described reflects a very different society to the one we live in, the growth which was important was in part due to the fact that groups of men and women quite separately would seek to share friendship and fellowship, whereas today individuals will be drawn by social



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media not on the whole to interest groups with the remit that held together the first members of Toc H.

An interesting element of the story of the 20's is the place of women and the formation of the League of Women Helpers (LWH), it seems that the men were unsure of how to react to their contribution.

Consideration to be given by the male leadership after careful consideration. The women though decided that independence was the order of the day, an early example of feminism at work.

Tubby's appointment to be incumbent of All Hallows in 1922 established a relationship which continues today. By giving the responsibility for the Parish, Tubby was able to have roots in one place which allowed him to continue to minister on what became a worldwide canvas. He might be vicar of the parish but like

Charles Wesley the world was his Parish.

The story of the 20's is a reminder of a country and a world in transition from war to peace which was combined with economic decline, unemployment, poverty and alienation. Toc H through its members was able to offer support to many individuals and families who without the good will and gifts that were offered would have had lives that were lacking in the very basics.

In meeting the challenge of the 1920's Toc H was able to set down roots of service that continued in the years that follow.

The challenge a hundred years on is to ask how we can continue to keep the light lit and contribute to the creation of a better society as those who went before us did. Jo will continue her research and I look forward to the 1930's and beyond.

Terry Drummond

No longer perplexed General Secretary

Those of you who persevered with the last In Touch to page 23 will have found my notes on 'Perplexed!!', where I made an appeal for 'The Log' editions for 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944 and 1945. I am very pleased to say they have been located.

The editions for the war years were very slim and had been bound without any external reference into the volume that supposedly only contained 1940.

So the mystery has been solved.

Doug Geater Childs



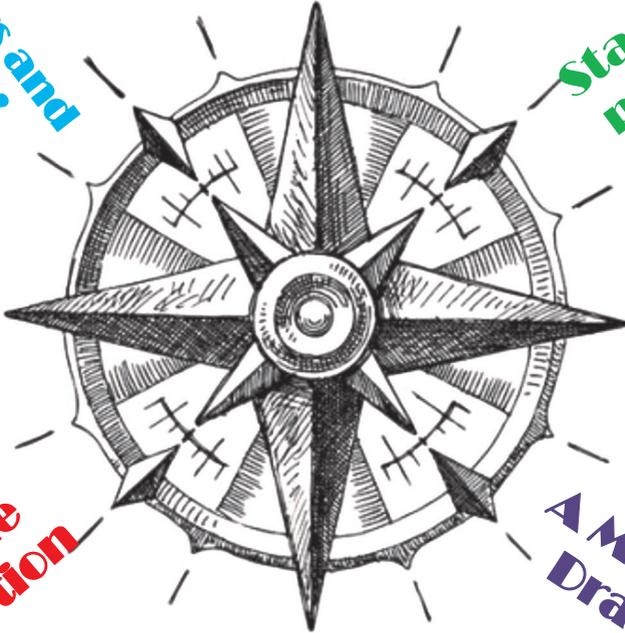
THE FOUR POINTS OF THE COMPASS

THE STORY OF THE TOC H MOVEMENT

Fantastic!

FAIRMINDEDNESS

**Staggering
portrayal**



FRIENDSHIP

SERVICE

**A Must See
Drama!**

WITNESS

**Awesome
Production**

Yes! & Challenging!!

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Jun 26 2020 - venue TBC, Crowmarsh

Jul 25 2020 - venue TBC, Saltburn

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The Four Points of the Compass Review of the Première

Peter Gill is known to many Toc H members through his play on Talbot House. In this new play commissioned for our centenary year, Peter has produced a play that takes the audience through a hundred years of the Movement. Based around three people two men and a woman the story of the development of the Movement is told with skill, pathos and humour.

The acts all begin with a backdrop of themes that identify the years under consideration, in each one the audience experiences the act that follows within the social context of the years, this includes popular music combined with news headlines. In this creative manner the story of Toc H is given a context that is wider than what follows.

It is a truism that every member of Toc H has a personal perspective on what represents the truth of the Movement, any history is open to interpretation of the individual and of the time we live in. Peter in my view captures the story of Toc H with wit and insight that is both entertaining and challenging.

The play represents his interpretation and, for me, he captures vivid insights that allow those who think they know the history to agree or disagree and perhaps more importantly introduce those with little knowledge to a story that is well told.

The penultimate act may cause consternation to some people, its honesty is searing and challenging. A factor that is turned upside down in the final act which represents a vision for the future. A future that the membership will be responsible for making happen.

I was excited, moved and challenged by Peter's play, he gets underneath the skin of the Movement and I thank him for an achievement that more than fulfils expectations of what was expected when Peter was commissioned to write the play.

On behalf of the audience in Birmingham I say thank you for the play and encourage everyone to find an opportunity to share in the experience of seeing three actors present a story that is more than the sum of its parts.

Terry Drummond

World Chain of Light

We were pleased in Birmingham to be starting World Chain of Light this year and to kick off the Centenary Celebrations. We were lucky enough to have the use of the Methodist Church in Kings Heath as this gave us full kitchen facilities and separate rooms for the different events. We were pleased to have a few members of the Board join us for the ceremony which was led by Terry Drummond. Birmingham was pleased to see some new people with us and we hope that this was a good introduction for them to what our Movement is all about.

Once the Ceremony was over we moved into a smaller Church room and began the Vigil – sitting around the lamp through the small hours in contemplation, keeping the lamp alight throughout the night.

As day dawned and more people gathered we moved back into the main Church so that the Lamp was in situ for the AGM at 2.00pm where I think it watched over us rather than us over it!

We ended the Vigil in The Midlands Arts Centre where a light continued to burn throughout the Centenary play – Laws of Health and Safety sadly meant that this could only be an electric one rather than a naked flame, but it was on the lamp itself so we did keep that lamp 'alight' for the full 24 hours!

Rebecca Dickson



Neil Mears led World Chain of Light at All Hallows lighting the lamp in the Guild Church on December 11th. He was joined by both members of All Hallows and Toc H.

The Movement of Toc H

1922—1929

The 20s - June 1922 onwards

Following the intense activity of 'The Years Between', Toc H began to develop its identity and administrative framework in this first decade and the Journal, which was first issued in June 1922 was the ideal platform to discuss and disseminate the new developments.

After the first June issue it was monthly from September, its early issues complicated by the basic printing facilities available at the time. The Editor constantly had to reiterate the need both for contributions from members and more importantly, prompt payment of subscriptions!

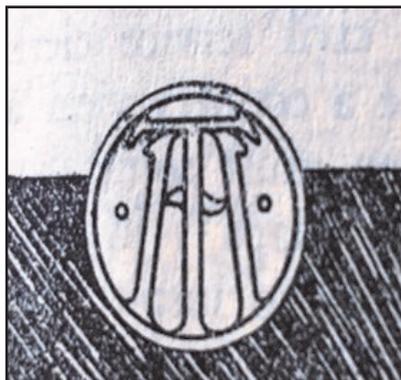
To some extent the Journal's development during its early years echoed the evolution of the organisation itself. Both trying to establish an identity in a post First World War Britain that was trying to re-establish itself in world trade markets while battling with rising unemployment, housing shortages and strikes. Many of the articles were written in a light hearted, slightly tongue in cheek style, perhaps demonstrating a cautious optimism and affection for an organisation that they were part of and had such enthusiasm for. Bo

The Lamp

Perhaps the action that had the most significant impact on the organisation was the realisation that Toc H needed a symbol and a standardised ceremony for branch meetings that would help to sum up their central ethos and provide a sense of unity.

Initially a simple round design had been used to symbolise Toc H and some members had a wristband, but the symbol seemed inadequate and apparently, the latter was unpopular.

Then in June 1922 Barclay Baron suggested a lamp of a simple boat shaped design reminiscent of those lit by early Christians in the catacombs of Imperial Rome. The sacred *XP* changed to the double cross of Ypres



which, from the Lord Mayor of the town, had been used by Talbot House during the war. These lamps were cast in bronze and during a simple but dignified ceremony, given to a branch when they had proved their worth. Initially the words

“Let us thankfully remember our Elder Brethren that grow not old”



....were used, but later, this was altered to not only remember the sacrifice of men in the past but also as a pledge to carry on with unselfish service in the future. Thus the Lamp was not just a *Lamp of Remembrance*, but also a *Lamp of Maintenance*. A sub-committee of three was elected to consider the requests from Branches for a lamp and subsequently, Tubby suggested that a similar ceremony should be used for the initiation of new members.

An alternative description of the lamp, in slightly more humorous style appeared in the June Journal

‘not a bicycle lamp or a blow lamp, or even a duplex-burner highly ornamented standard drawing room lamp – but just the simplest and most beautiful kind of lamp, the little boat-shaped lamp which the Romans used when they wanted a bottle of Falernian out of the cellar or which Aladdin exchanged in the shop in Baghdad’.

So at the first Birthday Festival in 1922 the Prince of Wales, the

Patron of Toc H, lit the Lamp for the first time at the Guildhall in London with the words, "in thy light shall we see light", in the darkness illuminated only by the lamp the haunting Last Post was played, followed by the more strident Reveille.

"Remember and maintain; the two bugle calls had caught up in a single phrase, beyond the reach and the need of word, the whole meaning of Toc H"

In 1925, following the success of the Lamp, which had assumed an almost iconic symbolism among branches, it was decided that a lesser object should be given to groups, i.e. those who had not yet achieved the status of being a branch.

Many of these groups had, apparently, observed a silence and lit a candle during their meetings, so it was decided that a Rushlight, which had many similar connotations to the lamp, should be given to groups to provide them with some focus.

To illustrate the increasing importance of the Lamp in May of the same year, Toc H was asked by the War Office to supply a Lamp of Maintenance for the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley. It was part of a larger display in front of the Empire Roll of Honour that symbolised ...

'Chivalry and unselfish sacrifice and service by land, sea and air'

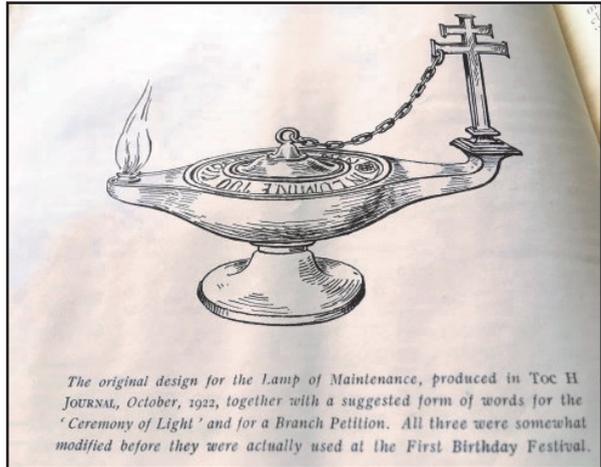


This was considered a great honour and the lamp was lit by the Queen and was to be kept burning throughout the exhibition.

In November 1928, a new lamp was designed for the League of Women Helpers (LWH) which again takes its inspiration from the lamp of Christians but retains *XP*, an early Christian symbol, emphasising that women's work was more concerned with peace and healing rather than war. It also includes a ram's head that symbolised sacrifice and a dove just about to take flight that

denotes peace and the Holy Spirit. Being ready for flight signifies "that Love looks always outwards and upwards and inspiration leads us away from ourselves to work for others"

Unfortunately, the first lamp lighting ceremony planned in All Hallows with much associated aplomb did not go well. 22 lamps had been ordered but only two unfinished ones arrived. Tubby saved the day by buying 20 small hurricane lamps from the hardware shop across the road which, while rather smoky, provided a symbolic link to the nurses in France in the war, not so many years before.



New administration.

As a parallel to the introduction of the lamp, it was decided that some sort of ceremony should be introduced to provide a framework for branch meetings. As early as the beginning of 1921 Cheltenham branch had suggested that a silence should be kept at the beginning of each meeting to remember those who had fallen and to re-inforce their "first inspiration and its inherited task". Many branches closed with the singing of the song *Rogerum*, a song Tubby first heard sung by the Queen's Westminsters in Flanders. Then in January 1923, several 'Forms of Ceremony' and wording were introduced to cover the different ceremonies ('*The Ceremony of Light*', '*The Ceremony of the Grand Light*' and '*The Initiation of New members*'). These were to be tried out by branches before the Central Executive agreed them for general use.

A note of caution however, was raised in May 1923 that warned that the associated ceremony surrounding this could, in time, become

more important than the work Toc H does. This was discussed again in July and an Executive committee was established to monitor and safeguard the Lamp and its associated meaning in the future.

New Roles

Gradually, it was decided that certain roles were needed to provide a framework within the organisation. The most significant of these was the appointment of Tubby as one of the Padres at All Hallows by the Tower, which led to the church becoming the central focus of the religious life of Toc H.

Ideally every branch should have a Padre, but Commissioners were appointed to oversee areas of the country where groups were being formed but had no padres or lay staff of their own. Their role was to support new groups, look for new leaders and report back to Headquarters so that the necessary help could be given.

At branch level the role of the 'Jobmaster' was created, which in a nutshell, comprised of finding a man

“who required tact, an infinity of patience, a knowledge of man, a fertility of mind, methodical habit, a sense of humour and a modicum of cheek”

Having found someone with those attributes they had ...

“two duties to perform: finding jobs and dishing them out”

Not much really!

The title 'Pilot,' was given to the person who looked after new recruits. This was aimed both at branch level and in the wider sense amongst larger bodies of people. For example there was an increasing interest in Toc H amongst sailors who had experienced the benefits of the organisation in ports across the world and in some cases groups had been formed on board ship. This was considered to be a positive move that should be encouraged.

Another initiative involved work in schools that drew on the previous work done by the Cavendish Club and developed into the *Schools Service Bureau*. This group aimed to make contact with schools across the country, hopefully through members who were teachers, to introduce pupils to the organisation and its ideals, in an effort to encourage them to undertake acts of service under the umbrellas of

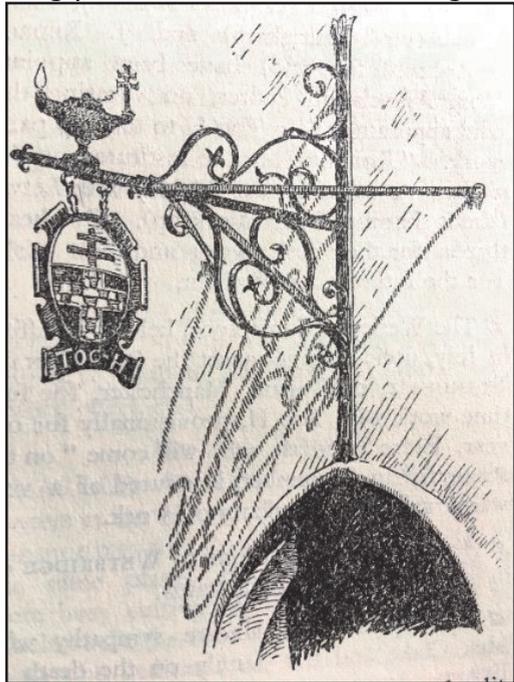
the SSB. This, in turn, it was hoped, would encourage them to join Toc H in the future.

On a more internal administrative level, it was decided that when men initially decided to come together within Toc H they should first be called a Grope, then a Group, before Branch status is achieved. In rural areas where numbers are low and people are scattered, 'Wings' should be formed that then meet together occasionally for larger events. In 1927, the first branch on board ship was formed on H.M.S. Railless and was to prove a successful enterprise communicating with other ships and people at ports across the world.

In 1927 in an effort to publicise Toc H and make the streets in our towns and cities more attractive, an enterprising Norwich member created a sign in a style more reminiscent of a bygone age which was designed to hang outside a meeting place. It could even have a light fitted to indicate that a meeting was taking place. It could be made to order and was originally advertised at £3 each, which subsequently was discovered to be too cheap so had to be increased to £4!

The growth of Toc H

From the opening of the first Mark in London in 1920 the growth of the new organisation during the next decade was rapid. From 1923 when more accurate records were available until the end of 1929 the number of Marks and hostels increased from 6 to 20, the number of branches and groups rose from 65 to



467 and the number of League of Women Helpers rose from 24 (mid-decade) to 140, with 2 Junes (details to follow). This was not confined to the British Isles as 8 Marks and 233 branches and groups and 2 on Royal Navy ships were opened overseas.

beliefs would take on more domestic supporting roles and it was hoped that groups would be formed wherever there was an existing branch. This indeed was the case as Miss Macfie toured the country encouraging and advising new groups. In May the Central Council was asked if women could be enrolled as members, but this was declined at this stage with the promise of more discussion in the future. Tubby pointed out that in the passage of time, the status of 'sisterhood' within the organisation would be clarified. However, in December 1923 at their first national conference, the LWH unanimously decided that they would rather remain outside the membership of Toc H, saying that

"women can best serve the ideal of Toc H at this time by remaining a League of Women Helpers"

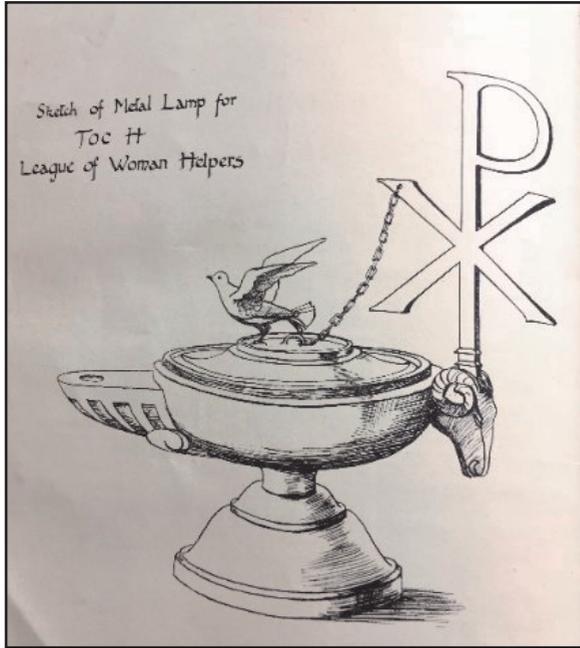
Some groups preferred to be known as Toc Emmas, the reason for which is, like the reason for the name Toc H, a little obtuse to the civilian population.....

"Toc Emma stands for T.M., the initials of Trench Mortar. For what I meant in the army, refer to any Service or ex-Service man; its future interpretation is in the hands of the Toc Emmas themselves."

By 1924 the LWH had a separate "News" section in the Journal and from November 1926 their own quarterly magazine. Later the same year they set up their own Constitution with Tubby as their only male member.

In the early years of the organisation the work of the LWH had mainly been involved with domestic matters in the Marks, supporting men at events or doing the chapel flowers and organising bazaars. Whilst this was always valuable, the women gradually began to widen their ideas of service to include the needs of their local neighbourhood. Branches were being formed all over the country and it was Sheffield that highlighted the need to help girls in society, since the men's movement predominantly cared for young men. This sentiment soon gathered momentum, new Girl Guide leaders were recruited, a 'Homely Club' that met weekly was opened for poor girls in Durham and in 1924, 'New June' (named after a famous house which stood near All Hallows in Medieval times) which was a 'Mark' for girls was opened on the top floors of No. 50 Great Tower Street.

The movement continued to grow in size and stature throughout the 1920s with the Duchess of Devonshire becoming President in 1925 and



HRH Duchess of York the Patron in 1926 and by 1928 there were 3000 members, 24 branches, and 109 groups. There were moments of tension between the men's and the women's sections concerning the position of the latter in the wider Toc H movement. There were frequent discussions at every level, perhaps reflecting the bias arising from what most perceived to be a male organisation, together with contemporary patriarchal values.

Weybridge branch even held a talk with the title

"that the LWH is not essential to the full development of Toc H", possibly tongue in cheek as the motion produced no votes in its favour!!

In an effort to clarify their position in 1927, the LWH confirmed

"that to carry the ideals of Toc H into the lives of women and girls was part of our intention"

It is probable that the 1920s male membership did not realise that one of the first jobs that the first LWD group did was to catalogue those Communicant Slips rescued from Talbot House at the end of the war (mentioned last month). This was a huge task involving trips to Records Offices, visits to next of kin and lots of correspondence to produce the very first list of the 'Elder Brethren' (those who were killed in the war) together with a list of those who had survived, many of whom were subsequently contacted to become the first members of the nascent organisation.

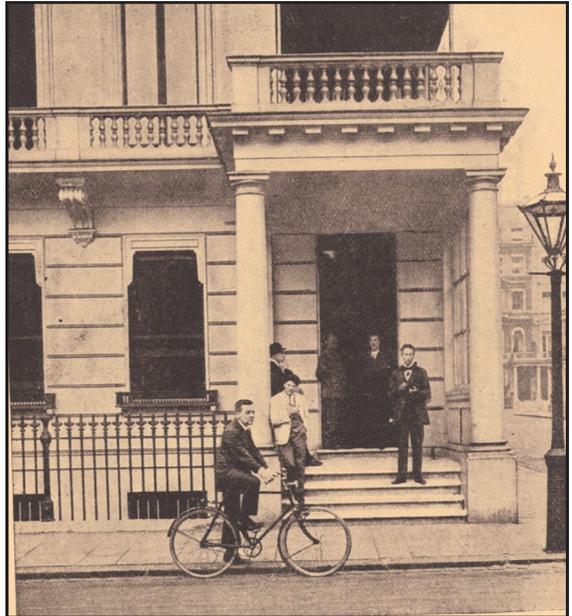
In addition from the end of 1922 until the end of the 2nd WW the LWD assisted in wrapping and sending out the Journal. So without them, the men may not have received it!

Toc H - the reality ???

The aim of those Toc H pioneers, as documented in 'The Years Between' was to maintain the sense of love, fellowship and service that was fostered in Talbot House amidst the horrors of war and use it to make the post war world a better place. How this manifested itself throughout all these different groups across the world was diverse and complex.

The most obvious embodiment of Toc H growth in Great Britain was the opening of Mark I,II,III in London, Mark IV in Manchester and Mark V in Southampton. Some of these houses were donated but finance was a constant concern as the houses had to be equipped and the running costs found. In London the Duke of Westminster generously relieved Mark II of the cost of rent and rates but other branches were not so lucky. The newly established Birthday Fund was a help but an article with lots of cartoons suggested that members could pay for a brick, a door or even a bell pull!!! Not that anyone would answer it if it was installed.

A lot of new branches opened across the country which seemed to start with lots of hugely successful social events, including suppers, guest nights, whist drives, cricket matches, boat trips, which could be summed up as 'tea, tattle and tennis'. They were all the more successful if Tubby



Tubby arriving in the "staff car" at 23 Queen's Gate Gardens. The carpenter's bench and other furniture from Poperinge were brought here

could be persuaded to attend.

Branches were not just based in towns. In 1924/25 farmers across Kent wanted to be involved but the logistics of forming a group when individuals were scattered across a wide area were problematic. However, after much discussion, a Countryman's Group was formed to serve a large area, a model that was used elsewhere in the country.

A Toc H sports ground opened in New Barnet to serve members in London and several very successful football, rugby and cricket teams were formed. In an ambitious statement it was suggested that

'hopefully in the future Toc H members of other great cities will be able to fly to New Barnet in the afternoon, with their teams, to play their football, cricket or tennis and back again for the evening in a Toc H owned aeroplane'

Another new development was the formation of the 'Tic Tocs', members in the London area who had some performance skills ranging from producing, acting, singing or dancing who would perform in entertainment and fund raising activities.

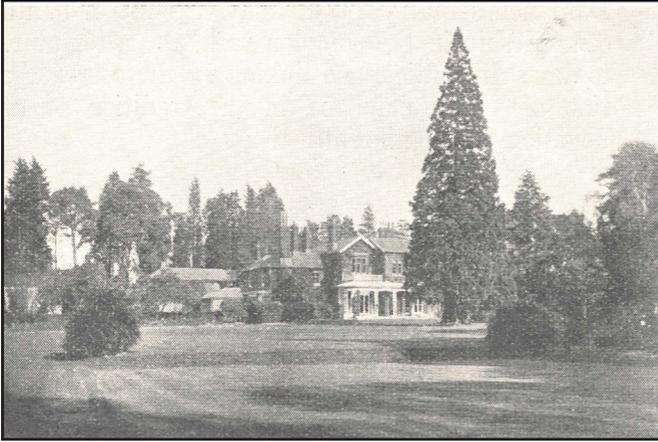
It could be said that for a while members relished the fun, fellowship, sport and social events that Toc H provided at the expense of service, but after surviving the horrors of the trenches, the Spanish flu and the ongoing unemployment and economic hardship, who could blame them.

However, as the decade progressed the acts of service increased becoming ever more varied and the fund raising more imaginative!



To illustrate this in 1923 the Journal introduced 'Branch News', self-explanatory really, so all branches could submit accounts of all their activities and it is here that the breadth of Toc H work becomes apparent.

Almost from the outset, one of Toc H's over riding concerns was for



TOC H Mark V, "The Firs" Bassett, Southampton

the wellbeing of young boys (care for young girls increased in the future) so much of their work was in creating and running boys clubs, Boy Scouts, Boys' Brigades, young offenders, organising camps, Church Lads, the unemployed and even a Newsboys League in Belfast.

Another major project, which was destined to continue for many years, began in Southampton where "Talbot House, Southampton" was established to look after young men and boys who went to sea with the Merchant Navy. In contrast to lads who joined the Royal Navy where their welfare is a major concern, there was no similar service for these young lads who often experienced loneliness, homelessness and risked exploitation between voyages.

The premises consisted of two adjacent houses near the docks with sleeping accommodation for 20 boys, restaurant, club room and 'Upper Room' and a resident Padre. This served a real need in the town but also helped to spread the word about Toc H around the world.

Predictably the ongoing costs were a problem but funds arrived from many sources, notably from boys in Public school.

Apart from work with young people Toc H cared for the blind, disabled, deaf and dumb, worked in hospitals, dug gardens, fetched shopping, provided equipment in hospitals, chopped wood, covered hymn books, the list was endless and continued to grow over the years.

On a more serious note there was ongoing awareness and concern about increasing levels of poverty as unemployment figures escalated. The problems facing British industry had in fact begun before the war when the country began to face competition from France, Germany and the United States but this was then exacerbated by the war years when production declined dramatically.

The coal, cotton, iron and steel and shipbuilding industries suffered

badly and while things did begin to improve in the early 1920s Britain had lost a fifth of their old markets. Unemployment of course increased poverty, and living standards in some areas of the country were badly affected, illustrated by the work some branches carried out. West Bromwich and Durham provided support to their mining communities, Liverpool worked with the Child Welfare Association, Birmingham gave a party to urchins who hung around and begged for cigarette cards, poor children's breakfasts were supplied and in Reading collections of tobacco were made for the workhouse.

This spectre of the 'workhouse', much more associated with the 19th century, still existed for those who faced the horror of the 'Poor Law' if their unemployment pay was stopped. Belfast were concerned about on-going employment for their Newsboys and Grangetown were pleased to find work for a young boy of 14 and a man who had been unemployed for 4 years. With echoes of 'Call the Midwife' Leatherhead collected clothes for the children of Poplar!

1926 was a time of great upheaval in Britain when rising unemployment and the resultant social unrest led to the General Strike from 3rd to 12th May. During this time some members sent messages to Headquarters urging them that Toc H should do something to end the conflict. The May editorial suggested that this was beyond the remit of the organisation but that members should



Reading: The Rovers & Toc H members packing clothing for distressed miners in South Wales. They had already sent 3 truck loads (about 200 sacks to Brynmawr , Tonypanyd & Merthyr.

rely on the Christian spirit that is their incentive to provide the help required. Cardiff branch reported that many of their younger members wanted to help the volunteer movement that had emerged to help keep the country moving, and it is likely that this occurred elsewhere across the country.

In 1928 unemployment figures were still over 1,000,000 with the mining industry badly affected. Cardiff, a branch in the heart of the affected area, started a big appeal to the whole country for boots and shoes to help the thousands of poor children who were going barefoot. Port Talbot supplied 140 pairs and many other branches also contributed. Northern branches combined forces and took boys from the mining areas on camping holidays.

The effects were varied dependent upon locality, but people in areas served by Barry, Maesteg and Coalville suffered badly during this time. The latter branch said "we are humbly plodding on in spite of the coal stoppage and those of our members who are in the coal industry realise more than ever the need for the "Toc H spirit" as an antidote to the feelings which breed distrust and unrest".

Toc H did not forget its military roots and worked with the Not Forgotten Association, (those who were still hospitalised as a result of war), fatherless boys, who had been orphaned as a result of the war and other ex-servicemen. Following a request from the Home Office, Toc H was asked to help with a scheme to integrate servicemen back into civilian life. This was to follow a successful model devised by York branch and it was hoped it would prove useful to all the Services. Not to forget the individual, a request was received from a young bandsman and Toc H member stationed in the North West Frontier Province in India. He was lonely and hoped members would write to him, let's hope some did!

All these activities required funding and the variety of methods used to raise money demonstrates the breadth of skills, knowledge and ingenuity that members had. Apart from the usual Rummage (Jumble) sales, whist drives and sales of work, the more unusual included a Flannel Dance?, a Smoking Concert, Grangetown collected 200 dozen Pioneer matchbox covers to provide a football for local boys and Windermere suggested that members should donate a gift of 2s 6d

every birthday to their local hostel. Interestingly when Mark V had a sale of work, the Queen donated a lace shawl.

An example of Toc H co-operation across the country began in a dingy factory in the back streets of Sheffield where Toc H members helped the "Painted Fabrics" factory in which men disabled as a result of war worked on decorating fabric. They produced ...

'the most beautiful and dainty stencilled creations, from fairy-like dress fabrics to heavy curtains, leather bags, tea trays etc'

Toc H Marks in London had already helped to arrange exhibitions of their work and All Hallows Church had purchased beautiful curtains, altar clothes and chapel hangings to enhance their worship.

Members had also been asked to advertise their work to encourage more orders so more men could be employed and their working conditions improved. The value of the work of Painted Fabrics however, was summed up by the heart-warming story of a soldier from the Gloucester's who was wounded in 1915 and hospitalised for five years. He was initially paralysed but subsequently relied on crutches. He was due to be discharged from hospital with a single man's pension, but wanted to earn a living to support himself and his fiancée to whom he had been engaged for 10 years. He still needed care and more treatment so it was unlikely that he would be



LONDON TOC H SPORTS CLUB : RUGBY FOOTBALL :SPRING 1927

employable. Painted Fabrics offered him work and on the old aerodrome where they were based, were brick built huts which could be converted into a cottage for him and his new wife to live. The conversion would cost £300, but with only £10 to his name this seemed unobtainable. The president of the Cheltenham LWH heard of his plight and with the help of a £50 donation from the Gloucester Red Cross raised the rest of the money. Such a great result when caring people work together.

The changing technology was to alter both acts of service and fund raising throughout the 20s and beyond and began here with the advent of wireless which many members enjoyed as a new hobby and putting it to good use installing radios in hospitals and homes. Over the years Toc H became well-known for recognising new trends or concerns in society, acting on them and then they would be passed on to others or new organisations would be formed to take them forward.

For example, in 1923 an interesting talk was held at Exeter branch that discussed the increasing popularity of the cinema. The speaker described how in 1917, 1,100,000,000 attendances were recorded at the cinema which equates to one visit per fortnight of the entire UK population. This, he suggested, could be a cause for concern as there was no regulation on the type of films shown to whom. The members agreed and felt that some form of censorship system should be in place. They decided to suggest that this becomes a topic of open debate in future Journals



Then in 1925 by Lieutenant Colonel Ronnie Campbell, a member who realised the importance of play, particularly play in the open air, for young people. He appealed to members to try and address the problem co-incidentally at the same time that the Duke of York had vocalised the same concerns. Following this high profile influence and the subsequent press publicity it was proposed that the *National Playing Fields Association* should be formed to try to address the problem. Toc H responded by writing to the organisers of the new body to offer support and practical help. As a result of this they were asked to use their branch network to galvanise support and obtain statistics about the distribution of playing fields in relation to the number of children in their towns and cities. On a more grass roots level members were also asked to acquire cricket sets and footballs and use existing parks to teach the child

'who is born and bred in the 'slum' areas, how to play'

The object being to

'give the fullest scope to the child's instinct for play, an instinct ordained for the development of healthy character, temperament, and body without which no people can expect to develop on Christian lines.'

Members continued to support the Association in 1927 and 1929. In 1926 there was much discussion about the dangers of alcohol especially amongst young people together with concern about young children on the streets, especially on Sundays. As a result of this more clubs were opened on Sundays serving tea and organising activities.

Blood donation was becoming a more regular occurrence and branches all over the country undertook to publicise this and encourage more donors, many of whom were members themselves, some of whom donated rather more often than is suggested today! On a more ordinary note, Norwich members began collecting tin foil to pay for a bed in a local hospital. Enough tin foil to raise £700 was required which would take them years so they asked other branches to help. Perhaps this was the first recorded collection of tin foil, something that would continue for years to come!

Controversy

Perhaps the most controversial internal problem of the decade was the

discussion concerning the acceptance of a Padre of the Unitarian faith. The problem arose after the appointment of a Unitarian padre in 1926 which was followed in January of this year by the application of three more. After much discussion the Central Executive voted to reject their applications on the basis that, Unitarianism did not believe in the truth of the Incarnation and so did not adhere to one of the central tenants of the Christian faith that Toc H followed. Subsequently, a special meeting was held to discuss 'The Unitarian Issue' and the first decision was upheld by an overwhelming majority, with just 2 objectors. The Unitarian Padre who had previously been in office, Rev. Henry Dawtry, left the meeting after a short speech. The meeting was closed by Lord Forster who said

'There is no movement that I know of except Toc H which could have had such a meeting, discussing fundamental issues in so fair and friendly a way and coming to so definite a decision with an entire absence of bad feeling.'

Following this, the then President, Ramsey MacDonald MP, himself a Unitarian, resigned from the role. This was not, he explained, a judgement on the decision, but because his public position precluded further involvement.

Overseas development

Following his successful fact finding tour in Canada and USA in 1922, Tubby felt that Toc H should now develop worldwide. Contact was made with correspondents in many countries, largely within the Empire to ascertain both the need and whether the cultural climate would be appropriate. He was encouraged by the formation of a strong branch in Winnipeg who had also established a Mark with another to follow in Montreal. So in 1925 he and Pat Leonard from Manchester Mark, began a world tour that encompassed 8 countries to champion the cause. Tubby, who was born in Queensland, Australia was particularly keen that Toc H became established there. They asked members to pray for them, hoping that

"God will bring us into friendship with those on whom His hand is, or is to be, set, in an accolade of the spirit of service"
A year later Padre Harry Ellison set off for South Africa and both journeys proved very successful, demonstrated by the increasing

news reports from overseas that appeared in The Journal.

Other groups who had already got started included those in Buenos Aires, The Federated Malay States and Kuala Lumpur, where one of their first acts of service was providing lepers with tyres to make slippers. In Madras, tennis parties were available for sailors from visiting ships. False Bay branch in South Africa met in the pump house of an Aquarium and in Cape Town a fowl run and swimming pool for geese was constructed. Branches in N.S.W. Australia collected literature for lighthouses along the coast and surprisingly Melbourne, suffered from cold weather during which poverty and distress increased amongst the poor, so firewood, potatoes and apples were delivered by members. In Untali, Rhodesia, newspapers were collected for railway men to be sent down the line and members in Suez kindly sent home photographs of servicemen's graves which resulted in requests by return for gravestones to be erected. In Alexandria in Egypt six members sold dress suits and top hats to raise funds. In an interesting reversal of roles members in Beira, Portuguese East Africa were concerned about ships personnel, especially Junior Officers who called at the port and were too nervous to leave the ship. They also planned to start a fund for distressed British Subjects. Similarly in Cawnpore in India there was a plan to provide a 'Relief House' to help distressed Europeans that would give them a night's lodging in exchange for casual work.

On a more serious note, and following the increasing membership overseas, The Journal published the first article in a debate that continued for many years to come both within the organisation and in the wider world about the question of 'colour'. It was hoped that ..

“the problem approached in the spirit of Toc H can, I feel certain, result in a real and happy Christian relationship as must be intended by Him whose dwelling place is in the souls of all His people”

Somewhat prophetically, the subject of debate had been discussed within the organisation, in the long evenings at the original Talbot House, many years before

In concluding the 1920s

Some interesting snippets include Tubby being enrolled as a Scout and falling into a Tan pit at the Bristol conference - not at the same

time! Goole branch introduced Toc H to canal boatmen and Hammersmith's first talk was 'The Menace of Islam'. Spen Valley invited an atheist to speak. He was so controversial in a range of topics that it reminded the members in no uncertain terms how important the values of Toc H were!

1928 must have been a year when egg production was low as Leeds, Gloucester, Sevenoaks, Sedburgh and Maidstone supplied well over 20,000 eggs to local hospitals, and spare a thought for the children of Worthing who were used as playing cards in a fund raising whist game!

Finally, in 1926 Birmingham was described as having a 'murky atmosphere' but still managed to install a beautiful stained glass window in Mark VI. I can confirm that the atmosphere is cleaner now, but where is that stained glass window??

Jo Adams

References on

Looking onwards to the next decade of the growth and evolution of Toc H - in our next edition of this centenary series we will look at what happened in the 1930's.

Jo will gather information from the journals of the decade.

We hope you are enjoying this trot through the journals.



The Toc H Minibus has moved to be more available!!!!

As you may or may not be aware Toc H owns a 17 seater minibus, it is currently based in Birmingham. We hope it will be more used from this central position and the community in general can benefit from it. As it moves around it will be a good source of advertising our Movement as it has our logo and details on it.

The cost per day will be less than a commercial self-drive Minibus.

It has been in the past used by a wide range of users, Regimental Association to do battlefield tours, Ordinands to Talbot House, Scouts and Boys Brigade to do trips, football teams and trips to the airport.

It is equipped with front and backwards facing dash cams, a satnav and if you want to use it overseas a tachograph.

If any of you would like to use it or knows anyone else who wants to use it please let us know.

Doug Geater Childs



We will remember them !

Mary Grace

Rev A T Budgett

Jane Brochner

Rev Colin Elliot

Geoff Taylor

Ruth Cockerill

Betty Wood

Age shall not weary them

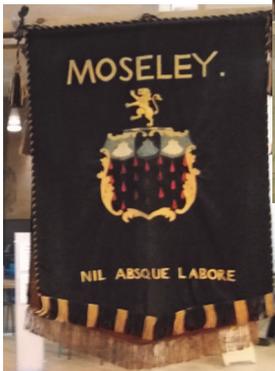


A new banner for the centenary

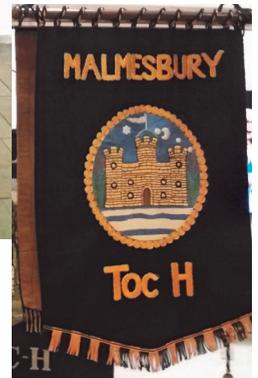
Toc H has a long history of banners being created for new branches etc. Sooo... a few of us decided that a Centenary Banner would be a nice thing to create! Pictured below is the unique rag-rugged large banner in a near completed state (it just needs backing). It raises the question 1919 to ??????. May it be of use for more than one year!!



Toc H Banners Displays



Just a few of the banners displayed in Birmingham at the Centenary Play



At The Premiere of the Peter Gill play we were delighted by the display of Toc H banners put on by the National Needlework Archive where they are lodged and cared for. We have chosen just 5 to show here, choosing the beautiful Ceylon banner and as the event was in Mosely we also chose that one. More will follow in future editions and they can all be seen on the National Needlework Archive in Newbury. Website is: www.nationalneedleworkarchive.org.uk/toc-h-banners.html

Between Thursday 19 March and Sunday 22 March the NMA is having a stand at ICHF Creative Crafts/Sewing for Pleasure/Fashion and Embroidery Show at the NEC Birmingham. We will be featuring an exhibition of our lovely, newly conserved, TOC H banners. The TOC H organisation was founded in the First World War and the banners in the NNA National Collection come from all over the world.

The Joy of Just Giving

As many of you will know I have recently undergone surgery for lung cancer and had a somewhat prolonged time in hospital only to be quickly followed by a longer stay in a different hospital due to a damaged spleen. In both cases I ended up in side rooms which is lonely and boring as there is little to occupy you (*the whole idea!*)

Morphine had the effect of causing me to have amazing conspiracy theories which meant I was incredibly scared (I gather not an uncommon side effect, although I do not remember much about pain!!!!) However it was a very lonely experience at times and watching everyone being so busy passing my door or popping in with a task gave me lots of time to ponder.

One of the things that was perturbing me was that the Board had ordered a lot of promotional pens and a few other items too and nothing was happening with them, with Marcia being on long term sick leave, Doug and me both effectively being hospitalised and the stock in the office!!!

So partly to assuage my guilt about this and partly to say thank you to the wonderful staff and at least to let some people hear the name of Toc H in our centenary year -I asked Doug to bring me in some pens which he did.

THEN the fun began! *AND* !!!! I really mean that. I was nervous at first but one of the staff popped in and asked if I'd like a drink and gave me a brilliant smile. When she brought the drink I said now would she let me give her a pen!! Ooooooh - What a discovery nurses LOVE pens! Particularly ones that write in black but are blue on the outside! They would ask why and I would say because of the smile you just gave, because it's a way of saying thank you, it's not even me that's giving it but a charity.

They would look at the pen and ask what Toc H meant and I would normally just say that it is a charity that is in its hundredth year and that I doubt they would ever have heard of it because it never specialised in a particular cause. If pushed I'd say it did what

The delight in receiving

it saw needed doing, and believed in its Four Principles. So many were so amazed and said it's what we need!! How long is it since you heard that from a virtual stranger??? Some may eventually phone the office if there is anyone there to answer the phone. One thing is for sure they now know Toc H exists!!!!

I was so rewarded by this so many would give me a wave as they passed my room would pop in and say hi if I was by myself and effectively all I'd done was say thank you to them for being who they were, and not even at a cost to me, as I would explain. Cleaners, Consultants, Porters, Chaplains, Sisters etc etc all enjoyed receiving a thank you (as well as me – time after time!!). Some even took msome to pass on—fantastic!!!!

Today I was taken to lunch by Doug to a busy garden centre and found I only had one pen with us. There was one lass constantly clearing tables, stacking used trays and I gave her one with the comment that she was working so hard and conscientiously that I wanted to thank her. It is amazing how that is something that does not happen often but it means so much when it does!!

In our last magazine I asked if anyone wanted any of our promotional gifts and not one person responded. Please think again and get in touch and we will send you some pens etc for you to do what I have been doing and see if you find it as rewarding as I have. I hope you do because you too deserve to !!!!! GIVE IT A TRY!!!

= happiness, interest and knowledge

NATIONAL PRAYER CYCLE

(This can be used weekly or monthly)

Friendship – To love widely

We love widely for all members, Branches and lone members in UK and overseas; and for those who are unwell.

Service – To build bravely

To build bravely thinking of people's needs in the UK and overseas and for new ways of serving and supporting them.

Fair mindedness – To think fairly

We think of plans for Toc H's ongoing development and for the Board and others looking after its opportunities.

Witness – To witness humbly

To witness humbly thinking of the Toc H Centenary and for all special events being planned this year.

Pray that more will share in the vision and work of Toc H.

*Prepared by Canon William Bestelink
January 2020*



MISSION STATEMENT

The aims of Toc H are defined by the four points of the compass, first defined in 1920:

Toc H is committed to building a fairer society by working with communities to promote friendship and service, confront prejudice and practice reconciliation.

Friendship:	To love widely
Service:	To build bravely
Fairmindedness:	To think fairly
Witness:	To witness humbly