

Herefordshire marks the 150th anniversary of the RNIB

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One of Herefordshire's ace fundraisers has arranged for the Royal National Institute for Blind People's 150th anniversary to be marked in the county.



Rosemary Rigby, who worked for the organisation for 30 years from 1966 to 1996, has retained her involvement with the organisation in a unique role.

"At the end of my final year, 'Rosemary's Year', where I collected £82,610 for the Talking Books for the Blind project, they asked me to be their Honorary Fundraising Ambassador," she said. "I'm the only one in the country."

Rosemary recalled how she had arranged for the site where the plaque, as well as one which had marked the RNIB's centenary 50 years ago, is positioned to come under the charity's control.

"I drove down that little road in Ross in 1966, not long after I had been appointed and what is now Caroline Symonds Gardens was just like a ploughed field," she recalled. "I had a dream that we might have a wishing well there and the council gifted the land for the wishing well to be built on. Then, for the centenary in 1968, the star of TV's Crossroads Noele Gordon, who lived in the town, unveiled the first plaque. Later that day, we had a wonderful service in Hereford Cathedral to mark the centenary"

"I just couldn't bear the thought that the year of RNIB's 150th anniversary could go by without being marked so we pulled out all the stops.

"I'm so grateful to Julian Stephens, the proprietor of E M Davis in Cotterell Street in Hereford, who was so kind in fitting in the engraving of the plaque so that it could be installed before the end of the anniversary year."