

News

Communications Unit

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Veteran volunteers receive British Empire Medals

A group of North Yorkshire veterans who have served communities and charities across the Lieutenancy received their British Empire Medals this week.

The volunteers were awarded the British Empire Medal in the New Year's Honours list and each received their medal at County Hall, Northallerton this week from Mr Barry Dodd CBE, The Queen's Representative, The Lord Lieutenant of North Yorkshire. The Medal is awarded for sustained and notable contribution to the local community. There was also a posthumous award to Joan Sadler, who died before she could receive her medal.

The people who received the award are as follows:

Ruth Boyes - for services to the 'Pets As Therapy' charity in North Yorkshire since 1999. She works with therapy dogs and visits many places, organisations and communities in the county. Ruth also visits Catterick garrison schools with a Reading Dog, helping reluctant readers and children suffering with animal phobias; organises fund raising activities and assesses new volunteers and their dogs. Since 2006 she has been a prison and Ministry of Defence Establishment visitor, visiting prisons including HMP Leeds and HMP Wealstun. Her work is seen as an important part of the rehabilitation process in these prisons.

Lesley Calvert - for services to education. Lesley has managed the Funfishers Out of School Club and playgroup, York, for more than 15 years, as well as providing a holiday club. Funfishers is a registered charity run by a voluntary parent committee who are trustees to the club. Lesley is a dedicated early years practitioner and is committed to meeting the needs of families and children in her local area. Through her work over the years, she has helped to give hundreds of children the best of starts in their early learning and development.

John David Thomas - for voluntary service to the National Railway Museum and the community in Bolton since 1976. Since 1995 John has been the Organiser and Chair of the Friends of NRM York Evening Meetings, managing a vibrant programme of activities; organising speakers; and writing promotional material. His efforts have inspired a sense of community and friendship amongst members as well as raising thousands of pounds to support the museum. As NRM's Volunteer Recruitment and Training Co-ordinator for over 13 years he has introduced over 700 volunteers to the museum.

Posthumous award and tribute: JOAN SADLER, 12 January 1922 - 14 December 2014: for services to the community in North Yorkshire and York.

Joan served the community for over 54 years, carrying out charity work for the Multiple Sclerosis Society and other voluntary organisations. Joan always said: "I do not have pots of money to give but I have time", and her British Empire Medal acknowledges this.

Between 1961 and 1992 she was Welfare Secretary and Social Organiser for the York Branch of the Multiple Sclerosis Society. She became Vice-President of the York branch in 1992 and was a member of the MS National Council for eight years.

For a number of years Joan was a member of the Development for the Woodlands Respite Centre for MS, while serving as a member of Arthritis Research UK and as a visitor with the Friends of York Hospital. She was a Life Member of York Musical Theatre Company; a member of the York Theatre Club; and a steward at the Treasurer's House in York. Joan she was also a volunteer for WRVS Meals on Wheels and a Life Governor of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

Just before Joan heard about her Medal last year, the Lord Mayor of York, Cllr Ian Gillies, made her "A Friend of the City of York" in recognition of her commitment and dedication to the city.

She died peacefully on Sunday 14 December 2014 at St Leonard's Hospice, York after a short illness. A memorial concert to pay tribute to Joan's life will be held at the Joseph Rowntree Theatre, York on Sunday the 26 July 2015 and her Medal, along with a portrait photo of Joan, will hang in the Theatre in her memory.

Picture shows: (Left to right) Volunteers receive British Empire Medals: Mike and Sheila Grimes receive the British Empire Medal on behalf of Joan Sadler from The Lord Lieutenant Barry Dodd along with Ruth Boyes, Lesley Calvert and David Thomas.

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