

## **PRESIDENTIAL YEAR 1965-1966**

### **JOHN TYLER**

How would I characterize my year as President of Rotary? We acted in whatever way we could in favour of the local community and for the development of international Rotary links, all this while enjoying deep friendships and generally having lots of fun.

I was a busy headmaster, but I had no difficulty in attending lunchtime meetings. I had an excellent relationship with teachers and other staff of the new Frank Hooker School, and they used to remind me about my Rotary attendance if they thought I might be late – perhaps they were looking forward to an hour or so without me!

The most important local event during the year was the opening of the University of Kent, though without students for the first period. Fred Nason, the department store owner, preceded me as President; another Rotarian, Peter Mason, owned the County Hotel, where Rotary had been meeting since 1925. These two thought that the University should have a temporary base in Canterbury itself while setting up on campus, and offered a room in the Hotel (looking onto the Beaney) as a welcome gesture from the town. The first Vice-Chancellor, Harold Templeman, together with the Treasurer whom he had brought with him from Birmingham University, Cyril Fox, both became Rotarians but had to resign after a few years owing to pressure of work.

We were closely connected with Christ Church College, which ran 6-9 month refresher courses for priests from all over the world. Bishop Sansbury from Singapore, a keen Rotarian and Principal of this College (as well as being a Governor of my School), suggested that we should act as hosts to the visiting priests. They became friendly with many of our families. One day we had a joint meeting with them, 20 Rotarians and 40 priests. Suddenly the then Archbishop Dr Ramsey walked in and all the priests went on their knees to greet him - he was very embarrassed! Later the College became a Teacher Training College and is now a University.

We continued to have close relations with the St Quentin Rotary. Canterbury Rotary had had a delegation of three (Harold Dawton, John Barrett and Harold

Young) at their Charter Night in June 1947, and an alliance between the two Clubs was confirmed on that occasion. Down at Dover on our way to visit St Quentin Rotary, one of our members named Hopper - a baker - found that he had forgotten his passport and he was not allowed on the boat. Such was his determination to attend the St Quentin event that he went home, grabbed his passport, flew from Lymne to a French Airport near St Quentin and caught up with us as we arrived at our destination! At our meeting we were introduced to a delegation from Ludenscheid Rotary with whom our friends were setting up ties. We set up a Club Sub-Committee to examine the delicate question of whether we could participate with St Quentin in an Inter-Club tie up involving Ludenscheid - it took us some time to get used to the idea.

We had a good cricket team. Tim Brett shone as a batsman and Albert Incles was a good bowler of in-swingers. Poor Eric Shepherd, our wicket-keeper, was very short-sighted and had to stand right over the wicket to see the ball coming. I was an opening batsman - I did not get many runs but tried to stay in as long as possible.

My wife Joan President of Inner Wheel shortly after I was President of Rotary, and we had many lovely friends through IW. We had an excellent delegation to the District Conference in Hastings, and overall we had a very close-knit Club during my year.

***Compiled February 2010***