

June takes on new challenges



June Arthurs, a member of Warwick branch has entered her seventies taking on new challenges and raising money for charities.

This year, at the age of 71, she took part in a charity abseil down the new art galley in Walsall in aid of Macmillan nurses. Next time she's hoping to do a tandem sky dive for the air ambulance.

June retired in 2014 after 11 very happy years as a receptionist in the X-Ray department of Warwick hospital. "I've done two previous abseils about twenty years ago but not from anything nearly as high" she said. "I didn't feel nervous until I stepped over the edge on to the little step they'd provided.

"I found the harness was hurting my back to start with (hence my pained expression). But when I got my legs in the right position I was fine. Once on my way it was lovely, very exhilarating and I thoroughly enjoyed it. I raised nearly £300. I know that's not a vast amount but every little helps."

Paul joins Fellowship team



Belief in members' potential to contribute more to today's NHS for the benefit of both is one of the reasons Paul Farenden, the new treasurer, has joined the Fellowship's leadership team.

He takes on the role after a distinguished 40 year career in the NHS which began as an accountancy trainee with South West Regional Hospital Board and ended with chief executive posts at Rugby, Warwick and finally Dudley. He was one of the first chief executives in the first wave of NHS trusts, making a switch from finance to general management and gaining an MBA in business administration from Buckingham University.

Since 2012 he has been chairman of Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust – a job he finds "enjoyably challenging."

"I have a strong belief there is enormous potential in the Fellowship if we can harness the skill, experience and knowledge of all those folk who have spent many years working in the NHS" he said.

"We are moving into an era where using people prepared to give time is going to be very helpful in supporting the activities of the NHS. The retirement Fellowship deserves more recognition for what it does – and I think we could do more. We should try to get the Fellowship more valued and more used."

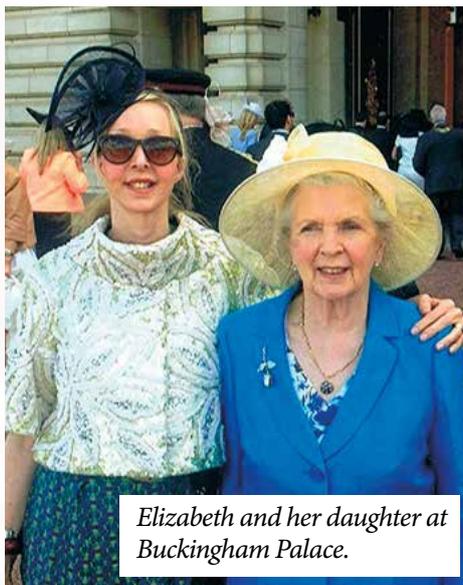
Paul is married, with two children and six grandchildren and lives in Badby, Northamptonshire. He enjoys walking, the theatre and plays golf.

Surprise for Watford member

Retired midwife Elizabeth Timmons who worked for many years at Watford General Hospital and is known for her fantastic fundraising, had a surprise this year when she was invited to Buckingham Palace to attend a royal garden party.

Over the past 25 years her efforts have raised £200,000 for the Watford Peace Hospice Care and her outstanding contribution was recognized in 2013 with an award for volunteer of the year presented by the Mayor of Watford.

This year came an even bigger surprise with the invitation to Buckingham Palace. "It was such an honour and I am so proud of all the people who helped me to raise so much money and supported the hospice. I thank them all," she said."



Elizabeth and her daughter at Buckingham Palace.

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Moving in the right direction

The Fellowship is moving in the right direction with the prospect of renewed funding from Health Education England and valued input from the recently appointed external trustees, says the director, John Rostill.



Danny Mortimer

“We have a lot more to do, but we are going in the right direction: it’s looking reasonably positive” he said. “We are very pleased with the input from our external trustees who have joined the board alongside our own members.”

The three external trustees are Sir Keith Pearson, chairman of Health Education England, Danny Mortimer, Chief Executive of the NHS Employers Organisation and Clare Panniker, Chief Executive of Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals.

Danny Mortimer was guest speaker at the Fellowship conference in Leeds last year and Clare Panniker leads the NHS Trust which won the Fellowship award for supporting the local branch.



Clare Panniker

Fellowship flies the flag among employers

Fellowship members “flew the flag” with NHS employers at the NHS Providers National Conference and Exhibition in Birmingham in November.

NHS Providers provided the Fellowship with a stand, and over two successful days it attracted a steady flow of delegates showing great interest in the Fellowship.

“It was an excellent opportunity to raise our profile and to promote the role of the Fellowship” said John Toman, Fellowship Officer for Wales. “Sue Williams from Walsall branch was magnificent in organising members from branches in the Midlands to run the stand.”

The picture is from day two, but also there on day one were Sue Williams, Kevin Williams, Helen Boyd, (Walsall), Moira Law and Anne Barker, (Wolverhampton) and Yvonne Hayward and Margaret Geddes from Sandwell branch.



Right: John Toman, Fellowship Officer, Wales, Jenny Clarke, Pat Overton. John Grubb, Sue Williams, Val Cox from Walsall branch, Lin Jarrett and Doreen Salter from Sandwell and West Birmingham branch and John Rostill, NHSRF CEO at the conference.

Pioneer branch celebrates 35 years

When the idea of a branch of the Fellowship in North Manchester was put forward 35 years ago it was Bob Townsend, now branch president, who helped to make it happen.

Bob was District Administrator for North Manchester and readily persuaded the authority to set up the branch and provide financial and practical support. He arranged a meeting, chaired by the then chairman of the regional health authority. The hospital provided refreshment and the district office provided clerical work, postage and even printing.

From the start the Fellowship attracted a good mix of staff. Officers were appointed who were dedicated to seeing it flourish, and saw it grow steadily.



Gwen Crossley, branch chair, Audrey Harris, Ethel Armstrong and Hylde Whitehead, secretary at the celebrations.

After such a promising start, the branch experienced a series of unsettling moves which led to a decline in membership. But Bob (now retired and a Fellowship member) managed to persuade the employing authority to pay the rental for rooms in the nearby Methodist church and membership has improved with an age range now from 55 to 92.

Members celebrated the anniversary with a party attended by Audrey Harris (national chairman) and Ethel Armstrong (patron) and now look forward to more years of friendship and mutual support.

“We can rise to the challenge”

Audrey Harris, elected the Fellowship’s chairman in 2015 has written to branches with thanks – and a promise to do her best for us all. Here’s an edited version of her letter:

“I want to thank you for electing me as your chairman. I feel very honoured to wear the collar which bears all the names of past occupants, right back to Irene James in 1980.

This is a very challenging time for us, not least because our funding bodies have demanded that the Fellowship find ways of becoming more self-sufficient. I am sure that we can rise to this challenge. We must also aim to open new branches and attract new members.

At the AGM Conference in Leeds the revised and refreshed constitution was accepted by the members. I want to say a very big thank you to Cynthia Matthews and Anthea Graham for overseeing writing the constitution, working with Rosie Parr the legal advisor to get it right and acceptable to the Charity Commission. Work is now in hand to re-vitalise the ‘handbook’ into easily readable ‘by-laws’ and procedures for branches. When completed these documents will be on the Fellowship website.

It was so good to meet so many members at conference and others that I have visited since in branches. Remember I am happy to meet with branches should you wish me to come. I can be contacted through Central Office or by **email audnhs@yahoo.co.uk**

Last but by no means least, I want to thank our staff in central office, Sherry, Kay, and Lucy for their ever ready helpfulness. These ladies do a fantastic job. Also the development officers and regional representatives who give a great deal of their time to making our branches and our Fellowship the best ‘club’ in the UK.

I look forward to the next two years as your chairman and promise that I will always try to do my best.”

Regards from
Audrey Harris



Basildon and Thurrock

Audrey was at Basildon and Thurrock when the award for the NHS Trust which has given exceptional support to their local Fellowship branch was presented to the Chief Executive Clare Panniker by Fellowship Director John Rostill, and at Harrogate for the presentation of the runners up award (see separate report).

Audrey’s travels

Fellowship chairman Audrey Harris has been touring the country visiting branches, joining them for special occasions and spreading her special enthusiasm.

Here’s a few of her memorable moments:

Derby



With branch officers from Derby branch in September.

Southend

In October she joined Southend and Rochford branch to celebrate their 30th anniversary. In our picture (right) founder member Richard Whitmore cuts the cake, watched by John Rashbrook (chairman) and Audrey.

Bromley



Bromley summer tea, with chairman Lynda Stimson, deputy Pushpa Hilton and branch members.



Harrogate

Harrogate branch’s nomination of Harrogate & District NHS Foundation Trust for its support since 1982 resulted in a runner’s up award in the Fellowship Awards for trusts which give exceptional support to their local branch.

It was presented to Dr Ros Tolcher, Chief Executive of the Trust, by Audrey Harris, NHSRF chairman, at the summer lunch which was also attended by Colin Billington, Regional Representative for Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire and 48 members and friends.



Left to right: Kathleen Peach, Marian Darwen, Amy Clarke, Sheila Jones, Janet Houston, Brenda Hawkswell-Stock, Audrey Harris, Ros Tolcher, Colin Billington, Mary Bradley, Gillian Oldfield and Vicky Bradley.

Anniversary Celebrations

Oxford honours pioneer members

The award of life membership to four of its most dedicated members was the highlight of an excellent gala lunch to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of Oxford branch.

About 100 members and guests were joined by National Director John Rostill, who presented life membership certificates to Jackie Slay, Nesta Jones and Peter and Vaughan Haskins.

Jackie was a key member of the branch in its early years and was speaker secretary (a role now filled admirably by her daughter Mary); Nesta led the branch in a critical period when the decision to join the national Fellowship caused a serious rift; Peter and Vaughan were long standing

committee members. It was their commitment in earlier years that has created the foundation of the present thriving branch.



Left to right: Nesta Jones, John Rostill, Jackie Slay, Peter and Vaughan Haskins.

Boston

Ninety three year old Edward Clark, the oldest member of Boston branch cut the cake at a special meeting to celebrate the branch's 35th anniversary in September. Edward is pictured with chairman Sally Mackenzie.



East Suffolk

East Suffolk branch celebrated 30 years in June. Pictured are chairman Brenda Simmons and Margaret Moffat national vice chairman, cutting the cake. Fellowship director John Rostill congratulated the branch on reaching the milestone.



Bournemouth

Members of Bournemouth and Christchurch branch gathered in July for their AGM and 35th Anniversary celebrations. Jo Cooper and Peggy Daniels, two founder members who still attend branch meetings are pictured here cutting the cake with chairperson Hilary Tice.



Northampton

Over 100 members of Northampton branch celebrated the 35th anniversary in April with a lunch with guests John Rostill NHSRF CEO, and Paul Farenden chairman of the Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust and now treasurer of the national Fellowship.

Our picture shows Paul Farenden with the then chairman of the branch Pat Oliver and John Rostill.



East Yorkshire

Dora Horncastle, the oldest member of East Yorkshire branch cut the cake at a party to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the branch in September.

Dora, who had her 90th birthday just before the party, joined the branch with Carolyn Estill, when the Hull branch closed.



Brighton reach four

This beautiful cake was made by Val Carden to celebrate Brighton and Hove branch being four years old. Audrey Harris, NHSRF chairman, was a special guest.



...and Magna Carta!



Runnymede, where the Magna Carta was signed and is also the home of the NW Surrey branch, so they decided to celebrate the anniversary in style. Suzanne made a Magna Carta cake, Mr Music Man (alias Stephen Best) played well known songs on his accordion ending with a stirring rendition of Land of Hope and Glory, accompanied by much flag waving..

Sky diver

East Suffolk member Jackie Greenway did a second tandem sky dive to raise money for her local hospice.



BEM for celebrity Maurice

Derby branch member Maurice Vaughan has become quite a celebrity. In August he was presented with the British Empire Medal and shortly afterwards was awarded a "Points of Light" award from the Prime Minister.



His BEM was for services to cricket and community. He has been involved with Etwall Cricket Club for more than 80 years, with great support over the years from his wife, Judith. Next year promises to be special too as Maurice and Judith have been invited to a garden party at Buckingham Palace.

Shortly after receiving the medal Maurice learned that he was to be awarded the 'Points of Light' from the Prime Minister. This award

recognises outstanding volunteers who are making a change in their community.

As you would expect, Maurice has met many famous people while collecting his awards and one of his favourites has to be Sophie, Duchess of Wessex. She presented him with the Torch Trophy last February which recognises a person's 'Outstanding dedication to sport in their local communities'.



Pictures show Maurice receiving his BEM from the Lord Lieutenant of Derbyshire and charming the Duchess of Wessex (or was it the other way round?)



Dressed in style

Sue Williams, Midland Representative visited Sandwell & West Birmingham branch in October to present the Sefton cup for the highest percentage increase in membership last year.

Members then welcomed George Murray, the Sergeant at Arms in Sandwell who gave a very entertaining talk about his job which involves looking after the Mayor on official duties, and taking care of the robes and regalia. He brought some of the items with him - and dressed up two members, Chris Horne and Keith Johnson, as seen in our photograph.

Making friends with alpacas

Walsall Branch members had a great day out at Charnwood Alpaca Farm, in Leicestershire. They were told all about alpacas, how they live, what they eat, before being introduced to their alpaca which they took for a walk around the farm. They were able to purchase a healthy bag of treats to tempt them with. Phew! they wolfed it down. A lovely experience. Afternoon tea on the way home rounded the day off.



Making friends with their alpacas are Mary Wheeler, Kevin Williams, Chris Horobin and Sue Williams.

Bromley in Devon

Thirty three members of Bromley branch had a very enjoyable visit to Ilfracombe in early summer. The hotel was good, the scenery superb and the weather fair. Visits were made to Dunster and Exmoor, Bideford and Hartland Abbey, Lynton and Lynmouth. Other days were spent walking and exploring the countryside and beaches or taking a boat trip along the coast to view the seabirds and seals.



Thanks...

Ada steps down



Ada Rankin, secretary of Wakefield Branch for 28 years has reluctantly had to step down due to family commitments. Su Caselli, chairman and Ros Bartle, treasurer visited her to present a token gift, for all her hard work.

Thanks to Pam

Poole Branch were pleased to present their outgoing chairperson, Pam Froud, with a flower arrangement at the June meeting, to thank her for her hard work over the past seven years and previously as vice chairperson.



...and to Marianne



North West Surrey branch warmly thanked their former chairman Marianne Robbins who has retired after eight years. She was presented with a bunch of flowers by vice chairman Merle Adams.

...and to June



Chairman Di Furbear and committee members of Cheltenham branch, presented June Hewett with a floral arrangement in July, wishing her well for her pending retirement and expressing their gratitude for her help and advice over the years.

Warwickshire step out

Warwickshire branch which had its first meeting in March is already on the road and has started a walking group.

Members had suggested the idea, and in June they embarked on their first walk along the Grand Union Canal from the Warwick Canal Basin at

the Saltisford to Hatton Locks, passing a total of 21 lock gates known as the stairway to heaven.

“It was a good morning out which has resulted in forming a walking group as an extra to our monthly meeting” said chairperson Pam Appleby.



Lining up for the Bluebell

Twenty four members of North West Surrey branch were lucky with the weather and had a lovely day in Sussex which included a guided tour of Sheffield Park Gardens and a ride on the Bluebell Railway.



Merthyr beat the “awful” weather

Awful weather in Torquay failed to dampen the spirits of 30 members of Merthyr and Cynon Valley branch who had a thoroughly enjoyable time at the Derwent Hotel on a four day festive weekend break.



Brent holiday

Forty members of Brent branch went on holiday to Cheshire with excursions including Jodrell Bank and Llandudno.



Hats off to Ann

Ann McLeod, a member of Bromley branch, knitted these 100 little hats to raise money for Age UK. Each hat raises 25p and they are all slightly different in colour and design.

Graham Hamilton-Smith, a long standing member of Huntingdon branch, celebrated his 90th birthday in August.



Sorry

Apologies to Mid Sussex branch which we mistakenly called South West Sussex in our last issue.

Bells ring for Ron and Avis



When Ron and Avis Prior from Chelmsford and District branch were married in 1945 they could not have the bells of Chelmsford Cathedral rung.

Seventy years on, during a special tea party for family and friends for their anniversary in September, the bells of the local church were heard ringing.

They received many cards, flowers and good wishes including a card from the Queen. Ron, now 95 and Avis 92, met at a dance in Chelmsford Corn Exchange. Ron worked in the NHS as a senior assistant treasurer for South Essex Area Health Authority.

When he retired he became treasurer for Chelmsford and district branch at their first meeting in 1988. Since then he has been chairman and is now vice-chairman so he has held an executive committee post for 27 years.

Sixty years together



Huntingdon branch sent flowers to their members Margaret and Derek Ditchfield who celebrated their sixtieth wedding anniversary in July.

Strawberry indulgence



Pontefract branch members indulged themselves when they shared a strawberry tea in July which included scones with jam and strawberries, strawberry pavlova and a sponge cake filled with strawberries and cream.

OBITUARIES

Chris Sumption

It is with regret that Poole Branch reports the death of Chris Sumption. Chris was a very interesting lady, having nursed both at home and abroad, with always a kind word for everyone. She was 100 in July which was celebrated at the branch meeting with a cake as our picture shows. Chris will be sadly missed.



Anne Eve

The sudden death of Ann Eve a popular member of Basildon and Thurrock branch has saddened the entire membership. Ann and her husband Colin joined the branch when she retired from her job as a pharmacy technician and quickly became involved, helping with the organisation of lunch clubs and the annual holiday.

She was a very warm, friendly lady with an ever ready smile of encouragement for newer members, always full of fun, and didn't do things by half, as shown with our champagne and cake breakfasts on the holidays. Her vibrant personality made her a very popular member of the branch and her immense contribution will long be remembered.

Mary Martin

Milton Keynes branch sadly reports the death of its founder, Mary Martin, aged 93.

Her nursing career began at 15 in Essex, long before the NHS was formed and she worked in many places in south east England as a hospital nurse, a midwife, a district nurse and a midwifery trainer before leaving nursing to open haberdashery shops. She later returned to nursing and in 1968 took a management post in London and then became Director of Community Nursing in Northampton, where she did much to better the cause of nursing. Later she was Director of Nursing (Personnel) in Aylesbury before helping to set up health services in Milton Keynes. She retired in 1982 and having been involved with the Fellowship in Aylesbury, felt there should be a branch in Milton Keynes. She set up the branch and was its first chairman, and then president. An extraordinary lady, with an extraordinary life who will be sadly missed.



Gladys (Kay) Kerr

Guy's and St Thomas' branch are sad to announce the death of its oldest member, Kay Kerr. She died in July, aged 101. Kay worked for many years in the records department at St Stephen's hospital

(now Chelsea and Westminster) and then in administration at a doctors' surgery for several years, retiring at the age of 80.



She joined the branch when a mere 98 years old and very quickly became a much loved member, joining members at meetings and outings as often as she could.

Kay is pictured with Ethel Armstrong, patron of the Fellowship, at Kay's 100th birthday party. Ethel writes: "I have wonderful memories of a remarkable lady and fellow member who took my hand and was so pleased that I was at "her party" on the day. I was so pleased to meet a grand lady, who reflects what the NHS and the NHSRF is all about."

Janet Edwards



Janet Edwards, (nee Hoffman) an active member of Oxford branch who died in August aged 89, was one of those special people who set an example of being willing to step forward to help in almost any situation.

She gave a lifetime of service to many organisations. She trained and worked as a physiotherapist at Guy's Hospital, London where she was student of the year, later emigrating to Canada with her husband and young son. Returning to England she worked as a physiotherapist in Surrey and Cheshire, and began a lifelong commitment to the Girl Guide movement.

She later moved to Kidlington, near Oxford where she was much involved with the local community and a great servant of the Oxford branch of the Fellowship, organising outings when well into her 80s.

John Laidlaw

John Laidlaw, an original member of Edinburgh and Lothians branch, died in July shortly after his 102nd birthday.

He began his career as a junior clerk in the works department of the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh in 1928 and later held many senior management

posts in the area. When he retired in 1978 he immediately accepted an invitation to be secretary of the committee organising the 250th anniversary celebrations of the Royal Infirmary – so he completed a 50 year career in the place where it began.



He came from a musical family and played the violin, forming a quintet in the 1930s which played in concerts and at other events. Although unable to attend meetings in recent years, he continued to be a member and took an interest in the branch.

Margaret Smith and Mary Nephin

Two members of Coventry branch died last summer. **Margaret Smith** joined the branch in 1998 and was welfare officer and then chairlady. Her health deteriorated in the past year and she died in April. She was an exceptional chairlady and much respected by the members. Her NHS career was mostly in medical records at Coventry and North Warwick Hospital.



Mary Nephin was a nurse who worked in London and Coventry and was one of the founder members of the branch, serving for many years as treasurer. She retired in 2007 and became a life member who always made time to talk and was excellent when new members joined.



Penny Loudon

Penny Loudon, who was Harrogate branch secretary from 2013-2015, was a medical secretary at Harrogate District Hospital until she retired.

She was very active in the village community where she lived and a committed member of the Fellowship branch, particularly enjoying the walking group.

She died in May after a short but brave fight against cancer, leaving a much loved family. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

Muriel Whisky, Seenar Deen and David Dixon

Brent branch sadly report the deaths of three longstanding members: Muriel Whisky, Seenar Deen and David Dixon.

RECRUITMENT INITIATIVES

East Dorset and Ringwood hit the airwaves

As part of a recruitment drive to secure new members, Rosemary White and Alan Redknapp from East Dorset and Ringwood branch were interviewed on local community radio station Radio Wimborne. Fellow member Ian Dickins joined them as 'official photographer.'

Radio Wimborne were most supportive. Rosemary and Alan were able to enlighten listeners on the background and aims of the Fellowship and benefits of belonging and sharing in activities.

The branch now has 54 members, seven of whom joined since April and there are hopes of four



more before Christmas. "Given our location and that we are traditionally a 'smallish group' we feel that this is a good rate of growth" said Alan.

Branches enjoy Poppy Factory



The Poppy Factory in Richmond is proving a popular venue for visits from branches in the south east.

The factory makes millions of poppies and wreaths for Remembrance Sunday and the Royal British Legion and provides employment for disabled ex-servicemen and women. Eastbourne members enjoyed a talk on its history before a tour during which they made their own poppies. "We would certainly recommend it" said outings organiser Hilary Coombes. Oxford branch followed them to the Poppy Factory in October – and echo the recommendation.

Suffolk West face the cameras

Suffolk West branch had a BBC news team at a branch meeting and appeared on a local lunchtime news programme, explaining about the branch and its activities.



Colchester spread the word . . .

Colchester branch members have had a busy summer promoting the Fellowship at local events.

In June they were at the Essex County Hospital open day which was visited by over 500 people who toured the hospital and viewed displays. Colchester member Ron Abbott was one of those involved in a really worthwhile day.

In July they were out again, this time at the 100th Tendring Hundred County Show handing out leaflets and answering questions about the Fellowship. The branch display won Best Education Stand in Show for the fifth year running. Colchester University Hospital Foundation Trust provides a lot of support to the branch.



Caption: *Judith Abbott (treasurer) and Sheila Crow (chair) of Colchester branch with the award for best education stand.*

. . .and link with local CSRF

Colchester branch has begun what they hope will be a fruitful relationship with the local branch of the Civil Service Retirement Fellowship. Two NHSRF members attended a CSRF meeting earlier in 2015 and in August members of CSRF came to the Colchester branch social gathering.

"It was a very successful meeting" said Ron Abbott, Colchester NHSRF member, "and there remains a reciprocal arrangement for members to attend each other's meetings. Hopefully this is the beginning of a good relationship"

So proud of Ethel

Members of branches in the north east took the opportunity of their regional meeting to present a card and flowers to their very own "special one," Ethel Armstrong, to acknowledge her election as patron of the Fellowship.

The main purpose of the meeting was one of on-going communication and to enable our regional representative to present the views of the local membership to the forthcoming National Council meeting.

Next year's regional conference will be hosted by South Tees branch.



Pam Holroyd, from Hartlepool branch, with national patron Ethel Armstrong.

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