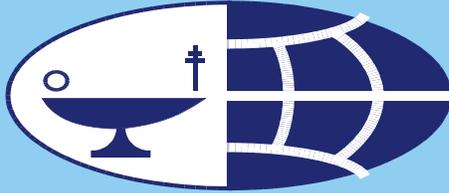


Spring



2015

Charity No 211042
SC045491



IN TOUCH

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FRIENDSHIP SERVICE FAIRMINDEDNESS WITNESS

BY TOC H MEMBERS FOR TOC H MEMBERS

IN TOUCH

Spring 2015

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EDITORIAL

The General Election will soon be upon us and the press are full of polls and suggestions on who is up and who is down, will there be another coalition or can one party win an outright majority.

In addition in recent weeks we have had the coverage of the Church of England House of Bishops Pastoral Letter in advance of the election. Comments have flown backwards and forwards from those who perceive a particular bias and those who see only a statement of moral values. The irony is that a letter of 53 pages is slightly longer than most people are going to read.



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In addition the Roman Catholic Bishops have issued their own Pastoral Letter which is shorter and more pointed on policy issues than that of the Church of England. Add to this Churches Together in England who have published a paper called 200 Vision of the Good Society. All of these documents offer insights into policy issues that deserve consideration by people who are prepared to think about what kind of society we want to live in.

I mention these documents because whilst Toc H is a charity and does not, nor is it able to, take a political perspective, we do have a vision for society. It is summed up in the Four Points of the Compass.

In the debate up until the day of voting it is important that we all give serious consideration to the kind of society we want to live in. Toc H in the past was active in locally based social activities, work with children and young people, with the elderly also the homeless and dispossessed.

A number of charities have their origins in Toc H and we

can be proud of our past and of the present in particular wherever individuals and families are supported as a working out of our principles.

In recent weeks we have been approached by a small charity in Gloucester who organise an act of worship in the open air for the homeless, they contacted us for support and possibly advice. In many ways they are an outworking of the Four Points of the Compass even though they probably do not know that this is the case.

In a number of places Toc H members continue to offer service to their community and in small ways contribute to the creation of a good society. Their work is practical and known only to a few but all of it represents an important contribution to the local common good.

The debates around the General Election will no doubt become less than healthy with insults being the order of the day, considered debate being reserved for the minority.

I hope that the outworking of the vision that underpins the 'Four Points of the Compass' might be promoted in local discussions by Toc H members. We are after all citizens and do have a right to speak out and share our vision of the kind of society we want.

The furore following the publication of the Church of England Bishops Pastoral Letter was a sad reflection on public discourse, most of it sound and fury rather than a considered response to important issues.

A society that is based on the common good is one where all of us contribute to public debate and draw on our experiences of working for a better society. Now is the time to reflect on the issues of today and contribute to public debate, challenging the negative perspective that all too often seems to be central in the media in all its manifestations.

Terry Drummond

Cover Picture: Maggie Beever signing to her mother who is profoundly deaf. This was at Jump Working Men's Club, the home of Toc H Barnsley, where the Toc H play was being put on which Maggie stood on the side of the stage and signed throughout. Photograph courtesy of Doug

The In Touch magazine is now 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**

2014 Carol Service at All Hallows

The annual Toc H carol service took place on December 13th in a beautifully decorated All Hallows and was led by Revd Bertrand Olivier.



It was well attended and the hospitality of the London District branch was excellent as usual.





Just prior to the Carol Service many members and friends of Toc H will have read the wonderful message written by John Bowman for the World Chain of Light. It

was based upon the importance of hospitality as is the Mexican tradition of Posada whereby figures of Mary and Joseph travel from house to house and represents the journey taken to Bethlehem. The households receiving the figures often take the opportunity to open their doors to friends and neighbours to share in the Advent message. It therefore seemed fitting that the Carol Service was visited by two such figures shown above.

It was good to see how many people had travelled from far and wide for this time of worship, and of fellowship.

*Photographs courtesy of
Chris Stoneham*



TALBOT HOUSE

A home from home



The story in words and music of the First World War haven for all soldiers, regardless of rank, which ultimately became the inspiration for the Toc H movement.

Performed at Jump WMC : Toc H Barnsley



Barnsley Toc H were joined by a good mixture of people for a wonderful performance of this play which continues to develop. Written, directed and performed by Peter Gill it tells the story of Talbot House's opening and of the part it played in WW1. It is well worth seeing, even if you have seen it before, as it is constantly evolving and now includes a little bit about how it became a Movement of men and women around the world.

Photographs courtesy of Sally Lomas include this one taken during the interval when the local popular dish of pie and peas was served and Maggie chatted with her Mum



The play features just two actors in the roles of Tubby and his batman, always played by Peter Gill, who narrates the story in his role.

An offer from Maggie

Maggie Beever grew up as a hearing child of two deaf parents and as such is a brilliant signer as it is the way she communicates naturally with her mother. She has offered to sign for any event or occasion in Toc H, so if you or your branch want her services please contact the central office and we will link you up.



Wardening Talbot House ~ Part One

By Pat and Jack Turner
(RIP Pat, may your memory inspire)

We first became involved as Wardens in 1993 when Jack retired from work. We were both at the Toc H Annual Meeting the previous November and were approached by John Biggerstaff from Toc H Headquarters asking if we would be willing to go out as Wardens for the month of August. He assured us it was a quiet month and as both of us had been going out to the House for many years, both as visiting party members and having taken out parties ourselves, we would cope quite easily.

What a month it turned out to be, hectic wasn't the word for it. When we arrived Martine, the Administrator, was heavily involved in an Toc H International Project which was taking place. Myriam the housekeeper was on a three week holiday and after the two week project Martine took a week's leave. So we were thrown in the deep end. There were beds to make, the house to keep clean, booking guests in and out, answering the phone and taking bookings, making endless cups of tea for visiting parties and of course washing up afterwards. Showing people round and assisting Jacques Rycke the Guide in giving talks about the House and its history.

Fortunately in the case of bed making, especially at weekends, we were able to call on Lena, the part time housekeeper, to come in and also, when she wasn't available, Jacques kindly arranged for his sister Nellie to come and help us.

When you first start wardening communication is a difficult task. When you first open the front door you are never sure what nationality the person standing there is. A wide smile and beckon in or use our hands to indicate enter does the trick. Fortunately the majority of them could at least speak a few words of English and sign language is a wonderful thing.

Over the years we have met and made so many wonderful friends and many of them come back especially to see us. We very much miss Jeanne Bathu who for many, many years came to the House daily. Listening to her stories from her childhood in the First World War when she first visited the House was absolutely fascinating and her many tales about Tubby. We get on very well with the staff and they love both the scones and cakes that Pat makes for them to have with their morning coffee.

Not only have we met people from all over the world, some just visiting,

mothers staying for a night or longer period and have had some wonderful conversations around the kitchen table, often long into the night, we have also had the privilege of meeting some of the First World War veterans.

It is this that makes coming home to Talbot House so enjoyable.

At the time of writing we have been wardening for 14 years on 21 occasions (for many years doing a spell of four weeks) and during this time we have been involved in all sorts of happenings.

Jack and Pat continued to warden for another 3 years making 25 times in total. Jack goes on to recall a few of the special happenings that they were involved with which we will return to later...to be continued!!

Preparations for the Centenary of Talbot House

Peace Book : This has now been to Barnsley and will go to Denny Branch in Scotland and hopefully an embryo branch in Glasgow and I have been asked to take it to Cosby, Heart of England and Rushton Royal.

A Different Chain of Light : Paul Dimoline and members of the Barton on Humber Branch took their lamp to the Upper Room in Talbot House where they met with members of Toc H Belgium. There was a short ceremony and Paul is now trying to contact all branches so he is able to visit and transfer that light to each Branch's lamp.

Paintings : Please remember that Toc H Belgium has invited people to produce small canvases of what Toc H means to them to contribute to the collage from around the world that they are planning for the centenary of the opening of Talbot House. There is a specific size and background colour which has been published in previous editions of In Touch, but if anyone is in doubt please contact the central office.

Representatives in Poperinge : We are asked to give details and numbers of who will be attending in Poperinge for the celebration in December . The official programme is from 10 –16 December and will include a service in Poperinge, Battle field tour, guided tour through Poperinge, WCoL and 24 hr vigil in 4 locations, evening entertainment, Last Post in Ieper, Toc H conference, **TH** birthday Party, **TH** reception with official speeches, **TH** brunch 100 years after the first breakfast was served

Please let us know quickly if you are interested in attending any part of these celebrations

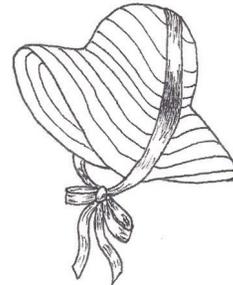
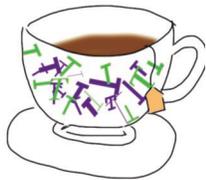
Alison House

Alison House Trustees and Management would like to invite all members of Toc H to a Garden Party

**at
Alison House**

**on
Wednesday 24 June 2015,**

**between
2 pm & 5 pm,**



to celebrate 50 years of Alison House.

Light refreshments will be provided.

In order to assist with the planning and catering an indication of numbers prior to the event would be appreciated.



Pictures from India



KOREAN STUDENTS AT Toc H PUBLIC SCHOOL, COCHIN.

Professor P. J. Joseph, President, Toc H Cochin Trust and the Director of Toc H Educational Institutions, Cochin, addressing the Faculty & Students of Youngsan University, Busan, in Korea, during his visit to Korea.



The new memorial building at Cochin is situated adjacent to Toc H Public School, Toc Indoor Stadium and Toc H Retreat.



A New Member JoinsBecause

No this is not the only new member but it is a lovely reason for joining and may be of interest :-

When an enquiry for membership comes to the Central Office we often ask questions about why people want to join and what they know of Toc H here is one answer we recently received:-

I am very happy to answer your question.

My Grandfather, 'Inky' Bean, met Tubby Clayton during the First World War in Belgium. After the war Tubby contacted my Grandad and my Grandad became a founder member of Toc H in Great Yarmouth, Norfolk.

During the Second World War the printing company where my Grandad worked in Great Yarmouth was bombed and Grandad was offered a job running a Services Club in Cambridge for a while and then moved to Southampton to be Warden of the home for Sea-Faring Boys.

My mum grew up mostly living in the Toc H hostel in Southampton and so Toc H has been a significant part of her life. She knew Tubby and talks of him with fondness.

The membership is really for my mum, she is 79 this year and has recently developed some short term memory problems. We have visited Talbot House in Poperinge three times and on our second visit Jan Louagie arranged for mum to read the citation at the Menin Gate Ceremony, which was a tremendous honour, Mum could do this from memory because she had said it so many times at Toc H meetings.

My Uncle, John Bean, gave me a copy of your magazine and this is what has prompted me to ask for membership for mum, as I feel she will enjoy reading the magazine and being part of Toc H again. I hope that's not too long an answer to your question!

Please tell everyone one there, that should they wish to visit Port Elizabeth South Africa, we have a self catering guest house operating to raise funds for the movement. TocHers will get a special discount.

Kind regards

Jenny Meyer

Lest We Forget

Recently there has been a flurry of phone calls and letters asking for information etc from the relatives of former members. Sadly this is often because the Toc H-er has died but had been very involved with their local branch until it had closed. We always offer to add the deceased to our Roll of Honour and this is usually accepted and appreciated, a common statement being "I don't know what they did but I do know that Toc H meant a lot to them". In turn they are the people who have meant a lot to us as their legacy is the Movement itself.

Many of the names below were not current members , but it is right that they should still be honoured for their part.



We will remember them !

Violet Huish	Arnold Fisher
Myfanwy Blackwell	Sid Stock
Florence Elliot	Josephine Richards
Joyce Green	Tom Newey
Archie Starr	Audrey Moore
Ida Starr	Mary Gandy
Charlie Harrild	Billy Walden
Audrey Smith	Connie Tate
Simon Allard	Joy McIntyre

Age shall not weary them

Our Movement

Thanks to the initiative of Barnsley Branch, who are committed to raising half its cost, we are now the proud owners of a smart new (to us) minibus.

It is owned by Toc H but lodged at Barnsley because they have undertaken the management and upkeep of it, having a member of the branch who has professional experience of managing a fleet of vehicles. It will of course be available for other branches to use - subject to negotiations over driver etc. If interested please contact Andy Hodgkinson on 0794 782 6970.

It is a seventeen seater but has the facility to lose a couple of rear seats for wheelchairs and has a ramp to facilitate disabled access. It also has a large roof rack with an attached ladder for ease of loading.

The royal blue colour was just a coincidence, but doesn't it look good!! Thank you Andy for sourcing the bus and getting the lettering and design sorted at a very reasonable cost.



.....on the move!!



One of the things that Barnsley are keen to use the bus for is to take a group of fathers and lads to Weirside to enjoy the outdoor experience that it can offer and to enable deeper relationships to be formed between father and son.

It will also enable a group to travel to such things as the Cenotaph, the carol service, the Toc H picnic etc etc and of course will pick people up at pre-arranged points if a reasonable route can be worked out.

The other thing it will be used for is regular trips to Belgium, a suggested itinerary for which is overleaf.

There is a business plan for the bus and it will have to pay for itself but if any members or branches feel like helping Barnsley to pay off their commitment of half the purchase price please donate through Barnsley Branch use the phone number opposite for details.

Suggested Itinerary for Tubby's Tours



Day 1

Leave Toc H Barnsley 8am Monday morning
Travel to Dover and get Ferry then travel to Poperinge
1 nights stay in Talbot House Garden Annex or Novotel Ypres

Day 2

Visit Talbot House Museum
Peace Pool
Vimy Ridge, Thiepval, Crucifix Corner
Hotel in Albert

Day 3

Sheffield Park
Morning reflections
Travel back to Ypres
Via
Messines Ridge, Paschendaele, Tyne Cot Cemetery and Ypres (Menin Gate),
where we will attend the Last Post Ceremony at 8.00pm.

Day 4

Langemark German Cemetery,
Hill 62
Harry Patch Memorial
Free afternoon

Day 5

Homeward Bound

Christmas at the Brooms

High Brooms branch held their Wednesday Afternoon Bingo Club Christmas Social on the 17th December. Twenty four people were present made up of members of the branch, regular Bingo players and a number of other seniors who were invited.

Fish and Chips from the local renowned shop in High Brooms were served followed by Vionetta Ice Cream and a Christmas Clementine. After a cup of tea or coffee we got down to the serious business of the Bingo.

There seems to be some sort of precedent that first time visitors win the main prizes and this afternoon was no exception. The whole event was covered by donations from a Carol Concert in Southborough, the proceeds of which are shared with three local church lunch clubs and the Salvation Army who provide the music, and also a very generous donation from a former regular at the Bingo



News from Cosby Branch

September saw the Annual Victory show held in the village and this year we held a display in our rooms of the men from the village who died in WW1.

There were 2 soldiers from 'The Warwicks' 1914-1918 living history group, who set up a small display on our back green, with guns of various sorts and many other items from WW1. This young lad was quite pleased to have his photo taken.

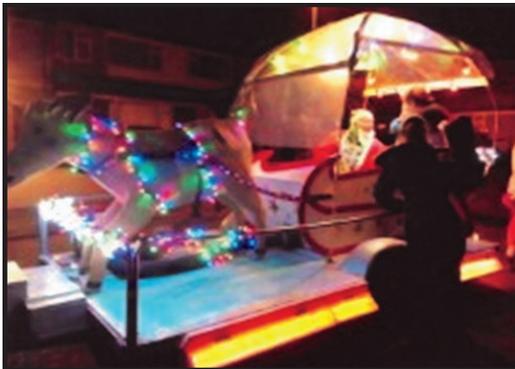


There was a good turn out for birthday celebrations in October when Paul Dimoline was our speaker. Everyone enjoyed his talk on his trip to Ghana and the commissioning of the water pump.

Eight members attended the AGM on 25th October at Birmingham and were pleased to see so many there.

Our St. Andrews night was a bit different this year, we had a fish & chips evening. It went down well and everyone enjoyed the socialising.

The Annual Duck Race was held on 8th Nov. and as usual was a great success. Plenty of people turned out for it and as result we raised £979 for nine organisations for young people in the village, plus Cosby Toc H.



We had our usual Santa collection around the village on the three nights before Christmas. Again there was a good turn out of collectors and the children enjoyed seeing Santa in his updated sleigh. Money raised by this event goes to the Cosby Old People's Welfare Association of the village. The Christmas Collection raised £1486.75 for Cosby Old Peoples Association.

Some members (of Cosby Branch) attended an inspiring talk by an organisation called Q4IS, Quilts For Injured Servicemen (& women). You will all have seen and read about the dreadful injuries sustained by our troops in

Iraq and Afghanistan and it seems that the handmade quilts are a real morale booster for those men and women. This photograph shows one that has recently been completed as a result of our sponsorship. Later in the year we will be organising a Coffee Morning for this worthwhile charity and they have promised to bring some examples of their work to show our supporters.



We held our annual Burns Supper on 29th January, (and bitter cold it was) 24 sat down to the usual fayre of Haggis, neeps and tatties – that soon heated us up. After the meal we had a variety of Scottish readings. A pleasant evening was enjoyed by all.

For a number of years Andy Strang, one of the members of Cosby Branch, has been researching the lives of the men from the village who fell in WW1. The results of this research have now been published in a book entitled ***'A Tribute to Cosby's Fallen in the Great War 1914-1918'***

The history of the events leading up to the 1914-1918 Great World War are described in this 130 page book together with biographies of the 41 men who fell during the conflict and are listed on the WW1 Roll of Honour in Cosby's St Michael and All Angels parish church. Also included are details of the dates and places where they died and are buried or commemorated as well as the regiments with which they fought. During the research the names of a further 14 Cosby men have been discovered who should also have been included in Cosby's WW1 Roll of Honour. A list of 104 Cosby men who are known to have survived the Great War is also included.

The book is A5 size of about 130 pages and perfect bound with a striking coloured cover of red poppies. It is also well illustrated with photographs of some of those who fell and of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's cemeteries and memorials where they are commemorated.

Copies of the book are available at a cost is £5 per copy, plus £1.50 for postage and packing, and can be ordered by contacting Andy on 01162864641 or strangs@talktalk.net

At present Andy is working on a further book on the lives of Cosby's men who fell in WW2 which he is hoping will be published by Remembrance Day 2015.

If any members of Toc H are interested in help with researching the lives of members of their families who fell in WW1 or WW2 Andy will be pleased to assist them. All they need to do is e-mail him on strangs@talktalk.net

A Pictorial Tour of Weirside Re-Born!



Below is the decluttered kitchen, the provision of storage space elsewhere that means plates etc can be stored in the dining/recreation room where there are new heaters and there is still room for table tennis!

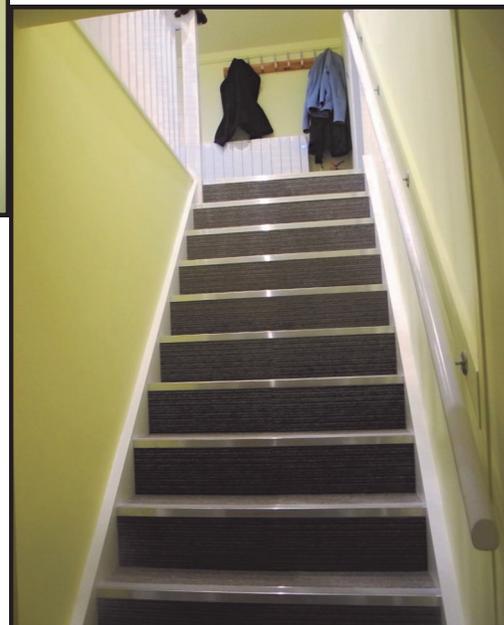


Passing through the downstairs dormitory to the main ablution room which has had a complete refit which includes new wash basins, toilets, and best of all new showers that should be much more efficient now. The roof has also been repaired and the new heating makes it much cosier



The downstairs dormitory remains much the same still sleeping 8. but it has a fresh coat of paint and the new carpet which runs throughout.

Due to fire regulations the open staircase has been replaced and is in fact wider too. It leads up to where the major changes have taken place



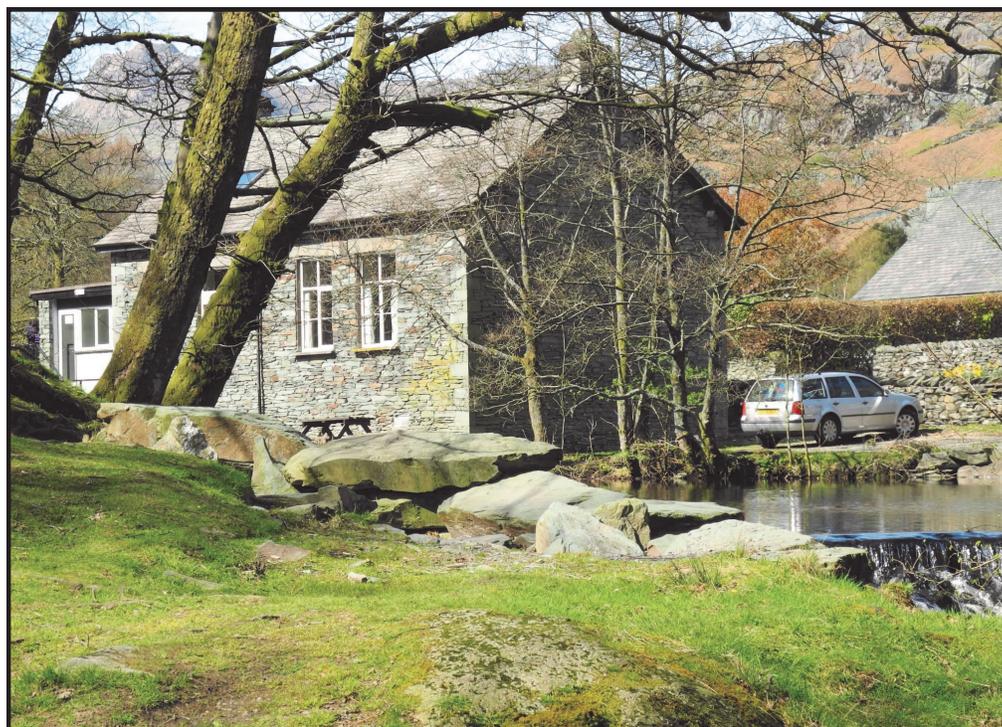


The new floor over the dining room provides a spacious landing with storage off, two new leaders' rooms each sleeping 2 with a new shower room to accompany them.





Even the upstairs dorm has its own shower through its washroom and loo, all has been repainted and re-carpeted. With 20 beds it now costs £200 a night for the whole place, but there is a £50 discount for charities and community groups.



Our Promise Fulfilled

In the last edition there was a copy of the Graham Stevenson's recognition from the French government for his war service. We promised to follow this up with more information and a photograph which we are glad to do. This appeared in a recent edition of the Walsall Express and Star.

A grateful France has thanked Graham Stevenson for fighting to liberate it from Nazi oppression.

With the remarkable modesty shown by many of his generation of heroes Mr Stevenson says serving during the Second World War was a "privilege"



France has now recognised his efforts by awarding him its highest decoration - the Legion of Honour. Seven decades on from when he was shot and injured in Tilly-sur-Seulles the 89 year old tells a gripping tale of how he nearly died from a severed brachial artery and his return to Wolverhampton for medical treatment.

While he is proud of his latest accolade he is also an extremely humble man. He and his fellow servicemen did what they did all those years ago because it was the right thing to do. As a result this country came through the darkest years in living memory.

Mr Stevenson's words should resonate with everyone. He says "I just believe we are so fortunate to live in this country. It is an honour being a citizen".

In fact it is we, fellow citizens of Graham Stevenson, who are fortunate to have him and others who served in the Second World War, living in this country. It is we who are honoured by them.

Toc H Picnic at the National Memorial Arboretum

Many of you may remember a lovely photograph in the last edition of a busload from Barnsley enjoying a day at the National Memorial Arboretum gathered around the Toc H memorial, one of the first ones to be seen on entering. When the Board heard about it several said we should make it a national event. So this year that is what we are suggesting!

If you have never visited the NMA then you are really missing out, it is an amazing place and very uplifting. The ingenuity of the memorial gardens is amazing, the chapel a masterpiece, the Far East building extremely moving. It is the history of all our services and so much more, set in beautiful surroundings with a riverside walk. There is also a tractor train that takes you round with a commentary and for £5 you have a really informative tour for about an hour.

We can picnic there but not take our own food into the café and Visitor Centre. You can also book a disability scooter to enable you to get about if that will help, though numbers of these are limited.

So far Cosby, Heart of England, London District and Barnsley branches are including it in their events' calendar, so why not join them there. Lone members will be especially welcome for what is hoped to be an annual time of true Toc H fellowship—ask for more details.



**Toc H
Centenary
Picnic
By the Lamp**

**Saturday 19th September 2015
12 Noon**

National Memorial Arboretum Alrewas

London District

Dates planned so far.....

Mill Hill Music Club – Sunday 10th May – 7:30pm.

London “Quiet Day” – Saturday 16th May – at Prideaux House.

National History Museum – Saturday 6th June at 11:30 – We visit the National History Museum (South Kensington Station)

Bradwell Pilgrimage / Visit to Othona Community – Saturday 4th July – see Chris for lifts.

Trip to see “Auntie” – (Irene Tucker) – Sat 18th July -and also Tony and Barbara Cock at Margate. Out for lunch, and a Strawberry Tea!

Bubbles Day – Saturday 22nd August - Come and visit Barbara in her Southend Seat.

London Walk – Saturday 5th September - Come and help with refreshments, or get sponsorship for your charity / Friends of Khasdobir.

Toc H Picnic—National Memorial Arboretum— a chance to meet members from across the country .

Toc H AGM – Saturday 24th October – in Birmingham.- Venue as last year. Lunch at 1pm

Toc H 100th Anniversary Service – Saturday 12th December, 2pm – All Hallows.

If you would like to attend any of these events, please contact Chris for details. Nearer the time please check that they are still “on”.

Chris Stoneham
020 8270 5742

Scottish Charity Status was awarded on 16th
March with the number of SC045491

London District pre Carol Service Lunch



Bring and share lunch before the Carol Service organised by London District Branch



Messages

Jean Fenner writes:~

Nearly two weeks since I arrived in New Zealand. Settling down slowly - still lots of sorting out on the SA side.

I will continue to take an interest in Toc H so would love to hear your news.

Linda May : apologises if she has been rather out of touch.

NATIONAL PRAYER CYCLE

(This can be used weekly or monthly)

Friendship – To love widely

Think of all Members in Britain and Overseas.
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 and its Centenary in 2015
Think of the First War and everyone associated with it.

Fair-mindedness – To think fairly

Think of the Board of Trustees and others running Toc H.
Pray for Khasdobir, the work of KYAG, for Afzal the coordinator
and everyone who benefits from the training.
Pray that the spirit and ethos of Toc H may spread.

Witness – To witness humbly

Think of all suffering from division and fighting today and for all who work
for peace and reconciliation.
Pray that more people may be drawn into the Movement.
Thank God for the hope that Easter brings in Christ's Resurrection..



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 |