

Spring



2016

Charity No 211042  
SC045491



# IN TOUCH

FRIENDSHIP SERVICE FAIRMINDEDNESS WITNESS

**BY TOC H MEMBERS FOR TOC H MEMBERS**

ISSN 1758-2407

# IN TOUCH

## Summer 2015



Charity No 211042  
SC045491

### EDITORS

Hilary Geater Childs  
Tel: 0121 444 5925  
e: h.geaterchilds@btinternet.com

Rebecca Dickson  
Tel: 0121 704 0045  
e: rebd1@rebd1.plus.com

TOC H  
PO BOX 15824  
Birmingham  
B13 3JU  
Tel: 0121 443 3552  
e: info@toch.org.uk

### EDITORIAL

In December following the celebration of the centenary of Talbot House a group of Board members travelled to Belgium for the Toc H International Gathering which was called together to be a part of the centenary celebrations. A report on the Gathering can be found on another page.

The event led us to ask when we should celebrate the centenary of the foundation of Toc H in the UK. It would be easy to see the opening of Talbot House as being the pivotal moment, easy but also wrong.

Talbot House was as we know a response to the horrors of the

trenches and it is important to recognize that whilst the seeds were sown the beginning of Toc H the Movement followed the invitation by Tubby Clayton to survivors with memories of Talbot House to meet together.

The postcards sent out by Tubby led to him gathering men together to think through how the camaraderie shared in the House could be replicated whilst building a living memorial for many who did not return. The meeting was in 1919 and was later followed by the granting of a Royal Charter in 1922, it is at this point that UK Toc H actually becomes a legal entity.

The necessary distinction between the centenary of Talbot House and the beginning of Toc H is the shift from the links to soldiers active on the front to the creation of a Movement that was in the beginning made up of ex-soldiers who contributed to the foundation of an organization that was eventually open to all people. Links with the armed forces remained strong but Toc H was

and is about individuals pooling resources to work for the good of all people.

The Board in the light of these factors has agreed to a celebration of our centenary in 2019 overlapping into 2020. The initial thought is for an opening act of worship followed by a series of events around the country.

We would like to organize something in all of the major regions, to be effective we need the members to suggest places and ideas for how we might mark the centenary. The activities might be in a city such as Liverpool or Birmingham, but equally we could look to smaller communities where there is a history of Toc H activity.

It is important that we are realistic about what is possible, big ideas require volunteers to make them happen, so if you have an idea for the celebration make sure that you have an idea about how it can be organized. Board members can only do so much for the centenary for it to be a success it demands that we all make a contribution.

Ideas for the centenary can be sent to the editors, or to me by e-mail [terry.drummond@hotmail.com](mailto:terry.drummond@hotmail.com) - I will pass them on to the group who will consider all the suggestions.

On another page and in the letter enclosed with this copy of 'In Touch' you will also read of the Patrons Lunch which is being organized to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday and celebrate her years on the throne.

We have booked a table in the Mall for the picnic lunch to be held on June 12th. Nine tickets are available which I hope members will want to apply for. The details are in the letter, it's over to all of you to make a bid for a place at what will be a memorable event.

I along with my colleagues on the Board believe that we are entering an important phase of our life together. It is important that we all share in making the coming years momentous and ensure that the centenary will begin and end with our sharing in a celebration of all that Toc H represents.

Terry Drummond

Cover Picture: The inside of the Toc H Hall, Looe, Cornwall

## Around the UK with a Lamp

Towards the end of 2014, we in Barton Branch had an idea, that as part of the 2015 celebrations of the Centenary of Talbot House it would be a good idea to take our lamp over to Belgium, light it from the lamp in the Upper Room and take that light to all the branches in the UK and challenge those members of Toc H, in this the Centenary year of Talbot House, to relight the spirit of Friendship, Fellowship and Fair-mindedness which was formed there in that house.

On February 20th, 2015, myself and Rachel Bavin of Barton Branch, along with 2 friends, Vic Green and Barry Jackson, went over to Talbot House where we were warmly met by Martine Boone, An Kestier and her sister Katrin, of Toc H Belgium. We took the Ceremony of Light in the Upper Room where the light was transferred to the Barton lamp during a short service.

As I was going on holiday in Scotland at the end of May, I thought it would be the ideal time to visit Denny Branch, so this was arranged for May 23rd at the home of Agnes Peattie where me and my dog, Cassie, were both well fed and watered!

On the way home, on May 31st, it was time to visit Joyce, Maria and Mark of Saltburn Branch. Cassie enjoyed having her photo taken along with us in front of both of the lamps.

There was then a bit of a break until Hilary & Doug invited me to their Heart of England Garden Party on July 11th. We had fun lighting the lamps out in the garden but we managed.

My next visit was to Lincoln for the Area Group meeting on August 12th, at the home of Clare Waters, where I spent a very pleasant afternoon with Clare, Valerie and Ted.

On September 1st I was invited to Long Eaton Branch to meet the members in their branch rooms which is, in fact, a house. It was very interesting to be shown around the house and to see their Toc H memorabilia.

The next day I visited Wolverhampton Branch in the afternoon. I was late to the meeting because I got lost and ended up giving a lift to a complete stranger who couldn't speak a word of English, but that is

another story! Joan & Marian had patiently waited for me and Marian gave me a very nice afternoon tea!

It was then a short drive over to Walsall Mens Branch to attend their evening meeting. It was good that 2 members of Hednesford Branch could come over and join us and I spent a very pleasant evening listening about their activities. I was tired when I got home. It had been a long day but an enjoyable one.

On September 16th I drove down to Rushden to have lunch with my old friends, Harry & Megan Graham before going to the meeting of the Rushden Royal Womens Branch where I was made to feel very welcome. What a spread the ladies put on, and I had only just eaten, but it couldn't be wasted!

I have kindly been invited to the Cosby Birthday Festival for many years now and it is always a pleasant occasion spent in good company. This year was no exception as on October 17th I was invited to pass on the light from our Barton Branch lamp.

October 19th was the start of 3 days away to visit 3 branches in the SW beginning with an evening meeting at Crewkerne. There were so many of us that we took over 2 rooms of the house! I was pleased that I had not had a big meal at the hotel as the home-made cakes were so tempting. It was then back to my hotel in Yeovil.

The following day I drove over the new Severn Bridge to Newport to the premises of Newport Branch to join an afternoon Zumba Class. Never a dull moment in Toc H! I was so pleased that I was at the back of the room as I have no co-ordination skills what-so-ever! We had a lot of fun and I had a very enjoyable afternoon. It was then a drive back to Cricklade to stay overnight with my good friends, Bill & Cynthia Benton.

The following morning it was a short drive to the Toc H Rooms in Wroughton to meet the members of Chisledon & Wroughton Branch. I had a very interesting morning listening to the members stories of times passed and looking at their Toc H memorabilia.

November 2nd was a typical November foggy evening as I drove over to Jump to the Working Mens Club and the home of Barnsley Branch. I had my dog, Cassie, with me and we were both given a warm welcome and we both enjoyed the ham & pork dripping on great slabs of bread!

The guest speaker was a young lady who spoke passionately about wanting to set up a club for ex-servicemen. Well worth the foggy drive!

The last branch I visited was High Brooms on November 11th. It was also the furthest, 426mils round trip. It was well worth it though. I had a good time with Duncan and the rest of the branch members and friends. I also won a tin of mandarin oranges at bingo!

It was unfortunate that I was unable to visit Mill Hill, Barkingside Mens and London District Branches. I was invited to celebrate the World Chain of Light with them but it was in the middle of a very busy time and I had to decline their offer. There is always next year!

I managed to drive 3,091 miles in going around the UK with a lamp and enjoyed every minute of it. It was good to see old friends again and to make new ones. And yes I will do it all again but without the lamp and over two years!

*Paul Dimoline*



This picture is taken in the Upper Room of Talbot House when Paul completed his circular visit by returning there with the lamp after it had visited all the branches. As you can see it was a very happy time and the lamp carried the good wishes and fellowship from so many of the UK members on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of the opening of Talbot House a place to which we all owe so much.

## Send your Birthday Wishes



[www.TheQueensBirthdayBook.com](http://www.TheQueensBirthdayBook.com)

As this year marks Her Majesty The Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday, we are delighted to be working with The Online Book Company who have provided a wonderful Online Book for people from all around the world to wish The Queen a very Happy 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday. This book is free and open to use for you to send your personal birthday wishes to Her Majesty.

Additionally you have the choice to purchase an

exclusive commemorative medal for £19.95, of which up to £5 will be donated to us when you select our charity at checkout.

We hope you leave a lovely birthday message for The Queen and choose to support us by purchasing a commemorative medal.

## Thank You For Your Help

In the last edition I appealed for help in finding certain people who are regularly donating to Toc H but whose letters are being returned. Overall you were very helpful and we are now back in touch with David Icke, Roy Salisbury and Anne Willis. Anne wrote us a lovely letter sending greetings to all who remember her and Cuddesdon House.

The search continues for Anthony Affleck, Charles Cole, Derek Bird and Paul Pugh.

Can anyone spread any further light in this matter?

*Douglas Geater Childs*

# Wardening at Talbot House part 3

## **Mentally Disabled Party at the House**

This was a Toc H project from Hertfordshire. On the Monday they went to the seaside for the day and unfortunately one of the men caught his foot in the wheel of a four wheeled bike which resulted in him breaking his ankle. It was quite a game sorting out the Insurance and his return travel to England!

On another occasion one of the group locked himself in the toilet and it was an hour before we managed to entice him out. We had to get a spade under the door and lift it up enough to get him to pass the key out. On another evening one of the ladies took all her clothes off in the lounge but when we told the party leader he told us not to worry – she liked sitting naked! We had to point out to him that it really was not hygienic and we had other guests to consider!

On the Sunday evening of their week Freda and Mark from the Patisserie opposite knocked on the door and asked how many we had staying in the House – they then brought across boxes of cakes for everyone. Freda told us that it was a thank you for the fact that her son was not disabled, since then she has continued to bring cakes over on a Sunday evening!

## **Garden Party**

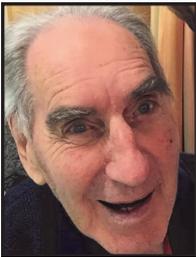
One year whilst we were out wardening the British forces in the German Branch of the Western Front Association organised an annual garden party. The theme was Edwardian and the ladies dressed up in period clothes and the gentlemen wore WW1 uniforms. A group who stage re-enactments of the first world war period with the appropriate uniforms also came along. When it was decided to take a photograph of them outside the front of the house the photographer arranged them to suit the camera and when the traffic came along Gasthuisstraat realised what was happening they stopped until the photographer had finished.

We have had Christening and Confirmation parties at the House and even a stag night! A group of Dutch men spent the night at the house prior to one of them getting married. They had all been at university together where they had studied Aircraft Engineering and

each friend brought along a little gift to do with aircraft engineering for the bridegroom. They had a couple of drinks but were quite sober with very little noise!

Talking of aircraft one of the regular parties who stayed at the house were Officer Cadets from RAF Cranwell. On one occasion we were invited to join them for dinner. They had brought their own chef and the dining room was turned into an Officers Mess for the evening. Everyone dressed in full Mess Kit. A bit of a panic happened when one of them realised he had forgotten to pack his bow tie – so guess who had to go around all the men's outfitters to see if we could purchase one. Alas to no avail but fortunately one of the other cadets had a spare one which saved the day!

Pat was the guest of honour and took her place beside the Senior Officer.



Jack would like to thank everyone for their good wishes and prayers during his ill health and extended hospital stay. He has recently returned home to continue his rehabilitation in Wootton. He is making steady progress and would greatly value your continued support.

## Newport Member Awarded BEM

In January last year Mary Leech, one of the longest serving members of the Newport Toc H Branch, heard that she had been awarded the British Empire Medal in the Queen's New Year's Honours List. She had been nominated by a Toc H member and supported by others in the branch.

For many years Mary has given untiring service to the organising and running of the two groups for the aged and infirm and is a worthy recipient of this honour. At a ceremony at Newport Civic Centre, attended by the Mayor of Newport, the High Sheriff made the presentation.

In May Mary also went, with her son, to Buckingham Palace to attend the garden party.

*David Hughes*

## Toc H - A Century Old



In 1915 Talbot House was born out of war. The ritual and liturgy of Toc H remind us of the circumstances of war. Hence once every year, the Members of Toc H Cochin visit the War Memorial at Fort Cochin.

These visits remind me of my visit to Westminster Abbey. In Westminster Abbey, there are a large number of tombs of very many great, famous and even obscure persons. I specially

noticed a tomb beautifully decorated. I wished to know the person lying buried there and his name. I went near. Then I realized that his name is not known to anyone; nor would anyone know him. On his tomb, it is written in bold letters, "THE UNKNOWN WARRIOR". All that is known about him is that he was a soldier who fell down dead on the battle field. His body that was unidentified was taken from the battle field and laid here in the midst of the tombs of the great and illustrious sons of England, because Westminster Abbey is the National Cemetery of England where, Kings, Queens, Princes, Princesses and the great Sons of the Nation are buried with honour and tributes. So he represents all the soldiers who laid down their lives fighting in defence of their nations. He represents soldiers come from different parts of the world; South, North, East and West – villages and towns, seashores, midlands and mountain sides. There are among them people of different climes, classes and colours – black and white, brown and bright, white and fair – they fought at different parts of the world, at different and distant battle fields.

Some of them came with a spirit of adventure; some with grief in leaving their kith and kin behind; some, as they were dragged in by force; some willingly with the spirit of sacrifice and dedication. The warrior buried there in Westminster Abbey represents all of them. He is just a symbol – a symbol of sacrifice, ruthless killing and helpless suffering.

I stood at the tomb, silent for a while. I thought of the colossal ruins and waste caused by the wars hitherto. Those men who died in the prime of their youth were the treasures and promises of the future. There may have been poets, musicians, sculptures, craftsmen, thinkers, philosophers and orators in the making. All their talents are lost and shattered.

Think of the mothers who lost their dear sons while they were praying for the safe return of their dear ones. Think of fathers who lose their future support, before half their lives are spent. Think of the beautiful innocent girls waiting for their future partners of life, coming back from the battle fields to embrace them with love and care. All their hopes and dreams are shattered on the battle fields.

The War Memorial at Fort Cochin is in the Churchyard of St. Francis Church. Whenever we go to the War Memorial to pay our homage, we go into the Church and stand in silence at the tomb of Vasco de Gama, the great ancient sailor who found a new, shorter sea passage from Europe to India. He was adventurous. He achieved something which seemed almost impossible. So when I stand there, I stand with reverence to his heroism. But the thought that the tomb at which I stand is an empty tomb used to disturb my mind with a tinge of sorrow. I used to wonder why the Portugese took his mortal remains away to Portugal. But now I regret no longer. Standing inside the huge Church in Lisbon before a very large and impressive tomb with a huge statue of Vasco de Gama lying on the top of it, I realized how respectfully the Portugese have honoured him by burying him alongside their glorious King. They have given him a royal stature. For them he is a glorious winner who brought fame, money and prosperity to the nation.

War divides and destroys while peace unites and builds. Toc H born in the midst of war tries to unite and build up relations. The Bible states, "Every Kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand". Every Movement has more to fear its own people, rather than its enemies and every Movement carries within it, the seeds of its own dissolution and prepares the way for it. No movement is an exception to this. In course of time fissiparous trends and tendencies creep in, so let us all try to stand up together united and continue `to love widely, think fairly, build bravely and witness humbly'. "United we stand; Divided we fall". *Prof. (Dr.) P J Joseph*

# Caring for the Community

Isn't it good when you and your friends are recognized in the community as folk who help?

Toc H in Barnsley in its short time of existence are already being recognised as just that. When Jeff (Jethro) Platts approached me and asked whether we could help him to get a few things together to take to the flood victims in West Yorkshire it was a no brainer.

We launched an appeal on social network sites and the response was absolutely amazing. Within a couple of hours the foyer at Jump Club was brimming with tinned food and cleaning stuff. There was toothpaste, deodorant, dog food, cat food, sleeping bags, blankets and candles. It was quite obvious that there was more than a van full. The minibus came in very handy.

We arrived at Mythelmroid near Hebden Bridge at about 11 am and went to the place we had been directed to. It was good to see they were high in spirit and they were very thankful to see us and the cargo we had brought. There was an army of helpers from scouts and guides to Army cadets and firemen. It was amazing to see the community spirit and I'm sure that the floods of help and donations were really helping to keep that spirit up.

After we had offloaded the gear we were directed to a building where we were treated to a hot drink and bacon buttie. As we were waiting a chap and his wife pulled up in a transit pick up full of brushes and shovels. He said it was his day off and he just had to come and do something.

Of course it made the local rag and my number was given. The next few weeks were hectic with collecting stuff and another delivery was made. This time a minibus full of bedding, sleeping



bags , food and clothing as well as two brand new microwaves and several slow cookers.

The generosity of the community was amazing and shows that when our neighbours and friends are in trouble people will rally round. They really do care! New friends were made along the way and a few IN TOUCH booklets dished out too.

## The Heat is on

Toc H Barnsley were in the thick of it again assisting in delivering winter warmer packs to elderly and needy residents in and around the community. The packs containing thick winter socks, a thermos mug, packs of soup and a soft fleece blanket were issued free by the local council ward alliance where Toc H has a representative.

The packs were very well received by all and it was a pleasure to be involved. All in all nearly 100 packs were distributed over 2 days and there was a smiling face at every door. Many cups of tea were turned down and it was nice to have a short chat with local people. One got the feeling that they were glad of a little company and a natter. Maybe that's something we can look into for the future.

Once again the Toc H minibus was seen to be at work in the community and didn't go unnoticed, a couple of old chaps remembered us from their Army years.

I have been asked to give a presentation to the Barnsley Area Council Cabinet next month and will be urging local council officials to address the problem of loneliness as a priority in the coming years.

*Andy Hodkinson*



# 2016 Visits to Poperinge and Around

Andy Hodgkinson is leading two visits to Belgium this year from

**8th August to 12th August**  
and  
**24th October to 28th October**

Travel in the Toc H minibus and by ferry  
Hotel accommodation in Ypres in double/twin en suite rooms

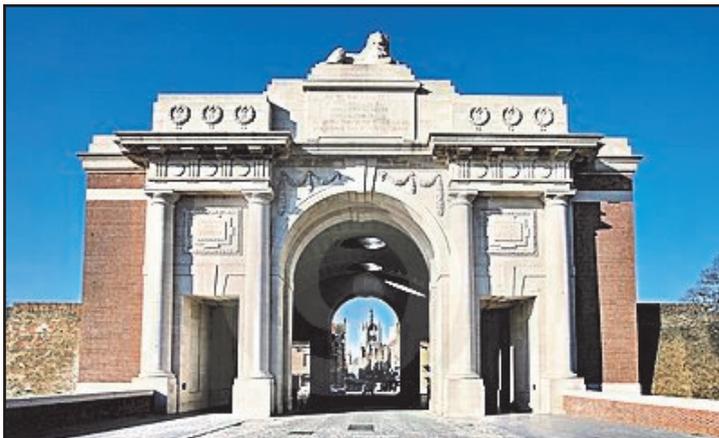
Itinerary to suit the group but will definitely include Talbot House, The Menin Gate, The Pool of Peace, and various war grave commission sites and cemeteries. (Andy asks that if you have a particular place you would like to visit that you let him know.)

Breakfast is included in the cost, but other meals will be the responsibility of the individual although the hotel also can provide packed lunches and evening meals

Price: £260 per person for minibus, ferry and hotel based on a group of 12.

Please book through Central Office and confirm your place with a deposit of £50, full payment to be made one month before the trip.

It is on a first come, first served basis, but don't worry if these go well there will be more!



# Suggested itinerary for the August Trip

## Monday

Travel to Ypres

## Tuesday

Visit Talbot House and Museum

Execution Platz

Tyne Cott

Peace pool

Langemark German Cemetery

Harry Patch memorial plaque

## Wednesday

Delville Wood

Mametz

Sheffield Park Serre

Irish Tower

Thiepval

Vimy Ridge

## Thursday

Hill 62

Hooge Crater

Passchendaele

Shopping/Relax

## Friday

Homeward bound



Talbot House Poperinge



The minibus in Ypres  
last December

Opposite: The Menin Gate, Ypres

## With Proud Thanksgiving

### **John Cole died 9/1/16**

John was a life long Toc H person. For many years he ran the much loved Warden Manor Holiday venue. He and the family were staunch supporters of worthwhile causes - his half brother Jackson Cole was a founder member of Oxfam.

John served as a Councillor for the Western Isles, he lived on the Isle of Lewis in recent years. Despite poor health he continued to work for the benefit of others. John was known at Alison House.

*Kitty Landan*

### **Alan Peacock died 16/2/16**

I'm very sad to have to let you know that our lovely Chairman, Alan Peacock, died last night. He has been struggling for some time and was taken into hospital early last week. We had hoped that he would bounce back again but sadly, not this time.

Alan was one of life's true gentlemen and we will miss him very much.

*Joyce Myring*

*We will remember them !*

|                   |                      |                       |
|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Mary Wickham      | Patricia Gladys Pate | Joan Golding          |
| Linda May         | Dorothy Upton        | Harvey Stamp          |
| Joan Bird         | Winifred Selman      | Neil Birchwood Harper |
| Roger Gadd        | Mable Maywood        | Ruby Joyce Mouser     |
| B H S Christopher | Winifred Eden        | Betty Hall            |
| Irene McBain      | John Cole            | Alan Peacock          |
| Joyce Todd        | Jean Heffernan       | John Cox              |

*Age shall not weary them*

# World Chain of Light 2016

Toc H Australia who took over the roll of managing the 'rota' of the World Chain of Light have requested that it should come from the UK this year and of course it is an honour to host it and to hold the central vigil.

Plans are in the very early stages but we have decided that it would be good to hold the vigil at Weirside and we will be looking for folk to take part in the vigil there. As you will know there are plenty of bunks but little privacy, but then on a vigil it is more a case of grabbing the odd nap during the 24 hrs rather than actually having a good night's sleep, and the kitchen will make catering easy.

Would you consider being part of the group at Weirside on December 11th to 12th?

The costs of accommodation and food will be met centrally but you will need to make your own way there although lifts from the station at Windermere can be arranged. You will need to bring with you a sleeping bag, or sheet and quilt and a pillow case for those times when you can get your head down. Weirside itself has always escaped being flooded due to the excellence of the miners who built it so that it might be surrounded by water but remains dry inside. It is warm and dry and in the fabulous Langdale valley—but it can only cope with so many folk so get in touch to join the vigil group.



## News from Weymouth Friendship Group



Jane Brockner was approached last summer by a lady from a Floral Group who were to do a week long display at Wareham Church with the theme of the First World War. She had been asked to do Toc H but had very little idea about the movement.

Jane and I set up a meeting with her and told her about Toc H. We were able to loan her some Toc H items including a signed photograph of Tubby. It was very good publicity for Toc H.

*Rene Turner*



## Branches Work Together To Save Lives

Toc H Barnsley with the help of our Saltburn friends are showing the way in community caring and empowerment by working together.

After the Barnsley branch visited Saltburn and supported their appeal to renovate their war memorial Saltburn Toc H more than returned the good will by donating £750 towards buying a defibrillator which is now based at Jump WMC the home of Toc H Barnsley.

The Defib will be available for use by the whole community and is obviously a great asset although hopefully will never be needed.

Funding for a first aid course including the use of a defibrillator has been granted to Toc H Barnsley from the local council and 12 volunteers will benefit from 3 hours training in the very near future.

The Barnsley branch hope to visit the Saltburn branch very soon to thank them in person

Photographs to follow of visit in next issue.

*Andy Hodgkinson*

## Historic Toc H Publications

In case anyone reading this is interested in historic Toc H publications, we have here in Birmingham a fairly large collection of them in excess of those in the University of Birmingham Toc H Archive.

We have a publications list which is an attempt at an exhaustive list of all Toc H and Toc H related publications. Some entries refer to one copy that is the archived copy, but in other cases we have multiple copies. The list is over 1000 lines long so I am unwilling to print it off, but I think I can send it as an attachment to an email.

While we have no wish to make a profit from allowing you to have the copies neither can Toc H make a loss, so some money would need to change hands depending on quantity and how the book/books were transferred.

So if you are interested please contact us.

*Doug Geater Childs*

## Congratulations Belgium!!!!

I was going to write a report of the time we had when seven of the Trustees joined Toc H Belgium at Talbot House in December, however Ray Geise from Australia wrote a really good report and with his permission I have reproduced some of it here. Thank you Ray!

The biggest thanks and congratulations have however to go to Toc H Belgium and Talbot House who between them put on a fabulous time of celebration and camaraderie - well done - we were sorry we had not been able to join you for longer!!

*Below 6 of the 7 trustees*



## Thoughts from Ray Geise

There was a powerful message coming out of the wonderful centenary celebrations and this message was that the lessons learnt in Talbot House from 1915 to 1918 are still very relevant in the 21st century. Things like Friendship, Service and Fairmindedness are still very much needed in our world. It was, for example, wonderful to see the same Friendship emanating from the House today just as it did 100 years ago. Every time the doorbell rang and was answered by the warden or staff of the House there was the same very warm welcome and an invitation to come in and have a cup of tea or coffee in the kitchen or the dining room. People from many different countries and different socio economic backgrounds were introduced to others enjoying the same hospitality and they simply 'chatted', so often the beginning of new friendships.

A real highlight of these Centenary Celebrations was the World Chain of Light which started at 9.00pm on the 11th December and concluded at 9.00pm on the 12th December. The Upper Room, the Chapel, was the venue for this. There was an opening service and a closing service and these captured the real ethos of Talbot House and the aims of the Toc H Movement.

In the Opening Service the focus was on the Four Points of the Compass and their importance and relevance to the world in the 21st century. The words of welcome at the beginning of the service are worth some thought: "It is right and fitting on occasions like these to look back to the past and remember with gratitude those who came before us and made our beautiful movement what it is today. It is also right to look forward and rediscover within us the hope and confidence to embark on a promising future."

These words from the Closing Service are also very worthy of note and they should be passed on to future generations for they remind us of the real work of Toc H as envisaged by its founders:

"The family of Toc H consists of people from different backgrounds and nationalities, different ages and convictions. The inspiring example of Padre Clayton brings us together here, and makes strangers into friends. Today we promise again – and more than ever – that we will commit ourselves to building a better world, by small personal acts of love and service, and by listening to one another."

At the conclusion of the Centenary Celebrations there was a two day International Conference during which a Charter was signed by members of the Talbot House Association, which owns Talbot House, and members of Toc H from around the world.

This will ensure that the two bodies will continue to work together to preserve and carry on the traditions of Talbot House for another 100 years and inspire many to continue with the great work which has been so worthwhile to so many. This work is all to do with the eternal realities; love, care and compassion. When they are put into practice they become a powerhouse for good in the world; they achieve much, as Tubby always used to say, 'To Conquer Hate'.





# Toc H Hall, Looe, Cornwall

It was with sadness that we heard of the sudden death of Captain Neil Birchwood Harper, who for many years had been the stalwart of the branch and ran the hall as a bookshop for holiday makers and a meeting place for the community (see front cover). Neil had previously been in contact to say that he could no longer continue and felt we had to close the hall and sell it.



The hall is in a very prominent position being situated between the main carpark and the town, so nearly everyone who visits Looe walks past it. Looe also has limited community space so the Board decided that the Hall should continue to try to serve the community it had been

built for and advertised to see if there was any local interest in this. Two meetings were planned on 14th March and Terry, Hilary and Doug attended. There was a really good turn out of current users, prospective users and ex members of Toc H.

With the consent of the Board we put forward the proposal that the users and interested people should seek to manage the hall for the community by forming some sort of council and electing a management committee. Toc H would continue to own it and would do some very necessary refurbishment but would then expect the building to pay for itself and its maintenance.

Doug and I are returning to Looe on April 7th to progress matters further and have written to all who came before, so watch this space and we will let you know if we are able to keep the lamp burning in Looe.

*Hilary Geater Childs*

# A Fool for Thy Feast by Linda Parker

## ***The Life and Times of Tubby Clayton 18815 -1972 Helion £25***

The life of Tubby Clayton, was to put at its simplest, one that was well lived, in particular this was the case in the way that he served the various communities that he found himself in.

His call to ministry led him to a famous Church of England parish, Portsea, which was known as a training ground for senior posts. His vicar was Cyril Garbett (later to be Archbishop of York) who was known for his strictness with his curates, everyone knew their place and Garbett was in complete control.

The exception was Tubby Clayton who was given a freedom that was not shared with his colleagues, this in particular came from his ability to befriend young men and lead them into the Christian faith. This pastoral skill would serve him well throughout his years in ministry.

The First World War led him in to chaplaincy and ministry to soldiers on the front line, in this context he was looking for a particular role which he found in the setting up of a house of hospitality.

It is for this he is best known in setting up Talbot House in Poperinge in Flanders in 1915 which became a place for soldiers of all ranks seeking peace in the midst of the horrors of the First World War. The Chaplain's room which was his base had the motto 'Abandon rank all ye enter here' a radical idea in 1915 never mind 2016 when status really mattered, especially in the army.

The work at Talbot House led after the war to the setting up of Toc H, the first members being discharged soldiers who he brought together to find ways of keeping the spirit of Talbot House alive. The success of this endeavor was beyond imagining, it brought together men and later women who made a commitment to service. In the inter war years it grew and Clayton was both its leader and its figure head.

In the Second World War being too old for traditional chaplaincy he found a way of being made chaplain to the tanker fleet in the southern oceans having first of all spent time in the Outer Orkneys and Scapa Flow. In taking on this responsibility he was taking pastoral

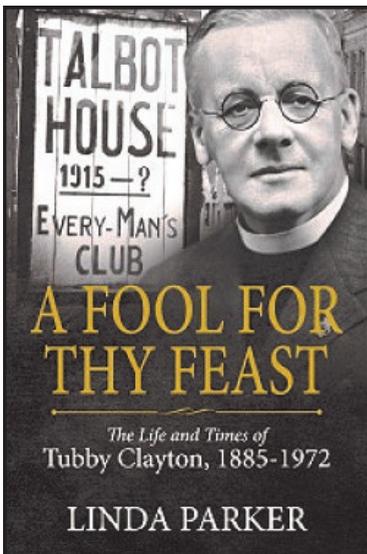
care to the ends of the earth - the possibility of a terrible death must have been ever present on the tankers just as it had been in the trenches of 1915 .

Following the war, he was made incumbent of All Hallows by the Tower which he made the Guild Church of Toc H. The church was badly bomb damaged and he threw himself into the fund raising campaign to have it rebuilt. In addition, he was a consummate fund raiser for Toc H and travelled the world raising funds often from the very wealthy.

He stayed at All Hallows for forty years and was supported by a number of curates some of whom went on to be leading Churchmen of their generation.

The ministry of Tubby Clayton was to all men and women, he was able to minister to the city worker, be they clerk or manager, street cleaner or docker.

He was clearly a man who was driven and was no doubt irascible - he wanted his own way and did not find delegating leadership easy, which must have led to many difficult conversations with staff and volunteers. The stories that are told of him are many and speak of a man who at his best was wonderful and his worst was difficult to handle.



In truth that is part of the life of any charismatic character whose vision may be shared but not always possible to implement. Love or hate him he was clearly a man of God who had a capacity to make things happen.

Linda Parker has written a biography that ensures that the reader comes to know and appreciate the man and priest and most of all to recognize that he was truly a man whose call came from God. He made a mark on the world that was for the good of the many people he worked with and the many thousands he assisted in the way that they lived.

*Terry Drummond*

## London District Programme

Here is a list of the Events we have planned. Everyone welcome! :-

**Foundling Museum – Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May** at 11:30 – We visit the Foundling Museum (meet at Russel Sq. Tube at 11am or at Main Entrance at 11.30).

**Trip to see “Auntie” – (Irene Tucker is 90 !) –Tues 19<sup>th</sup> July** at Margate. Out for lunch, and a Strawberry Tea! Collect from Redbridge Station. Tea will cost £9 each. Transport from Redbridge Station. Let Chris know if you want a lift. At 10am. Let us know if coming, to book the Tea.

**London Walk – Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> September** - Come and help with refreshments, or get sponsorship for your charity / Friends of Khasdobir.

**Bubbles Day – Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September** - Come and visit Barbara in her Southend Seat.

**Toc H AGM – Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> October** – in Birmingham.- Venue as last year. Lunch at 1pm. Lift from Redbridge Station. At 10am.

**Toc H Carol Service – Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> December , 2pm** – All Hallows. *(To be confirmed)*

**World Chain of Light – Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December – 12 noon**

**Lunchtime** – at Chris Stoneham’s house. Fish & Chip lunch. Lifts from Hainault Station.

Please contact: [Chrisstoneham1@gmail.com](mailto:Chrisstoneham1@gmail.com) [chris.stoneham1@ntlworld.com](mailto:chris.stoneham1@ntlworld.com)

### **A New Branch in Wantage??**

Having held a sounding out, informal meeting which went very well  
Linda Parker is heading up a public meeting on

**April 27<sup>th</sup> at 7.30p.m.**

**at**

**The Comrade’s Club**

To tell people about Toc H and to see if anyone is interested in committing to forming a group. 15 people attended the first meeting and they have all volunteered to help get out leaflets etc

Apart from Linda herself Andy Hodgkinson will be speaking and Tony Holland will give a talk on a Victorian Adventurer and Spy

**Open to all please tell people who might be interested!!**

## 13<sup>th</sup> November at the Cenotaph



We have been contacted by The Royal British Legion to let us know that soon they will be opening the booking system for this year's parade.

I do appreciate that November 13<sup>th</sup> does seem a long time away but these things seem to come upon us in a rush while we are concentrating on other things.

I do have to say from experience that the parade probably involves an early start and a lot of standing around, the actual walk is about a mile.



Personal experience also says it is a very moving event to be part of.

So please let us know if you would like to be there as soon as you can as we will need to apply for our allocation of tickets **before 1st June**

Doug Geater Childs

## Toc H in Brixham

We have been approached by a man who is considering involvement in Toc H and was wondering if there might be any like minded people in the Brixham area.

He appears to know John and Dorothy in Zimbabwe and tries to keep in touch with them.

So if anyone out there wants to contact him they can email [dgc@toch.org.uk](mailto:dgc@toch.org.uk), phone 0121 44 33 55 2, or write to PO box 15824, Birmingham B13 3JO and we will pass it on.

He wishes to be of practical value !

# NATIONAL PRAYER CYCLE

(This can be used weekly or monthly)

## ***Friendship – To love widely***

Give thanks for the century of Talbot House;  
We think of all who have visited it over the years.  
Pray that it will enhance the ethos and work of Toc H.

## ***Service – To build bravely***

Give thanks for all Members in Britain and Overseas;  
We think of the Branches, their fellowship and activities.  
Pray for the work of KYAG at Khasdobir and everyone benefiting from the training there.

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

Give thanks for the work of Toc H over the last century.  
We think of the Board of Trustees and others running Toc H.  
Pray that the work of Toc H will continue to develop.

## ***Witness – To witness humbly***

Give thanks the hope that Easter brings.  
Think of all suffering from divisions in societies or countries  
and for all refugees.  
Pray for members who are housebound, ill or isolated.



# 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:

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