

Recruitment drive pays dividends

The Fellowship's recruitment drive, which was promoted through a flyer to NHS pensioners earlier this year, has produced an outstanding response.

Reporting to the national conference in Harrogate on July 2, Fellowship Director Mike Brown revealed that so far 1,582 new members had joined the Fellowship since April – an 11% increase and the first substantial increase in membership in England and Wales for years.

It follows the highly successful Scottish campaign a year ago. Leaflets went out with the end of year pension information to 600,000 pensioners, inviting them to join.

As well as those who responded to the call centre, it has raised awareness of the Fellowship. "I think it has upped our profile" said Mike. "Lots of people who have nothing to do



Mike Brown

with the Fellowship have told me they got our flyer. I think there are a lot of others who got the flyer and went to the Fellowship website and found a local branch."

Mike's report was greeted with applause from the record 431 delegates at Harrogate at a highly successful weekend in blissful Yorkshire sunshine. Full report and pictures pages 4 to 8.

Ethel takes the chair

Ethel Armstrong, the bundle of energy and enthusiasm from the north east who brings a smile to everyone she meets, is the new chairman of the Fellowship.

Ethel has been a member of Durham branch for 21 years and was quickly persuaded to become welfare officer, then branch chairman, then regional representative and a member of national council, before becoming vice chairman two years ago.

"I have enjoyed every minute of it" she told conference. "I look forward to two years of being your chairman, which I shall do to the best of my ability."



Ethel Armstrong

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New initiatives from the Fellowship

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Seniors Golf Tour in 2012

The NHS Retirement Fellowship and the Civil Service Retirement Fellowship have joined forces to set up a Seniors Golf Tour in 2012 which will stage golf days in five places across the UK leading to a national final.

Competitions will be held in north and south England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and are open to men and women of all golfing ability, based on the Stableford format (full allowance) with a range of prizes for

individuals and teams. The final will be a 'curtain raiser' for the national conference of one of the Fellowships, in alternate years.

As well as linking Fellowship members across the UK, part of the aim of the tour is to attract new members. There's an annual subscription (£25 for existing members, £35 to include NHSRF membership for newcomers) and an additional cost for the golf day package. This includes coffee and a bacon roll on arrival, 18 holes golf tournament, a buffet supper and presentation of prizes.

Dates and venues will be confirmed in September and October this year. For further information or to register an interest please contact John Toman, the Fellowship's Welsh Development Officer, who is the Tournament Director, at Oak Cottage, Stoulgrove Lane, Woodcroft, Chepstow, NP16 7QE.
Phone **01291 620345**
Email john_toman@btconnect.com

Fellowship launches walking holidays

Walking holidays for members across the country are likely to be a regular feature for the Fellowship in future.

Talks with Roger Bristow of Della Holidays at the Harrogate conference prompted an immediate and ready response and there's already a holiday being set up for a week in North Devon in September. Next spring the Fellowship hopes to run a similar holiday in the north of England and there could be more to follow.

Della Holidays is already organising the very popular Fellowship holiday to Majorca from 14 to 21 October, with 57 members already booked – two of them at the conference. "It's been an excellent response" said Roger. "We have people flying from all parts of the country. We are a small company and we try to give our customers a personal service."

"After our talks at Harrogate we are now arranging a walking holiday in the South West of England starting on 10 September. Staying at an hotel close to Dartmoor National Park, the holiday will include organised walks over Dartmoor on a scenic section of the South West coastal path. There will also be an opportunity to learn a little more about Nordic Walking (walking with poles to improve mobility) with a talk and a short walk with a qualified instructor. Transport will be by coach with pick ups in the London area and the South of England."

Details are available from Della Holidays.
Phone **0800 216182**
Email enquiries@dellaholidays.co.uk

Active theme for new photo contest

'Active Ageing' is the theme of a national photographic competition which the Fellowship is launching this year in partnership with the Civil Service Retirement Fellowship.

The competition is the first step towards setting up a photographic society for members of both organisations and is being co-ordinated for the Fellowship by Mik Webb, who represents Wales on the National Council.

"2012 is the European Union Year of Active Ageing" said Mik, "we hope



members will get out with their cameras and send in some exciting pictures."

Full details will be announced soon, but for further information or to register contact Mik on:

Email mik.webb@btinternet.com
Phone: **01492 535781**
www.nhsrf.org.uk
www.csrf.org.uk

Fellowship links with Civil Service groups

The launch of these new opportunities for members has been made possible by teaming up with the Civil Service Retirement Fellowship.

The idea is to attract new members and to offer interests and activities organised on a national basis for existing branch members.

"Many branches already have book clubs, walking holidays or photography groups" said Mike Brown, Fellowship Director. "This initiative is designed to complement these and to provide new opportunities for members in smaller branches who do not have the capacity to organise such things."

Right: John Toman (Development Officer, Wales), Vic Griffiths (National Chairman) and Mike Brown (Director) and Mik Webb (Wales Representative) in discussion with representatives from the Civil Service Retirement Fellowship.



New Northern Ireland Chairman gets a buzz from Fellowship work

Wesley McKimm, who began his NHS career over 50 years ago “at the lowest possible grade” has taken over the most senior position in the Fellowship in Northern Ireland.

He has succeeded Peter Davies as chairman of the NHSRF Northern Ireland Region and is a member of the NHSRF National Council.

Wesley’s wide-ranging NHS career began in 1957 as a ‘non-established temporary clerk’ in what was then the Northern Ireland Health Services Board in Belfast. “You can’t get any lower than that” he said.

“I was doing clerical work for six or seven years before I moved to the City Hospital in the salaries and wages department and then I got a job with the grand title of Group Cashier for the South Belfast Hospital Management Committee.”

It was in that job that he helped to introduce computer systems for payroll and his next move was to do the same thing (and lots of other tasks) for the Northern Ireland Nursing and Midwifery Council.



Wesley McKimm

Later he became Administrative Officer for the Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Service before joining what later became the Northern Ireland Health and Social Services Training Council.

“At that stage I was a bit of a dinosaur” he joked. “All my service was in general work where you were expected to do a bit of everything, whereas by that time everyone was becoming a specialist.”

Ill health led to him retiring early in 1987 and he joined the Fellowship in the Lisburn branch about 10 years later. “I think it was at my second meeting that I found myself branch secretary” he said. With a new chairman and a new treasurer he helped to widen the range of branch activities with outings to ‘practically everywhere’ and before long he was regional representative as well, then vice chairman and now chairman for Northern Ireland.

He is still secretary and acting chairman of Lisburn branch and enjoys the friendship and conversation. “I’m really just an ordinary member doing ordinary work” he said. “We are all retired now, all one group, no matter what you were when you worked. You get a buzz out of it and you meet all sorts of people.”

Wesley is married, with three children and lives in Boardmills, about 10 miles from the centre of Belfast. He’s a keen gardener and has had a lifelong interest in stamp collecting. His collection of British stamps since 1840 runs to five albums.

Fellowship plans link with Age UK for conference event

The friendliness of Fellowship members has been an inspiration to Lynn Ireland, who began work as Development Officer for the north of England in June. “Everyone has been so nice” she said. It’s lovely. I am really, really looking forward to it.”

Lynn’s background is in further education where she was a lecturer at colleges in the north west before joining the NHS about nine years ago teaching ‘essential skills’ in literacy and numeracy to staff who were without qualifications.

“I liked the ethos of the NHS and I liked working with adults. My role just developed and I finished as Training

Manager for Lancashire Teaching Hospitals” she said. Four years ago she made the decision to go self-employed and has been doing project work for a government supported organisation ‘Skills for Health.’

Lynn lives with her partner Fred in Penwortham, near Preston. They enjoy walking and outdoor activities and are regulars at music events and beer festivals.



“I liked the ethos of the NHS and I liked working with adults. My role just developed and I finished as Training Manager for Lancashire Teaching Hospitals”

Lynn Ireland

The NHSRF is good for you

Positive proof that the Fellowship is good for you was revealed by our Patron, Ken Jarrold at a typically engaging and stimulating welcome speech at the conference reception.



Ken Jarrold, Patron

He introduced members to a best-selling book by French psychologist and psychotherapist Marie de Hennezel entitled "The warmth of

your heart prevents your body from rusting' and recommended it should become the official book of the Fellowship.

The book proposes cultivating a positive awareness of ageing and suggests that it is the capacity to love and desire that keeps us alive. 'Charm no longer comes from the smoothness of the skin or the strength of muscle – but from the soul' is the message.

'I speak as someone who is 63 and I know some of you regard that as ridiculously young, but we all need to adapt to changing situations' said Ken. 'One of the things this book tells us is that giving and receiving and showing generosity all have positive effects. So now it is official: being a member of the NHSRF prolongs your life.'

The book is published by Rodale (Pan Macmillan) which is part of Macmillan publishing.

Chaplains at the heart of care says minister

The varied role of a hospital chaplain and their work in helping people to confront deeply spiritual issues was described to members in a sincere speech from the Reverend David Hopkins, Chaplain to Harrogate District Hospital, at the welcome dinner.



Reverend David Hopkins

David, who is a Baptist minister, retired from his chaplaincy job last November. But four months later his successor resigned – so he is back at work in a job he loves.

"People think of chaplains as people dressed in black who are only there when someone is dying, and when they are not doing that they just sit in their office and be holy" he said.

"But we support staff, visitors and patients, we sit on ethics committees, we help with organ donations and we teach on courses for breaking bad news or helping with bereavement."

"People struggling with life and death issues want someone to talk to. That has shaped my whole life as a chaplain. When someone says 'why am I suffering like this?' or 'why has your God given my mother cancer?' these are deeply spiritual issues, not religious ones."

He praised the readiness of staff to go the extra mile and their massive commitment to the service which was marvellous to see. But sometimes, he added, chaplains could go where staff fear to tread.

"Chaplains are there to help others through the vicissitudes of life" he said. "It is right at the heart of the Christian tradition." And quoting the story of St Martin who shared his cloak with a beggar he added: "I share my cloak with you."

New form simplifies Benevolent Fund bids

A new and simpler form for applying for a grant from the Fellowship's Benevolent Fund has been produced and will be available from Central Office or can be downloaded from the Fellowship website.

It has been devised by the fund's trustees: Ethel Armstrong, Renee Gibb, Mik Webb and Gareth Ogden – and cuts out some of the complexity and patronising style of the previous form.

"The old form was written in the way you might talk to your pussycat" said the fund's new chairman, Ethel Armstrong. "It was not appropriate and we have been working very hard on your behalf to make a form which will be acceptable and simple."

The trustees are adamant that confidentiality should be maintained and have agreed that the forms will be held at central office and members can apply directly for support, without necessarily going through their branch officers.

Audrey Harris (NE Thames Regional Representative) said many branches



felt that the initial contact should be with welfare officers or branch secretaries rather than someone members don't know at central office.

Ethel explained that members would have a choice. "They can apply to central office or they can go to their branch secretary or welfare officer. With the new form there should be no need to go back to ask extra questions and we hope applications can be dealt with in 7 to 10 days."

Last year the fund made grants totalling just over £1,800 and has a balance of over £24,000. Grants of up to £800 are now available.

SIXTH IRENE JAMES LECTURE



Professor Ian Philp

Ian Philp inspires delegates

The complexities of trying to match his zeal for improvements in services for the elderly with the realities of politics and money were brilliantly depicted in an inspirational, and at times passionate, Irene James lecture by Professor Ian Philp, CBE, who was National Director for Older People from 2000 to 2008.

In a series of personal recollections he described how the fluctuating politics of the Labour government years confronted him with difficult personal choices as ambitious plans were either seized on with enthusiasm or watered down or abandoned, according to the mood of the government or ministerial changes.

It was a lesson he learned early in life. His father was a consultant radiologist and he recalled the excitement and awe of his first visits to a hospital as a small boy. But when he trained to be a doctor he began to have doubts when his ideals were confronted by a reality where the best was not always done for patients.

He 'discovered' geriatrics at age 19, working with a physician full of humanity, and later became Professor of Geriatrics at Sheffield where he was involved in turning round the local services.

Service framework

At the time the Observer newspaper was running a campaign about the lack of dignity in the care of older people and he was called in by the then Secretary of State for Health, Frank Dobson, and asked to develop a National Service Framework for Older People.

His team drew up a wide ranging framework and sent it to No 10. "Far too broad" was the response. Narrow it down to hospital care and strokes. They solved the dilemma (with help from Frank Dobson) by publishing it anyway and Ian was then asked by Alan Milburn to implement it as the 'Tsar' for older people.

"These were fantastic years" he said. "we had money to invest in community services. I went round the country and I could see the pent up enthusiasm among people to work together to improve services."

The draught of change

But then came the cold draught of change. The government decided to focus on national priorities; cancer, heart disease and waiting times – and the framework for older people was relegated to a fourth tier priority. Should he quit, or should he stay?

He stayed, and wrote up the achievements to show what had been done. And then some of the work began to 'resonate' with other campaigns like dignity and privacy, or the equalities agenda and he was given a chance to talk directly to the Prime Minister.

In a seven minute slot he told the story of a miner who carried his dying son to hospital because he could not afford the bus fare, only to find he was dead when he got there, and reminded Tony Blair that incidents like that were the motivation for the founding fathers of the NHS. He then listed 10 points for change – and got the political backing he needed to go ahead.

The mechanism for the National Service Framework had been disbanded, but by linking with other initiatives like work on stroke prevention or mental health developments it became possible to make progress again.

“In a seven minute slot he told the story of a miner who carried his dying son to hospital because he could not afford the bus fare”

He left in 2008 and resumed more of his clinical and academic work. Today, he told members that as he walks the corridors of hospitals in Warwickshire he still feels the excitement that he had when he was a little boy. "It's immensely rewarding" he said. "You know the institution you are working in will do great things that day. You know there is going to be excitement and challenge and in some small way you can probably make a difference in areas that are important to people."

And as a final thought, he went back to his training days when he was asked by his tutor to talk to older people about dying. "It makes you unafraid" he said. "Older people often have an acceptance of the fact that they are near the end. They tell me they are not afraid to die. That they have had a good life, it makes sense now and it was worth living. They say 'if I die tomorrow, it would not be a tragedy. I just don't want to suffer and I don't want to be a burden to my family.'"

THE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

“ Let’s build on our winning formula ”

Mike Brown was in upbeat mood as he presented his fifth annual report to conference.

“I remain enthusiastic, committed and optimistic about the future” he told delegates as he set out his aims of increasing membership and getting the Fellowship more widely recognised in the NHS.

A difficult year lay ahead with the changing structure and the changing people in the NHS and the Fellowship would have to seek new sources of funding if it was to continue to flourish.

But looking back over the past year he noted that the number of members signing up for Gift Aid had risen to 6,300 as a result of which the Fellowship recovered about £16,000 in tax, and our lottery was now bringing in nearly £3,400 a year.



Mike Brown

Major success

Some branches had closed but the major success had been the flyer which had been sent to 600,000 pensioners. This resulted in 1,584 new members - an increase of 11%. Thanks to the work of development officers, new branches had opened in Wales and the south of England and there was every prospect of more in the next year.

The Fellowship was now doing more in collaboration with other organisations such as the Civil Service Retirement Fellowship (ideas include joint arrangements for special interests like golf, photography, cookery, theatre, walking, genealogy and even real ale) and it has undertaken a survey of postal members (those who do not

belong to a branch) to find out what most interests them.

Investment continues in the Fellowship website where it was increasingly important to be professional and well presented and develop its potential for communication with members.

Last year members went on holiday to Croatia. This year more than 50 are going to Majorca. Members visiting London can now stay at the Civil Service Club near Whitehall.

Thanks

Mike thanked retiring chairman Vic Griffiths for his support and leadership, ‘his enthusiasm and energy and commitment are infectious’ and once again praised the central office

staff ‘the mainstay of the Fellowship.’

“I believe we have a winning formula” he said. “I am a member of South Manchester branch which is thriving and enterprising with lots of activities. I know this is replicated around the UK. I don’t want to change the structure, I want to nurture it.”

“We are in a rapidly changing world. We ignore it at our peril. We must embrace change if we are to survive. I am up for the challenge and I believe all of you are as well. Let’s go forward together and build a Fellowship that future retirees will be proud to join.”

Branches boost membership

Colchester were the winners of the Sefton Cup for the highest percentage increase in membership in a year which saw their numbers jump from 26 to 36 – an increase of 38%.

Second were Enfield and District (18 to 26 – 33%) and third were Sandwell and West Birmingham and Norwich and District, both of whom achieved 27% increases.

The Membership award, for the branch with the highest increase in numbers (as opposed to percentages) was won by Barking, Havering and Brentwood where there was an increase of 21 members, from 113 to 134.

East Grinstead were second, with 20 new members (85 to 105) and Norwich and District third with 19 (71 to 90).



Anna Johnson, Barking, Havering and Brentwood, receives the Membership award from the Fellowship's new president, Vic Griffiths.

Kettering scoop newsletter title

New entrants Kettering, who produced a newsletter for the first time in their 30 years, “zoomed in under the radar” to scoop the certificate and shield for the best newsletter.



Gareth Ogden, from Kettering receives the shield for the newsletter competition from Andrew Moss.

Age UK listens to Fellowship members

Older people are the glue of our communities, Kate Adams, Head of Engagement and Volunteering for Age UK told delegates in a lively speech which set the scene for later discussions about current issues.

Kate explained that Age UK (formed from the merger of Age Concern and Help the Aged) sets great store by the importance of listening to what people tell them about their aspirations and experiences.

“Society doesn’t always treat getting older and having an older population with enough care” said Kate. “Ageist attitudes prevent many people from being able to take full advantage of opportunities.”

Age UK was a champion on such issues with both central and local governments and carries out research in areas which are not of interest to other organisations like incontinence, eyesight problems or falls. She set delegates the task of feeding back comments on three topical issues (and any others they wished) which were: care services, the changing structure of the NHS and comments on ‘the big



Kate Adams, Age UK

society’ and volunteering. Full results will be analysed and reported in later newsletters, but topics which made a big impact at once were about nutrition in hospitals, obstacles to volunteering caused by regulations, and insurance premiums. More information on Age UK is available from their useful website or you can email Kate at Kate.Adams@ageuk.org.uk

The competition was judged by regional representatives Pam Holroyd and Joan Dew, with help from national newsletter editor Andrew Moss.

A record entry of 30 included four who were sending in newsletters that had been started during the year – Salisbury, Kettering, East Surrey and Northallerton.

The judges praised the quality of the entries, which reflected a lot of enterprise and activity in the branches, and were particularly pleased with those that looked forward with a spirit of optimism, rather than dwelt in the past. They chose Kettering because of the way in which it presented the branch as an organisation with plenty going on in a clear and helpful way.

Runner up, to the delight of their representatives, was Cambridge with their simple but comprehensive publication and Highly Commended was the ever-reliable and crisply written newsletter from Peterborough.

All change at the top

Vic Griffiths becomes the new president of the Fellowship, taking over from Gordon Jackson as the top roles changed hands at the AGM.



The new chairman (taking over from Vic) is Ethel Armstrong, as reported on page 1. One of her aims this year will be to retain the membership of the hundreds of new members who have joined through the recruitment campaign.

Her first task was to say a special thank you to Gordon and Glenys Jackson. Over the past six years Gordon has been vice chairman, chairman and president and now returns to the ranks of ordinary members. "I am so grateful to you both for all the work you have done to support the Fellowship" said Ethel. "You have been wonderful."

New president Vic Griffiths added his praise: "I have followed Gordon for years" he said. "He has helped me tremendously."

Stepping up to be the new vice chairman is Cynthia Matthews, who represents

Wales on the National Council. She is a founder member and secretary of Gwent branch and a former consultant dermatologist.



Above: Cynthia Matthews, elected vice chairman at the Harrogate AGM

Left: Gordon Jackson hands over the president's badge of office to Vic Griffiths

Subscriptions increase

Subscriptions to the Fellowship are to go up by £1 a year to £5 per member from April next year.

Members backed the increase after hearing from Hon Treasurer Martin Davis that the subscription – which supports the work of central office, the director and the development officers – had not gone up since 2006.

"It needs to go up every five or six years to retain its purchasing power" said Martin, "and it represents only about 20% of our operating costs."

"If we go to other bodies to ask for grants the first question they ask is 'what are you doing to help yourselves?' It is helpful to be able to say we have looked at our subscriptions and revised them."

The Fellowship as a whole put in a strong performance financially in 2010-11, Martin reported. Central Office expenses were £4,710 below the budget of around £200,000, while overall the Fellowship had a year-end surplus of £45,970. But there is a lot of uncertainty about the future, and in particular the £150,000 that came from Strategic Health Authorities which are being disbanded. "We shall work to secure grants from the successor bodies, but it is against a very difficult financial climate."



Members were quickly on the dance floor after the gala dinner to revive memories of fifty years ago when the band – complete with Beatle jackets and winkle picker shoes – struck up with a series of hits from the sixties. There wasn't anyone who didn't know the words – and the dancing went on till midnight.

Talk raises cash for tumour charity

The story of the struggle of a baronet to save his family home from ruin was amusingly told by Sir Thomas Ingilby, Sixth Baronet of Ripley who was guest speaker at the Gala Dinner.

Sir Thomas inherited the estate and its tax burdens and liabilities when he was only 18 and has restored its fortunes

by developing the castle as a centre for visitors, hospitality events and weddings. His tales of near catastrophes brought many a gasp and a smile from his audience. His talk helped to raise money for a charity founded by a friend whose husband died of a brain tumour.

Norwich says thanks to Janet

Norwich and District branch has awarded honorary life membership and presented a certificate of appreciation to Janet Wright, branch secretary for 13 years until 2007 and a committee member until this year.

Janet joined the branch in 1992 with her husband Derrick, who was a Transport and Stores Manager in the NHS for 20 years. In her working life she was PA to the Highways Superintendent at the City Engineers Department in Norwich.

“Since I joined the Fellowship its aims and purposes have remained virtually unchanged” she said. “The format has worked well. A welcome change has been more frequent outings and the largest change has been information technology, which has been a factor in bringing new members to the group.

The branch newsletter has proved very popular, especially sending copies to members who are unable to attend meetings. It keeps them in touch.”



Janet and Derrick Wright, with the certificate of appreciation.

Dame Vera joins Joan's birthday party

Dame Vera Lynn was among those present to help Mid Sussex branch member Joan Dew celebrate her ninetieth birthday. As well as being a very active member of the Fellowship, Joan has also been on the committee of the Friends of the Princess Royal Hospital in Haywards Heath for 20 years and is still vice chairman.

Dame Vera is president of the League of Friends and joined members and the chairman, retired surgeon Richard Corbett, for a special reception. Paying tribute to Joan, Mr Corbett said she was a wonderful person to have on the committee. If there was a job to be done and it was given to Joan it would be done quickly and efficiently, with the minimum of fuss.



Joan Dew at the Harrogate conference receiving the certificate for second place in the membership awards from president Vic Griffiths, on behalf of East Grinstead branch. “I founded that branch” she said with delight.

Farewell Mr chairman – welcome Mr president

Ron Harding, who has been an inspirational member of Eastbourne branch for many years has retired as chairman – and immediately become its president.

The branch was founded in April 1987 and Ron and his wife Joyce became members soon afterwards, when Ron retired from working at the Royal Marsden Hospital.

Ron became Vice-Chairman in 1992 and chairman in 1994 and has been hugely dedicated and inspirational in his service – the backbone of the branch and a constant part of the committee.

In earlier days he arranged many memorable and successful outings and holidays. Both Ron and Joyce, who has supported Ron and the branch loyally, have been keen members of the walkers group. Their knowledge of wildflowers and butterflies is renowned.

Sylvia Hoan and Gillian Langridge paid moving tributes to the couple's dedication to the branch followed by the presentation of retirement gifts. It was announced that Ron had agreed to become President – a move that was warmly welcomed.



Ron and Joyce Harding after being presented with gifts and flowers at the Eastbourne Branch AGM.

Sunshine on the Isle

Huntingdon branch members pose for the camera in front of one of the carriages after a train ride to the top of Snae Fell during their holiday on the Isle of Man. “We had wall-to-wall sunshine and very smooth crossings both ways” said member John Smoothy. “We have already made arrangements for a trip to Cornwall in 2012.”



Cheery walkers in Bromsgrove



Bromsgrove and Redditch branch has started a walking group, pictured here looking cheerful at the start of a leisurely stroll round the Bromsgrove countryside. "We expect this to be the first of many" said group member Roger Wharton.

Pembrokeshire on recruitment drive

Pembrokeshire branch, which opened a year ago, is busy recruiting new members.

The branch meets every month in Haverfordwest. Secretary and acting chair of the county's branch Shan Bartlett said: "People who work for the NHS are constantly learning and training. That's not the idea behind

our branch which is more of a social and friendship group."

The branch aims to organise activities starting with a trip around Pembrokeshire's historic sites. To join at £15 per year, call Mrs Bartlett on 01646 601641 or email shan101@live.co.uk.



Pembrokeshire members Jeff Edwards, Sian Edwards, Stephen Bartlett and acting secretary Shan Bartlett are on a recruitment drive.

Royal wedding parties

Berkshire branch members raised a glass to toast Prince William and Kate Middleton (whose family live at Bucklebury, near Reading) the day before the royal wedding when they held a buffet lunch after their regular meeting.

And North West Surrey branch held a special celebration meeting to mark the occasion. Members contributed food for a lunch party, bought a special "wedding cake" made of iced cup cakes and held an appropriate quiz.



Olive's spring chickens

South Manchester president Olive Bellfield went for the soft toys in a big way when she decorated her Easter bonnet for the branch parade.



Thanks to Doreen

Vic Griffiths, chairman of Basildon and Thurrock branch presented flowers and a gift to Doreen Musgrove, who has retired after 17 years as membership secretary. She is succeeded by Wendy West.



Obituaries

Kay York



Catherine York (Kay) was born in Scotland and grew up in Wales. She qualified as a nurse and then a midwife and worked at a steel works in North Wales, moving to the Canary Islands after she married.

When the family returned to England she became a Queens Nurse for Mill End, Rickmansworth and Moor Park and spent many years working in the community. She later became a senior community midwife in the Watford area, retiring in 1986.

Kay was a founder member of the Watford branch to which she gave her full support. She loved people, disliked injustice of any kind and was always ready to prove her point.

Margaret Pickering

Margaret Pickering, a founder member of Boston branch, died in April at the age of 93. She was an active member and regularly attended meetings until 2007 when she moved to Leek, in Staffordshire to be close to her family. Her most treasured possession was a photograph of herself with Princess Anne at the official opening of the Pilgrim Hospital, where she worked as Linen Room Supervisor.

Jimmy Taylor

James "Jimmy" Taylor who died in April was an active member of Perth and Kinross branch for 25 years and secretary from 1988 to 1999. Latterly the branch made him an honorary member. He attended every meeting, outing and the national conference and will be sadly missed by his many friends in the Fellowship.

Henry Knight

Cecily Knight, from Southend on Sea branch writes: "My dear husband Henry William Knight passed away in April after a serious fall at home. He was an associate member of the Fellowship which he enjoyed for many happy years."



Peggy Grieve

Margaret Mary Grieve MBE – or Peggy as she was fondly known - died in May. She joined the Fellowship in Fife but later founded the Dumfries branch in 2005, chairing it for four years. At her last meeting, just after her 91st birthday, she was elected president. The thriving Dumfries branch is the result of Peggy's foresight and endeavour – she never missed a meeting and took part enthusiastically in any organised event. She was an inspiration and a wise leader and the Fellowship has lost a dear friend.

Ella Radford



Bromley branch members were saddened to hear of the death of Ella Radford, a lovely lady who had been secretary and holiday organiser and an active committee member until her health deteriorated. Ella trained as a nurse in London in the 1940s, caring for patients injured in the blitz and her later career included midwifery, orthopaedics and operating theatres. She finished as nursing officer at Orpington. She loved music, books and art and was a keen tennis player.

Audrey Fairbairn



Audrey Fairbairn, an active member of Harrogate branch died in March aged 81. Audrey trained in nursing and midwifery in Birmingham and joined the Princess Mary Nurses of the RAF, working in Germany where she met her husband Norman. They had three daughters. Audrey returned to midwifery in Harrogate in 1965 and worked there until retirement in 1989.

She joined the branch committee in 1994 and was responsible for catering. She became social secretary in 2007, organising branch holidays. When she retired from the committee in 2010 she was made an honorary member. Audrey was a member of several groups apart from the NHSRF and also helped with Mothers Union Enterprises, raising funds for work overseas and in the Red Cross shop in Harrogate. She will be missed for her constructive support and her friendship.

Margaret Goard

Margaret Goard, a founder member of East Grinstead branch, died in June aged 81. She trained as a nurse at the Royal London Hospital and then worked from 1951 to 1968 as a staff nurse at the Queen Victoria Hospital in East Grinstead before switching careers to become a teacher at a school in Surrey.

Helen Brunton and Julia Gilbert

Two members of Clyde and Lomond branch have died recently. Helen Brunton was a long serving member of the branch committee and membership secretary for many years. Julia Gilbert was a founder member, served on the committee as minute secretary and was a regular attendee at Scottish federation meetings. Both are sadly missed.

Brent surprise Olive, 90



A surprised Olive Hughes with Brent members and her birthday cake

Brent branch members surprised their elder statesman Olive Hughes with a special ninetieth birthday cake at the Gala Dinner in Harrogate.

The cake bore the legend '90 years young' which was a fitting motto for a lady who is still branch treasurer. "She's fantastic" said chairman Kathy Hine. "If we need to know anything we ask Olive – she's a fountain of knowledge. When we go on outings we never have to worry, she's up at the front with the cheque book doing all the maths in her head."

Olive joined the Fellowship after a career in health administration, starting as a Steward's Clerk at Central Middlesex Hospital in 1939 and retiring from a post in the supplies department at the Regional Health Authority in 1984. She has been a Fellowship member for more than 26 years and is a former regional representative.

"I have been a committee member, membership secretary and now treasurer" she said. "They are a young crowd. It's wonderful."

Off to a flying start



Members of the new Guys and St Thomas's branch have wasted no time in getting out and about this summer. In June they persuaded a tourist to take this picture of them at Westminster Pier at the end of a boat trip down the Thames to Greenwich and back. In July they were on the water again for a visit to HMS Belfast, including watching Tower Bridge open and a grandstand view of an ocean going liner being moved off its moorings.

Salisbury Cathedral Carol Service

The Carol Service in Salisbury Cathedral, co-hosted by the NHS Retirement Fellowship, will be taking place on Saturday 3rd December 2011 at 3.00pm. NHS staff, Fellowship members, their families and friends are invited to participate in this seasonal celebration and perhaps to combine the visit with some Christmas shopping in Salisbury market. If your branch is organising a coach party to the service, you can contact Anthea Graham to arrange for a block of seats to be reserved.
01520722951
anthea.graham@nhsrf.org.uk

Varied topics at Scottish seminar

Members attending the annual Scottish Seminar in Perth on 13 October will have the chance to hear speakers on subjects which range from managing pain to plans by the banks to phase out cheques.

There will also be a workshop style session run by Age UK (Scotland) who want to find out what issues most concern older people. The seminar costs £25. Details from branch secretaries.

Scots branches reach 30

Two Scottish branches have celebrated their thirtieth anniversaries. Both Perth and Kinross and Fife branches held celebration lunches and enjoyed specially created cakes to mark the occasion.

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