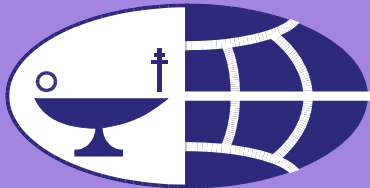


In Touch



October 2021

**Centenary Edition 10 of 10**

**Toc H — 2000–2015**



Oh! Then what a pleasure to see the ground  
floor  
With tables for two laid as tables for four,  
And bottles of sauce and Kia-Ora and squash  
Awaiting their owners who'd gone for a wash.

Who had gone up to wash the ozone from their  
skins

The sand from their legs and the Rock from  
their chins,

To prepare for an evening of dances and cards  
And forget the sea breezes on the dry  
promenade.

From third floor and fourth floor the children  
looked down

Upon ribbons of light in the salt-scented town;  
And drowning the trams roared the sound of  
the sea

As it washed in the shingle the scraps of their tea.

*(selected verses)* - **John Betjeman**

**Margate, 1940**

**FRIENDSHIP SERVICE FAIRMINDEDNESS WITNESS**

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

# IN TOUCH

## EDITORIAL TEAM

Hilary Geater Childs  
Rebecca Dickson

Toc H  
PO BOX 15824  
Birmingham  
B13 3JU

Tel: 0121 443 3552  
e: info@toch.org.uk



**Charity No 211042  
SC045491**

## EDITORIAL

In this final issue of In Touch for our centenary year Jo brings us into the new century the 2000's a period in which for those of us who were involved in the management of Toc H was a period of challenge and difficulty.

In the pages that follow we read of the plans that were discussed in the early part of the new millennium. The plans for future action and a revitalised Toc H that was to be built on the existing membership whilst also moving into new avenues of work.

The plans in themselves represented an exciting vision based on the potential for partnerships which were actively encouraged by the government and in our case more importantly Barclays Bank who extended our credit to ensure that the plans would be well funded.

The immediacy of developing the plans was in the climate of the time very important and reflected what was happening across the voluntary sector, consultants offered insights and encouraged growth.

The flaw in the argument, which with hindsight was missed, was that long-term plans need not immediacy but

sustainability which is counterintuitive to the thinking of Banks who want and expect returns not over a ten-year period but in a much shorter time scale.

The problem of course is that hindsight tells you where things went wrong when at the time of exciting developments, the present is all that matters.

In 2008 Barclay's Bank informed the Board that we had overstretched our financial capability and withdrew their support demanding that outstanding loans be repaid and imposing auditors to assist Toc H in moving forward. The irony of this action was that the auditors all of whom were nice people were also very expensive with monthly fees that depleted the available funds.

The irony of this move by the Bank was that within days we entered what is known as the credit crunch when the world of finance was turned on its head, the financial world was in uproar and the Banks found themselves facing financial problems that were many millions of pounds greater than the financial problems we faced.

The Banks had in fact been caught

out in a way that led to problems for countries as well as small organisations.

The outcome for Toc H was that we had to make staff redundant and close projects to ensure that we could pay debts which included a staff pension fund debt of over a £1m. The following years were to put it at its simplest very difficult for the Board who had to manage change in a way that ensured that the organisation could survive.

The reality is that had the Bank not waited a few days before moving in on us we would have faced bankruptcy the few days of grace inadvertently given to us were sufficient for a plan to be put in place. A plan predicated on no or very few paid staff with the Board being responsible for difficult decisions without senior staff to advise.

The process of recovering from the changes that had to take place meant that for a few years we were firefighting to survive. Though with time we had paid our debts and had money that was surplus to immediate needs and therefore allowed us to continue.

The changes were traumatic for those who lost their jobs and at least one person greeted me at a social occasion as though I had personal responsibility for the changes. A meeting that was not helped by the fact that I had no idea who the individual who clearly disliked me was!

A disturbing outcome of the problems faced by the Board was the view of a small number of members, I suspect influenced by some of the staff, that Toc H in the UK was going to close. In retrospect we were able to show that this was short-sighted and a misunderstanding which we were able to prove was simply wrong!

The 2008 credit crunch was world wide and an example of the Banks overstretching their capacity, which is of course what they had suggested for Toc H.

The following 10 years that brought us to our centenary year have brought us to a point when we need to plan for a future in which we rely on our resources of people and finance.

The lessons learned from 2008 and the years that followed must be imbedded in our culture and our thinking, most important of all remembering that policy and planning dictates how we work using our finances to support the possible and not allowing money to dictate policy.

In a week's time we interview for the new General Secretary, I hope that in my next letter I can tell you who we have appointed.

The Board residential to review future plans planned for July is now taking place in September, if you have any thoughts as always please send them to [tmd@toch.org.uk](mailto:tmd@toch.org.uk)

With best wishes

*Terry Drummond*

# The End of an Era

It seems a very long and difficult time since we looked to celebrating the Centenary of the Movement of Toc H so named in recognition of Talbot House, Poperinge where the ethos and fellowship of the Toc H movement was born during the 1915-18 War. At that point we had no idea of the difficulties and the journeys that such a venture would involve with the onset of illnesses, of isolation, and of deaths! BUT with the publishing of this In Touch we successfully complete the task we set out to do!! In doing so I believe it is only right to acknowledge those who have given so much to the task.

Firstly and personally I have to acknowledge the part Doug played and also that of Marcia. Sadly both have died during the period, though neither through Covid and together they were the eyes that reviewed the work that Rebecca and I put in to creating these magazines. Both contributed much behind the scenes and have been a great loss. Doug was always a historian of sorts and his knowledge was always of use, let alone his compensating for my lack of computing skills. Marcia lead to there being considerably fewer typos than there otherwise would have been!!

We owe an immense amount to Jo Adams who researched, selected and wrote the copy for each decade. What a formidable task to use her skills to sort through so much and not to produce dry fact! To capture the feel of each decade and to include the little things that made the impact of Toc H so important in each decade. To show growth when there was growth and also the human and humorous and 'little' things that made Toc H unique. She demonstrates in her choices the Toc H philosophy of "if you see a need, see if there is a way to fix it, and if there is – do it, and share it so similar needs can also be 'fixed'!!

Thank you Jo for all your work throughout the whole period and your offer to continue research as required.

Finally, I wish to say a heartfelt thank you to Rebecca Dickson who has been my co-editor of In Touch for so many years and who "stayed on" to complete the series and has put up with me health issues and all the rest and your patience with my lack of skill!!

To all of you we owe a great deal !!!!!!! THANK YOU ALL !!!!!

Hilary G C

# The Movement of Toc H

## The New Millennium ~ 2000 - 2015

The new decade dawned with fireworks, singing and dancing and everyone woke up on January 1<sup>st</sup> relieved that the world was still there, all the computers seemed to work and life continued....

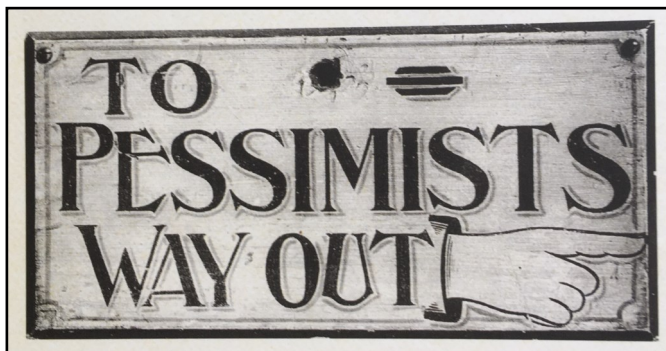
### The Future of Toc H

In the past there had been many occasions when concern about the Movement had been expressed, new initiatives launched and directives sent out. However at the beginning of 2000 this acquired a more serious and perhaps more ominous overtone.

In August 2000, following the sudden death of the charismatic Mike Lyddiard in 1999, the new Director, Geoffrey Smith was appointed. His main challenge he announced was to reverse the 'decade of decline and discover new opportunities in a new century'. He described how the future of the Movement depended upon getting rid of the 'Stumbling blocks' and converting them into 'Stepping Stones'. This, it was hoped would result in better management of assets, increased appreciation of staff and more efficient estate management.

The business plan proposed a new conference centre at Wendover and new investment in existing houses, activity centres and campsites which would include Alison House and Talbot House and a network of Community Houses. As a direct result of this, smaller premises were acquired so work could continue in the community in a more economical way, with activities tailor-made to suit local needs. These were developed in Bradford, Leigh in Runcorn, Croydon, Halton in Salford and Rhyl to name but a few. Costs would be more carefully controlled with the aim to achieve a 'balanced budget' by 2005.

Geoffrey Smith concluded by saying that this plan was not for the faint hearted and quoted the well-known sign from Talbot House that said



Throughout 2001/2002 there was much discussion about the future by the Central Council culminating in an alteration to the Royal Charter. The Central Council 'weekend' was replaced by an Annual General Meeting to which all members would be welcome, (Members had been allowed to attend the Central Council meeting since 1990) and Toc H would be governed by a small National Management Committee of 6 to 9 members. A new business plan was introduced that would split the country into 4 regional companies that would oversee work in their region and have a partnership agreement with branches.

By 2005, the National Management Committee had renamed itself the Board of Trustees as it was felt this more accurately defined its role. However, by early 2007, it seemed that all the optimism generated at the beginning of the new Millennium had disappeared. The AGM was delayed because of the appointment of new bankers, the auditors had refused to sign the accounts until this was resolved and it appeared that there was a lack of communication between the trustees and membership. This together with administrative problems, more staff redundancies, financial shortcomings and a falling and aging membership (this had fallen to 1200, half that of six years ago), increased the possibility of the closure of Toc H or a merger with a 'like-minded' organisation.

However, in the spirit of the Movement, optimism again prevailed and at the February 2007 AGM, Mary Rance the new Director presented a 'New Business Plan' which aimed to balance the budget, consolidate present activities and encourage more collaboration with Local Authorities, but also more staff redundancies.

In 2008 membership figures increased slightly to 1404 with 60% of those within a branch. There were 44 branches with 28 having less than ten members and only five branches having more than 15 with **Cosby** having the most at 23.

Toc H headquarters was closed and there would no longer be any paid staff or advisors. The existing branches that were meeting for fellowship and friendship could continue as long as they worked under the legal framework of the Movement and if funds were required for activities they should appeal to local support organisations. Terry Drummond, the new Chairman agreed to establish a working party to consider the way forward.

## **Branch work**

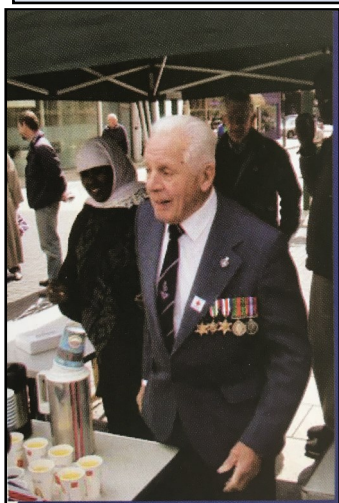
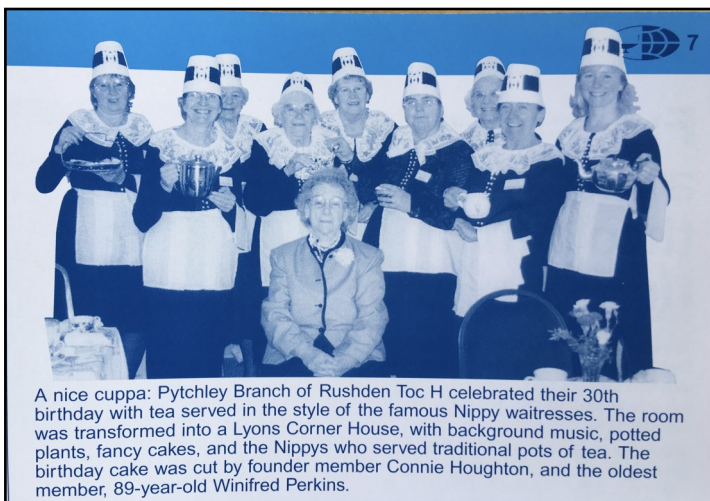
On a more positive note, away from the administrative problems and within the constraints of a much smaller organisation, the branches that remained continued with the grassroots work that had been the hallmark of Toc H in the past.



**Rushden Royal Ladies** who increased their numbers in 2000, donated two wheelchairs to a local charity for the elderly. The money was raised through a coffee and gateaux evening; this branch always seemed to do things with style!!

**Crewkerne**, carried on their tradition of providing a float for the local carnival. In 2000 it had a Peter Pan theme and won first prize

**Pytchley branch of Rushden** celebrated their 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary by transforming their room into a Lyons Corner House with background music and potted plants with members dressed as the famous 'Nippy' waitresses who served fancy cakes and tea.



In July 2005, **Barkingside branch** celebrated VE day by serving 250 free cups of tea to passers-by during street party in Ilford which included live 40s music, dancing and stalls.

**Toasting VE Day with  
a cuppa in Barking-  
side**

**Denny** in Scotland, a branch that had been in existence for 45 years cared for the handicapped local people with a weekly meeting that included games, basketball, music and colouring in books and plenty of tea and coffee. Members were also busy raising money for their ambitious trips which ranged from visits to Ambleside and Weirside, to weekends in Blackpool and Scarborough.



**Weekly games evenings**



**The annual weekend in Blackpool**



Another success story was **Cosby** branch who, in 2001 collaborated with Help the Aged and was awarded a grant of £62,500 from the National Lottery Community Fund, (a body that had been a valuable source of funding since its inception in 1994). This enabled a major upgrade of its property so that it was fully accessible and so able to offer wider facilities for all. For 60 years Cosby branch has been serving its local community with a wide range of events and, in contrast to other branches, membership had risen by 25% with a new recruitment drive planned.

**Newport** deserved a mention for increasing membership and **High Brooms** and **Saltburn** obtained grants from Toc H central funds to improve their premises.

In 2014, **Saltburn** also ran a special fund raising day to raise funds to restore the local war memorial. They were helped on the day by members from **Barnsley**, **Barton** and **Heart of England**, an example of collaboration between branches that seemed to increase during these years.

Other branches enjoyed outings and lunch groups and continued to meet in people's houses to listen to talks, have cake sales, quizzes etc, or just enjoy the fellowship of those who had known each other for years. The North of the River Rallies continued and up to 2015 London District was organising a programme of events that included the Mill Hill Music Club nights, visits, walks, picnics and the intriguing 'Bubbles Day'!

In 2013, the most heartening event was the opening of a brand new branch in **Jump** in the borough of **Barnsley**. The impetus for this came from a group of Barnsley friends who visited Talbot House and became inspired by the ethos of Toc H. It was based initially in the Jump Working Man's Club and aimed to encompass a wide community involvement. Links were established with a local biker café, the local church and local authority and a community hub in a disused showroom was planned.

The Toc H small grant scheme provided funds for a kitchen and the branch began to serve breakfasts at the weekends, opening at 7.30 to feed the local fishermen first, before the rest of the community woke up! In Spring 2015 the branch staged 'Talbot House, A home from home', a play written by Peter Gill, which was signed, for the deaf members of the audience. They also catered for the younger members of their community with a holiday club aptly named Little Jumpers!



**Little Jumpers**

**Jump** then went on to acquire a 17 seater minibus which they planned to use for trips to Toc H events, taking 'Dads and Lads' to Weirside to improve father/son relationships, and other community based activities.



## **Fund raising**

As I have already mentioned in previous editions, methods of fund raising altered over the years as society and technology have changed. In simple terms this was demonstrated by Tony Cook the champion of Toc H recycling who added the collection of print cartridges to his list.

Inspired by a popular film that featured the Women's Institute almost baring all, in 2004 Toc H Rugby Club decided to produce a similar calendar to raise funds for the club and the local children's hospice.

Cosby started filling shoeboxes for Armed Forces personnel in Afghanistan and also championed the 'send a cow' scheme, metaphorically speaking of course!

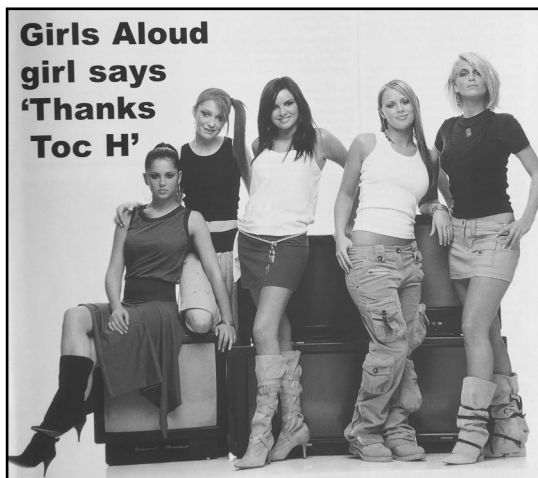
The old 'mile of pennies' was still popular but this was upgraded by **Much Wenlock** branch who encouraged children to stick 10ps to sticky tape in order to complete a 1km strip This should amount to £4000, which they hoped to send to the Khasdobir project in Bangladesh. In the same vein all attendees at a 2002 Central Council meeting were presented with tubes of Smarties which when filled with 20ps should raise £14 per tube for funds.

Teddy bears provided the focus for other fund raising schemes, with Teddy Bear Picnics being arranged in 5 regional centres, the largest of which was at Gateshead where Toc H joined forces with Community Service Volunteers and BBC Radio Newcastle to provide a day of fun entitled 'Make a difference day' to which over 4000 people attended. The event was free, the only stipulation being that every adult carried a teddy bear.



Entertainment and activities were laid on and included a girl band 'Devotion' from the Wirral who were Toc H members and a boy band, 3MN. British Airways took 4 special bears away with them for a month to see how far they travelled. The event was so successful that it was specially commended at a national awards day for making an outstanding contribution to the community.

Nicola Roberts, one member of the girl band Devotion, later credited the day with being the springboard of her career as she went on to be part of the hugely successful Girls Aloud some years later.



## **Branch closures**

Many branches closed, some after many years of service and fellowship, which of course was always sad. Their lamps no longer had to be returned to HQ but could be kept in a local church or museum to commemorate the existence of a branch.

An example of this was **Enfield** branch which decided to close in 2000 after 72 years of continuous service. It was founded in 1928 by Dorothy Singer after a visit by Alison Macfie. Two of the founder members, Phyllis Coutts and Betty Winter had been members throughout. The branch always maintained a good mixture of members that included teachers, bank clerks, shop assistants, dressmakers and hairdressers. The ages ranged from 18 to 50 and denominations covered C of E, Presbyterian, Baptist, Wesleyan and Christian Scientist. Over the years the work had remained much the same, winter and summer parties for senior citizens and people with disabilities, manning hospital television trolleys, visiting housebound people and carrying out small jobs.

This perhaps personifies a 'typical' Toc H branch so could be applied, in generic terms to many of the branches that closed during this decade.

A factor that it is said to have contributed to the demise of many Toc H activities was the increasing amount of government legislation surrounding public events. This including compulsory police check (CRB) for adults working with children, plus Risk Assessments and Health & Safety guidelines that had to be followed. One of the high profile casualties of this was the highly successful Birmingham Outward Group (BOG) who felt unable to continue with their activity weekends that they had been organising for 44 years.

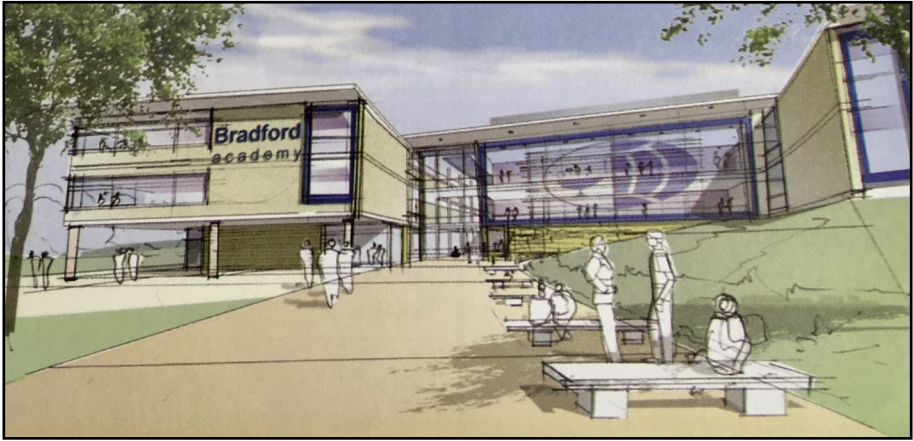
## **Innovation**

**Enfield** (See above) deserve an additional mention for their most notable achievement, featured in the 2005 'In Touch', which was to establish Britain's first ever talking newspaper for the blind over 40 years before. When the scheme was in its infancy ten members would record the news from weekly papers onto large spool tapes before driving the huge tape players round each home of 12 subscribers, leaving the machine overnight with each listener. (As technology moved on this procedure became simpler...). The scheme then spread to many other branches, before being taken over by larger organisations nationwide. Yet another Toc H innovation that contributed to the fabric of society.

July 2000 saw the introduction of Dotcom Branch, which was believed to be the first branch of a national charity to "meet online". This enabled all members to log on, three evenings a week to chat, debate and advertise events etc. A year later this was replaced with 'TocTalk' which was a message board for anyone to contribute to and 'chat', covering general news, the volunteer programme, fund-raising ideas and a swap shop. Denny and Barnsley linked up on Facebook in 2014 and a year later, a member near Glasgow decided to start a new branch by launching it on the same platform.

Perhaps the biggest and bravest example of innovation for Toc H in this decade occurred following the launch of the Government Academies scheme in 2001. In 2004, the Movement, which has always had a commitment to education, decided to work with local Diocesan partners in Bradford and Lambeth to help to sponsor two new city academies. As well as providing the best education possible, their aim was also to put citizenship and conflict resolution studies into the curriculum.





**Artist's impression of the proposed Bradford Academy**



Another innovative way to champion Toc H ideals was developed in November 2004, with a view to provide employment for ex service personnel. The project Manager Tim Chillman planned to run residential courses in brewing, hospitality and business and then build a micro-brewery that would produce a range of organic beers with names like Desert Rat, Passchendaele Bitter and Anzac lager. Profits will be put back into the business to subsidise future training. The plan was to use traditional ingredients and methods common in the First World War to produce 20 beers, each commemorating a battle, campaign or military unit and be sold with the relevant historical details .

It went on sale online the following year with Original Campaign Ale and Christmas Truce Porter available, the latter as a limited edition of 300. In the future, it was hoped that the beer would also be sold through regimental museums, historic country houses and tourist centres.

### **Queen Mother**

In April 2002 the death was announced of the Queen Mother, who had supported Toc H for many years. She had been patron first of the League of Women Helpers which became Women's Association and then the combined Movement. She was present at many Toc H milestone moments including the re-opening of All Hallows church after the war, the opening of Talbot House on Tower Hill and Prideaux House. People often wrote to her asking for help and some of these requests were passed on to Toc H to deal with. These became known as the 'Queen's cases' and were usually dealt with by a member of staff who reported back to her on progress. Apart from her official status she and Tubby were also close friends.



*H.R.H the Duchess of York visits "New June" in 1934 - escorted by Tubby Clayton and, right, Alison Macfie.*

Every year she also entertained the American Winant and Clayton volunteers with tea on the lawn at Clarence House. This event became renowned within royal circles as being somewhat livelier than other royal events and on one occasion Princess Margaret decided to renege on her planned itinerary to join the party. This enlivened the occasion even more and at one point she entertained a small group with her particular way of disposing of cocktail sticks during a buffet. She collected everyone's sticks and dropped them point down on to the grass before neatly pressing them in with her beautifully made shoes. A nightmare in waiting for the gardeners I should imagine!!

***Does this still continue I wonder!?***

### **National Memorial Arboretum**

In 2003 a large oak sculpture of a Toc H lamp was installed in the memorial garden at the Arboretum in Alrewas. It was carved by Jim Heath and was eight times the size of a normal lamp.

Unfortunately, by 2005 it was badly damaged by the weather, so was recast in bronze by experts at Black Isle Bronze in Scotland. The cost of this was met by a legacy in memory of John Davidson, the Chairman of **Hednesford** branch.



The Toc H lamp at the National Arboretum



## **Armistice Day**

In Belgium, November 11<sup>th</sup> is a public holiday and in Ypres, the centre of the Salient where so many people died, there is a Day of Remembrance focussing on the Menin Gate. Members of Toc H had, for many years visited Talbot House at this time and in the early 2000s decided to run a stall, called 'Tubby's Tea Bar' which provided free tea and biscuits to those who joined the commemoration. This became an annual event organised by the Belgian branch of Toc H, the picture shows members hard at work in 2008.



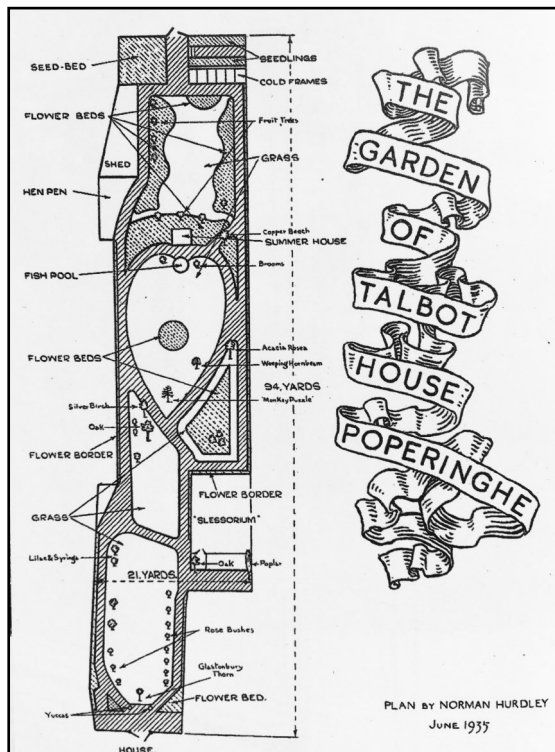
## **A first for Toc H**

In February 2007 a national Toc H teapot painting competition was launched by Henry Sandon of the Antiques Roadshow. The aim was to encourage young people to develop their artistic skills, with the winning designs being made into teapots to go on display at the Stoke-on-Trent Ceramic Festival.

Subsequently, the Teapot competition came to a close in Autumn 2007 with an Awards ceremony at the Stoke-on-Trent ceramics festival. Prizes and certificates were presented and the winners in each category were given a real teapot made with their design. A Grand China and Glass Auction followed resulting in Toc H benefitting from the good publicity, much good will and a small donation to the funds.

## Chelsea Flower Show

In 2008, a replica of the garden of Talbot House in Poperinge was created at the Chelsea Flower Show. Tubby once described it as "The Largest Room in the House" because it provided an area of peace and solitude for many battle weary soldiers from the Front line. This included 'Tubby's Summer House' and wooden benches in the same style as those in the Attic Chapel. Poppies were included in the planting to echo an air of remembrance 90 years after the end of the First World War. Friends of Talbot House gave out leaflets about Toc H and the garden won a Silver Gilt medal. After the show the exhibit was transferred to Roundhay Park in Leeds.



Another horticultural moment occurred in Tower Hamlets, when 'Fruitful City Garden' opened in 2007. This aimed to encourage 'community food growing', at the Toc H John Scurr Community Centre. This was a collaborative project championed by Toc H



outreach worker who aimed to bring all members of the community together, “regardless of culture, religion, age or race”.

## **A Surprise**

The accounts showed a deficit every year from 1994 until 2008 when a surplus surprisingly appeared, due to the unexpectedly high price of £900,000 received from the sale of the Royal Albert Hall box, that had been given as part of a legacy many years before. Sadly, this was not to last!

In 2009, the green logo (that no one appeared to like) was officially replaced by the blue oval one.



## **Ghana Well project**

A 60 mile cycle in your 60<sup>th</sup> year sounds a daunting prospect but this was the target for Paul Dimoline and his fellow Toc H branch members in 2012 to raise money for completion of a well being built in Anotem in Northern Ghana. The link had been made many years before when a young Ghanaan called Thomas joined a weekend project, met Paul and many years later invited him to his wedding in Ghana.

Paul saw for himself how hard their existence was and was determined to help. Paul and his team raised over £2000, Barton Rotary and Barton Lions donated some more and the shortfall was

made up by a quiz devised by Hilary and Doug Geater Childs and the Heart of England branch who donated quiz prizes. A real team effort.



The well was opened later in the year and in 2013 Paul returned to dedicate the site and present a lamp to the new branch of Toc H that had opened in the area.



Across the world, Toc H still had a presence in France, Belgium, Zimbabwe, India, Bangladesh and Australia.

## Weirside

In 2015, Weirside in the Lake District, which had been gifted to Toc H in 1964 by W N Grinshaw in memory of his Mother Arabella was 're-born'. The centre, had over the years provided a place for charities and community groups to experience all aspects of the great outdoors either by challenging them physically or by providing a place of tranquillity away from their everyday life.



While the outside remained the same, the interior was decluttered and updated to adhere to building regulations, ensuring that it would be available for many years to come.



## Archives

As the future of Toc H became increasingly uncertain several dedicated members realised the importance of collecting, preserving and centralising historic documents, objects and memories. This was spearheaded by John and Marolyn Burgess and Hilary and Doug Geater Childs, although others were involved.

This was to take several years with the aim to deposit the archive in Special Collections at The University of Birmingham where they would be correctly stored and accessible to all.

## Centenary celebrations

2015 marked 100 years since Talbot House had opened in Belgium and 2019 will be 100 years since Toc H movement was conceived. In Belgium and UK plans were being made to commemorate both events.

In Belgium Toc H Poperinge planned:

- a Peace Book that would be circulated to all members to sign
- a 'Different Chain of Light' that would begin at Talbot House and visit all existing branches
- World Chain of Art, small canvases from all over the world depicting what Toc H means
- 6 day celebration in December at Talbot House that would include a vigil, battle field tours, Last Post in Ypres, a conference, a birthday party and brunch 100 years after the first breakfast was served.



Members from all over the world attended what proved to be a memorable week of celebrations organised by the small number of dedicated Belgian branch members.



## A selection of art work that was sent in from all over the World



## 1915-2015

So by the end of 2015, Toc H had evolved from its small beginnings in Tubby Clayton's attic flat in London, to a world-wide movement. With the Four Points of the Compass as their guide, the members would tackle any problem; from painting the railings on the sea front or building a bus shelter to trying to rid the world of leprosy and provide care for ex-servicemen and POWs.

Some of the ongoing legacies of Toc H are the number of activities they have initiated that have become part of other organisations; the Cycling Proficiency Scheme, the Blood Transfusion Service, the expansion of Samaritans to name but a few, that still flourish today but no longer under the auspices of Toc H. Many of the pioneering



projects in South Africa, India and Bangladesh for the less fortunate members of society and the care for indigenous peoples in Australia still continue, but are now funded and run by a variety of different agencies.

Other innovative ideas came from members who voiced concerns that the increasingly popular cinema culture that would benefit from a censorship framework to protect young people. The rising death and injury figures on the roads prompted calls improve road safety with the suggestion that drivers should be fined for breaking the speed limit.

The overriding need to care for others manifested itself in running uniformed organisations, holiday trips, prison and hospital visiting and care for the homeless and marginalised members of society, all of which were funded by the weirdest selection of money making schemes that themselves provided much fellowship and fun for members and participants.

Toc H seemed to recognise the need for these caring groups at the time when they were not provided by anyone else. They then gradually became embedded in our society, supported by the DSS, Charities and NHS. Similarly, jobs such as the aforementioned painting of railings and bus shelter construction are now undertaken by Local Authorities. The original Toc H impetus forgotten.

This is perhaps the way it should be, members of Toc H never glorified their work, they just aimed to:

*Love widely, build bravely, think fairly and witness humbly.*

***Josephine Adams***

### ***Author's note***

The one hundred years are now complete.

It seems a long time ago since Doug and I first chatted about the plan in February 2019.

The aim was to tell the story of Toc H through interpretation of the monthly journals. This primary source provided an insight into a fascinating organisation.

It has taken me on a journey that I was not expecting. I have learnt so much, not only about Toc H but about the social history of the last one hundred years. All this, despite the constraints of time, resources and the global pandemic.

I feel very honoured to have been given the responsibility to document the history of Toc H. I have fulfilled my brief and hope it provides a valuable record for generations to come.

*We will remember them !*

**Vince Foy  
Dr P J Joseph  
Angela Fulcher  
Alice Bertha Dunford**

**Beryl Cameron  
Pat Ingham  
John Wesley Garratt  
David Icke**



*Age shall not weary them*

## **A memory, a gift and a lesson**

As newly appointed field staff, some 50 odd years ago, I had many interesting experiences, but one that still stays with me was when two of the Mark VI Marksman (where I was working from) requested that they should meet Tubby. I spoke to Tubby's batman and in due course we were granted an audience!! WE must have looked an incongruous trio, Ken was as smart as could be in an emerald green suit and neatly trimmed red hair and full beard while Clive was casually dressed in jeans and rugby shirt with an immense and unruly Afro. I was in a full length maxi skirt not a mini! But this led to Tubby referring to me as Archbishop Makarios throughout!

We duly arrived at Trinity Square where we were met by batman Neil looking a little worried — a few days before an Australian member had made a pilgrimage across the world to meet Tubby. On arrival he was only met with Tubby's anger when Tubby literally pushed him downstairs declaring he was not a tourist sight! How dare he be treated as such!!!

We were much more fortunate as Tubby showed us drawings of the preserved walls of London and talked with us for a really long time. He explained that what mattered was each individual and the present and the future; that our energies and those of Toc H were not about *what was* but about meeting needs in the present and in building a better future if at all possible - that it was the fellowship from Talbot House that was now (then) to be found in branches, that ideas and needs should be shared and needs relieved if at all possible. Quite an evening, but one that definitely made me think of the bible verse - "Faith without works is dead".

***Hilary Geater Childs***

## Welcome to the New General Secretary



Hilary has given me an opportunity, by way of introduction, to say a few words about myself as the new General Secretary of Toc H, and to set out my thinking for the future of the organisation.

I should perhaps start by being up front that I have a *chequered history*. I have done lots of different sorts of jobs, both voluntary and employed, most of them associated with the Church, but all of them about building the common good with the intention of creating a better world. I

want to bring these diverse skills and experience to the leadership of Toc H.

So let me give you a potted history. After working as a psychologist with children, I was ordained priest in the Church of England at the end of the 1980s and did a curacy in what was then the Diocese of Bradford. I returned to that diocese later to do a 10-year stint as parish priest in Thornbury where, with a very committed congregation, we built a new church and community centre.

Both churches saw their ministry as serving their community and so this included establishing several projects including a nursery, a café with a bar, a community project and interfaith work as well as several training courses for local people in computer skills, food hygiene etc. I was also for a time Social Responsibility Adviser in the Diocese of St Albans where this community focus continued and then later as Archdeacon of Loughborough.

Latterly my work has been oriented in a more focused way towards Christian social action. I had 10 years as CEO at Church Urban Fund where I established the Near Neighbours Project and the Just Finance Foundation – if you are interested you will be able to find out more about that work by putting those names into Google.

Most recently I was CEO at Ampleforth Abbey, where I was employed

to help sort out some of the difficulties the community were facing.

I've also had time on a Police Authority with responsibility for Human Resources and Community Relations and in the Heath Service where I chaired the local



hospital's charity and the Complex Care Panel, as well as having the role of Deputy Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee.

In a voluntary capacity I am also a trustee of the Henry Smith Charity which gives away about £30m per year for social and community projects and supports Anglican clergy across England, as well as a small charity in the village where I live, which funds local schools, university undergraduates and clergy dependents. So a diverse background.

It may be a disappointment, but I have no great masterplan for Toc H and its future; what I want to do over the next few weeks and months is to listen to members, to the board, to the friends of the organisation, to those outside of Toc H and to the wider context in which we live. Anything new will come out of the existing organisation and its work so the starting place for the future is attentive listening.

I wanted to come and work at Toc H because it has rock solid foundations and a clear set of values and on that groundwork much can be built. Its origins in the ministry of Tubby Clayton and the trenches of the First World War and latterly in its community service has given Toc H a set of values, friendship, service, fairmindedness and an orientation to Christian values which are perennial and in our own time attractive to many.

I am committed to taking the noble inheritance of Toc H and building with its members, the board and anyone else who is interested a new future.

***Paul Hackwood***

## NATIONAL PRAYER CYCLE

(This can be used weekly or monthly)

### **Friendship – to love widely**

We pray for the Board and the vision of Toc H,  
for the new General Secretary  
and that the Movement may grow.

### **Service – to build bravely**

We pray for Branches, lone members,  
those unwell or housebound;  
for ongoing work and new opportunities.

### **Fair-mindedness – to think fairly**

We think of the Four Points of the Compass,  
we reflect on our changing society and how we can  
be inspired and respond to new needs.

### **Witness – to witness humbly**

We think of the needs of people,  
particularly those who are isolated or alone,  
and all affected by the virus.

*Prepared by Canon William Bestelink  
June 2021*



## 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.

<b>Friendship:</b>	To love widely
<b>Service:</b>	To build bravely
<b>Fairmindedness:</b>	To think fairly
<b>Witness:</b>	To witness humbly