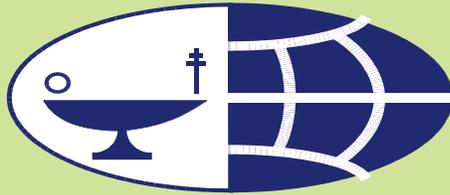


Autumn



2014

Charity No. 211042



IN TOUCH

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FRIENDSHIP SERVICE FAIRMINDEDNESS WITNESS

BY TOC H MEMBERS FOR TOC H MEMBERS

IN TOUCH

Autumn 2014



Charity No. 211042

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EDITORIAL

The magnificent display of ceramic poppies that were set out in the moat of the Tower of London proved to be a tourist attraction, more so in the days before November 11th and the keeping of the 2 minute silence in recollection of the armistice in 1918. The numbers attracted to view the display seem to have represented a cross section of the whole community who on viewing the poppies shared an emotional experience of recognising the importance of remembrance.

The photograph of the handing over the 'Peace Book' which is travelling the world before

returning to Poperinge for the marking of the 100th anniversary of the opening of Talbot House was taken a

few weeks before the display was completed.

The 'Peace Book' and the ceramic poppies are a reminder that whilst we are a hundred years on from the opening battles of the First World War, it is important that we remember the hundreds of thousands who died fighting for peace. The poppies were both a reminder and a gentle celebration of the lives of those who died.

The 'Peace Book' is a reminder that we live with the realities of conflict in the world today. The problems of war are a part of the lives of too many people, for instance in Syria and also in other countries that, all too often, are not reported by the media.

The 'Peace Book' underpins the contribution that Toc H can make to working for a better understanding of what peace means. The collection of pictures, messages and signatures brings together a memento from across the world.

In making the statement about our contribution it may seem that I'm making a very big claim for a small number of people. The truth is that whilst Toc H across the world represents a small number of people, it is through our individual and collective identity that we can contribute to discussions and activity in creating a better and peaceful world.

The First World War veterans who were the first members of Toc H were encouraged to do good as a matter of course, without publicity, and to remember those who had given their lives fighting for freedom. In the years that followed many activities were started by Toc H members across the world and this continues to be the case.

In a conversation with the Bishop of Rochester I mentioned the work in Tunbridge Wells which he had visited very early in his time in the diocese. He went on to say that he had seen a large Toc H sign in Harare and it made me think that we may be small but we can be a sign to the world of what good can be done by a few committed people.

At the AGM I spoke of our ageing membership in the UK, age is relative, we can be as active as we want to be even if the activity is limited. As long it is based on working for the good of the wider community it will be another contribution to the building of an equitable society.

Like the first members in the 1920's doing good quietly and unobtrusively remains a key element of our call to service and the working out of the values that are summed up in the Four Points of the Compass.

To return to the ceramic poppies they were in place for a season before being despatched to those who had purchased them. We are called to be active for more than a season but like the poppies whatever we do should be of the moment and be a pointer to the future.

Terry Drummond

Cover Picture: Martine Boone hands over the Peace Book into the safe keeping of Terry Drummond outside the Tower of London and the field of ceramic poppies. This is the start of its journey around the United Kingdom and it is our earnest wish that as many members as possible contribute to it.

The In Touch magazine is moving to being produced three times a year, and is free to members. Last date for submission of articles is the end of **February, June and October**

"Sharing this wonderful fellowship"- Toc H in Canada and the USA

Linda Parker who has just been elected as a Trustee shares part of her research with us

Many of the troops that had visited Talbot House during the war were from the Dominions, particularly Canada and Australia. When they returned home, they formed groups of ex-servicemen, who seeing the growth of the Toc H movement, resolved to start groups of their own. Tubby described how Toc H had started to take root in the Dominions, not as a movement imposed from London, but as the natural result of men who had known the fellowship of Talbot House in the war to attempt to replicate it in their own countries after the war: "...it was an empire growth from the beginning: Canadians, New Zealanders and Australians, who had never thought to set foot on English soil, until they came to share the agony they could have easily avoided, created Talbot House and stood by its true spirit." He considered that the growth of Toc H abroad was due to: "The survivors, scattered in all parts of the world, who regarded Toc H as the turning point in their experience but did not attempt to keep it to themselves, and were unanimous that they should transmit the truth of Christ in Flanders to the next and subsequent generations"

Tubby was pleased to be invited to Canada in 1922 by Lord Byng, the Governor General of Canada. Lord Byng had distinguished himself as a general in the War, and had led the Canadian victory in April 1917 at the Battle of Vimy Ridge, an historic military milestone for the Dominion that inspired Canadian nationalism. Tubby was pleased to think that the nascent branches in Canada had been noticed by the Governor General. He set sail on January 6th 1922 and received a splendid welcome at Government House, Ottawa. After a rest of two weeks with the Byngs he set out on his travels to lecture about Toc H and give encouragement to groups armed with his magic lantern apparatus. The tour was a success, generating large audiences full of enthusiasm and managed, as well as raising the profile of Toc H, to raise funds for its work. As a direct result of his visit Winnipeg became a branch. In the first lamp lighting ceremony in London in 1923 Winnipeg was the first overseas branch to receive its lamp. Travelling next to New York Tubby, at first not impressed with the City, but after he had been there two weeks, supported by the rector and congregation of Ridgefield, Connecticut, he wrote to his father that he had

found "the genuine New York". Tubby's problems with the USA stemmed from his perception of it as a materialistic and modern country. Tired from his Canadian tour, he perhaps had an unduly pessimistic outlook. He certainly made an impression in New York, and made contacts which were to bear fruit during and after the Second World War.

By 1925 funds were needed to support the rapid expansion of Toc H, and in the light of his successful tour of Canada and New York in 1922, it was decided that Tubby would make a world tour, accompanied by the energetic and successful Toc H padre of the Manchester Mark, Pat Leonard.

Times reported that Toc H was "seeking friendship and free growth all around the world". Tubby and Pat Leonard, it said, would deliver lectures about the aims and methods of the movement. Edward, Prince of Wales, talking about the movement of Toc H, expressed the view that the young men that they met in different countries would "have the chance of sharing in this wonderful fellowship... I feel sure that some of them will receive the torch that you carry".

Tubby and Pat Leonard (ex-chaplain and full time padre for Toc H) set out on Thursday 8th April 1925 on the RMS Antonia. A Royal reception was held on the Cunard ship RMS Antonia, and 30-40 Toc H members had come on board. Pictures were taken of Tubby explaining about the Everest lamp, given in memory of Andrew Irvine, which Tubby was due to take to a group of rubber planters in the Malay jungle. The expedition was provisioned for 44 weeks and took 17 trunks and packing cases which Pat Leonard was responsible for. He later described their contents: "In addition to a complete range of clothes... including field service uniform, Arctic underwear, tropical evening clothes, scout kit,..... there were several boxes of lantern slides and a magic lantern... two or three Toc H lamps, a portable altar and much Toc H literature." Tubby described his visit to Halifax as 'joyous' and then sailed on to New York. In New York Tubby had arranged a lunch on board for important contacts and Pat and Tubby were photographed from "every conceivable angle."

He preached three sermons on the Sunday and attended various lunches and meetings of all kinds. At the end of his visit to New York he reported: "We have had a good time in New York. Not large sums of money, but what is better - real deep keenness which will, I trust, result in Toc H being really formed as a native USA movement." The American tour included talks to service men, the Navy Club with Theodore Roosevelt in the Chair. Pat Leonard reported that although the Americans were very polite and

Continued on page 10

Press Release for the BBC

Cenotaph March Past 2014 - Background information sent to British Legion & BBC

Toc H is a positive legacy of the First World War. A Royal Charter charity which has achieved much over nearly a century of offering simple acts of friendship, of seeing needs in the local community and doing its best to meet them.

The name Toc H comes from the 1st World War Army Signaller's code for the initials of Talbot House, a "Home from Home" in Poperinge, Belgium, during the time of trench warfare. The House was run by an Army Chaplain, the Revd. 'Tubby' Clayton, and he invited soldiers of all ranks to find a haven of peace and refreshment, physical, mental and spiritual, whenever they could, provided they accepted Tubby's rules, chief of which was "abandon rank, all ye who enter here". Talbot House was opened on 11th December 1915, so will be celebrating its centenary in 2015. After the war, many of the soldiers who had experienced the special atmosphere of Talbot House, gathered together to try to recreate something of its ethos in their home towns, and in special hostels in major cities in Britain, and later around the world. The aims of the charity, which was granted a Royal Charter in 1922, are summed up in the "Four Points of the Compass": To love widely (friendship), To build bravely (service), To think fairly (fairmindedness), and To witness humbly.

For many years, Toc H members numbered in many thousands, with a large staff to support members and to run projects of all sorts. Now the charity is purely voluntary, administered by a small Board of Trustees.

Our contingent today will be led by one of the Trustees, Andy Hodgkinson, accompanied by a group from the Toc H Barnsley Branch (our newest branch just entering its second year) which meets at the local Working Men's Club which he manages, now very much along the lines of the Toc H ethos. This year we are grateful for being awarded extra tickets, and the 20 strong contingent includes other members and a former Mayor of Hackney, Dr Shaikh Shuja, who worked closely for many years with the Rev. Gualter de Mello on the Committee of Prideaux House, a Toc H House and Community Centre in Hackney.

We will be in Column M, and have been taking part in the march past for many years.

Remembrance Sunday at the Cenotaph

This year we had requested extra tickets and received 20 and people came from far and wide to represent Toc H at this very moving ceremony. The top picture was taken from the BBC television coverage which was accompanied by a good commentary about Toc H.



Below is the Toc H group on Horse Guards Parade after the March Past.



Barnsley Annual Picnic



Barnsley Branch organised a visit to the National Memorial Arboretum, opening it to their community. After a wonderful and successful day they suggest that next year other members and branches of Toc H might like to join then. Watch out for further details in the Spring In Touch.

How long is a piece of wool?

Helen Hodgkinson entertained the AGM during the branch report section with this :~

In the last copy of IN TOUCH she had wondered what she could make from one mile of wool. It had already been stated that she had knitted 120 little Christmas stockings for Andy to use at this year's children's party. Helen wondered how much wool they had taken so she weighed one on the letter scales at a post office.

Finding that it was 4 grams, she worked out that at 12 yards x by 120, the stockings took 1,440 yards. She then went on to knit a pram size blanket, with a matching coat & hat, to fit a premature baby, these took 612 yards to make, so added to the stockings, she had knitted up 2,052 yards, a mile is 1,760 yards, proving a mile doesn't go all that far.

Since then, Helen has made many other things for premature babies and can tell us all how long the wool for them has to be!!

Future Events

London District are Celebrating the World Chain of Light on Monday 8th December at Prideaux House. They will be having a Fish & Chip Supper at 7:30pm, and then Celebrating the Chain to end with Light at 9 p.m. If you would like to come (lifts can be arranged from local stations), please contact Chris Stoneham (020 8270 5742), so we can arrange catering.

There will be a "Bring & Share Lunch" from 12 noon at All Hallows Church on Saturday 13th December preceding the Toc H Carol Service (which commences at 2pm). All welcome. Teas & Coffees provided.

Congratulations!!

Walsall Branch shared with the AGM that one of their members, Graham Stevenson, had been notified that he was to be decorated with the Legion of Honour medal for his service in Normandy in 1945.

We heard today that this has now happened and hope to have a picture for the next edition.


Ministry of Defence Personnel and Training – Defence Services Secretary
- Commemorations
Floor 6 Zone C
Ministry of Defence
Main Building
LONDON
SW1A 2HB

ADMINISTRATION FORM

Regarding the proposed veteran

NAME AND SURNAME : Graham Stevenson

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH : Walsall .13.12.24

NATIONALITY : BRITISH

RANK : Trooper. B Squadron **SHERWOOD RANGERS YEOMANY**

ROLE OCCUPIED : Tank Driver/Gunner, **XXX CORPS - 8th Armoured Brigade**

AWARD TO BE BESTOWED : Chevalier de l'Ordre National de la Légion d'Honneur

FRENCH DECORATION(S) HELD : NONE

REASONS JUSTIFYING THE PROPOSAL :

Joined the army in 1941 age 17 fought through out the North Africa campaign. Arrived Normandy on D+14. Fought with the regiment in Normandy France, until being severely wounded in the arm and upper body on 15th July near Fontenay Le Pesnel. Evacuated to the UK and spent the next 6 months in hospital subsequently being discharged from the Army in 1945 due to limited use of arm.

Date: 25.07.14 Signature of claimant: 

Home Address: 10 Rushall Close, Walsall. WS4 2HQ. UK.

"Sharing this wonderful fellowship" Toc H in Canada and the USA

continued from page 5

charming it was difficult to get below the surface. He considered that in Philadelphia and Baltimore: "Something will doubtless happen though it may not be Toc H as we know it." Tubby wrote to a young worker for Toc H in England "North America was full of emptiness, geographically and a great deal of spiritual vacuity as well."

On the twelfth of March Tubby was reporting success in Boston. He was giving daily lunch time talks on "The Christianity of service and sacrifice illustrated by Toc H" and the congregation grew as the week progressed, Tubby reporting congregations of over 1,000. He wrote to his father "We are both very happy here, much more so than in New York. Pat Leonard agreed that Boston and Harvard were "much more congenial" and Leonard said that church leaders, state leaders and business men were glad to help. Altogether in New England Tubby and Leonard delivered 63 sermons, speeches and magic lantern lectures.

After a few days in Ottawa Tubby and Pat had three days rest at Government House as the guests of The Byngs which Tubby described as 'rest and refit'. During April in Canada their hosts included Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists as well as the Anglican Church in Canada. They visited the major Canadian cities amid much enthusiasm. Canadians were occasionally prone to think of Toc H as a Canadian invention. Someone said that "I hear that you are starting Toc H in England". From Toronto Tubby sent a request for more copies of the Toc H journals, as "The journals are the most vital link... they are the best expression of the life and scope of Toc H and thus the best appeal matter" The journey across the Rockies and the visit to British Columbia left Pat Leonard with two abiding memories. One was that of a man who had been a 'church warden' in the chapel at Talbot House who hearing that Tubby was in Sicamons travelled 150 miles by canoe and trail and foot to meet "the little man who had been priest in that chapel". The other was the group of men who travelled from Chilliwack to Vancouver for a guest night and then back again to be in time for morning milking on their farms. Tubby wrote an exciting article for the Times on his journey to Chilliwack to see this nascent branch and to encourage them. By the end of Pat and Tubby's

visit in 1925 there were eight active units and by the end of 1928, due to the efforts of Revd Huw Sawbridge and Padre Harry Ellison there were 42 units. Many of these later became inactive due to the lack of full time staff. However of the 17 units set up from 1930 onwards, only one become inactive before the Second World War. There was extensive reorganisation and rationalisation of regions in the early thirties which resulted in Toc H in Canada being in a strong position in 1936.

In December 1941 Tubby managed to get himself appointed to the Anglo Saxon tanker fleet as chaplain to the fleet. Tubby had joined the MV *Diplodon* en route to the Dutch West Indies. The Toc H journal reported in February 1942 that Tubby had landed at Aruba, in the Dutch West Indies, and then went with the tanker to San Francisco. Tubby then spent a little while visiting tanker ports on the west coast to "build up near tanker ports some little groups of quiet friendly folk who would open up their home in order to provide a happy welcome for future personnel of the British Tankers"

In December 1940 the Guild Church of Toc H, All Hallows, was hit twice by German bombs and very nearly completely destroyed. After his busy war, and over 60 years of age Tubby set about raising funds and physical material with which to rebuild the church. In a letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury to the presiding member of the Episcopal Church in 1945, he particularly mentioned All Hallows as having a claim on the sympathies of Americans. As a result Tubby was invited out on a tour of the United States to raise both the profile of Toc H and raise funds for the rebuilding of All Hallows. He used the good will and contacts built up during his time in USA in the war. He emphasised the links with America in All Hallows's history. It was there that William Penn was baptised and John Quincy Adams was married.

It was at a meeting in New York that the suggestion was first made that groups of young Americans should come to England and volunteer some of their holidays to help be the friends and leaders of youth in the East End. The scheme was named the Winant Volunteers, after the war time ambassador to Britain, Sir John Winant, who had first-hand knowledge of the conditions in the East End of London. From 1948 groups of American students started arriving to spend their summers helping with social work and relief in London's East End, based at All Hallows church under the umbrella of Toc H. While on his American Tour Tubby met President Eisenhower and addressed thousands of servicemen at San Antonio.

The rebuilt church of All Hallows was dedicated in July 1957 in the presence of the Queen Mother. The success of its resurgence owed much to Toc H's

friends in the New World. The steel needed to reinforce the walls was provided by Boston, the steel for the South Aisle was from Houston. In all 21 American States contributed steel. The carillon of Bells came from Toc H friends in Montreal and flooring from friends elsewhere in Canada. The high Altar came from Argentina.

Although Tubby continued to visit the USA and Canada during the 1950's the situation of Toc H in USA and Canada was declining in this period. Despite the warm relationship between Tubby and Toc H and America during the War and the undoubted success of the Winant Volunteers, Toc H as a native institution had never really taken off in the States. The editor of the Toc H Journal in October 1949 commented "Toc H, so far as it is known, is not considered in the States to be successfully transplanted - it is too British." In Canada the immediate post war situation for Toc H looked hopeful, with a thriving Mark 11 in Toronto and regular reports in the Toc H Journal about the social work initiated by Toc H. However, as had been the case from the 1920's onwards, the distances involved in Western Canada made organisation difficult.

Toc H on the North American Continent had changed from being a transplanted British movement to one that had increasing support from the citizens of Canada and the USA. The attempts to encourage the movement sprung from a genuine desire to spread the joy from Talbot House. Members earnestly strove to carry on the work of the Movement that had emerged so triumphantly and positively from the trenches of the Great War, and attempted to influence the thoughts, actions and relationships of the next generation by being part of the world wide movement that Toc H became in the 20th century.

Linda Parker

Apology

We regret that this edition of In Touch is being issued and sent out much later than hoped. It is timed to be mailed out with the post AGM mailing, but that too has been delayed due to pressure of work and a much needed holiday!



Lest We Forget

Chris Roberts from Bristol writes:~

MEMORIAL GARDEN Guards Museum, Wellington Barracks, London .

I have just returned from a short break and went to a talk by Andrew Wallis, Curator of the above Museum. We saw a short film and all came away with a super little brochure full of photos and text and a packet of poppy seeds. Tears all round.

I gave my spare brochures to a French lady and a Belgian lady so I don't have any spares. He asked us all to look at the website

www.memorial2014.com/en/memorial_garden

The story is that of 70 bags of soil taken from each Cemetery where Guards are remembered, which was done by Belgian and English schoolchildren. They were then sent from the Menin Gate by Prince Philip and with great ceremony transferred to London and then blessed and put in the Garden. The last bag (from a forgotten Cemetery) has just been given to the Mayor of Southampton having been picked up by Cunard. The film showed a hessian bag used to bring the soil from Poperinge Cemetery.

I spoke to him afterwards and was disappointed that Toc H had not been invited to the Dedication by HM The Queen on 6th November. Perhaps the film might be included in events as we approach the Centenary of the opening of Talbot House?

We will remember them !

Mary Airey

Myfanwy Blackwell

Catherine Stewart

Florence Elliot

Violet Huish

Joyce Green

Age shall not weary them

During the Ceremony of Light at the AGM the full Roll of Honour for the year since the previous AMG was read out by Doug Fairgrieve and Paul Dimoline and that Roll of Honour is included in the post AGM mailing.

Toc H Annual General Meeting

The AGM this year was a really happy occasion despite the fact that a great deal of time was lost. Unfortunately ten people who had intended to be there had in the end to send apologies. The afternoon started with lunch which as usual was much appreciated by those who had come. The round up of news from all the branches present was fascinating and showed just how much is going on unobtrusively because they are after all just simple acts of friendship. All too often it is just 'we just' and out comes a list of what they routinely do as part of their branch work. The amount of work that goes on around the country is really remarkable.

Our two overseas branches of Paris and Ghana sent in reports which are printed in this issue. A letter of greetings which is also included on page 16 of this magazine.

So much was happening that time just flew by, but one of the really important things was to sign the petition around the UK. At the end of the meeting everyone present was invited to sign it and thank Chris Stoneham and others for their efforts. Below is the result of combining the two lists - only half there!!



eting - October 25th 2014

of business was covered as members will see from the Post AGM mailing. apologies for one reason or another, but there were still 50 people present. The had travelled from all over the country to be there.

l just how much is still going on in the traditional branch way - quietly and en branches started with a comment like `we don't really do anything these days, rch life and so is seen as not doing anything much. In reality the sum of what

in this edition of In Touch. As you will also see John and Dorothy Bowman sent in

ings was that the Peace Book was received by the Movement to start its journey and gather together for a photograph. In fact we needed several photo's and ing three of Chris's photographs which we have achieved even if Paul Dimoline is



Greetings from Zimbabwe

Once again we welcome the opportunity to send special greetings to our Toc H Friends in the United Kingdom on the occasion of their 2014 Annual General Meeting, and wish to convey Congratulations on a successful year.

Referring to the Paper included in your AGM documents, 'Opportunities not to be missed', we would like to make the following comments –

The Toc H Peace Book: We consider this to be a splendid project to mark the Centenary of Toc H and our members are keen for Toc H Zimbabwe to be included in the Book. Hopefully this can be arranged over the next few months.

Remembrance Sunday: Regrettably, as Zimbabwe is no longer a member of the British Commonwealth, Remembrance Sunday is not generally celebrated here. However, certain service clubs visit the military cemeteries around the country on Remembrance Sunday to honour the fallen, and this year Toc H members will join members from MOTHS (Members of the Tin Hats Society). Here in Bulawayo we are also helping with the British Legion's Poppy Day on Saturday 8th November.

Toc H Zimbabwe:

We are pleased to report that in September we were able to hold our National Council Meeting in Harare and Officers were elected as follows -

Trustee	Reverend Saul Tadzaushe
Trustee	Miss Beryl F Watson
National President	Mr John H Bowman
National Pilot	Reverend Margaret M James
National Chairman	Mr Ponds Phiri
National Vice-Chairman	Mr Abel Denhere
National Treasurer	Mr Godfrey Musariri

Following the unfortunate hindrances and challenges of the past four years, we now look forward to a more settled and peaceful future where more progress and outreach can be achieved.

It is an honour for Toc H Zimbabwe to have been invited to prepare this year's World Chain of Light Service, and the theme we have chosen is 'Providing Christian Hospitality'.

We send you our prayers and good wishes for a successful and rewarding 2014 Annual General Meeting. May the good Lord richly bless you in your work and deliberations.

John H Bowman

News from Paris

As you possibly know our Branch in Paris is a very small one. Over the years, however, our committee of only eight members has managed to maintain regular contact with elderly British residents in the Paris region. We provide a monthly tea on the second Monday of each month with the exception of the month of August. We have an average attendance of up to 20 who are welcomed at St Michael's Church at 3 pm for a "cuppa". In this we are assisted by the ladies of the English speaking churches in Paris and also the British Commonwealth Women's Association who are good enough to provide the sandwiches and cakes.

Our annual fundraiser takes place in May, in the form of a "ploughman's Lunch" offered at a very moderate price, this along with book and cake stalls enables us to cover the cost of transport to Holy Trinity Church in Maison Lafitte, where we are invited to lunch and tea.

At our June tea we celebrated the 101st birthday of our Doyen, Mimi Canu, who came over to France just after the war in 1947 and enjoyed company with four other ladies, all in their nineties.

Last December with our Chaplain Reverend John Moore and five of our committee members we celebrated the WCOL with the Toc H Lamp which was donated to the Paris Branch in 1947. The lamp was safely hidden in the Scots Kirk in Paris in 1940 and retrieved by the Minister, the Reverend Donald Caskie at the end of the war in 1945 on his return from imprisonment. Reverend Caskie goes as far as mentioning this same Toc H lamp in his memoirs "The Tartan Pimpernel"

Our Christmas luncheon, organised as a thank you for our friends who have assisted us throughout the year was enjoyed by the forty guests.

The visit of Her Majesty the Queen in June, covered extensively by the French media, was naturally followed with great interest by our members.

Our patron Lady Ricketts has invited us to tea next month at The Embassy. As you can imagine everyone is really looking forward to that. It should be all decorated for Christmas so that will be a great treat for them all. So our Christmas lunch will now be in January, it'll help the January blues!

We will be celebrating The Chain of Light on 11th Dec.

In closing we forward our congratulations and thanks to those who produce In Touch which is avidly read and appreciated by all.

Valerie Chemama

Extracts from the message from Ghana

22/10/14

Dear Trustees/ Members,

THE AGM MEETING TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, 25/10/2014

With all respect to the message received, we are very grateful to be part of the body of TOC H UK as scheduled above. or your information we would have been very glad to attend the meeting but as you are aware it is due to financial constraints.

We have decided to pray that if in the future meeting we could be supported to make it and also see the way the meeting is attended or conducted and the visual performance carried out during the programmes with regard to the agenda.

From Ghana, we have been activated by the vision of TOC H with regards to the mission field, which is in the statement, we have taken seriously to evangelism and planting churches.

In that regards we have introduced TOC H Ghana, in affiliation with TOC H UK, to the communities. The main programme is with regards to promoting social lives of the natives, families or parents, teaching and counselling children in the Communities to live moral lives and promoting peace in communities.

Toc H Ghana will give you the information, supported with pictures, about all the communities where we have planted churches. These communities were bound by superstition but have now changed to Christianity.

The request to support communities, with viable skills is our greatest need so that the poor but needy school children can be supported and also to carry microfinance to support these poor communities to enable the parents to support their school age children. Besides this, the communities need support for social amenities like good drinking water, projects like skills training for the many school drop outs who cannot further education due to advert poverty.

Furthermore, with much gratitude, we wish to advise you that we have received the printer. Our desire was a printer, photocopier and scanner (i.e. three in one), but it was only printer that was sent. However, we do

appreciate the support. We wish to state that, the finance TOC H forwarded to us, was used to purchase a desk top computer which is operating perfectly. We also purchased the internet modem and now have access to internet at home which is much better and safer.

We will send to you soon the statement of accounts, information on the communities, pictures of the communities we visited and continue to reach out to with the TOC H mission.

Many of the churches we have so far planted do not have schools or building structures to have the services in. The communities that have schools are allowed only to use them for church services temporarily pending the construction of their own church building.

We of TOC H Ghana never cease praying for the Trustees and members alike for God's blessing and then also for the promotion of TOC H UK vision worldwide. We in Ghana are saved from Ebola viruses by the grace of God. We wish you a very joyful, successful and fruitful AGM.

Thank you and long live all TOC H UK.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Thomas Ayine, Board of Trustees Chairman, Toc H Ghana

Wolverhampton Branch

Joan Nicholas wrote:-

Marian Paley and I are the last remaining members of Wolverhampton branch. Marian is now 96 years of age and despite uncertain health and poor eyesight remains cheerful and alert and retains her deep commitment to Toc H. I am not quite so old as she but have my limitations so try to put the Toc H spirit into practice more spiritually than physically. We meet up once a month and we both appreciate the hard work and long hours put in by others in order to keep us in touch, particularly with the editing and publishing of In Touch.

Unable to attend the AGM Marian and Joan sent their best wishes for the future of our Movement.

WWI - Impact on one Toc H family

by Douglas Mills

This 100th anniversary of WW1 has caused my family (like no doubt many other families) to start researching their connection with this great but, taken overall, tragic conflict. My father, the late Cyril Mills (involved with Mill Hill Branch from 1945-2001 and chairman for the years 1998-2001), had some personal memories of Zeppelin raids on London e.g. in 1916 being taken by his mother to shelter in the Drill Hall near Tottenham Lane in Hornsey while one raid was in progress; and later that year watching from the top of his house another Zeppelin all in flames sinking to the ground. But it was the two relations who were involved in the fighting and sadly both lost their lives that we got particularly interested in. This led to a visit by my wife Mary and I to Northern France this summer.

We started by visiting Talbot House in Poperinge (John Burgess gave some advice on accommodation - the local Baker - which we took up) No question Talbot House has been much smartened up since we were last there about 14 years ago. We had a really interesting time looking around for about 3hrs (and having a coffee provided by English "volunteers"). Nice





to get back to the roots as it were. That informal atmosphere that Tubby engendered was very much still in evidence. A visit is much recommended (see photos).

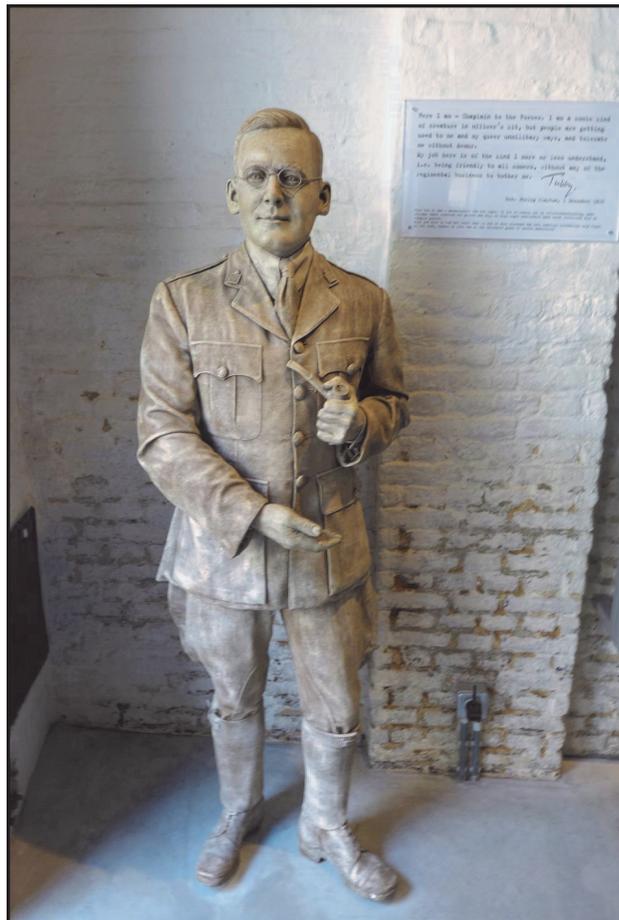
Moving to the battlefields area (further south than Poperinge) we managed to locate the memorial/grave of the two relations. One was Cyril's mother's brother, Percy Mallet, my great uncle - he is among the 73,000 missing in the Somme area who are commemorated on the Thiepval memorial near Amiens. The other was a cousin twice removed, Willie Tomkins, he was a Padre 4th Class (pay equivalent to a lieutenant) and we found his grave at the British Cagincourt cemetery near Arras. Regarding Percy I have done a small amount of research to try to find out how he died on September 17th 1916 (nobody in the family seemed to have any information). This is based on where his Middlesex regiment/battalion was at that time. It was probably during the Battle of Flers-Courcelette, 1916, part of the Somme offensive. This commenced on 15th September. It was notable as the first battle where TANKS were introduced by the British Army; 49 of them, but they were notoriously unreliable (only about 40% of that number actually made it into battle). There was initial success but the Germans retaliated and on 17th September there were heavy allied losses. The attack was called off on 22nd September with very little ground gained. Lord Asquith was among the

casualties. I would guess that because of the advances made and the subsequent retreat this is why Percy was never found. Unless there are more detailed records with people who survived describing what happened to him I doubt we will ever know more.

Although Percy would very likely not have been aware of Toc H (his regiment/battalion were not deployed in Ypres sector during the time he was with them), it is possible that Willie had come across Toc H in his work as a Padre. Willie was unlucky to be killed only a few weeks before the armistice when a hitherto unexploded shell blew up beside him. My second cousin William (Bestelink) has a book about all the Padres (300 of them) who died in WWI. It is not known how many Padres actually served (probably several thousand). We must conclude that the founder of Toc H our very own Tubby Clayton was relatively lucky.

So all in all this has proved an interesting and quite moving bit of family research. No question that it was largely my Toc H connection (I had been a Toc H builder for donkey's years but only became an actual member of Mill Hill Branch about sixteen years ago when my father took over the chairmanship) that "fired me up" to take an interest in all this. Visiting the memorials/ graves brings it all home to you. We will always remember and must always be grateful to all those like Willie and Percy who made the ultimate sacrifice to help preserve our freedom.

Douglas Mills



Pictures from India

Here is the picture of the Flower Carpet laid as a part of ONAM [a local festival] celebration at Toc H Public School, Cochin.



Professor Joseph inaugurates a book stall as a part of the Festival Fair conducted by the post-graduate students of Business Management of Toc H Institute of Science & Technology.



Weirside Progresses

On November 20th Doug and Hilary visited Weirside to liaise with the builder. They were delighted to find everything running to schedule (if not a little ahead!). Here are some photographs and as you will see it is still a 'work in progress' but rapidly coming to completion. By mid December it should all be done, decorated and refurbished with new carpets, sofas and additional furniture.



Downstairs wash room :
2 new loos
2 showers
3 basins

◀ Upstairs Shower
added to
dorm w.c.

New leaders' shower room



►
Main room showing new ceiling, lighting (in progress) heaters and entrance door.

New staircase with storage cupboard under it. This meets fire safety regulations.



►
New upstairs landing showing new storage cupboards at end next to doorway to one of the two new leaders' rooms.

Large new velux makes this area great for map studying and route planning.

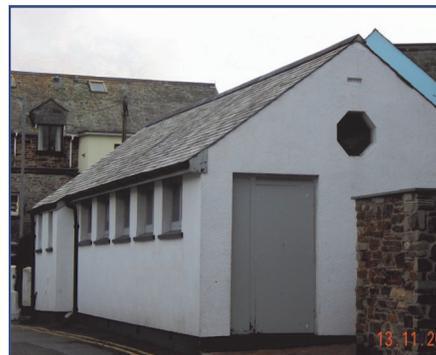


The Peace Book UK Journey

First stop Crewkerne Branch, Somerset, on one of the wettest evenings going! The branch met at the home of Bob and Anne Hedditch and all members present signed the book held here by David Cuthbertson. Phyllis Wright (Chair) is holding the book's travelling case.



Second stop - Looe Branch, Cornwall where a coffee was shared with Neil and Barbara Birchwood-Harper near their branch room.



More from Gualter

Following on from the article 'Marked for Life' in the last edition Gualter writes about another important aspect of his Toc H life:-

In 1972 the Quakers became aware of the crisis looming in Uganda and set up the coordinating committee for the welfare of evacuees from Uganda. I was asked to help receive the Asians being sent away from Uganda by Dada Amin and became the welfare "Guy" at the West Malling (Kent) Refugee Resettlement Centre, previously the RAF Kent barracks. A most humanising and rewarding experience!

Children would come to me asking "when is my daddy coming?" Many Ugandan Asian families became split because members could not find the old family documents or lost them in the process of getting ready for evacuation.

The lack of reception officers' knowledge on arrival in the UK caused so many Sikh families to be split. A Sikh lady's surname is Kaur and the men are Singhs so wives and children would end up in one camp and the husband in another. Then when either part of the family was found we had to find a way to bring them together.

I am so grateful that our full time Mark III volunteers and many other Marksmen were available to drive "Martha", the Toc H dormobile to help at Stansted Airport when the flights would bring the families.

Elsa Perrin, a member of the Toc H staff, was wonderful because she contacted all the Toc H branches and all the people she knew in Kent and around and made it possible for the children to be regularly entertained, taken out of the camp and helped the families to relax.

Major Arrowsmith cared and managed the camp. He and Mrs Arrowsmith were a good team and they were astounded when The National Front managed to enter the camp and frighten the people. From then onwards all camps had security around the clock.

Please let us know if you would like to put a message in the Peace Book. We plan for it to go to all branches but we would also like lone members to contribute!!

NATIONAL PRAYER CYCLE

(This can be used weekly or monthly)

Friendship – To love widely

Think of all Members worldwide.

Think of the Branches, their fellowship and activities.

Pray for members who are housebound, ill or isolated.

Service – To build bravely

Pray for all whom we are serving or helping

Think of Talbot House, its involvement with the First War and all associated with it.

Pray for Khasdobir, the work of KYAG & Afzal the new coordinator.

Fair-mindedness – To think fairly

Think of the Board of Trustees and others running Toc H.

Pray that the spirit and ethos of Toc H may spread and that more people may be drawn into the Movement.

Witness – To witness humbly

Remember the Great War and each family involved.

Think of all working for peace & reconciliation today.

Thank you for the hope that Christ's birth offers.



Prepared by William Bestelink

MISSION STATEMENT

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

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

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