

## **Early History of Upper Eden Rotary Club**

The Inaugural Meeting of the Upper Eden Rotary Club took place on 15th May 1979 at the Shap Wells Hotel and was attended by all 29 Founder Members. Also in attendance were the District Governor, Reg Huyton , Past District Governor David Pierce and President Maurice Clarkson of the Appleby Club who were the Sponsor Club.

Past President Bill Binnie of the Appleby Club had been the assistant District Extension Officer with responsibility for the detailed planning and instruction to the new club and he was MC for the evening.

On the 25th September 1979 the Club was presented with its Charter by DG George Tomlinson and the Club was welcomed into Rotary by RIBI President Douglas Imrie-Brown. President Geoffrey Harker received the Charter on behalf of the new club and paid a special tribute to PP Bill Binnie for his work in so ably guiding the Club during its formation period.

The Club successfully weathered the first year under the guidance of President Geoffrey Harker , who attended the Charter celebrations of all of the Clubs throughout the District's Northern area during his term of office and was instrumental in ensuring that Club members were present at every District Council Meeting , District Assembly and District Conference during his year of office and for the following ten years when he served as Club Secretary. Geoffrey was the first Club member to be awarded a Paul Harris Fellowship. Geoffrey remained an active member of the Club until he died aged 80 in 1992. As a mark of their affection , the Club designed and had erected a memorial stone. This is a large granite rock firmly set into the ground at Hillsbottom on the bank of the river Eden. It has a viewfinder plaque on top which includes the Rotary Wheel and his name.

President Tommy Hunter took over the badge of office from Past President Geoffrey Harker in 1981. President Tom made one of his projects for the year the formation of The Probus Club of Upper Eden . This Club was officially opened in 1982 and is still very active today.

The Club played a full part in Rotary International's "Three H" program and in the "Polio Plus" campaign. Targets for Foundation contributions are consistently achieved and the Club plays an active part in the hosting of GSE teams, Counselling of Students on Rotary Scholarships and partaking in District activities. The Club has five Paul Harris Fellows: Past Presidents Bill Watkin, John Bainbridge, Fred Hayllar, Colin Jenkinson and Raymond Thornton.

The main fund raising event for the Club has been The Mallerstang & Nine Standards Yomp. This was first held in May 1983 and has been an annual event ever since. The Club has raised well over £75,000 from its 25% share of the entrants sponsorship and the participants have given the balance to their own charitable causes.

In 1986 the Club sponsored a "Take Heart" program with the Doctors in the local Health Centre and we have had regular "Heart Start" teaching and demonstration sessions.

Club membership is fairly constant in the mid 20's but even though we are a relatively small in numbers, we pride ourselves on being an "Active" club. Carol Singing to entertain residents in three local Senior Citizens establishments , Coffee mornings , a Bookstall , trips to the pantomime for Cubs and Brownies , Emergency and Aqua boxes RYLA participation , Mock Interviews , Careers evenings and fun nights with BBQ & Barn dances on the farms of Club members. We regularly meet other Clubs in competitions and visit Clubs outside our District for social evenings and we have an annual Cheese & Wine evening to raise funds for our donation to Rotary Foundation.