

ROTARY CLUB OF DUDLEY - THE FIRST 75 YEARS

PREFACE

About six months ago at a meeting of Dudley Rotary Club the then District Governor Fraser Dukes suggested to me that I write a history of Dudley Rotary Club. I was not to know then exactly what I was letting myself in for.

To research information relating to Dudley Rotary Club has proved much more difficult than originally envisaged, due to the fact that the majority of the information has been gleaned from rather sketchy details contained in Club Council Minutes and Committee minutes.

Unfortunately during my researches it appears that a considerable number of these minutes are missing from the Dudley Archives, and despite recovering some, there are still many missing, with the inevitable result that a few years may seem short on content.

It may appear that some years have very little reported. This does not mean in any way that Service or Fellowship was less than in any other year. Many events have gone on year after year and have not been mentioned purely to avoid continual repetition.

Perhaps the final product may show the changes that have taken place in the thinking and attitude of Dudley Rotary Club from the 1920's to the 1990's.

Rather than a history this booklet is more a recording of events which I trust will be acceptable to all who read it.

May I express my thanks to both Jean, my wife for her tolerance and to Past Presidents Fred Austin and Bernard Beales for the help they have given me in the preparation of this document.

Michael Crump November 1997

1921 - 1924

In late 1921 senior members of Birmingham Rotary Club approached some leading businessmen in Dudley with a view to forming a Rotary Club in Dudley. The efforts of these Rotarians were rewarded by the great interest shown by the Dudley businessmen. Many meetings were held by the nucleus of members of the proposed new Rotary Club prior to the actual formation of the club. An inaugural Meeting was held at 264/8 Castle Street, Dudley on 22 May 1922 with Mr F.W. Cook in the chair with seven other members present: at that meeting a further 26 members were elected to the club. Draft rules of the club were considered and it was resolved that they be placed before the first official meeting of the club to be held at 1.00pm on Monday 12 June 1922 at The Dudley Arms Hotel. Furthermore, it was agreed that meetings of the club should be held fortnightly.

At the meeting on 12 June, Mr F.W. Cook was elected founder President of Dudley

Rotary Club. The Secretary announced at that meeting that he had been in communication with The British Association of Rotary Clubs with reference to the Constitution and Bye-Laws of the Association. The rules of the Club, agreed on the 12 June 1922, were rescinded, as they were in conflict with those of the Association. And thus Dudley Rotary Club came into being.

Badges were purchased for members at a cost of 3/6d each. A bank account was opened with the London Joint City and Midland Bank at their Dudley Branch.

In July 1922, Lord Ednam accepted an invitation to become an Honorary Member of the Club. In August, the Earl of Dudley also accepted the invitation to become an Honorary Member. The Club was granted its Charter from Rotary International on the 13 December 1922. The first year or two were predominantly concerned with getting to grips with the Rotary Constitution and recruiting new members.

In a very short time, the membership of the Club increased and by mid-1923 was in excess of 70, all the members being leading businessmen of the Borough of Dudley. The Secretary reported that he had received letters from the Temperance Legislation League and the Anti-Prohibition League, asking for permission to address the Club. Both requests were accepted and they were asked to attend on the same day.

It was decided that a Ladies' Night be held on 16 April 1923 at the Palais de Danse, Dudley at a cost of 7/6d per head of which 1/0d would go to Club funds.

A resolution was put to RIBI relating to the Annual Conference; as follows: "Resolve that the out-of-pocket expenses of attending the Annual Conference incurred by the two members of each Rotary Club nominated to the Council of R.I. be paid by R.I.". This resolution was however rescinded at a later Club Council meeting.

The first sub-committee of the Club consisting of five members was a "Boys' Work Committee". At a meeting of Club Council on 4 June 1923, it was resolved that no meetings should take place during the month of August. (This was to remain in force until it was rescinded in 1995.) On 4 February 1924, an evening meeting took place at which a debate on the subject "That in the opinion of the meeting Dudley is efficiently and economically governed". (There is no record of how the voting went.)

The first Fellowship Meeting was held on 1 April 1924 with a visit to Wolverhampton Rotary Club.

By June 1924 three Sub-Committees had been formed - Boys' Work, Fraternal and Membership.

1924 - 1928

The early years of the club were concerned mainly with fellowship and ensuring that a stable membership was obtained. There were many resignations (due mainly to the attendance rule which was rigidly enforced). However, there were also many new members, which offset this.

The early records of the club leave something to be desired and there is little mention

of the inner workings of the Club.

The President of RIBI visited the club on 2 February 1925, (with 3/- being charged for persons attending).

When a new member was inducted into the Club, he was presented with a ribbon with the words "New Member" embroidered on it. These ribbons were to be worn at all meetings. However, this seemed to be unpopular and, following a letter from the Fraternal Committee to Club Council, these words were omitted from ribbons issued subsequently.

In 1925, with reference to a proposed Ladies Evening, the question of entertainment was discussed and a request was made that items of a "humorous nature" would be desirable.

Classification of new members appeared to create problems in the early years. A proposal form was submitted for a prospective member with a suggested classification of "Bean Car Distributor". This classification was not approved by Club Council but it was resolved to accept the classification of "Sports Outfitter"!!!!

Throughout the first few years of the Clubs existence, two items more than any other were under continual discussion: attendance and the quality of the catering. (This was not to change in future years.)

The first record of any fund-raising occurred in March 1925 when the club agreed to support the Guest Hospital £10,000 appeal fund.

In September 1925, a letter was received from RIBI informing the club of a proposed Australian Conference and stating that they proposed to send a delegate from this country. In order to do this it would be necessary to make a levy of one shilling per head on all RIBI members. This was considered by Club Council, who resolved that no further donation be made.

At this time Dudley Rotary Club seemed to be involved in an enormous amount of correspondence with RIBI, interpretation of the rules being one of the major items. Due to the fact that some members were magistrates and that they were on the "bench" on the first and third Monday of the month, it was resolved that the fortnightly meetings of the Club would take place on the second and fourth Monday of each month.

For 1926, a Ladies' Evening was proposed, which would again be held at the Palais de Danse, Dudley. This would be a sit down supper with dancing to follow. A card room would be available for those not wishing to dance. Due to lack of support, this function was subsequently cancelled.

Following many complaints from members about the venue for meetings at the Dudley Arms, it was agreed that from 20 September 1926, meetings of the club should take place at the Saracens Head.

Following a letter from R.I.B.I. suggesting that the Club meet weekly instead of fortnightly, the Secretary was instructed to send a reply stating that weekly meetings

were "not in the best interests of the Club".

In February 1928, a letter was received by the club (and by other local clubs) from the Rotary Club of Weston Super Mare. This was in connection with a Boys' home in the town and asking for financial support. Dudley club gave this their full backing and support.

Complaints were received by Club Council relating to the time that the luncheon meetings finished. It appeared that Club Council meetings, which were called for 12.30pm on the day of each meeting of the Club seldom finished by 1.00pm. All Club meetings started late due to this and rarely finished before 2.30pm. Council were to look into the matter.

A letter was received from Dudley Cricket Club asking that the Club elect a representative to serve on their committee.

1929

Membership on 20 February, 1929 was 70.

As from 4 November, 1929, it was agreed that meetings would in future be held on a weekly basis and not fortnightly, as was current.

It was agreed that the club should be responsible for the maintenance of the wireless, wiring and headphones at Dudley Guest Hospital. One Dudley Rotarian kindly donated a new wireless for this project.

A letter was sent to the Dudley Postmaster complaining:-

- (a) That telephone operators do not put through trunk calls.
- (b) That when calls are put through they are summarily cut off.
- (c) That the telephone operator does not disconnect when the trunk call is finished.

It was agreed by Club Council that 30 luncheons be guaranteed weekly to the Saracen's Head for a year.

On 25 November, 1929, a letter was received from R.I.B.I. appealing for assistance towards the cost of litigation involved by the Kensington Club as a result of expelling a member. It was resolved that the letter be left to "lie on the table".

1930 - 1931

Membership at 31 March, 1930 was 55.

Membership at 30 June, 1931 was 59.

In March 1930, club committees were regularised in accordance with the bye-laws being.

Fellowship and Programme.

Aims and Objects and Boys Work.

Membership and Vocational Services.

In May 1930, the membership of the club was 55, a drop of 15 in the period of 12 months. This was a cause of great concern.

In July 1930, a letter was sent to No.6 District, suggesting that RIBI table a resolution in

support of the League of Nations at the next conference.

In the 1930's, new members were allocated by Club Council to the committees on which they should serve.

A meeting was held between all local Rotary Clubs to establish exact club boundaries. The Dudley area was agreed as, The County Borough of Dudley, Brierley Hill to the junction of Moor Street and Mill Street, Tipton where the canal crossed Toll End Road.

The average attendance at club meetings was 62.9% for the 12 month period to June 1931.

At a special general meeting of the club in October 1931, it was agreed that the annual subscription be increased to £2.

1932 - 1933

Membership at 30 June, 1932 was 52.

Membership at 30 June, 1933 was 52.

A levy was made in 1932 of 8/6d per member in respect of the outings for crippled children arranged during the year. Transport and entertainment was arranged on two occasions when, in each case, 60 crippled children were taken to Astley Burf Camp, entertained and then returned home.

In March 1933, it was agreed that the sub-committees should be reorganised and would be as follows:

Club Service and Programme.

Vocational Service and Membership.

Community and International Service.

In February 1933, Dudley club headed the District Attendance Figures with 80.09%.

1933 saw many fellowship visits to and from neighbouring Rotary Clubs.

In a letter from German Rotarians in July 1933 the Club was asked to consider the position of Jews in Germany at that time. Unfortunately, there is no record of what action the club took on this matter, although, the International Committee did send Christmas Greetings to our Rotarian Friends in Germany.

Following the guarantee given to the Saracen's Head relating to lunches, it was agreed by Club Council that a levy of 3d. per absence be made on the member, to defray the cost of the guarantee.

1934

Membership at 1 June, 1934 was 51.

In April 1934, Community Service Committee recommended to Club Council that dinners be provided to the unemployed attending the Occupational Centre. It was agreed that this service should be provided once a month for about 40 unemployed members of the centre. In addition, to commemorate The King and Queens Silver Jubilee, a further function was held, taking the form of a tea for the unemployed and

their wives, followed by a visit to the Castle Cinema.

Average attendance for the year 71%.

Following an appeal from the Prince of Wales, three separate parties of about 30 unemployed men were given a weekend at Astley Burf Camp. This was carried out jointly with Toc H.

In June 1934, a visit was made by club members to the Austin Motor Company in Birmingham, where all the latest models were seen being constructed.

It was agreed, in July 1934, that a clock be presented to Miss Dorothy Round in recognition of her winning the Ladies Singles Tennis Championship at Wimbledon.

A Hobbies and Handicrafts Exhibition held at the Park School over three days was proclaimed to be a resounding success. This was jointly organised by the Dudley Corporation, the Chamber of Commerce and Dudley Rotary Club. There were 250 exhibits made by Boys and Girls aged 13 to 17, many of whom would shortly be eligible for employment.

An address given by a member of the Fellowship of Freedom and Reform on the subject of "The modern Public House and its place in the Social Scheme" was considered by the Programme and Fellowship Committee and a letter was sent to Club Council asking them "To put a stop to this class of address, which, in the opinion of the committee, was sheer propaganda".

1935

Total Membership at 30 June, 1935 was 51.

In February 1935, following receipt of a letter from Grimsby Rotary Club, a donation was made to a fund providing assistance to the widows and dependants of those who lost their lives whilst fishing off Iceland.

Between June and December 1934, 14 members attained attendances exceeding 90%, of which 7 attained 100%.

In March 1935, the secretary was empowered to purchase a typewriter at a cost not exceeding £10, for the use of the present and future secretaries of the club.

Also during 1935, a Round Table Club of Dudley was formed, receiving considerable support from Dudley Rotary Club.

During 1935 the club investigated the possibility of forming another Rotary Club in the area. As a result of this investigation, the Rotary Club of Rowley Regis, our first daughter club, came into being.

Due to various problems with the management of the Saracen's Head, it was resolved that, as from 16 September 1935, the headquarters of the club should return to The Dudley Arms Hotel for all future meetings.

The President-Elect for the year 1935-1936 requested that an evening meeting be held to enable him to outline a plan of campaign for his year in office.

The Club, in conjunction with District, supplied Stewards to take charge of the Rotary Rest Room during the period of the British Industries Fair held at Castle Bromwich. A visit to the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre took place to see a performance of "The Taming of the Shrew". This was preceded by dinner at the Shakespeare Hotel.

1936

Membership at 1 July, 1936 was 59.

In 1936, the major fund-raising event was a flag-day on behalf of the British Empire Cancer Campaign.

A letter was received from Birmingham Rotary Club regarding foreign Rotarians visiting this Country, asking for names and addresses of members who would be prepared to offer accommodation in their homes.

A visit was arranged by District to Southampton to view the new liner, "Queen Mary". Several members and their wives attended, spending several hours being shown round the magnificent vessel.

The Club closed its bank account at Midland Bank Limited, and opened a new one with National and Provincial Bank Limited.

It was noted that, between July and December 1936, 21 members achieved attendances in excess of 90%.

1937 - 1938

Membership at 1 July 1937, was 67.

Membership at 1 July 1938, was 68.

In 1937, the Club entertained ten German girls together with their hostesses and, after luncheon they visited Ludlow Castle. An exchange visit was made later in the year by a party from Dudley Girls' High School.

Following a request from Community and International Service Committee, the Club donated the sum of two guineas to the British Empire Cancer Campaign Funds.

The custom (now defunct) of proposing international toasts to Rotary Clubs throughout the world continued.

In 1937, poor attendance of members at meetings was again presenting a problem and great efforts were made to remedy this.

In June 1937, the District Extension Officer wrote to the Club, suggesting the formation of a Rotary Club in Tipton. After long discussions, the Club unanimously resolved "That owing to social and geographical difficulties, it was not possible to ensure a strong and healthy Club in Tipton".

A Charity Ball was held in November 1937 which showed a profit of £24-16s-8d.

A Christmas Tea for Old Folks was held at the Odeon Cinema, which was much enjoyed by those attending.

In January, 1938, a Ladies' Night was held at the Town Hall.

Also in January 1938, negotiations commenced with regard to forming a daughter club

in Brierley Hill. These proved successful and the Brierley Hill Charter Night on 15 February was well attended by Dudley Rotarians.

Following still declining attendance figures, Club Council agreed that the importance of attendance should be stressed to all new members.

In June 1938, it was agreed that Dudley Rotary Club would offer to provide Dudley Inner Wheel Club with a President's Badge.

For a number of years, the Club's Community Service Committee had been running a Hospital Transport Scheme. This involved more than half the members of the club holding themselves and their motor cars available for the day and night services at Dudley Guest Hospital. This service was to continue for many years.

During 1938, a gong in the shape of a ship's bell fixed in an oak frame was purchased by the club. In addition, the President stated that he found the chain of office extremely heavy, due to the weight of the gold bars on which the names of past presidents were engraved. It was resolved that the existing bars be sold and that new ones of a lighter weight be obtained.

1939

Membership at 1 July, 1939 was 68.

In May 1939, a circular was received from RIBI with regard to the position of Rotary Clubs in the event of a National Emergency.

Due to problems with the meeting place it was agreed that, as from 28 August 1939, the weekly luncheon meetings would be held at The Station Hotel, Dudley.

Following the outbreak of war in September 1939, many discussions were held on whether the club should continue whilst hostilities were taking place. A communication from RIBI stated that, despite the difficulties, it was hoped that Clubs would be able to continue. Dudley agreed to this request and whilst no formal meetings had taken place since September, meetings were resumed in January 1940. The format of these meetings would be as before, although it was hoped that they would finish by 2.00pm. Shortly afterwards three members joined the Services and it was agreed that they should remain members and that no subscription would be required.

1940 - 1941

Membership at 1 July, 1940 was 65.

The Dudley Club was involved in 1940 in helping with care for refugees who fled from Europe to this country.

In addition to the Hospital Transport Scheme, the Community Service Committee provided a transport service for Servicemen coming home on leave.

The Club also undertook to supply the crew of H.M. Minesweeper "Taipo" with comforts such as knitted goods, tobacco etc. Correspondence was exchanged with both the skipper and a member of his crew, who was a Dudley man.

Wool was provided by the Club which was knitted up by the Inner Wheel Club and

distributed to the forces.

On a monthly basis, the Club sent 100 cigarettes to those members of the Club serving in H.M. Forces.

In May 1940, Club Council also agreed to support an appeal for the provision of a fully equipped Mobile Ambulance for the use of the troops in France. Each member of the Club was asked to contribute £10 towards this appeal.

In July, a Garden Party was held at the home of Rotarian and Mrs Field (Presidents of Dudley Rotary Club and Dudley Inner Wheel Clubs respectively).

A Civic Lunch was held, at which all the Aldermen, Councillors and Officials of the Dudley and Tipton Borough Councils were invited. (This function was to continue for many years.)

Due to petrol rationing the children's outings were severely curtailed.

Members were actively involved in organising wartime activities such as Air Raid Precautions and War Weapons Weeks as well as contributing to charities such as the Spitfire Fund.

It was agreed that Commissioned Officers of the troop detachment stationed in Dudley should be invited to Honorary Membership of the Club during their period of service in Dudley. This referred mainly to the Anti-Aircraft Battery stationed at Oakham.

A discussion took place at the December 1940 meeting on a scheme for initiating a "Mutual Aid" fund in the Club, from which those who had been unfortunate enough to suffer loss through aerial attack or war damage might be granted financial aid. It was however, considered that a scheme introduced by the government rendered the "Mutual Aid" fund superfluous.

In June 1941, the Station Hotel regretfully found it necessary to raise the cost of the luncheons from 2/6d to 2/9d.

It was agreed that Ladies should be invited to the Luncheon meeting on the occasion of the new President's induction on the 7th July.

During the Christmas Period of 1941 Christmas Greetings were received from the Rotary Clubs of Whangarie and Napier, both in New Zealand. (Another custom that has since lapsed.)

1942

Membership at 18 May, 1942 was 78.

A Charity Dance was held at the Town Hall, organised jointly by Dudley and Rowley Regis Clubs in aid of the Red Cross. In due course, a cheque for £138.17s.1d. was donated.

Following a District Council Meeting in Birmingham, a strong recommendation was made for the study in Rotary Clubs of matters affecting the reconstruction period that will follow the war. (So, even in those dark days, there was absolutely no doubt regarding the eventual outcome of the war.)

In March 1942, a letter was received by the Club from No. 6 District congratulating the

Club on the excellence of the WEEKLY circular. It was proposed at a Club Council meeting that the weekly circular should be curtailed or only be published monthly due to the shortage of paper. This proposal was withdrawn after considerable discussion. At a Club Council Meeting in May, it was announced that the "Charter" of the Club had been lost. It was agreed that the secretary apply to RI for a duplicate.

A celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Club was held on the 20th July 1942, to which function had been invited all founder members who were no longer members of the Club. In addition, as a further celebration, over 100 Members and Ladies went to Dudley Hippodrome.

120 poor children were entertained by the Club Community Service Committee with an outing and tea at Dudley Zoo.

It was agreed, in August 1942, that all Committee Chairmen should be invited to attend all meetings of Club Council, but that they should not be entitled to vote.

Three boys were sent on holiday to Weston Boys' Home and the Welfare Officer stated that they had all benefitted from the experience. Dudley Rotarians were invited by the President to make personal donations to the Home.

It was agreed that the Club should, through District No.6, enter into part ownership, with Districts No.10 and 17, of Rotary Boys' House, Weston-Super-Mare. The Club would make an annual contribution towards the upkeep of the house, initially at a minimum per capita sum of 2/6d per member.

During 1942, Community Service Committee were discussing at their meetings the subject of "Juvenile Delinquency", whilst the Reconstruction Committee were debating "Employment & Social Security". (Times do not change.)

In September 1942, the question of the quality of catering at the luncheon meetings was discussed at length. It was agreed that the Hon. Secretary should make representations to the management on a suitable occasion to see whether improvements could be made.

1943

Membership at 24 May, 1943 was 81.

There were difficulties in obtaining metal classification badges for new members. It was resolved that the Hon. Secretary should obtain particulars of a new set of celluloid-faced badges for all members, an order for which was subsequently placed.

Owing to wartime difficulties, it was decided that no Ladies' Day would take place in 1943.

It was agreed that the gratuity to the waitresses at the Station Hotel be increased from 2d. to 3d. per member per week.

In view of the considerable amount of clerical assistance required by the Honorary General Secretary for the due and proper execution of the normal secretarial duties, it was agreed that he should be paid an honorarium of £30 per annum to defray in part, the cost of such clerical assistance.

An Information Committee was formed for the purpose of informing prospective new members about the aims and objects of Rotary.

An enquiry to RIBI regarding the supply of lapel badges resulted in a reply stating that they were not obtainable at the present time.

Problems of non-attendance of some members caused considerable concern to Club Council.

Council agreed that printed Post Cards be obtained for the use of Committee Secretaries in calling members to meetings.

Vocational Service Committee were to discuss the following subjects.

- The Post War System of Government.
- Bureaucracy.
- Government control versus Private Enterprise.
- The Small Trader and the Beveridge Report.

(Even in those days, Vocational Service Committee was considered the "Think Tank" of the Club.)

A report presented to the Club from the Community Service Committee showed that the Dudley Club's past efforts for Rotary Boys' House at Weston Super Mare compared unfavourably with those of neighbouring Clubs. Following the report, a number of Rotarians and their wives visited Weston Boys' House in November and were most impressed with the running and facilities there. It was agreed that further positive efforts should be made by the Club to improve the situation.

1944

Membership at 30 June, 1944 was 84.

In January, Lord Vansittart, together with Lady Vansittart, visited the Club when he gave the address. 132 people including visitors and guests attended the meeting. The attendance of members on that day was 86%.

Two members of the Club were elected to District Council as Chairmen of District International Service Committee and District Vocational Service Committee.

Letters were exchanged between the Club and the Rotary Club of Webster-Dudley in Massachusetts, USA. A gift parcel had been received from them which was passed on to the Inner Wheel Club for them to distribute.

A Charity dance was held at the Town Hall on the 11 March 1944 with dancing to The Rhythm Maestros Dance Orchestra. Unfortunately, Dudley Corporation would not allow a licensed bar at that function. The Ladies of Inner Wheel provided refreshments and the evening resulted in a profit of £75.5.11d.

Members of the Club offered their services to the Mayor of Dudley to co-operate with any plans for the entertainment of American Forces stationed in the town. This was to be worked in conjunction with the British Welcome Clubs.

70 members, together with their wives, attended a theatre party at Dudley Hippodrome to see a performance of the play "Claudia".

Following a suggestion by RIBI, the Club drank a toast to a different Rotary Club in the U.S.A. each week and followed this up by writing to the Club.

Members were invited by Dudley Inner Wheel Club to a tea and entertainment to celebrate its seventh anniversary.

It was recommended that the practice of turning up chairs to reserve places at the luncheon meetings should cease. This was considered particularly bad, bearing in mind a number of new members who probably knew only one or two members of the Club.

31 bedside lockers were presented to Weston Boys' House as a gift from the Club.

Letters were sent to the Presidents of the Dover, Folkestone and Deal Clubs sympathising with the difficulties in these towns from Flying Bombs being launched in France by the Germans.

As an innovation, the Presidents of several Clubs in the locality moved around, taking the chair at a neighbouring Club's meeting.

1945

Membership at 28 May, 1945 was 83.

The major event of the year was obviously the end of hostilities.

The International Committee presented a report to the Club on "The failure of the League of Nations to prevent War". This report was printed and sent to all the Clubs in No. 6 District.

110 children from Dudley (mostly orphans), were entertained to a Tea and Social at St. John's Parish Hall.

In March, the first Ladies' Evening since the commencement of the War was held with 130 guests attending.

The Social Committee organised a Theatre Party of 170 to Dudley Hippodrome.

A large quantity of packs of playing cards was collected by the Club and sent to the crew of H.M. Trawler, Glen-Kitson.

In July, the Club asked the Station Hotel to allow a cupboard to be placed in a suitable position in the Hotel, to house a library for the use of members. The request was refused.

A letter was sent by the Secretary to former Rotarians of the Club, cordially inviting them to renew their Club membership. This action, however, did not prove successful in increasing the membership.

It was resolved that donations to National Institutions be considerably curtailed and be restricted to objects promoted by Rotary or to charitable efforts organised by the Club.

Perhaps the most important Club event of 1945 was the formation of another daughter Club. The Rotary Club of Tipton was formed, following a number of meetings with local businessmen. The inaugural meeting of that Club was held on Monday 12 March 1945 at the Royal Oak Hotel, Dudley Port. Two Dudley members resigned to join this new Club.

1946

Membership at 30 June, 1946 was 88.

Discussions took place in January about the desirability of holding a meeting occasionally in the evening instead of the usual one at lunchtime, when the Club would be addressed by a speaker of outstanding merit.

120 children were taken on a trip. They went to Stourport in a charabanc where they took a steamer trip to Holt Fleet. This was followed by tea at the Riverside Cafe.

The Annual Ladies' Evening took place on 1 March with 130 guests present. This was at the Mirabelle Ballroom, which was situated on Castle Hill, next door to the Hippodrome.

On February 11, Fellowship and Social Committee arranged a party to see "Babes in the Wood" at the Dudley Hippodrome. Approximately 150 seats were taken up. Afterwards the party assembled at the Zoo Club (Fellows' Club) where refreshments were provided.

On March 20th, President Fred Cozens arranged a very successful visit to the Baggeridge Coal Mine.

Vocational Service Committee sent a letter to the Dudley office of the Ministry of Labour offering the services of members of the Committee in an advisory capacity in respect of the resettlement of ex-servicemen.

During 1946, two further parcels of chocolates and sweets were received from the Rotary Club of Webster-Dudley in Massachusetts and correspondence was exchanged. Both of these parcels benefitted Rotary Boys' House, the one producing £4/7/0d in a raffle. The parcel and money were sent to the house at Christmas.

In November a party of 130 visited the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-on-Avon, to see "As You Like It". A buffet was provided at the Swan's Nest after the performance. These visits to the Theatre at Stratford were very popular and went on for many years.

On 13 December the Ladies' Evening took place and, for the first time this was held at the Queen Mary Ballroom in Dudley Zoo. This was to become a venue for Ladies' Evenings for many years.

1947

Membership at 30 June, 1947 was 85.

On February 14, another event took place that was to occur annually for the next 35 years: The first International Students' Day when students from overseas visited the Club and were entertained to lunch.

At the Inner Wheel Meeting of May 15 it was presented with a bell by the President, as a gift from Dudley Rotary Club.

In June, the Club received the unexpected pleasure of being awarded two citations for Distinctive Achievement and Outstanding Accomplishments in the fields of Vocational and International Service. Unfortunately, the reasons for these citations were not recorded.

Club Service Committee proposed that a paragraph be included in the weekly circular, requesting that members submit names of suitable speakers and subjects. This was agreed by Club Council.

Club Council was to bring to the notice of the District Executive the growing use of Christian names at Public Rotary Functions without the use of proper Rotary titles. It was felt that this tendency was likely to lower the dignity of such Rotary functions.

During the year 10 Fellowship visits were made to local Clubs and on three occasions further presidential exchanges of chair were made.

A complaint regarding the "poor fare" being served at the weekly luncheons was discussed by Club Council and representations were made to the hotel management. The amount of £73 12. 0d was raised for The Paul Harris Memorial Fund. This fund was for post-graduate students to encourage the development of good international relations.

Toys for distribution at local hospitals were received from the Rotary Club of Endicott, New York, USA. Photographs of the distribution were taken and included in a brochure which was sent to Endicott.

1948

Membership at 1 May, 1948 was 88.

Lengthy discussions took place regarding the lack of time speakers were given at the lunchtime meetings. They invariably had to shorten their talks, which was not considered fair to them. This matter was left in the hands of Club Service Committee. (And still has not been resolved by 1997.)

In March, representations were made to the Station Hotel regarding the quality of the meals being supplied. The Club were informed that the Hotel would make every effort to vary the meals but there seemed no immediate prospect of it being able to improve the quality.

An approach was made to Dudley Inner Wheel Club with a view to setting up a joint committee which could work to the mutual advantage of both Clubs.

In mid-1948, under the auspices of the Club discussions took place regarding reforming the defunct Round Table in Dudley. On 22 June the inaugural dinner took place at the Saracens Head.

Three Dudley members held District Office during this period.

The event of the year was the election of Past President H.H. (Herbert) Cartwright as Chairman of No. 6 District, a great honour for him and also Dudley Rotary Club. He was to be the first of three Rotarians from the Dudley Club to hold this highest honour in District, the others being Past President W.E. (Bill) Homer (1948-1949) and Past President R.A.(Ron) Brooks (1956-1957)

Dudley Rotary Club's Ladies' Evening was booked for the 10 December at the Queen Mary Ballroom and the Dudley Inner Wheel's Gentlemen's Evening was booked for the

11 November. These two events ran side by side until the early 1980's, when it was agreed that they should become a single joint function.

Three works visits took place during the year: to Cleobury Engineering Limited, to Muller and Co. (England) Limited and to Dunlop.

1949

Membership at 30 June, 1949 was approximately 90, no records available.

Vocational Service Committee was discussing "International Finance".

In late April, a tripartite evening meeting was held in Halesowen between the Rotary Clubs of West Bromwich, Dudley and Halesowen. A most enjoyable evening of fellowship took place between members of the three Clubs .

150 books were received by the International Service Committee in response to an appeal for books for the Universities, Schools and Libraries in devastated Europe.

The Club was considering the possibility of arranging a Fellowship visit to a Rotary Club overseas.

The question of the desirability of making a presentation to the retiring President of the Club was considered in the President's absence. It was decided that the matter be not proceeded with.

A total of 48 boys were sent to Weston Boys' House during the year and many letters of thanks had been received from the parents of the boys on their return home.

Community Service Committee arranged to take 103 children to Stourport. The event proved extremely successful and was repeated in future years.

In December, the Club contacted Dudley Council, offering its services with regard to the forthcoming Festival of Britain in 1951.

1950

Total membership at 1 May, 1950 was 89.

Community Service Committee members made several visits to both Prestwood Sanatorium and Burton House (Burton Road Hospital) which were greatly appreciated by the patients.

A joint meeting between the Vocational Service Committees of the Dudley and Kidderminster Clubs was a great success and further meetings were to be arranged.

A sub-committee was formed to which Mr Bert Bissell (Probation Officer) was co-opted to investigate what steps should be taken to help boys on probation.

The annual report from Vocational Service Committee consisted of a professionally printed document running to 12 pages. It covered Committee discussions of subjects including "Devaluation", "Nationalisation" and "Planning".

The Dudley Club was instrumental in arranging 12 months' study at Princeton University U.S.A. for a Rotary Foundation Fellow. George Tolley was selected from a short list of very highly qualified candidates. (Mr Tolley was an executive of a local firm, Metallisation Limited.)

A Fellowship visit was made to the Rotary Club of Ostende, when a party of 18 chartered an aeroplane. It was a very successful visit which was felt to be very worthwhile in the interests of International Fellowship. By coincidence, at the Rotary meeting attended by the Dudley party, the British Vice-Consul was inducted into the Belgian Club.

Two teams were entered for the Mander Cup, a golf competition organised by District. This was won in 1950 by the Wednesbury Club.

1951

Membership at 1 May 1951 was 94.

18 foreign students visited the Club on April 2. After lunch, they were taken on conducted tours of Metallisation Limited and Clydesdale Stampings Limited.

During the year the daughter of a Swedish Rotarian and the son of a French Rotarian were hosted by members of the Club in what was the first of a type of Group Study Exchange hosting.

At a meeting of Club Service Committee, the subject of poor attendance at committee meetings was discussed. In addition, the Committee felt that there were too many "negative" Rotarians in the Club.

By way of help for elderly persons at Christmas, each member of the Club donated ten shillings towards gifts for selected elderly people. It was also agreed that the contents of the charity box, passed round each week, should be given to these people.

For the Annual Ladies' Evening the President was allowed the sum of 10/- per head for expenses in entertaining the official guests.

Yet again, the attendance of some members was giving cause for concern: in addition, the number of members leaving the lunchtime meetings early and before the speaker had given his address seemed to be on the increase, with many persistent offenders. It was agreed that at the commencement of the next year, the attendance rule should be rigidly enforced. The President was to make a statement at one of the meetings. It was also felt that certain sections of the membership were forming themselves into "cliques", which was not good for fellowship within the Club.

75 Christmas parcels were delivered to elderly people in the town just before Christmas by 20 Rotarians.

1952

Membership at 1 May, 1952 was 91.

Active support was given to the RIBI "Help to Greece Scheme". With the cooperation of Dudley Inner Wheel a valuable collection of clothes and other goods was assembled and despatched.

At the January meeting of the International Services Committee the subject discussed was "The Bill of Human Rights, with particular attention to the attitude of the South African Government".

A long discussion took place at Club Service Committee on the 60% attendance rule: It was considered an outdated rule and it was felt that the problem of any lack of attendance by a member should be discussed on its individual merit. A proposal that the Club should refuse in future to send attendance returns to District was defeated. Club Council considered a suggestion that regalia should be provided for the use of the Vice-President when deputising for the President. Past President Arthur Cook offered to provide such regalia, an offer the Club accepted with grateful thanks. In addition, it was brought to the notice of the Council that the Chain of office worn by the President's Lady was unsuitable for all occasions, and it was suggested that the badge of office should be made detachable, so that it could be worn as a pendant. President Arthur Hillman offered to have the necessary alteration made. The offer was accepted with thanks by Council.

The Rotary Club of Webster-Dudley, USA sent further parcels of goods which were raffled in aid of the Charity Fund.

190 people attended the Annual Ladies' Evening held in January at the Queen Mary Ballroom.

70 Rotarians, wives and friends visited the Stratford Memorial Theatre in February to see the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company's production of "The Mikado".

Four members and their wives attended the RIBI conference in Brighton in April.

A party of boys from Fort William was entertained during a visit to Dudley. The organiser of this visit, Mr Bert Bissell, was very grateful for the help given by the Club. Visits continued by the members of the Community Service Committee to Prestwood Sanatorium, Burton House and to the new Old Peoples home at Albert House in Vicar Street.

Vocational Service Committee discussed the subject of "The Continued Employment of Older Workers" and subsequently produced a comprehensive report document.

A member offered to present the Club with a colour photograph of Paul Harris (the founder of the Rotary movement) which was accepted with thanks. It was agreed that it should be on the table where the banners were placed.

A party of blind people was entertained to tea during 1952. They were taken on a coach tour of Shropshire.

During the year the Club presented a television set to Albert House, Dudley's first Old Peoples home. Part of the cost was contributed by other organisations in the town.

In November 1952, no less than 51 members achieved 100% attendance.

Two boys per month had been sent to Weston Boys' House: it was hoped that the service was a beneficial contribution to the Community and certainly seemed to be appreciated by both parents and boys.

A further visit to The Shakespeare Memorial Theatre took place to see a performance of "As You Like It". After the performance, President Arthur Cook entertained those present to supper at the Theatre.

1953

Membership at 1 May, 1953 was 101, the first time that the membership of the Club exceeded 100.

Rotary Boys' House in Weston-Super-Mare was sold for £4000 and a new and larger property was purchased for £6800, with conversion costs of £9800.

18 members attended the RI Conference in Paris.

In the early part of the year, International Toasts were proposed to the Rotary Clubs of Vereeniging and Vancouver. A letter had been received from the Melbourne Club and four letters had been sent to Canadian Clubs. Contact had also been made with the Rotary Clubs of Duluth (USA), Dunkirk, Durango (Mexico), Motueka and Oamaru (New Zealand), Antwerp and Hamburg.

In the letter received from the Rotary Club of Melbourne, they stated that labour problems due to communism, were no worse there than in the U.K. and that communism was not as strong in Australia as was sometimes supposed!!!!

Consideration was given to having a monthly circular letter instead of the weekly one that was currently produced.

On International Students Day, after lunch, the students were taken on a tour of Round Oak Steelworks in Brierley Hill, where they were provided with tea.

At a meeting to suggest names for future speakers to the Club, the name of Mr Eddie Robinson who took the part of Simon in the radio programme "The Archers" was suggested.

The Club sent a donation to the Mayor's fund towards the distress caused by floods on the East Coast and the Lynton and Lynmouth disasters.

In cooperation with Mr Bert Bissell the Club again entertained 25 boys from Fort William, following Mr Bissell's contacts with Lochaber and the Rotary Club of Lochaber, (who assisted the Vicar Street Boys annually when they climbed Ben Nevis). After the 1953 climb the Club received a letter from the Rotary Club of Lochaber relating to Mr Bissell's Vicar Street Young Men's Class.

A proposal was received from RIBI that every Rotarian should be asked to subscribe 5/- per annum towards a new scheme being introduced into Rotary: it was to be called Rotary Foundation. This increase to subscriptions was agreed by Club Council.

A party of 50 German Industrialists and a party of 5 Student Leaders were entertained to lunch. It was believed that the Dudley Club was the first Rotary Club in the Country to entertain a party of this kind and it was thought that the visitors took away with them an excellent impression of the nature and scope of Rotary.

Brierley Hill Rotary Club organised a Motor Rally in which three Dudley Rotarians took part.

On December 17 the new Rotary Boys' House was opened in Weston-Super-Mare and requests were made for boys to be selected for 1954.

Gifts to old people continued at Christmas.

Complaints were again made that the Club meetings were too lengthy and consideration should be given to the speeding up of proceedings so that it would be possible to finish by 2.15pm. In addition, it was thought that, to enable the speaker to have a fair and reasonable time for his address, every effort should be made to enable the speaker to start by 1.45pm.

1954

Membership at 1 May, 1954 was 96.

A Theatre visit was made to the Birmingham Hippodrome to see "Chu Chin Chow on Ice".

A golf competition was arranged by Brierley Hill Rotary Club in which Dudley participated.

In May, following meetings by a special committee, the subscriptions were increased from £3.10.6d. to £4.0.0d. per annum.

A District Fishing competition was arranged by Bridgnorth Rotary Club. (This competition was still being held in 1997.)

In April, the Club was addressed by His Excellency the High Commissioner for Ceylon (Sir Claude Corea, K.B.E.).

In July, on a Sunday afternoon, 60 people visited Hagley Hall for afternoon tea.

30 members and friends visited the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, to see "The Merchant of Venice". After the performance dinner was taken at The Swan's Nest.

200 attended the Ladies' Evening at the Queen Mary Ballroom.

Club Council Meeting in June was attended by the Manageress of the Station Hotel, when complaints regarding the quality of the meals was discussed. Mrs Woodyatt countered this by stating that, although the Station Hotel was the Headquarters of the Club, very few social functions were held at the hotel. Club Council agreed to discuss this comment at a future meeting.

It was agreed that the President of the Rotary Club of Dudley should accept the Presidency of the Dudley Round Table and that the Chairman of Round Table should become an Honorary Member of Dudley Rotary Club.

Following a request from the Express and Star, Club Council agreed that the newspaper be given permission to take photographs of members, if requested to do so.

The arrangements by International Service Committee for the interchange of a number of boys and girls with French children proved to be very successful and all participants had benefitted greatly from their stay in a foreign country.

For the meeting on December 20, the meeting took the form of a Christmas Interlude and ladies were invited. A Rotarian and his wife from the Bilston Club provided musical items.

1955

Membership at 30 June, 1955 was approximately 94.

An appeal for books was made by the Education Department of the Local Authority for the purpose of building up libraries in new schools. The Club agreed to support this request.

International Service Committee reported that arrangements for the proposed International Youth Camp at Nash Court and that a boy would be sent from Dudley. (Nash Court was another event that would continue for many years.) Following the camp, a Civic Reception was held for the boys at Dudley Council House and was well attended by Dudley Rotarians.

Two essay competitions were organised, one for Dudley Girls' High School and the other for Dudley Grammar School. These were very well supported by both Schools. The competitors from Dudley Girls High School were to prepare an essay on the subject "World Food Supplies", whilst the subject for Dudley Grammar School was "Anglo-American Relations".

Following the success of the competition, it was agreed that, in future years it should be open to students attending the Technical College and the Sir Gilbert Claughton School. As usual the Community Service Committee made arrangements for the visits to local hospitals and also supported the visit of the boys from Fort William.

An Old People's outing took place in June, with Rotarians transporting the people in their own cars.

On the 11 October, a party of 60 visited Cadbury's Bourneville factory where a very interesting tour took place.

Members were representing Rotary on committees of a number of local organisations and the help given to these organisations was greatly appreciated.

1956

Membership at 1 May, 1956 was 95.

Past President W.E. (Bill) Homer was honoured by being appointed District Chairman of Number 6 District for the year 1956-1957.

182 people attended the Ladies' Evening held in February. A four piece band (without trumpet!!!) was engaged for the evening at a cost of 17 guineas.

The Club was pleased to give lunch to 50 boys from a number of countries who were attending the Boys' Camp at Nash Court.

On 25 June, 1956, the speaker at the Club meeting was a Father Tony Fleming a Roman Catholic missionary in India. (Little were the Club or Father Fleming to know at that time how close the involvement would be in future years.)

Although it was considered by some that the postal charges to the club of sending the circular out weekly were excessive, Club Council's opinion was that it should be one of the last economies to be made.

International Service Committee arranged for three children of Dudley Rotarians to visit Switzerland in exchange for a similar number of children from that Country.

A party of Danish Boys visited the Club and the entertainment provided by the Club

proved very successful.

A donation was made to the Hungarian Relief Fund following a request made by the Mayor of Dudley.

Community Service sent two boys a month to Weston Boys' Home as usual and the arrangement continued to be a success.

1957

Membership at 1 May, 1957 was 93.

A Sub-Committee was formed to review the finances of the Club and, after considerable deliberations, it recommended that the Club subscription be raised to £5.5.0d. This was subsequently agreed by Club Council.

A letter was received from RIBI regarding the numbering of Districts. District No. 6 would in future be No. 106.

Fellowship Visits to other Rotary Clubs were severely curtailed due to the petrol rationing imposed by the government following the Suez crisis.

In March, 39 Rotarians, wives and friends visited the Houses of Parliament and were conducted through the Houses by the Dudley M.P., George Wigg.

Long discussions took place on the cost of being President of the Club. In addition to purchasing drinks each week for all those sitting on top table, there were many other occasions when the President incurred considerable expense in the course of his year in office. Whilst it was the decision of each President how much entertaining he did, it was felt that this cost may prevent some worthy members letting their name go forward.

It was suggested that badges be obtained, showing the name and occupation of each member. These would be worn at the lunchtime meetings and would certainly help overcome the difficulty of new Rotarians getting to know their fellow members. This suggestion was passed by Club Council and the badges were subsequently purchased. The weekly charity donation of 1/0d per member per week was discussed and it was agreed that members should have the option of paying either weekly, annually or by form of Covenant.

The Committee work continued during the year as before with Weston Boys' Home, Nash Court, International Youth Exchanges, Hospital Visiting and many others.

1958

Membership at 1 May, 1958 was 89.

A party of Norwegian boys and girls was given hospitality by the Club and in due course the son of one of the Dudley Rotarians was given reciprocal hosting in Norway. Nash Court International Youth Camp was again supported by the Club and one member hosted a boy from Iceland prior to the camp starting.

The Community Service Committee assisted in organising a Fete at Prestwood Sanatorium. On a separate occasion, a party was given for the children of patients. International Service Committee was becoming involved with The Ockenden Venture.

The Vocational Services Committee was addressed at their February meeting by a lecturer from Birmingham University on the subject of "The European Customs Union". Discussions were held regarding the possibility of holding a Careers Exhibition at the Town Hall. However, the support from the Club was very lukewarm and it was decided not to proceed in 1958, but to try again later.

The Finance Sub-Committee reported in November to Club Council that the donations made weekly to the Charity Box were inadequate and, instead of suggesting increased weekly contributions, it was proposed that members be asked to make a subscription to the Charity Box of at least 46/-d per annum payable in the first week of January each year. Council agreed to accept the Committee's recommendation.

In addition, it was also recommended that deeds of covenant were a very tax-effective way of making donations to Weston Boys' House: for every pound given, the House would be able to reclaim approximately 14/-d.

1959

Membership at 1 May, 1959 was 89.

Community Service Committee commenced supporting the Voluntary Society for the Handicapped. This involved transporting handicapped people from their homes to social functions held at St. John's Parish Hall. This was done on a weekly basis.

Funds were also raised to provide television sets for the League of Friends of Dudley Hospitals.

In July, Past President Arthur Hillman was elected District Vice-Chairman of District 106 South: a further honour for the Club.

Following the half-hearted support in the previous year for a proposed exhibition, Vocational Service Committee arranged a Youth Exhibition at the Town Hall which proved to be a highly successful event. It involved virtually every committee member in assisting in one way or another. This was the main event during the year and, in due course resulted in a profit of £34.4.0d.

Community Service Committee ran a very successful stall at the Prestwood Sanatorium Annual Fete in June.

A scheme was started within the Club whereby members were invited to the workplace of other Rotarians and were given conducted tours of their offices and works. This gave members an insight into what other members did and how they did it.

Further support was given to the Ockenden Venture. Adopting a child at Ockenden was discussed, but the cost of £3 per week by a seven-year covenant was considered too much for the Club to be committed to. However, it was resolved that the Club should raise monies to support this very worthwhile organisation.

1960

Membership at 1 May, 1960 was 94.

Long discussions took place on the general lack of fellowship at meetings, together

with lack of support given by members to Rotary functions. The President was to speak to the Club on the matter.

A sweep on the Grand National raised the sum of £60.17.6d., which was donated to World Refugee Year.

Several "Rotate Meetings" took place during the year when members were asked not to sit in their usual places to ensure a better fellowship within the Club. This idea was not very popular and was subsequently discarded.

Civic Day was held in May, at which the Second Vice-President Arthur Webb explained the Aims and Objects of Rotary to the assembled company.

The Social Committee did not meet until late in the year, owing to misunderstandings about the officers!!!.

60 boys from foreign countries attended the camp at Nash Court. Each Club in District was invited to nominate a boy to attend. Dudley successfully had their candidate accepted.

After a successful Club Council Dinner held in December, the following final paragraph appeared in the minutes under Any Other Business: "Under the benign chairmanship of our President, George Lewis, officers and members dined with Rotary Fellowship. It is regretted that the finer details eluded the pen of this diligent secretarial scribe due to his eager participation".

One of the social events at this time was, the Vocational Service Committee annual dinner. This was for many years held at Neen Sollars (famous for their duck suppers). Quite outstanding evenings of fellowship.

1961

Membership at 1 May 1961 was 89.

At an informal meeting of Past Presidents, held early in the year, concern was expressed at current trends in the Club. Examples given were general lack of Fellowship and of Club support; the appalling turnout at International Students Day, the Christmas Meeting, Fellowship visits and District events. These were not in the true spirit of Rotary. Members were to be circulated by letter to make them aware of the situation.

In early 1961, RI made a concerted effort to take over RIBI and, to quote from Club Council minutes, "This dastardly attempt has now been foiled by RIBI".

Past President and Past District Chairman Herbert Cartwright was granted Honorary Membership of the Club.

The main event of the year was a Careers Exhibition and Convention at the Town Hall in May, organised by Vocational Service Committee in co-operation with the Youth Employment Service of Dudley Council. This event proved to be extremely successful.

The Community Service Committee continued assisting the Voluntary Association for the Handicapped by supplying officers and helpers.

The introduction of an International Study Bursary enabled a pupil from Dudley

Grammar School to attend a Music Festival in Koblenz.

A contribution was made towards a Play Hut at Weston Boys' House and once again boys were sent there on holiday.

Old people's outings, Christmas gifts, Ladies' Evening, Theatre visits were much the same as in previous years.

An International Study Bursary was given to a young man who went to Austria to study German.

Contact was maintained with overseas Clubs by International Toasts and correspondence with the Clubs involved.

1962

Membership at 1 May, 1962 was 89.

At last, the new classification badges arrived and most of the members wore them at meetings.

A visit was made to the Memorial Theatre in Stratford to see a performance of "Measure for Measure". This function was as usual, very well attended.

A Tombola was organised by the Community Service Committee at the Annual Fete and Flower Show at Barnsley Hall Hospital and despite heavy rain, over 17 guineas was raised for the Patients' Comfort Fund.

On the 10th December, the usual luncheon meeting was transferred to the evening, when club business was kept to a minimum. Dinner was followed by entertainment. 98 people were present, including 12 widows of Past Rotarians who were invited as guests of the Club. The ladies concerned were most appreciative of the invitation and the Council felt that the practice should continue on suitable future occasions.

The 40th anniversary of the Club was celebrated with a dinner, when the speaker was Honorary Member Past President Leonard Hillman (President 1932-33), the only surviving founder member.

1963

Membership at 1 May, 1963 was 87.

The regular rota of Community Service members transporting the handicapped to and from their homes to St. John's Church Hall at Kate's Hill was further extended.

A donation was sent by the Club to help finance the sending of a Dudley Boy Scout to the World Jamboree in America.

Transportation of two boys each month to and from Birmingham en-route to Weston Boys' House continued. Council agreed to pay fares in deserving cases.

The Community Service Committee sponsored an experimental "Granny Scheme" under which senior High School girls regularly visited lonely elderly ladies. Dudley Inner Wheel was also involved with this.

An International Study Bursary was granted to Robin C. Hradsky, who went to Meyerhofen in Austria to study German.

The Youth Employment Officer of Dudley Council added the names of willing Rotarians to their list of Specialist Advisers on particular careers.

A tombola was organised and run at the Mayor's Coffee Evening in aid of the Guest Hospital Chapel Fund. £28.10.6d. was raised.

1964

Membership at 1 May, 1964 was 91.

Efforts were made to encourage some of the newer members to give a "My Job" talk. These became very popular in later years and were usually very interesting. They were not a mere recital of a day's work, but how to transform "a way of getting a living into a way of life".

The Vocational Service Committee spent a considerable time in the year discussing the subject of "Advice to Youth". A pilot scheme was tried out whereby several boys attended the business establishments of local Rotarians. After the boys had been to the businesses, meetings took place with the Headmasters and Careers Masters of the Schools, after which the results were presented to a higher authority in the education system. .

The International Study bursary was given to a Dudley Student who wished to study Art in Paris.

At an open meeting of the Club, the subject discussed was the Middle East Problem from both Jewish and Arab points of view.

The International Committee raised the sum of £157.10.0d., which was sent to the Flying Doctor Service in Africa. This was to purchase a Village Radio Set.

A visit to a theatre in Birmingham to see "My Fair Lady" was followed by a buffet supper at the Albany Hotel.

1965

Membership at 1 May, 1965 was 93.

Community Service continued their transport service for handicapped people, but the transport was now to the New Centre for the Handicapped in Wellington Road: nearly 60 Rotarians were involved performing transport duties of one kind or another.

Transport was also provided for blind people returning from their holidays. They were picked up by Rotarians in Wolverhampton and returned to their homes.

A number of people were sent on holiday to West Winds in Aberdovey, a property in which Dudley Rotary Club and other Clubs had an interest. (This was to go on regularly until the property was sold in 1996.)

The International Committee collected nearly 4.5 cwts. of clothing for Algerian refugees as part of the "War on Want" campaign.

Without a shadow of doubt, the major event of the year was the presentation of a Comer Minibus for the benefit of the physically and mentally handicapped. The cost of the Minibus was £708. The vehicle was used regularly to transport all the local

"Handicapped" Associations.

In addition, the Club presented trophies to the County Borough of Dudley for swimming events.

1966

Membership at 1 May, 1966 was 91.

Weekly car outings were arranged by two Rotarians for a West Indian triple amputee and these were greatly appreciated.

Two experimental monthly collections of waste paper were tried at the Station Hotel. This proved extremely successful. Arrangements were then made for a container (supplied by a Rotarian) to be placed on the Odeon car park and weekly collections were made from there.

Club Assembly was held at the Lyttleton Arms, Hagley, where, in addition to discussions concerning the forthcoming programme for the year, a buffet supper was enjoyed by all those attending.

The International Committee, in addition to the established annual events decided to undertake the collection of used ladies' stockings. These were forwarded to a Leper Colony in Zambia for use as bandages. The Club was grateful to the Ladies of Inner Wheel for their useful contributions.

In connection with the 1966 Football World Cup the Club undertook to provide emergency accommodation, if required, when the two scheduled matches were played at Villa Park.

A successful Ladies' Evening was held at the Botanical Gardens in Edgbaston. The tombola raised a substantial donation for the Club Charity Fund.

The Community Service Committee was given £10 to add to the £20 a young man had earned himself to "kit" him for his emigration to Australia under the "Big Brother Scheme".

The Vocational Service Committee organised the first Public Speaking Competition in early December. This was open to any pupil attending any school in the enlarged County Borough of Dudley. The finals were held at Dudley Grammar School and the speakers were of a very high standard. The first prize was a visit to the House of Commons in London as well as two tickets for a show. Later on the best three speakers were invited to give their speeches to the Club at a luncheon meeting.

A party of 16 Children and 4 Adults from the Council's children's foster homes was sent by train to London to see the Christmas Decorations. Mrs Cadman, who was in charge of "Maitland House" visited the Club Luncheon and described the event to members. Blind people were transported to and from their Christmas Dinner at the Institute for the Blind at Sedgley and the physically handicapped were transported to their New Year's Eve party.

During the year, the International Service Committee collected over 1500 pairs of spectacles, which were sent to the Missionary Optical Service for regrading, overhaul

and despatch to Overseas Missionary Stations.

On 27th October, the Club held a Sporting Evening at the Queen Mary Ballroom. Dinner was followed by amateur boxing. The event was a great financial success and helped to replace the money spent on the minibus.

1967

Membership at 1 May, 1967 was 95.

The International Service Committee was granted £100 to be sent to the Rotary Club of Tasmania following the recent fire disaster. However, Club Council challenged the Committee to make good the amount to club funds.

The Ladies' Evening in February was held at the Botanical Gardens in Edgbaston.

The essay competition was not very well supported and it was thought that the project was no longer of interest.

A golf match was arranged between Dudley Rotary Club and the Rotary Club of Tokyo Ginza. Dudley played at Enville and The Tokyo team played on their local course. (Both courses had a similar length and standard scratch.) In the event, Dudley won and were presented with handsome plaques commemorating the event. (This ran for a few years and then just faded away).

A joint service was held with Inner Wheel at Top Church on 2nd July, with the Vicar of Dudley, Rotarian Raymond Efemey officiating.

A Cheese and Wine Party was held in June at the home of Past President Eric Bunn, the profit from which went to Rotary charities.

A wrestling evening took place at the Kingfisher Club, organised jointly by Dudley and Tipton Rotary Clubs. This was held to sponsor a Voluntary Service Overseas candidate. In December 1967, a request was made for a member to undertake the writing of the History of Dudley Rotary Club. Unfortunately, there were no volunteers to take on this most enjoyable task!!!!!!!.

1968

Membership at 1 May, 1968 was 92.

President Ernest Bunting stressed that, whilst the Club was doing well in the fields of both Service and Fellowship, it was the few who tended to do all the work. He felt, that there was much more that could be done in the town and he hoped that those members who did not become involved would have a change of heart. They had so much to offer to both the Club and the community.

A joint meeting was held with Round Table in the hope that it would create a closer liaison between the two Clubs. (This, again, was allowed to lapse after a few years.)

An evening meeting was held, when the President of RIBI visited and addressed the Club. The evening provided fellowship with many members from neighbouring Clubs. The Station Hotel was congratulated on the quality of the food over the year.

The Vocational Service Committee changed the venue for their meetings and I quote from their annual report: "Our venue this year has changed to the much more convivial atmosphere of the Angel Inn in Castle Street".

In his closing address in July, the Retiring President Ernest Bunting stressed the need for ALL Rotarians to do their bit for the future of Dudley Rotary Club. He was disappointed that so many members treated the Club as purely a Luncheon Club.

By far the major event was again, an exhibition at the Town Hall organised in conjunction with Dudley Council's Sport Advisory Council. This took the form of an exhibition of leisure time activities. The event was an unqualified success, with approximately 40 Clubs and societies taking part. An enormous amount of time was spent by members assisting with this.

In addition to the exhibition, one other major event took place in 1968 - the formation of another daughter club. After many interim meetings, the Rotary Club of Sedgley and Wombourne was formed.

1969

Membership at 1 May, 1969 was approximately 93.

A request from Dudley Council's Children's Officer resulted in a donation being made to help pay the air fare of a young man wishing to spend a holiday visiting his sister in Canada.

A Wine Tasting evening was organised at Peter Dominic's in Stourbridge, which was extremely well supported by members and their wives.

Even at this stage of the Club's development very little major fund raising was being carried out. The main input of the Club was that of "Service". It was stated on many occasions that "Rotary is not a fund-raising organisation". (But this was to change).

On 10th August, a number of members, together with their wives, visited the International Camp at Nash Court. All those present were most impressed with the international fellowship taking place there.

The new Club of Sedgley and Wombourne invited the Dudley Club to a Skittles Evening at the Waggon and Horses in Wolverhampton on the 21 October. Several members attended this evening of Rotary Fellowship.

At last, with the permission of the management, a cupboard was installed in the Gentlemen's Cloakroom at the Station Hotel: this enabled the bell and other Rotary equipment to be stored safely.

1970

Membership at 1 May, 1970 was approximately 94.

A joint meeting was held on 5 January with Rowley Regis and Tipton Rotary Clubs, for the purpose of an address by the District Governor.

A Dudley member made a 4-foot diameter wooden Rotary wheel for use on special occasions.

Despite many requests over the years for some form of amplification, the Station Hotel refused to take any action. The answer lay with one member of the Club (Rotarian Arthur Parkes) who, for many years, week in week out, brought his own amplification equipment to offset the appalling acoustics in the ballroom.

Dudley Rotary Club became co-owners of West Winds in Aberdovey. A further property was also purchased during the year.

Early in the year, a communication from the Mayor of Dudley invited members to a meeting at the Town Hall regarding the possibility of a Black Country Museum within the Dudley County Borough area.

A Rotaract Club for 13 to 18 year olds was formed in January, 1970 and their meetings were for many years, held under the guidance of Dudley Rotarians. They excelled at fund-raising and service and their enthusiasm was boundless.

Through Tipton Rotary Club, Dudley Club was asked to support Tipton Sports Union Trust by providing trees for their Stadium. The Club was pleased to help and six trees were purchased and donated.

The Club held a Dance, the profits of which were used to help finance The Dudley Girls' High Schools Choir and Dance Team on a trip to America.

A swimming cup was presented to St. Luke's Youth Club during the year. This was to supplement the one already presented by Dudley Inner Wheel Club.

A highly successful Boxing Evening was held at Brierley Hill Civic Hall, which resulted in a profit of £660 being presented to the Dudley Mentally Handicapped Committee.

1971

Membership at 1 May, 1971 was 95.

By this time, a Fund-Raising Committee was now in place and the first project was that of providing a vehicle at a cost of £1600 to be used as a Mobile Cardiac Unit at Burton Road Hospital. After many fund-raising events, the vehicle was presented on 6th December. (This vehicle was the first of three to be presented by the Club to the hospital.) Members were asked to organise their own private fund-raising functions to raise money for the vehicle, an idea that many members cooperated with.

The Club was fortunate in being able to use an empty shop in New Street for fund-raising and the format was similar to the Charity Shops seen in later years.

The Club agreed to provide a place for a young person at the General Wingate School in Addis Ababa. The place was for four years and the cost to the Club was £85 per year. Concern was expressed about a function when only about half of the members who said they would attend actually turned up. It was considered that this was extremely bad for both the Club and the public image of Rotary.

The Ladies' Evening took place at The Summerhill House Hotel, Kingswinford.

In July, another momentous decision by the Club was taken, resulting in the formation of The Dudley Rotary Club Housing Association Limited. It was hoped that the Club would be able to build some flats in the Borough, in conjunction with the Housing

Corporation, to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of the Club. The scheme was to be financed from the rents received from the tenants, supported by a Government grant and by the Rotary Club. (This first phase of Rotary House was, in fact, completed in 1976.) It was necessary to elect a management committee, under the chairmanship of Past President Stanley Jones. Every member of the Club became a shareholder of the Association by paying the sum of £1.

It was noted that some members objected to the use of Christian names in the monthly circular. There was, however, very little support for any changes.

Dudley Guest Hospital reached its Centenary and the Club donated £300 to purchase equipment.

The Vocational Service Committee had a serious discussion at one of their meetings during the year when the subject was "The Mini Skirt". It was a very "Stimulating" meeting and all members agreed that it had been very successful.

In November, by courtesy of Past President Basil Poole, a fund-raising Musical Evening was held at his home in Enville. This took the form of a pianoforte recital by Miss Jana Frenklova. A profit of £52.41 was made on the evening.

A letter was received from Father Tony Fleming, a Catholic Missionary in India. (He was also the brother of a former Dudley Rotarian.) He was asking for funds to dig five wells in his area. The subject was discussed at length by Club Council but a resolution "That this project be supported" was not carried. (Father Fleming was to have a much greater influence on the Club in later years.)

During the year, Past President Arthur Hillman was made an Honorary Member of the Club. This was given in recognition of the many years' service both to the Club and to District.

A new system was adopted of introducing guests at the Monday lunch, members introducing their own guests to the meeting when they were non-Rotarians. Rotarian visitors continued to be introduced by the President.

1972

Membership at 1 May, 1972 was 92.

The Housing Association's proposal for land in the Kate's Hill area was not approved, but Councillor Charles Clarke was to propose to Dudley Council that the Club be granted some land at Russell's Hall for the purpose of building flats.

Following further information Club Council agreed that £25 was to be sent to Father Tony Fleming for the wells in India scheme.

An attempt was made to arrange a fellowship visit to the Rotary Club of Martigues, in Southern France: it got as far as arranging dates but failed due to difficulties with travel arrangements. The Chairman of the International Services Committee wrote to Martigues regretting the inconvenience to which they had been put.

In the year 1971/1972, major changes took place in District organisation. The old District 6 became District 106 and a new District was formed as District 121. District 121 covered

the area of Staffordshire, Shropshire and part of the West Midlands. And so from 1st July, 1972 Dudley Rotary Club became part of District 121. In addition, District changed the designation of its District Chairman to that of District Governor.

The first Assembly of District took place at Keele University on 8th July, 1972

A request from the District Governor to assist in providing holidays for children from Northern Ireland resulted in the Club deciding to pay the cost of £40 for 2 Children to visit Dudley.

A Boxing Evening was held in April which was financially very successful.

Another service the Club provided was the collection of books for the Ranfurley Library. (This was continued for many years.) One member was heartbroken, having lost his copy of the Khama Sutra which he had inadvertently covered with the jacket from "Favourite Woodland Flowers" by Gladys Chuckerbutty.

In September, the Club was fortunate in having a Fashion Show put on by Marks and Spencer at the Town Hall. M & S did the organising and all the Club had to do was to sell tickets, which virtually sold themselves. A clear profit on the evening was £400. Since 1969, the Club had been trying to purchase 4 acres of woodland at Kinver for use as a camping site for young people. However, there were problems with rights of way which, in the end, forced the Club to withdraw the offer made.

A letter was received from the Rotary Club of Calais offering help and assistance in entering the Common Market (E.E.C.). Club Council decided to let this lie on the table. A successful showing of a Rotary sponsored film entitled "One Way Trip" was seen at Dudley Grammar School by an audience of 250. The film was on the perils of drug addiction.

For the Rotary Year ending 30th June, 1972, 29 members achieved an attendance in excess of 90%, whilst 12 were 100%.

An item from District Assembly was that Dudley should consider the formation of a Probus Club in the town: this was to receive consideration by the Vocational Service Committee.

On 13th December, 1972, the Club held its Golden Jubilee Banquet at the Station Hotel. This was attended by many dignitaries, including the President-Elect of RIBI, John Edwards, who presented a plaque from RI to President Jack Wall. Approximately 200 guests attended a memorable event. (What has happened to this plaque?)

1973

Membership at 1 May, 1973 was 98.

Concern again. The President complained about the lack of fellowship given to new members who joined the Club. Many new members found that after having been members for six months or so only a few of the older members spoke to them.

In 1973, a Probus Club was formed in Dudley with a number of retired Rotarians as the nucleus of the Club. They met initially at The Dudley Zoo Club, moving to Dudley Golf Club after a year or two (where they have been ever since).

In June, a joint Dinner Dance was held with Brierley Hill Rotary Club at the Queen Mary Ballroom.

The Club arranged for a new floor to be laid at the Headquarters of the St. Johns Ambulance Brigade.

Two Norwegian girls were hosted by the Club for two weeks in June and the Club were responsible for their entertainment during the period.

Nash Court proceeded as usual, as did Weston Boys House, West Winds, etc., etc.

In March, Watney, Mann & Company presented a cup that was to be a trophy for a golf competition to be played for by Dudley and her daughter Clubs.

Dudley Council ran a Youth Service Summer Camp at Symonds Yat. Equal numbers of boys on probation and boys from Secondary Schools attended. The Club was pleased to make a donation towards the running of this camp.

The Housing Association reported that they would proceed with the purchase of the land on Russell's Hall Estate, together with the preparation of drawings and documents up to tender stage for the construction of 26 flats. Without the enthusiasm and drive of Past President Stanley Jones, there was every chance that the project would not have progressed very far.

The possibility of forming a Rotary Club in Netherton was discussed by Club Service Committee. It was agreed that no further action be taken in the immediate future.

A challenge was made to the Rotary Club of Bilston in respect of the "Potty Trophy".

The challenge was to play them at Quoits. (Whatever happened to it?).

1974

Membership at 1 March, 1974 was 98.

On July 1st, the Club was honoured when Past President R.A.(Ron) Brooks was elected District Governor of District 121.

Despite several letters to the Rotary Club of Tokyo Ginza regarding the annual Golf Match there had been no response. It was thought wise that we drop the fixture.

12 members of the Vocational Service Committee discussed at length the subject of "Pornography" at their March meeting: a poll taken of the members at the conclusion of the meeting resulted in 12 don't knows !!!.

After the Ladies' Evening it was commented that there was too much "Rock and Roll" and not enough "Ballroom Dancing" and "Why was the band so noisy"!!

An "Olde Tyme Music Hall" was held at the Queen Mary Ballroom, with many people joining in the theme for the evening by turning up in Edwardian dress. Professional entertainment was provided and a profit in excess of £200 was made.

Dudley Probus Club invited the President to become an honorary member of their Club. This honour was accepted by the President.

The first Group Study Exchange to be organised by District 121 was for a team to visit District 225 (Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Natal, Rhodesia, Swaziland and

Transvaal). The team consisted of five young business and professional men who were selected from 21 applicants. The nominee of Dudley Rotary Club was successful and was also employed by a Dudley member. A return visit of the team from Southern Africa would take place in 1975.

The Annual Students' Day was held in March with twenty-seven students from seventeen countries. After a visit to the Council House and the Central Library, lunch was taken at the Station Hotel, where each visitor was allocated a Rotarian as host for the afternoon visit to the Stuarts Crystal Glassworks.

"My Job" talks were again a popular feature of the lunchtime meetings.

One of the events that stands out in the history of Dudley Rotary Club took place during the year. Those who were members will remember it with a mixture of horror and pleasure. On June 1, ROTAWAKE took place at Bobbington airfield. Activities included an ox-roast, hot-air balloon (including trips), parachuting demonstration, stalls, etc. The Club planned for 5000-6000 people, but the Police considered that it could be as many as 30,000. The smoke, caused by the Ox-Roast, combined with the rain and the wind managed to depress almost everyone. Despite the problems, the organiser, Past President Fred Baker, remained unperturbed. The ladies of Dudley Inner Wheel coped magnificently in a little caravan, churning out sandwiches for customers who turned up despite everything. The high wind caused the balloon to drag its anchors and set off on its own, complete with basket, totally unmanned towards the car park. The sight of several Rotarians hanging on to the ropes, striving to hold the contraption back was a sight for sore eyes. Fortunately, only a few cars were damaged. In the event, however, the Club having expected a colossal loss, ended up with a profit of between £60 & £80.

Discussions had taken place with the medical staff at Burton Road Hospital and, following proposals to Club Council it was agreed to replace the Mobile Cardiac Unit with a new vehicle.

1975

Membership at 1 May, 1975 was approximately 99.

Another Leisure Exhibition was held over four days in April the purpose of which was, as before, to bring to the notice of the people of Dudley the large variety of leisure activities which were available locally. There were forty stands and, again, the exhibition was very successful.

In February, the Club once again held a Fashion Show at the Town Hall, put on by Marks and Spencer, which was a total sell out.

Whilst on holiday in Brittany, Past President Ray Glazzard (Then merely a Rotarian) visited the Rotary Club of Concarneau, but, despite their friendliness, they showed no enthusiasm for a possible twinning as their Club was already twinned with another English Club. However, there were other Rotarian visitors from Clubs in Brittany who showed some interest in further contact. Dudley International Service Committee

agreed to investigate further.

The end of year function in June for President David Cariss was a dinner held at the Lenchford Hotel near Worcester.

The new President for the year 1975-1976 (Fred Jones) asked the Club to organise inter-committee social functions together with their ladies, bearing in mind his theme for the year of "Fellowship and Fun". At one meeting at which suggestions were put forward, one member suggested that a wife swapping party seemed to fill the bill ideally, however this was flattened by another member who stated that he had recently attended one of those parties and came away totally disillusioned. Apparently, all he had been offered for his wife was a lawnmower, and a push one at that.

Following complaints by members, it was agreed that, in future, the Christian names of members wives should appear in the annual blue book containing the names and addresses of members.

The Ladies' evening at the Summerhill House Hotel was graced by the presence of the President of RIBI and his lady.

Nash Court was still very successful. The purpose of the camp was to enable 50 youths (25 English 25 Foreign) to attend a camp of fellowship together. The hope was that lessons were learnt regarding tolerance and friendly co-existence during a fortnight of sporting competitions and exchanges of ideas and customs.

The "Hub-Cap Trophy". a trophy to be played for between the different committees of the Club was organised and played for. The first holders were International Service Committee who out-beetled Community Service Committee by a short head. (What has happened to that trophy?)

In November, the Community Service and International Service Committees had a joint meeting when discussions took place regarding a joint long-term project in India. The committees were addressed by Father Tony Fleming who informed those present of the many needs in India.

1976

Membership at 1 May, 1976 was 101.

Another year (the second) when the membership was over 100.

In February, the Club appeared to have made a very positive contact with a French Club. A new Club had been formed in the city of Brest: the Rotary Club, Côte des Légendes. Following an invitation from us, a party from Brest visited Dudley at the end of February. (This was the start of a lasting relationship between the two Clubs.)

The Housing Association reported that the contract to build 26 Flats at Russells Hall had been placed with J. Hickman & Son (Building) Limited, at a cost approaching £200,000.

Early in 1976, District 121 organised a District Quiz which was to be played on an Inter-Club knock-out basis. Most Clubs in the south of the District dreaded being drawn away against the Rotary Club of Leek.

Another change of venue for the Ladies' Evening in February 1976 was the Westley

Court Hotel near Cookley.

The replacement for the Mobile Cardiac Unit, which was given to Burton Road Hospital by the Club in 1971 was presented to the hospital in May, in the shape of a Vauxhall Victor Estate Car. President Fred Jones together with several members and their wives handed over the keys of the vehicle to Dr Michael Kubik at a simple ceremony held at Burton Road.

In June, the first Dudley visit to Brest took place, a party of 15 travelling to France at a ferry cost of £12 per person. Language problems were brushed aside, probably due to the vast quantities of wine being available. It was rumoured that one member of the Dudley Club was forced to declare himself to H.M. Customs on arrival at Plymouth. A concert by the Treorchy Male Voice Choir in the Town Hall was an unqualified success with the tickets, as with the Marks and Spencer fashion show, virtually selling themselves. The event showed a profit of £600.

Members were asked to locate 14 suitable people to spend a week's holiday at West Winds in Aberdovey. The qualifications laid down by the West Winds Management Committee were: -

"The concept of West Winds is to provide for those who, for example through reduced circumstances, cannot afford a holiday. West Winds is not suitable for disabled or physically handicapped persons nor anyone who may be in need of nursing attention". The Community Service Committee arranged to finance the transport of children from the Church of England Children's Home, Holy Cross Lodge at Clent to their holiday destination at Southbourne.

The International Service Committee recommended to Club Council that the sum of £150 be donated for the purpose of setting up an Eye Camp in India. The appeal was initiated by the Rotary Club of Bombay and several Clubs in RIBI contributed.

The Club were challenged to a Skittles Match by Dudley Inner Wheel Club. This event took place at the Fountain Inn at Clent.

In October, once again, serious discussions were held regarding the formation of a second Rotary Club in Dudley. The points in favour and against were put very eloquently but again the decision was against the proposal.

1977

Membership at 1 May 1977 was 84.

A concert was arranged at the Handicapped Centre in Wellington Road by the Community Service Committee. This event was well supported by Rotarians and their wives.

There was great concern in the Club following the sharp decrease in membership during the previous year and it was hoped that the proposed steps to be taken would reduce any further slide.

12 Rotarians and their wives from Côte des Légendes visited Dudley in early June. A

very enjoyable, if hectic weekend for all those involved.

The High Spot of the year was the opening of the Rotary House Flats on 23 June by the Mayor of Dudley. The agreed basic rents at that time were a single person flat £6.25 per week and £8.25 for a two-person flat

As a final function for President Austen Rumney, a Riverboat Shuffle was held on the River Severn from Worcester to Holt Heath at the end of June, which was well supported by members, it was very different from any social event held previously but, nonetheless it was hoped by members that it would be repeated.

Following a cyclone in India the Club sent £50 to the Rotary Club of Pownar.

At the District Conference held in Bournemouth, President Ernest Evans received the District Significant Achievement Award for 1977. This was in recognition of the work done by the Club with the completion of Rotary House flats.

1978

Total membership at 1 May, 1978 was 84.

Ladies' Day was held in May, when members were joined for lunch by their wives. The speaker was Mrs Dorothy Little J.P., the former Wimbledon Tennis Champion.

The Dudley Club received 8 schoolchildren between the ages of 12 and 16 from the Rotary Club Côte des Légendes for a stay of 12 days.

The Club paid its second visit to the Rotary Club Côte des Légendes in Brest. This was again well supported by members and the hospitality of the French Club was outstanding. Dudley Club presented the French Club with a cheque towards their main project for the year, providing an inflatable lifeboat for the Brest area. At the formal dinner, on behalf of the Club, First Vice President Ray Glazzard, presented to the French Club a Vice-President's jewel.

A joint meeting was held with Round Table at the Station Hotel, where an Italian meal was provided.

Following the successful visit of our District G.S.E. team to Australia, the return visit was made by their team to District 121. A full day was spent by the team in Dudley, culminating with presentations by the team at an evening meeting.

The Club made a donation of £100 towards the refurbishing of West Winds at Aberdovey.

The end of year function for President Ernest Evans was held at Stone Manor in June. The high spot of the evening being a take-off of one of the leading all girl groups of the time, "The Supremes". Blacked up and in beautiful evening gowns were three Rotarians, all destined to become future Presidents of the Club.

Community Service continued helping both financially and by service very much as in previous years.

Following the opening of the Rotary House flats, the Housing Association passed a

resolution approving the building of 27 more flats on land immediately adjacent, if it could be purchased.

President Ray Glazzard took office on 1st July 1979, and for his project for the year wished to raise £2500 for a computerised monitoring system for Burton Road Hospital. He succeeded in his efforts.

On 18 October 1978, the Club was heavily involved with a Speedway Evening at the Stadium in Cradley Heath. This was another great financial success, well supported by members and the evening raised almost £2000.

A cricket match was held also in October between the Rotary Club and Rotaract. This was held on the playing fields of Dudley Grammar School. Arrangements were made to have the Mobile Cardiac unit in attendance, just in case. Rotary just scraped home as winners, but it was an excellent evening of fellowship with the younger generation. However, there were complaints that Rotary President Ray Glazzard ran out at least three of his team!!

In November a Burgundy evening was held at the home of a member, which was very well attended by members and their wives. Also on the social side a very successful "Hoe Down" was held at the British Legion Club in Lower Gornal.

In November, a concert was given at the Town Hall by The Treorchy Male Voice Choir. As on the previous occasion, it was a resounding success being a complete sell-out, resulting in a profit of £1500 which was donated towards the computerised monitoring system at Burton Road Hospital.

1979 - June 1980

Membership at 1 July 1979 was 84.

For additional fund-raising every member of the Club was given £1 and asked to make it up to £10, not by just giving the money, but by actually raising that amount. Members came up with many ingenious schemes and, in the main, it was very successful.

A party of 15 children aged between 12 and 17 from the Rotary Club Côte des Légendes visited Dudley in April and were hosted by Rotarians which further strengthened the relationship between the two Clubs. This was followed in May by the visit of the French adult party for the weekend, the high spot of which was a Barn Dance at Worfield Village Hall.

Fellowship visits to other local Rotary Clubs were still being arranged and, usually were well supported by members.

With a view to attracting new members, a Businessmen's lunch was held, when local businessmen were invited to attend a Club meeting. The speaker on that particular day was the President of RIBI.

The new President of the Club in July 1979 was Alan Foulkes, who was the first member to have a father who had been President of the Club. His theme for the year was that of

the President of RI, "the 3H programme", ("Health, Hunger and the Humanities"). This was taken "on board" by both Community Service and International Committees.

A Skittles Evening was held for the International Students at the Fountain Inn at Clent. On 25th February, 1980, the Club celebrated the 75th anniversary of the formation of Rotary with a dinner which was addressed by the Earl of Dudley. In addition, the Club decided to present the town with an information board which it was hoped would be erected in the Churchill Precinct.

Discussions were still proceeding between the Housing Association, the Local Authority and the Housing Corporation. Draft Drawings and supporting documentation had been prepared and submitted for approval for Phase 2 of Rotary House.

July 1980 - June 1981

Membership at 1 July, 1980 was 82.

52 "Boat People" from Vietnam, between the ages of 6 and 60, were taken on a trip to Dudley Zoo. The Club had been supplying clothes for them since they arrived at the reception centre in Wolverhampton.

The Local Authority allocated 3 Houses for the "Boat People" on Priory Estate and the Club spent a great deal of time and effort providing furniture, cleaning and generally making them habitable.

A party of 16 French children from Brest were entertained by the Club over the New Year. Due to difficulties with hosting, parents from the Dudley School assisted.

An applicant, Peter Brownjohn sponsored by our Club, was accepted as a member of the GSE team which visited Ohio.

In connection with an earthquake in Italy, the Club, cooperating with Round Table had filled 7 containers with clothing, which were subsequently transported to the stricken zone.

The Dudley Club was convincingly beaten by Tipton Rotary Club at Table Tennis for the "Beacon Shield".

Vocational Service Committee was discussing the subject of "The likely significance of the silicon chip".

Further concerns were expressed during the year regarding the decline in membership. Despite appeals to members, few application forms were processed. It was thought that the main problem was the attendance rule.

1980 saw building work commence on Phase 2 of Rotary House, the contract being awarded to Walker (Contractors) Limited of Cradley Heath with overall costs approaching £550,000. The design team remained as for Phase 1 being Club Members, namely Architects Alan Young and Partners and Quantity Surveyors Girling and Hewitt. The Community Service Committee arranged a concert at St Thomas' Church in aid of the Handicapped Centre. The concert was given by The Solihull Choir.

July - December 1981

Membership at 1 July, 1981 was 79.

Michael Crump who was elected President in July 1981 had quite a family connection with Dudley Rotary Club over the years. His grandfather was a founder member of the Club; a great-uncle was a member, father was a President of the Club, and an uncle and father-in-law were also members.

Throughout the year, at the request of the President, Evening Meetings were held together with the ladies whenever there was a fifth Monday in the month.

Each member of the Club was given a small cardboard box, with a request that he put his small change in it at bed-time. This raised in excess of £400 over the year.

12 schools supported the Public Speaking Competition held at the Technical College.

The Rotaract Club gained in strength and was very successful, but more support was required from Rotarians at their social functions.

Discussions took place within the Club relating to the 60% attendance rule. It was thought that this rule did not reflect the problems young executives have in making such a high percentage of lunchtime attendances.

The Club finished third in the Black Country table of the District Quiz.

A request from John Gilbert M.P. to support the training of a local ballerina in London was turned down by Club Council. However the Club was able to obtain money through the local Unwin Trust to support this request.

An evening of Christmas Music at the Town Hall raised £550. Fortunately poor support from members was more than offset by last minute sales to the public.

January 1982 - June 1983

Membership at 1 May, 1982 was 74.

A Flag Day in February raised almost £400.

The most important event of 1982 was the completion of Phase 2 of the Rotary House Flats. By March, they were fully tenanted and the official opening by the Mayor of Dudley took place on 9th June. A plaque was subsequently fixed at Rotary House to mark the hard work of the chairman of the Association, Past President Stanley Jones without whose enthusiasm the project would never have got off the ground. The plaque was a relief sculpture of Stanley done by a local Art teacher.

£3200 was raised to provide specialist equipment for Disabled Children within the Borough.

Due to an initial poor response in sponsorship, a proposed Pro-Am Golf Day was reluctantly postponed.

A darts competition was held at Dudley Grammar School for local players and was attended by some 100 players. The top ten players then went forward to a final at Dudley Town Hall where each of them was able to play against the reigning world champion, John Lowe. It proved a successful event in every way.

A Concert was held at the Town Hall, which resulted in a profit of £550.

A GSE Team from North Carolina visited Dudley during their time with District 121 and hosting for one of their six weeks was carried out by the Dudley Club. (The young man who stayed with Dudley families is still in contact with them.)

1982 was also the year of dissatisfaction with the catering at The Station Hotel. This resulted in somewhat acrimonious discussions with the management with the result that new President Fred Austin, announced to the Club that a search should be made for an alternative venue. Proposed venues included The Lodge, The Zoo Club and the Royal Oak at Dudley Port. In the meantime, the Station asked that the Club be responsible for collecting the money each week. This was agreed to and a Steward was appointed weekly for this purpose. After negotiations, a move was made to The Zoo Club (Fellows Club) on Castle Hill which was to prove ideal for the Club and complaints about catering disappeared overnight due, in no small measure to the helpfulness of their manager "Costa".

During the year, Dudley Rotary Club started negotiations initially with District, with a view to putting forward a resolution to RIBI Conference. This was for a relaxation in the attendance rule to allow attendance at Club Committees to be counted as an attendance. This proposition was put to RIBI conference at Blackpool in April, but was unfortunately defeated by about 2 to 1.

The Rotary visit to Brest in late May, in glorious weather was extremely successful and the Club was involved in a Mini-Olympics against Côte des Légendes. The fellowship of these visits fulfilled all the ideals of Rotary,

The visit to France was followed by a reciprocal visit to Dudley by young people from Brest for two weeks. They worked with young people from Dudley at the Black Country Museum, where they assisted with the building of a loading quay for the pit-head exhibit. Prior to that young people from Dudley helped to clear vegetation from banks of the river Mignonne near Brest.

The Vietnamese refugees housed in council houses on the Priory Estate were still being assisted by members of the Club.

The International Youth Camp took place, not at Nash Court as previously, but at a new venue of Apley Park near Bridgnorth. An Austrian boy was hosted by the Club for the week preceding the camp.

The Club were again fortunate in being able to have another Marks and Spencer Fashion Show at the Town Hall which, for a minimal amount of work, was again a great success.

A joint committee was formed between Rotary and Inner Wheel to discuss the possibility of no longer having separate Rotary and Inner Wheel Ladies' and Gentlemen's evenings and substituting a single joint function. This was subsequently agreed by both Clubs.

The Christmas Social in 1982 which coincided with the 60th anniversary of the Club's Charter Night was held in the Dining Hall at the Dudley School. The turkey and pork

were cooked on the premises and carved by members, after which a history of the Club was given by Rotarians Alan Black and Ken Powell.

For his project for the year, President Fred Austin wished the Club to replace the Vauxhall Victor, (supplied by the Club to Burton Road Hospital in 1971 as a Mobile Cardiac Unit), with a more up to date 4 wheel drive vehicle. An appeal was launched to provide a Range Rover for this purpose. This daunting task set by President Fred kept the fund-raising Committee on their toes.

The main fund-raising was achieved by raffling a Mini-Metro car and this was extremely successful due entirely to the hard work of members. From the start the support of Dudley townspeople was very encouraging.

For the Christmas Social, the Brass Ensemble from the Dudley Grammar School played to members and their wives, which proved to be most enjoyable. The function was at the new headquarters of Dudley Rotary Club, the Dudley Zoo Club.

The first combined Ladies and Gentlemen's evening was held at the Zoo Club in March and was a resounding success with 120 people present.

In April, the French children came to Dudley, with one of the high spots being a Skittles Evening at the Kenmare Restaurant in Kinver. The French adults also visited Dudley in 1983 for another successful weekend, during which they were presented with a lectern which was very well received.

July 1983 - June 1984

Membership at 1 July, 1983 was 72.

A shop was made available to the Club in the Churchill Precinct and this was used in the same way as today's charity shops. It was staffed by Rotary members, wives and Ladies of Inner Wheel.

The winners of the Public Speaking Competition addressed the Club at one of the lunchtime meetings.

An outing was arranged by the Community Service Committee for 30 elderly people to visit Trentham Gardens.

The International Service Committee's project for the year was the collection of unwanted hand tools of all sorts and transporting them to Southampton, where they would be refurbished by a charitable trust and subsequently distributed in kit form to the third world.

The Annual Christmas Social was held at the Handicapped Centre and took the form of a performance of the Pantomime "Aladdin", written and performed by members of the Club. This proved to be an unqualified success and was enjoyed by everyone present particularly the cast.

The Club again pursued the attendance rule amendment at District level, prior to, once again, putting the proposal to RIBI Conference. On this occasion Dudley received the blessing of District.

The provision by the Club of the replacement Mobile Cardiac Unit with a Range Rover

by the Club to Burton Road Hospital was the reason for Dudley being awarded the 1983 District Significant Achievement Award, which was presented to President Alan Black at District Conference in Bournemouth. The new vehicle was presented to Burton Road Hospital in November, the event being supported by many Rotarians and their wives. The combined Ladies and Gentlemen's evening proved to be a resounding success. The Community Service Committee ran a Barn Dance at Bromley Hills School, which was a complete sell-out. £215 was raised by this event; this was made up to £250 from Club funds and the amount was passed on to Compton Hall.

In May 1984, the Mobile Cardiac Unit Range Rover crashed but despite extensive damage, it was repaired very quickly and was soon back in use.

Two items of equipment were purchased by the Club for Burton Road Hospital. An ECG machine at a cost of £1500, and two Closomatics at a cost of £1720.

With the RI Convention taking place in Birmingham in early June, local Clubs were asked to offer "Home Hospitality" to visitors attending from overseas. The total number attending was in excess of 10000. 15 members of the Dudley Club supported this and all the Club's guests were Americans who were wined and dined in individual members' homes.

At the Annual General Meeting held in April, Past Presidents Arthur Hillman and Bill Homer were elected Honorary Members in recognition of their services to the Club and to the Rotary Movement.

July 1984 - June 1985

Membership at 1 July, 1984 was 59.

On 30th July, President Howard Harvey welcomed R.I.B.I. President Jim Watts together with the Mayor of Dudley, District Governor Don Rowland, and other District Officers to the Club meeting. Representatives of many other Clubs in District were also present to hear a stimulating address from the RIBI President.

Once again, the considerable drop in membership was of great concern to the Club. It was proposed that, for a short period the Club should try holding evening meetings, with a view to them becoming permanent if successful. It was subsequently decided that the Club would continue as a lunch-time Club.

Discussions were held during the year following suggestions that an additional Club be formed in the Dudley area which would meet in the evenings. This was not considered a good idea at that particular time.

Contact with the Vietnamese was scaled down as this was considered no longer necessary.

Support was requested by the Dudley Special Olympics Committee for the team that was being sent to the Mentally Handicapped Games to be held in the Isle of Man. The Club made a donation of £250 towards this.

A Flag Day was held, which was once again well supported by Rotarians and their wives, raised £400.

It was agreed that the Club should contribute £1250 towards the £3000 required to provide a new Day Room at Burton Road Hospital.

Once again, the Club pursued an amendment to the attendance rule with full backing from District. The proposal was put to R.I. in Evanston, Illinois and it was hoped that the enactment would be put to the Legislative Council in 1986. Later the Club were advised by the R.I. Council of Legislation that the amendment put forward by us was included for their consideration, but it was later withdrawn on the advice of that Council.

A member asked Club Council to consider supporting an appeal being made to enable a Hospice to be built in Stourbridge.

A visit was made to a live BBC Quiz show at Pebble Mill, Birmingham by a number of Rotarians and their wives. This proved very enjoyable but unfortunately the particular show was not shown in the Midlands area.

The visit of the French Adults from Côte des Légendes was enlivened by a Race Night held at the Conway Club in Wombourne.

During the year, presentations were made to two members: Past President Arthur Cooke and Rotarian Syd Rowley, who both achieved 50 years in Rotary.

1985 - 1986

Membership at 1 July, 1985 was 60.

There was very little fund-raising during the year, but three projects were the theme of President Brian Jones.

1. An attempt to persuade Dudley Corporation to do something about the litter in the town.
2. Tourism: a group of some dozen people were gathered together who were interested in becoming Tourist Guides. A company "Tourist Guides of the Black Country Limited", was formed which had regular meetings at the library. (Some of the original members of that group are still very active in tourism.)
3. Iron Curtain Countries. A suggestion by R.I. that Clubs should try to make contact with countries in Eastern Europe, was taken on board by the Club and the President visited the Hungarian Embassy to be wined and dined at a "Chinese" restaurant. Contact was also made with Poland which seemed more promising. (In the event only one other Club in R.I. (Australian) took the same initiative.) Contact with the East Germans and the Czechs resulted in little interest being shown. The Polish attache, however, visited the Club at one of the Monday lunchtime meetings and was very positive about a possible visit.

The Club had two very successful snooker evenings at a snooker hall on Castle Hill where a room with two tables was hired. The event enabled those present to see which members had a mis-spent youth.

Inter Committee Quiz nights were held, together with Inner Wheel and were very enjoyable, but the mists of time prevent me from being able to recall which committee won.

A boy was sent on an Outward Bound course.

A Photographic Quiz of Dudley was held at a joint evening meeting with Round Table, which proved just how unobservant Rotarians were (and probably still are).

The French children from Brest visited Dudley in April and were followed in May by an adult visit to Brest.

The Club sponsored a Mrs Sara Kelby for a two year period of Voluntary Service Overseas to enable her to work in Ghana.

1986 - 1987

Membership at 1 July, 1986 was 60.

The major event of the year, was the visit of five young executives from Poland on what was, to all intents and purposes, a modified G.S.E. exchange. The visit was masterminded by Past President Fred Austin. A return visit was to take place by a team from Dudley in 1988. Dudley was thus the first Club in R.I. to organise such an exchange with a country behind the Iron Curtain.

All G.S.E. exchanges are funded by Rotary Foundation but, despite many representations to Foundation, they were not prepared to give us any support. Dudley, therefore did it alone, albeit with some financial help from District.

The Polish Team visited Dudley in early November. They were hosted by Dudley members and spent their two weeks making visits to companies relating to their individual occupations. The visit was an unqualified success and it was hoped that the team picked to go to Poland in 1988 would include one member sponsored by the Rotary Club Côte des Légendes. (In due course, the Dudley Club was given a Significant Achievement Award for the project.)

A visit to a local Brewery by the Vocational Service Committee was extremely well supported by members and the attendance was greater than any other visit made in the history of the Club. The reason for this excellent attendance was never explained. Problems were encountered during the year, in that until a very late stage, the Club had no Vice-President; however, at the last moment Past President Alan Black offered to fill the breach, thus saving the Club from possible extinction. This was an offer that the Club was only too pleased to accept. For the first time since 1922, (but not the last) the Club was to have a President in for a second term.

A very enjoyable weekend was spent by ten couples in the City of York, an event that, due to its success was the forerunner of several others over the years.

A concert was arranged at the Town Hall, where the audience was entertained by Banks's Brewery Brass Band, together with a local Choir.

The Club made an early (and strategic) exit from the District Quiz and District snooker competitions but the table tennis team reached the semi-finals.

Again, as in previous years many other regular events took place: visits by Dudley children to Brest and the French adults back to Dudley, International Youth Week,

Outward Bound, West Winds etc. etc.

At a Celebrity Dinner, the international test match cricket umpire, Harold "Dickie" Bird, gave a very interesting and amusing talk which resulted in a profit of £520.

25 physically handicapped people, with 25 Dudley Rotarians paid a visit to Trentham Gardens which was greatly enjoyed.

£1100 was donated to Dudley Road Hospital for life-saving heart equipment.

Certain statistics became available in 1987 and were published in the Express and Star. Since the inception of the Club in 1922, archives revealed that the Club had been involved in 742 local projects and 246 international projects and had raised and distributed £164000 during that time. 782 local business and professional men had enjoyed fellowship in the Dudley Club whilst serving the community over the years and together with five daughter Clubs, brought a total of 2876 into the Rotary membership.

1987 - 1988

Membership at 1 July, 1987 was 59.

The theme for the year from the President of R.I. was PolioPlus. This scheme to eliminate Polio throughout the world would cost £120 million US dollars. President Alan Black and the Club backed this wholeheartedly and many fund-raising events were held.

The Treorchy Male Voice Choir visited Dudley again and was sponsored by the M.E.B: £4000 was raised on the night.

A Celebrity dinner held at Dudley Zoo Club realised £700.

The Dudley Rotary Club Am-Am golf tournament raised almost £2000. (This tournament still goes on and has always been very successful, thanks to the hard work by Past President Geoff Groves and a few Rotarians, together with the generosity of Dudley Golf Club.)

The total raised in the year was in excess of £7000.

Funds were made available to Burton Road Hospital for a "Mecabed" being an orthopaedic bed to assist nursing staff in turning patients over to avoid discomfort. The cost of this bed was £925.

Meals out and theatre trips were amongst the social functions of the year.

Following a request from Father Tony Fleming in India, a donation of £100 was made as a first-year contribution of a three-year commitment to support the education of a young lad.

Whilst the annual Public Speaking Competition took place as usual, there was some disappointment at the small number of young people taking part.

1988 - 1989

Membership at 1 July, 1988 was 56.

Following the shabby treatment (as we saw it) from Rotary Foundation over the Polish "GSE" visit, the Club withheld the £7.50 per member due during the year to Foundation.

Past President Fred Austin led a team to Poland in September 1988 on what proved to be an extremely successful as well as the first ever visit by a Rotary sponsored team behind the Iron Curtain. The team from Dudley included a young man sponsored by the Rotary Club Côte des Légendes.

A wine-tasting evening was held at the Wine Press in Lye which proved to be extremely well attended by Rotarians and their wives.

A fund-raising evening was held at the Town Hall, where the Band of the Royal Marines entertained a large audience.

At the beginning of November, a Black Country evening was held at Grotty Dicks in Stourbridge, which was a very different social evening, but none the less was enjoyed by everyone.

A celebrity fund-raising evening was held at the Lodge where the Club members and their guests were entertained by former England and Worcestershire cricketer, Basil D'Oliveira. £400 was raised on the evening.

A momentous decision was made during the year, when the Club moved its headquarters from the Zoo Club to the Lodge in Wellington Road.

Following the visit of the Dudley team to Poland, the Club gave £250 towards the cost of providing equipment for the rehabilitation of handicapped Polish children.

The Club voted on the important issue of "Women in Rotary" with the result that 24 voted against and 8 for.

The Club was exploring the possibility of a joint project with the Rotary Club Côte des Légendes. Past President Ray Glazzard had received a letter from Father Tony Fleming in India stating that his Rotary Club would also be interested in a joint project. It appeared that it was looking to support a local Leper Colony. And so, from small beginnings, came the start of what was to become the largest fund raising-project to date, entered into by Dudley Rotary Club.

Another Brass Band concert was held at Dudley Town Hall with the visit of Black Dyke Mills Band.

The principal donations during the year made on behalf of the Club by President Roy Pedley were: Institute for the Blind £500; Mary Stevens Hospice £500; Cardiac Rehabilitation unit £200; and an amount of £2500 for laser surgery.

In May, a Bavarian evening was held at the Training College. An Oompah band was engaged. Liquid refreshments were brewed by Rotarians and a buffet was supplied by the ladies of Inner Wheel.

Also in the Spring, a party of Club members and their wives visited Bruges for a long weekend. A fellowship visit was also made to the Rotary Club of Bruges: an excellent example of Rotary fellowship.

The Club was also actively involved in supporting the Ranfurley Library and the Local Authority gave permission to collect books from schools in the borough that were

surplus to their requirements. These were to be stored at the Dudley School until transport could be arranged to take them to London.

1989 - 1990

Membership at 1 July, 1989 was 58.

Early in the year, despite efforts by the Club, Dudley Rotaract Club finally disbanded. Consultations would be made with District regarding the distribution of their funds. At the International Committee Meeting in September Father Tony Fleming was present and talked about his hopes for a joint project between Dudley, Côte des Légendes and his own Club to build houses for lepers in Bargarh, India. His hopes were that, over a period of years, twenty blocks of two houses each would be built on a plot of land near the river. Dudley Club were to investigate possible funding from R.I. Foundation. The cost of the project was anticipated to be in the region of £25000 to £30000 spread over 5 to 7 years.

The Christmas Social at The Lodge had as entertainment a pantomime written and performed by members of the Club. On this occasion, a production of "Cinderella" was very well received by the audience and showed that many of the performers had hidden talents.

A "Victorian" evening was held in February 1990 at the Cottage Inn, Kingswinford. A successful combined Ladies' and Gentlemen's evening was held at the Stewponey Hotel at Stourton.

The International Committee reported that 18000 books had been collected by the Club for the Ranfurly Library. Many of them were collected from local schools. The books were, in due course, transported to the Ranfurly Library Centre in London for subsequent transportation overseas.

A G.S.E. team from Queensland, Australia visited the Club and were hosted for their first week by members of the Club.

The Club held a St. George's Day Dinner at the Lodge. This was presided over by President John Rowen and was very successful. It was also hoped that this would be celebrated in future years.

With the supply of a suitable vehicle from Past President Ray Glazzard, Past President Fred Austin took a full load of items to Poland. Included was a modified hoist suitable for use in the hydrotherapy unit at the children's hospital in Warsaw.

The visit from the French adults in May included a visit To Chatsworth House on a bitterly cold and wet day. However we still managed to picnic outside.

1990 - 1991

Membership at 1 July, 1990 was 59.

The incoming President was Ken Powell whose wife Barbara was also President of Dudley Inner Wheel.

The Bargarh Project - an application was made to R.I. Foundation for a grant towards

drainage works.

The Fellowship House and Social Committee organised a Crown Green Bowling evening at Bridgnorth.

The Club supported the Sports Day for the Handicapped at The Dell, Pensnett, where hot dogs and drinks were supplied.

It was agreed that the Foundation dues that had been withheld following the Polish exchange should now be paid to District.

A ten-pin bowling evening was held at the Superbowl at Brierley Hill. Wives and friends were invited on what was another evening of excellent fellowship.

A Gilbert and Sullivan evening and the Raconteur's Dinner raised the sums of £700 and £154 respectively.

A weekend away was spent by thirteen couples in Norwich which again proved very successful.

The Community Service Committee distributed 26 hampers at Christmas for elderly and needy people.

A successful Ladies' and Gentlemen's evening was held at the Mill Hotel, Alveley.

Dudley received a walkover in the first round of the District Table Tennis Competition. It appeared that it was too late to cancel the catering and venue, with the result that there were probably enough sandwiches left over to feed most of Dudley for a week.

In view of the popularity of brass band music locally, another brass band concert was organised. On this occasion, it was the Grimethorpe Colliery Band and, as with similar evenings held in the past, this was just as successful. A profit of £3200 was made on the night.

10 couples went to the District Conference, which was held at Llandudno. The District golf competition was held there in conjunction with a force 10 gale, which made it extremely interesting for the competitors.

Another wine tasting was held at the Wine Press at Lye in October. This event seemed to be better supported than most, although the reasons for this were not clear.

26 Christmas hampers were supplied and delivered to elderly people immediately prior to Christmas.

£150 was given towards a Christmas Party for the residents of Rotary House.

The entertainment at the Rotary Christmas Social was by a Brass Ensemble of former pupils from the Dudley School.

The Vocational Service Committee organised visits to Birmingham Mosque and to a Monastery.

Bargarh, India - problems of communication were hindering the overall impetus of the project. It had been decided that the formation of a trust was essential to ensure proper control of the project. Father Fleming notified the Club that the cost of the land would be in the region of £4000. It was agreed that, once the land had been purchased, together with a firmer indication of the overall cost of the project, individual

Clubs in District would be approached for support.

In May, another successful visit by the Club to Brest took place.

1991 - 1992

Membership at 1 July, 1991 was 53.

There were two main events during the year: the first was the project for the year by President Keith Jackson, being the provision of a minibus for the use of the deaf people in the Borough. The other major event was the celebration of the Club's 70th Anniversary.

Following recommendations by the Community Service Committee, the sum of £2000 was donated to Mary Stevens Hospice. The donation was for day-to-day running and also to pay off a high initial loan.

The supply of the minibus ran into problems very early on, due mainly to the fact that organisations who promised to sell raffle tickets very much overestimated the numbers they could sell. As the prize for the raffle was an Austin Metro car (which had to be paid for) things became very difficult, but thanks to the hard work of members and their helpers, a vehicle was, in due course purchased and handed over.

Following a request from Dudley Social Services £750 was donated to enable a lady to purchase an electric scooter.

When it was learned that Burton Road Hospital was soon to be closed, the Club approached the Hospital to ascertain what was happening to all the equipment donated to the Hospital over the years. The Hospital Administrator assured the Club that all equipment that was still in working order would be used elsewhere.

Thanks to another Am-Am Golf Tournament at Dudley Golf Club the Club made a profit of £1300.

The Vocational Service Committee arranged visits to a synagogue in Birmingham, the Quaker Meeting House in Stourbridge and the Geeta Bhawan (Hindu) Temple in Handsworth.

Bargarh, India - the Trust had now been formed and sufficient funds had been sent to India to purchase the land. Half this initial cost was donated by the Rotary Club of Côte des Légendes. It was agreed that serious fund-raising should commence with Clubs within District 121. In May 1992, work commenced on site.

A small party visited Dudley from Côte des Légendes in April and despite somewhat inclement weather an enjoyable time was had by everyone concerned. A joint meeting between the two Clubs took place at the Black Country Museum.

An evening at the Town Hall, where a concert was given by the Cradley Heath Choir raised £2200.

A Rotary trophy for elocution was presented to the Dudley Festival of music and drama. Two "My Job" interviews were carried out at separate evening meetings to which wives were invited. Bert Bissell was interviewed by Bernard Beales and Ron Westerby (Director

of Education) was interviewed by Ken Girling.

The final event of the year was the dinner at the Station Hotel, held on 22 June to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Club. The event was attended by the Mayor and also by many dignitaries from the Rotary movement. There were, however, many complaints about the quality of the meal (which was the main reason for the Club leaving the establishment some years before), resulting in the hotel offering two free weekend stays at one of the Crown and Raven group of hotels. In addition, it was considered that there were too many speeches and those who did speak went on too long!!

In late June, the Club had an Indian Meal at Dudley High School prepared by Rotarian Narayan Rao and his wife. This was thoroughly enjoyed by a good turn-out of members.

The Am-Am golf tournament was held at Dudley Golf Club at the end of June and once again, was a great financial success, due in the main to the hard work of Past President Geoff Groves, Rotarian John Hyde, together with the support of two or three other Rotarians and their wives.

1992 - 1993

Membership at 1 July, 1992 was 53.

The R.I. theme for the year was "Real Happiness in Helping Others".

On a visit to this country from India, Father Tony Fleming spoke to the International Service Committee in July and told the Committee what was happening at the Indian end of the project. The "Swasthya Seva Sangha Trust" had been formed.

During the closure in the month of August, Scatter Weeks took place when members visited daughter and local clubs in groups.

The first official function of President Barry Townsend was a visit from the Treorchy Male Voice Choir in October which was, as usual a very successful event. The concert, held at the Town Hall raised almost £3500.

A Hot September Jazz evening was held in a marquee at Halesowen and proved to be most enjoyable for all those who attended.

The Vocational Service Committee instigated a "Young Inventor of the Year" competition, details of which were sent to 22 local schools. A first prize of £100 was agreed by Club Council.

Efforts were made to speed up the Luncheon Meetings with an aim to finish by 2.15pm. 30 hampers were delivered to elderly people immediately before Christmas by the Community Service committee.

Bargarh, India - following illustrated presentations made to other Clubs, donations started to trickle in. Also, other organisations were being contacted and asked for support. The first four dwellings were completed in April. The work being put into this project by both Past President Ray Glazzard and Rotarian John Madeley was very considerable and was noted by the Club.

The Annual Ladies' and Gentlemen's evening was once again held at The Mill at Alveley, coinciding with St George's Day.

Two Emergency Boxes (boxes filled with clothes, tools etc.) were collected and delivered to be transported overseas.

The Vocational Service Committee arranged very interesting visits to the Humanists Society, the Unitarian Church and the Christian Scientists.

A GSE team from Malaysia visited District 1210 for six weeks with Past President Fred Austin being responsible with the organisation and programming for the week they spent in our Sub-District. Members of the team were also hosted by Dudley members. Community Service Committee arranged an outing for Senior Citizens to the Farmer's Arms at near Worcester which was greatly appreciated by the participants.

The trip by Rotarians and their wives to Brest took place in May and followed a previously much enjoyed format. It proved, once again, that no knowledge of the French language was really necessary. During the weekend, dinner was arranged aboard a huge Catamaran in the Straits of Brest. Unfortunately, it poured with rain and there was a force 8 gale. 90% of the people were seasick and few dinners were consumed and many of the dinners eaten did not remain so for very long. The next day, the sun shone and all was well (except for the President's wife, who swore she would never set foot ever again on a boat. How she returned to England still remains a mystery).

Jean and Michael Crump presented a Golf Cup to the Club in memory of Jean's father, Sydney Rowley, who was a member of Dudley Rotary Club for 57 years. The first winner of the cup which was played for at Enville Golf Club, was Roger Thornett.

1993 - 1994

Membership at 1 July, 1993 was 55.

Problems were again encountered with finding someone willing to take on the office of President. However, Past President Colin Knipe offered to take office once again, much to the relief of members.

West Winds holiday home at Aberdovey was still being used by people from Dudley, sponsored by the Community Service Committee.

Another Am-Am golf competition took place in August by courtesy of Dudley Golf Club and was again financially very successful.

District Conference at Bournemouth was well supported by members and their wives. The visit of a G.S.E. team from Sri-Lanka took place in September, during which, an evening video presentation was given at the Lodge.

Again, as in the previous year, Scatter Weeks took place during the month of August. The annual Handicapped Games took place at Pensnett, where hot dogs and drinks were supplied by members of the Community Service Committee.

The Vocational Service Committee arranged a visit to The Severn Trent, Trimpley Water Treatment Works, when 30 people attended for a conducted tour followed by a buffet.

Bargarh, India - we received a visit from Rotarian Gupta from the Rotary Club of Bargarh, who, together with a friend, was with us for a few days. (Apparently he had won the flight in some sort of lottery.) It was, however, pleasing from the Club's point of view to meet someone who was on the spot. By November, a further four dwellings had been built, making a total of eight. By March 1994, the total sent to India was £11137.

A talk to the Club by Josephine Price regarding her proposed visit to Bosnia with essential supplies was very well received and resulted in Club Council authorising a donation of £250 towards petrol costs.

A large party made an evening visit of fellowship to Sedgley and Wombourne Club, when it pledged £1000 towards the Bargarh project.

A Club Quiz was organised by Past President Geoff Groves at the Conservative Club. This very enjoyable evening of fellowship was well attended by members and their wives.

Support for West Winds at Aberdovey continued as in previous years. A donation was made by the Club towards new kitchen equipment at the house.

£2000 was donated to the Handicapped Centre in Wellington Road.

A Barbers Shop Choir and Brass concert was held at the Town Hall in May and, although not very well supported by the general public, was thoroughly enjoyed by all those present.

An evening of Go-Karting was held at Bilston for the younger members of the Club (i.e. those under 65), which was enjoyed by those who took part. One or two of the more elderly members still complained of aching limbs three months later.

The Vocational Service Committee arranged visits to The Buddhist Centre and the Mormons in Harborne.

£200 was donated to a hospital in Kathmandu following a harrowing talk to the Club by Dennis Pitchford.

A visit from Rotary Club Côte des Légendes took place in May. The lack of numbers gave rise to some disappointment.

1994 - 1995

Membership at 1 October, 1994 was 50.

Once again the problem arose of having someone to take the office of President. On this occasion, the Club was fortunate in that Past President Fred Austin was prepared to do a second term.

A mixed crown green bowling evening was held at Dudley Junior Conservative Club in August, which was very well attended.

The gradual fall in membership was causing concern and discussions took place on

several occasions as to whether or not the Club should meet in the evenings, but no firm decisions were made.

The Club also voted on whether or not women should be allowed to join Dudley Rotary Club. The members voted narrowly against the proposal.

The Vocational Service Committee organised a visit to Kays Warehouse at Droitwich, an event well supported by members.

The visit of a G.S.E. team from Michigan and Ontario in October, received hosting from Club members.

Bargarh, India - the Club was presented with the District Significant Achievement Award at the District Conference, for the Bargarh project. Many Clubs in District supported this venture and several of them responded with amounts in excess of £1000. An application for a matching grant was made to Foundation for the supply and installation of pumping equipment, sponsored by both the Rotary Clubs of Dudley and Bargarh. By the end of May 1995, the sum of £20137 had been sent to Bargarh and 28 dwellings had been completed and occupied. Past President Ray Glazzard visited Bargarh after Christmas 1994 and was received like royalty by the local populace. He was conducted round and stayed with his old friend, Father Tony Fleming.

A major fund-raising evening took place in February in the form of a Sportsman's Evening held at Molineux, Wolverhampton. The main speaker was former England and Liverpool football captain Emlyn Hughes and lighter entertainment was provided by local comedian Reg Keirle. The event, which entailed a great deal of hard work by a few members, resulted in a very worthwhile profit of £3568.

The Fellowship House and Social Committee arranged a weekend away in March to Tiverton which was thoroughly enjoyed by all those who went.

An "Organ Extravaganza" was arranged at the Town Hall. The concert was a great success musically, but, because the public stayed away, only a small profit was made.

Attendance at meetings was again discussed at length by Club Council. Although there had been an improvement over the year, it was still not very satisfactory.

The Vocational Service Committee organised an evening meeting devoted to the subject of "Faiths of our Neighbours". Representatives of four different faiths attended and gave short talks, followed by a question and answer session.

The Community Service Committee continued with many projects that were carried out as in previous years, West Winds, Handicapped Sports, Wellington Road Centre, Outward Bound and Christmas Hampers.

To celebrate the 20th anniversary of the formation of the Rotary Club Côte des Légendes, it was decided to present them with a "Bell" similar to the one used in Dudley, for use at their meetings. The "Bell" was presented at the formal dinner during the visit to Brest of the Dudley Club.

An Emergency Box filled on our behalf by Quarry Bank Townswomen's Guild was sent, together with 1499 others, to Northern Albania to help "poor villagers suffering extreme

hardship as a result of many years of communism".

To show the appreciation of the Club to Past President Ray Glazzard for many years' hard work both at Club and District level the Club made him a Paul Harris Fellow. His enthusiasm for the Bargarh project had ensured the resounding success of what could quite easily have become a disappointing venture.

Dudley Rotary Club had not had meetings during the month of August since 1922. It was decided that in future meetings should be held in August, since the number of members who took their holidays in August was considerably less than in the past.

1995 - 1996

Membership at 1 August, 1995 was 47.

The principal theme for the year from President Bernard Beales was to consider seriously the Club's future Development.

A cheque for £1500 for Bargarh was given to Father Tony Fleming during his visit To England.

A G.S.E. team from South Africa spent a day with the Dudley Club, where they enjoyed a lunch reception in the Mayor's parlour followed by a conducted tour of Dudley Castle. In October 1995, a party of 32 had an enjoyable evening out at Luciano's in Stourbridge.

Following a request from MASCOT (Making A Sick Child's dream Come True) the Club donated £100 to enable a sick child from Netherton to visit Disneyworld.

After a deliberately careful gathering of opinions, it was proposed and accepted that the Club should become a Twilight Club, meeting at 6.15pm for 6.30pm and concluding at 8.00pm, as from July 1997. The voting was: For a Twilight Meeting 36, Against 8. Unfortunately, with such a decision, there were inevitable casualties: members who were nearing the end of their active Rotary service who felt unable to make the change, younger members whose occupations made evening attendance difficult and others who lived at a distance which deterred them from returning to Dudley for an evening meeting.

A Development Team comprising 9 members met in January 1996 to consider the way forward. It was felt necessary to focus on an event, specially arranged for prospective members and their partners, as guests of the Club. The resultant Rotary Evening was attended by over 60, including 9 prospective members. The relaxed, low key presentation of Rotary in Dudley, hopefully, introduced newcomers to the benefit of fellowship. (Subsequently 4 became members.)

£100 was donated to Rotary House for their Christmas Party.

25 Christmas Hampers were delivered to elderly and needy people by the Community Service Committee.

The Beacon Centre for the Blind was presented with an Induction loop, which was presented, together with a plaque in memory of Past President Geoff Groves, who had

masterminded the Rotary Am-Am Golf.

A major fund-raising evening in the form of a Boxing Evening was held on the 14 March at the Park Hall Hotel, Sedgley. This event realised a profit of £4445.

The visit of the French Rotarians and their wives took place in May. A visit by coach was made to Charlecote Manor and a ten-pin bowling evening was held for their entertainment. A joint meeting was also held prior to their return to France.

Bargarh, India - the total cost of the construction of 40 dwellings was £28737, of which an amount of £14000 had been raised by the Dudley Club: the balance was donated by other Clubs and organisations. In addition, the total cost of ancillary works part-funded by Rotary Foundation was £2508.

The Club commissioned a painting in memory of the late Past President Geoff Groves: this painting was to be of part of the course at Dudley Golf Club and would be presented to that Club.

Due to his quite exceptional work for the Club since he joined in 1968, (Particularly in the field of fellowship), the Club were pleased to award a Paul Harris Fellowship to Past President Fred Jones.

District also awarded a Paul Harris Fellowship to Father Tony Fleming. This was an award that the members of the Club thought was well deserved.

After many years, the West Winds home closed at Aberdovey. Dudley had, from the start, been heavily involved, but the decision had sadly to be made to close it down.

Dudley's share of the resultant sale of the property was the sum of £6708.

Various annual sporting events also took place during the year, The Watney Cup and Sydney Rowley Trophy (Golf), Club Bowling and Ten Pin Bowling.

During the year Past President Eric Bunn was elected an Honorary Member in recognition of his services to the Club over many years.

1996 - 1997

Membership at 1 August, 1996 was 44.

An evening out was organised in early July, when a dinner was held at "Black Ladies" an Elizabethan Manor House near Brewood. A tour of the house together with its history was given by the owner, followed by dinner. Another "different" and successful evening. Another Rotary Am-Am golf competition was held at Dudley Golf Club, which showed a profit of £1985. The thanks of the Club to the ladies of Dudley Inner Wheel Club were expressed by a one-off donation of £400 to their Funds.

It was agreed, following requests from the Community Service Committee, that a Christmas Sleigh be constructed with the help of students at Pensnett School of Technology. A £500 budget was agreed for this.

The Club again supported the Handicapped Games at Pensnett by supplying and cooking hot dogs and also supplying drinks to the many people attending the event. Poor attendance of members at meetings again caused concern and it was agreed by

Club Council that the Club should meet at 6.30pm from the beginning of July 1997. Whilst it was appreciated that, initially, the membership of the Club would go down due to the change, it was thought that in due course, it would be best for the future of the Club.

A visiting G.S.E. team from New Zealand was entertained for the day, with a format much as in previous years.

Immediately prior to Christmas, the Christmas Sleigh with a magnificent Father Christmas (in the shape of Past President Barry Townsend) was placed on alternate days at Supermarkets at Burnt Tree and Withymoor Village. This proved very successful, apart from the occasion when another Club complete with Father Christmas and sleigh, turned up at the same venue.

Another successful Boxing Evening was held at the Park Hall Hotel, on the same lines as the previous year.

The Club, with support from the British High Commissioner in Calcutta, put forward Father Tony Fleming for a decoration in the New Year Honours List. In due course, the Club heard that Tony had been awarded the M.B.E. Sadly on his way from India to England, he was taken ill and died at Los Angeles Airport. The Club was, greatly saddened by his death for he had for many, many years been a great friend of Dudley Rotary Club.

And so to the future: the 75th Anniversary of Dudley Rotary Club in December 1997 and, perhaps, to the 100th beyond the millennium. But that will be another story.

EPILOGUE

This is a somewhat garbled account of what Dudley Rotary Club did and achieved over the 75 years from 1922 to 1997.

Many events and fund-raising functions will inevitably have been missed, and many worthy personalities will not have been mentioned, and for that I apologise.

Perhaps in 25 years' time, in the year 2022, some enthusiastic member of Club Council will say "Don't you think it would be a good idea if someone wrote a history of 100 years of The Rotary Club of Dudley?". The whole Club will be in favour of it, but there will I am sure, be one major problem.

Thank God I shall not be there!! Amen.

Past President Mike Crump

November 1997

The Club is extremely grateful to Past President Mike Crump for compiling this fascinating record covering our Club's first 75 years. The effort involved is much appreciated and will provide many a smile for past and present members.

Roger Emery, President
November 1997