

# Remember



# when . . .

Dear Friends,

Recently I have been thinking about the reaction of some people to the fact that I'm an abstainer.



My husband and I visited my cousin Dave and his wife Ann. One evening Ann laid on a special meal and, with a flourish, Dave produced a bottle of wine. Don thanked him and explained that we didn't drink alcohol which resulted in Dave telling us several times during the meal how embarrassed he felt that he was enjoying this treat and we were not. In fact, we were embarrassed because he wouldn't drop the subject. He gave the impression that our not drinking was beyond his understanding. Though knowing his and my family it shouldn't have been!

I sometimes used to have Sunday dinner with a family from my church. It was delicious and there was always fruit juice to drink. One day I arrived to find a cupboard door had been left open – the cupboard was stacked with alcohol. It had never occurred to me that these people might not be abstainers. Although I had never discussed it with them, they obviously knew that I was, so whether they were embarrassed or thought I might be offended, I don't know. But I appreciated their thoughtfulness.

Finally, some years ago Doreen Driver and I went on a cruise along the coast of Norway. One evening the captain gave a reception at which we would be treated to a very special drink. The only ingredients I can remember were cream and alcohol. We explained to the courier that we belonged to the Blue Cross which is the Norwegian equivalent of the Band of Hope and, with no fuss, the problem was dealt with. The special drink minus the alcohol was delicious.

There is no need to deliver a lecture. Our way of life or a quiet word is often enough and may sometimes lead to an opportunity for us to give a reason for our abstinence. Of course there is always the possibility that people think you are a member of Alcoholics Anonymous!

God bless you,

Ruth

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. . . is a publication from Hope UK for anyone connected with the Band of Hope movement. It is sent out three times a year. Contributions from former Band of Hope members are very welcome and can take the form of memories and thoughts about the impact that Band of Hope membership had on adult life. For a free copy (if you have not already signed up), please get in touch with Ruth Mills at the address on the back page.

# The Permissive Society

The permissive society has been with us for so long now that it no longer occasions much comment. The 115th Annual Report of the United Kingdom Band of Hope, produced at the beginning of 1970, however, still treats it as a new and disturbing phenomenon:

“This has well been called the Permissive Society. Ethical principles that were sacrosanct in pre-war days are being openly challenged or violated not only by the avante garde of the younger generation but sometimes by those persons of influence who have been regarded as the pillars of society. Drug addiction (and alcohol is the most widespread drug), communal violence and sexual promiscuity are but symptoms of the shaking of the foundations of our Christian society. There is ample historic evidence that such movements as ours have played their part in preserving the essential features of the Christian heritage. In the present climate of irreligion and loosening of morals the need for our work is paramount, but for these very reasons and because of the falling off in church membership, frequently it is a constant effort to keep such societies as ours from folding up.”

Permissiveness has become still more entrenched in the intervening years.

As yet we see no sign of the pendulum swinging in the other direction, as so often happens in society. But we are seeing in ever increasing measure the consequences of the abandonment of Christian values and standards as our society becomes increasingly broken and dysfunctional.

Hope UK’s constitution states that the organisation has two objects:

1. To educate children and young people about the harm associated with the use of alcohol and drugs of all descriptions and in the principles of total abstinence and
2. To encourage actively the practice of Christian Citizenship.

It is no longer easy to openly ‘encourage the practice of Christian Citizenship’ in secular society, but our Drug Educators are being trained to include ‘life skills’ in their work with children and young people to help them make drug-free choices. And we are encouraged by the conclusion of the Annual Report for 1969:

“... Labours for the physical, moral and spiritual welfare of young people can never be unproductive; not can complete results ever be assessed. Those who faithfully sow the seed must trust God for the harvest.”

NYTC Annual  
Conference  
April 1958 in  
Reading



# Memory Lane

Daphne Ayles writes:

Clapham rejoiced (literally according to my Dad) in the Young Men's Temperance Billiard Hall. The building still stands. It provided state of the art billiard facilities. The refreshments were buns and cocoa. They were wiser in those days. They realised that young men did not always want church activities or to be with their families. They needed to be young together and plan their own futures.

I believe that after the Great War the building that is now the much loved and appreciated

Clapham Picture House was also, for a while, a temperance billiard hall. The building had opened as a cinema around 1909. Dad and his mates went regularly. One of the attractions was doing battle with the commissionaire, a veteran of the Boer War who thoroughly enjoyed their skirmishes.

One winter, when the snow was thick on the ground, the rascals armed themselves with snow and pelted snowballs at the screen until the commissionaire picked them up two at a time and dumped them out in the snow!

Daphne reports that her Dad was a life-long teetotaler which shows, yet again, the positive impact of the temperance movement.

**Recognise anyone? Write and let us know.  
No prizes for guessing which decade this is!**



# Reflections on the NYTC (National Youth Temperance Council)

"What happy memories were triggered by George Ruston's article on the National Youth Temperance Council (NYTC)! I experienced the NYTC for the first time when I was 15, most of the fun I had as a teenager was in NYTC circles.

As a consequence of going to summer school at Eastwood Grange my life changed dramatically. A few weeks later on October 3rd, 1960, I left my home in Grimsby and went to work at Hope House with Robert Tayler, General Secretary of the UK BHU to whom I owe a huge debt. He taught me writing and editing skills as well as stimulating my interest in a wide range of other things.

It was my pleasure and privilege to be the NYTC Secretary for four years (1966-70). I travelled around England and Wales and had a huge amount of fun. Today I have friends in various parts of Britain through having fun with them at NYTC events."

*John Beasley, London*

"NYTC Summer School was never just a holiday. There were always four or five lectures followed by group work and a report back.

'Public Speaking' subjects were published in the week's programme and preparation begun before arrival was often finished at Eastwood. Those taking part were marked on appearance, content and delivery, so the boys brought suits and the girls their smartest frocks.

Short morning and evening devotions were held daily. Also a choir practice to prepare for the last evening's concert.

Some students became total abstainers. Some became Christians and some met their life partners.

Summer school was often a life-changing experience."

*Ruth Mills, Bromley*

"... the photo we treasure most is the NYTC 1967. What memories that picture brings to the Rice family. I have such happy and positive thoughts about my links to the Band of Hope. I treasure those memories and the above experiences were in fact life-shaping for us as a family."

*Bill Rice, Bournemouth*

Do you have memories of the Band of Hope you would like to share? Write to:  
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