

Plaque to US founding father Paine is unveiled

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DISTINGUISHED guests were invited to unveil the latest blue plaque in Grantham on Wednesday.

Karen E. Huntress of the United States embassy and Ray Burman, president of Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland, were on hand to unveil the plaque to Thomas Paine - one of the founding fathers of the United States.

The Thomas Paine plaque is in The George Centre in Grantham.

Ms Huntress said: "It is wonderful to see such a historical figure be recognised

"Thomas Paine is a wonderful example of the link both the United States and the United Kingdom share and it is very exciting for me, as an American, to see Thomas Paine recognised in this way."

The blue plaque project has been headed by Courtney Finn of Grantham Civic Society and the Rotary Club of Grantham.

He said: "It's great to see so many people come along and a real privilege to have Kate here with the president of Rotary International in Great Britain."

Ms Huntress shared the unveiling duties with Mr Burman of Rotary International, who spent all of Wednesday in Grantham.

After visiting Rotarians behind the Trade Aid scheme, Mr Burman headed to Hougham to visit those behind Kesteven Rideability where he was touched to meet a girl with cerebral palsy whose life had been transformed by the scheme.

After the unveiling, he visited Mencap Fairview Farm, which has received support from Rotarians before a hog roast at Great Ponton was held in his honour.

Mr Burnham said: "I am always amazed by what our Rotarians are doing to support projects in their local community and here in Grantham, I have seen Rotary at its best.

"The Trade Aid project, organised by the Rotary Club of Grantham Kesteven, is amazing, providing tools and equipment in a box which change the lives of the people in the developing world, giving them self-respect and independence, and allowing them to work and provide for their family and local community.

"The Rotary Swimathon, organised by the Rotary Club of Grantham, has raised hundreds of thousands pounds to support their local community and local charities. I am so impressed that they are going for swimming world record with their awesome project of a global swimathon on 23rd February 2012."



Dignitaries including the president of Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland and Karen Huntress from the US Embassy in London unveil the plaque which was paid for by Grantham Rotarians.



Courtney Finn of Grantham Civic Society and the Rotary Club of Grantham explains Thomas Paine's links to Grantham.

Rotary International's Ray Burman and US Embassy Cultural Attaché Karen Huntress were given the honour of unveiling the plaque (right).



Mayor of Grantham Mike Taylor greets Rotary International's Ray Burman in the Mayor's Parlour (left).

