

## **THE REVEREND DR P. T. B CLAYTON CH, MC, DD**

The Toc H mural is the only one of its kind in the world. It commemorates the life and work of an outstanding Army Chaplain in World War I, The Reverend Dr P. B. [Tubby] Clayton, CH, MC, DD.

Ray Geise, OAM, KSJ served as his personal assistant “as a young man I had the honour of being his ADC for five years. Working alongside him in the East End of London, as his personal assistant, travelling with him all over the United Kingdom and Belgium, I got to know him very well and we became firm friends. His devotion to a cause, his tireless energy, and his compassion and caring for all people, were a great example and inspiration to a young Australian like myself “Ray said “He was warm, he was friendly and he was funny. His charisma enabled him to be at home with everyone who had the opportunity to meet him, and he had the great gift of being able to break down the barriers that so often keep people apart.”

Friendship was an important foundation in the Reverend’s life “To him friendship was so important, and his friends came from all walks of life - all religions, all nationalities, all economic backgrounds. He treated everyone equally” Ray said “He lived by the creed in the following words”

- ***Service is the rent we pay for our room on earth.***
- ***Behind the things temporal [power, position possessions, money] lie the eternal realities [love, kindness, trust, generosity], and the latter are what really matter.***
- ***Toc H is TO Conquer Hate.***

Tubby toured Australia on a number of occasions and a visit to Maryborough was on his itinerary on each occasion. He visited the house in which he was born in North Street and the grave of his little sister in Maryborough Cemetery. He admired the great work done by Toc H members in Maryborough, especially their work in pioneering the Royal Queensland Bush Children’s Health Scheme and their work in the Maryborough hospital. During World War 2 his church in London, All Hallows-by-the-Tower, was bombed and when it was being rebuilt the Toc H members in Maryborough decided that they would make a special chair for the church and Colin Ruhle crafted it by hand. The chair was sent to London and was placed in the church. It was used by the Queen Mother each time she visited the church.



### **Tubby Clayton -----**

Tubby Clayton was born in Maryborough Queensland on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 1885. His parents had a property just outside Maryborough. Following a severe drought in the early 1890s they moved back to England. Tubby completed his schooling at St Paul's School in London and from there he went on to Oxford University, [Exeter College]. He was ordained and when World War I started he was commissioned as a Padre and went firstly to a Hospital in France and then to Belgium.

Once he settled down to life in the Army in the Ypres Salient, he set about ministering to those who were on their way to the Front Lines and to those returning from them: the survivors of the horrors of trench warfare and the mud and slush of Flanders Fields. To do this he needed a base from which to operate and he found this in a three-storied white building in Gasstuistraat 43, in Poperinge. On the 12<sup>th</sup> December 1915 he opened the centre [Everyman's Club].

One of his closest friends was Lieutenant Gilbert Talbot of the Rifle Brigade, who was killed at Hooze in the first liquid fire attack on the 30<sup>th</sup> July 1915, and the decision was made to call the centre 'Talbot House' in his memory. It provided accommodation and opportunities for reading, letter writing, relaxing in the garden or joining in the many concerts which Tubby and his staff organised. Above all, however, it was a place in which everyone was welcome, in which there was much fun and laughter and in which real and lasting friendships were made for men of all ranks. Right from the beginning Talbot House was unique and this was evident from a sign displayed within it which read: '*All rank abandon, ye that enter here.*' It was a true Every-Man's Club. Tubby's great sense of humour, friendliness and kindness pervaded the whole place, and for many it was a home away from home.

What made Talbot House so special from 1915 to 1918, however, was its Chapel, known to everyone as 'The Upper Room'. This was located in the loft above the third floor. It was non-denominational, and it was, as one young soldier wrote later, '*a room so sacred to many of us that it grows more hallowed with the passing of the years.*' The altar in the Upper Room was a simple carpenter's bench. Queues stretched down the stairs and often out into the street for services held in the Upper Room and over fifty thousand signatures appeared in the Communicant's Roll kept by Tubby.

From 1915 to 1918, Tubby did outstanding work caring for the needs of young men serving on the Western Front, and he was awarded the Military Cross. The special ethos of Talbot House of Friendship, Service, Fairmindedness and The Kingdom of God, was the foundation stone of the Toc H Movement, which received its Royal Charter in 1922 and thereafter became a world-wide movement, breaking down the barriers which keep people apart and caring for people in need. The Movement came to Australia in 1925 at the instigation of Lord Forster who was the Governor General at that time. The Forsters were close friends of Tubby. Their two sons were both killed during the war.

As the Founder of the Toc H Movement and the Vicar of the famous London church, All Hallows Barking-by-the-Tower, Tubby Clayton was one of the most outstanding and widely respected figures on the world stage in the twentieth century.

He died in 1972 and his ashes are interred in the crypt of All Hallows Barking-by-the-Tower in London which he had rebuilt after it was destroyed by bombing in World War II.

*Talbot House*

