

REFLECTIONS OF OLIVER DAVIES, PRESIDENT 1981-1982

I was inducted as a Rotarian in 1975 and later served as Hon Sec for three years. I had attended District Conferences in Eastbourne for many years before having the honour to lead the Canterbury delegation at the March Past of the District Governor. This was memorable for the fact that I escorted GLADYS YOUNG, the widow of past President HAROLD YOUNG, the only (to date) District Governor from Canterbury Rotary, President of RIBI and Director of Rotary International.

In December 1981 at the Christmas Dinner in the County Hotel I had the pleasure of installing Archbishop Robert Runcie as an Honorary Member – if only I had not had a moment's lapse of memory at the critical moment and forgotten his name! The Archbishop came to my rescue and whispered his name in my ear. Later in his speech of acceptance he light-heartedly referred to me as President Jones? or Williams? before saying President Oliver.

In February 1982 I received a circular letter from a Rotary Club in Argentina seeking our support and understanding. This letter I read to the Club, and it brought forth an outburst from a Past President who condemned it as propaganda and said that I was a pacifist. I reminded the said PP that I had served more than three years overseas in World War II and that he ought to read the 4th Object of Rotary. The letter was left on the table and no further action was taken.

1982 was a year of many happy memories of service and fellowship which became friendship. Club Historians will know that in that year we celebrated the 60th Anniversary of the foundation of the Rotary Club of Canterbury. The fact that it was also the year of my 60th birthday and marked my retirement as a Head Teacher adds to my joy at being President of a Club without equal.