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Ethel Armstrong MBE

## DEAR ALL

### Helping Hands

I hope you like the tree on the left. I see it as representing all the good work people are doing at the present time to try and win the battle with Covid-19. Some of you are, I know, doing marvellous work making scrubs and other items for those on the front line whilst others are helping in other ways like getting shopping for people. Keeping in contact with folk is also very valuable. I am sure we all enjoy making and receiving telephone calls, contact via Facebook and so on. So, keep those helping hands busy. It is so worthwhile.

### What's new this Issue

Well I would like to start with a very special message from Ethel Armstrong, one of our Patrons. Despite being poorly earlier in the year she is now back and engaging enthusiastically in all that is going on. As she says, 'I have given 70+ years of my life to the NHS/Fellowship and continue to be inspired by all the exceedingly good work that is done. My very best wishes and thanks to you all.' I am sure you will all join me in my thanks to Ethel for her continued support and continual good humour.

Next on my list of 'what's new' are the Mirthy Talks, details of which are shown on page 2 of this newsletter. I first met Alex, their CEO, at a reception at The Admiralty in London a few years ago. He was then CEO of the Care Workers Charity. Since then he has moved on to create a new organization whose mission is to help those in later life remain active and engaged. I do hope you will join me on 19<sup>th</sup> May when the first talk goes live, the topic being VE Day.

We have been hearing quite a lot in the news recently about the mobile phone App which is currently being trialled in the Isle of Wight. In one of my phone discussions with John Rostill recently he told me he was very interested in this initiative. It is appreciated that not everyone will be able to take part when this goes nationwide but John is keen to encourage us all to engage with it if we can and thus help to win the battle with Covid-19.

Quiz – Many of you will remember that a couple of newsletters back I included a quiz with the request that entries be received by 30 April. Well my thanks to those who took part. On the due date I asked my hubby, Frank, to help me do the draw. I am pleased to announce that the lucky winner was Lorraine Taylor, Regional Rep. for NW Thames. Well done Lorraine. Your prize is on its way to you in the post.

## New – UK-wide live ‘branch meetings’ for Fellowship members

### First meeting Tuesday, 19 May at 11am

I am pleased to be able to invite you to take part in our new Fellowship-wide live branch meetings commencing in May. These will be available to all members who have access to an internet enabled device, e.g. laptop, PC, tablet, or smartphone, with a broadband connection. Mirthy recommends using Google Chrome (<https://www.google.com/chrome/>) as your internet browser to register and access these talks, to ensure the best possible experience.

To take part all you need to do is go to - [www.mirthy.co.uk/nhsrf](http://www.mirthy.co.uk/nhsrf) and follow the simple instructions to register your interest. You will then be sent an email telling you precisely what to do to join the meeting. Basically, you log on 15 minutes before the state and wait. Then all will become clear nearer the start time.

The meetings will consist of an introduction from our host, Alex Ramamurthy, the opportunity to say ‘hello’ to other members then a talk that is being delivered only to NHSRF members across England, Scotland and Wales. At the end of the talk you will be able to ask a question of the speaker. Basically, you type in your question, Alex will read it out and then you will hear the speaker answering. It will not be quite the same as an actual branch meeting, you will have to provide your own tea and biscuits, but promises to be enjoyable and worthwhile, nonetheless. I have already taken part in one of these talks and it was certainly well worthwhile.

The talks are being generously provided fortnightly free of charge for NHSRF members during the Covid-19 shutdown by Mirthy, a new dynamic organisation whose mission is to help those in later life remain active, social and connected in their community. In the words of their CEO, Alex. ‘This is our way to give back to those who have given so much.’

Mirthy is currently contracted to deliver talks around the country to other organisations such as U3A and McCarthy & Stone residents.

The first two sessions will be delivered on:

#### Tuesday, 19 May 11am

(Talk lasts 34 min + Q&A)

Meet Harry Kay, a veteran of WW1, now a civilian and living at home with his family. He is dealing with the privations of a different sort of war, the air raids and rationing. Listen how he and his family experienced V-E Day through the words of Simon Waterfield, a historical performer. There are period newspapers, ration books and identity cards to show you.

#### Tuesday, 2 June 11am

(Talk lasts 29 min. + Q&A)

#### Gongoozling for Beginners

After 30 years as a police officer in Sussex, Neil thought this sounded just the tonic for retirement; relaxing, stress free and with the chance to grow his beard and hair. This is a light-hearted journey around some of the 2000 miles of navigable waterways in a 58-foot canal narrow boat across Britain, with just a small dose of history, lots of humour, a rather wet puppy and only one broken arm .....so far!

Further dates/topics to be advised in due course.

If you have any problems with registering or any queries at all, please contact me in the first instance. Thanks.  
[london.eastanglia@nhsrf.org.uk](mailto:london.eastanglia@nhsrf.org.uk) or call 07960 425956. Sally/Editor

***Live Events for older adults in the comfort of your living room***

## High Street Shops

I thought it would be nice next to have a little bit of fun. Susan Gunning of the Royal Marsden Branch sent me this quiz recently. See how you get on. I will print the answers in the next issue of South East News but if you can't wait in the meantime do drop me an email.

Can you guess which shop is referred to:

1. A cold country (7)
2. The value of fleece (10)
3. Spoil the pot hops (3,4)
4. Keep optics (10)
5. Gives a boost to walkers (5)
6. Move roy truss around (4,1,2)
7. National Dwellings Depository (7,4,6)
8. Books 9, 10 in the Old Testament (7)
9. An RAF pilot would not shop here (4,3,4,6)
10. We can blame Halley for this one (5)



*Some Interesting actual business names:*

*Wright Hassall, solicitors Leamington Spa*

*Floral and Hardy, florists, Hertfordshire*

*Surelock Homes, locksmiths in Portsmouth*



If you like to draw, write short stories, compose music, write poems or short drama pieces then this competition could be for you. Special category for the over 70s. £1,000 prizes to be won.

Visit <https://www.kinglearprizes.org.uk/> for more information.

Thanks to Sheila Sheppard of Brighton for drawing this to my attention.

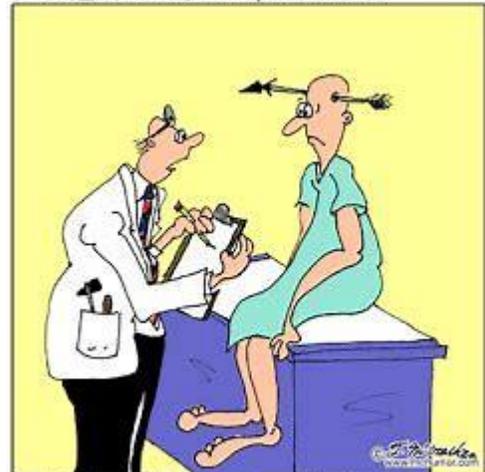


## Covid-19 Mutual Aid UK

Covid-19 Mutual Aid UK is a group of volunteers supporting local community groups organising mutual aid throughout the Covid-19 outbreak in the UK. Visit the website to search by location to find what is available very locally.

<https://covidmutualaid.org/>

**McHUMOR.com** by T. McCracken



"Off hand, I'd say you're suffering from an arrow through your head, but just to play it safe, I'm ordering a bunch of tests."

## Making Scrubs, Washbags and Headbands for Frontline Staff



If you are currently involved in making scrubs, then well done. I have read of some excellent work done by members via Facebook. We all know everyone's efforts are being much appreciated. If you are not involved but would like to be and are not sure who to contact then please consider contacting Scrub Hub [www.scrubhub.org.uk](http://www.scrubhub.org.uk) which has many branches around the UK or the For the Love of Scrubs Facebook group which currently has around 40,000 members. In addition, there are also various local initiatives to be found on the web.

My understanding is that not only are people needed to sew but also to help with the administration. Making the items is fairly straightforward and if you become involved with a group, they will advise you how they would like the items to be made. There are, in any case, various sites on-line with photographs showing how to make items and a number of YouTube videos for those who prefer to learn this way.

If you have any difficulty in finding a way to help do please contact me.

Editor

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## Over 70s urged to maintain an exercise routine



My apologies for the stark heading of this item but as I fall into this category myself, I feel reasonably comfortable in writing it. Indeed, I did, in fact, copy it from the March/April 2020 edition of Dignity Magazine mentioned in the last issue of SE News.

I was speaking with our CEO, John Rostill, last week and we discussed our concerns for members who for whatever reason were not going out for walks during the current crisis. We fully appreciate that for some people it simply is neither practical nor safe for them to do so.

At the present time Covid-19 is the biggest enemy for most but, referring back to the Dignity article I would just like to mention, what we all really know already, that inactivity will lead to some muscle wastage and possibly also low mood. Consequently those suffering from it are at greater risk of experiencing trips and falls, and a loss of confidence.

So, my reason for writing is just to encourage those who can sensibly go out to do just that provided they take adequate precautions. I wear sunglasses and a mask. It was a woolly scarf on the colder days earlier in the year. I also observe social distancing even if it means crossing the road a few times.

If going out of the house is really not for you then may I take the liberty of encouraging you to do simple exercises like marching on the spot or up and down the room, side steps, wall press ups and going from sit to stand a few times. I have a little routine I do every day. I also do my Cawthorne Cooksey exercises as I have a balance problem. I know that some people follow online exercise routines or dance to music but just moving about really is the key.

Good luck everyone and sorry to nag!

Editor



## Kathy Hine has kindly given us the history of Brent Branch

A meeting of retired staff was called in December 1980 to see if there was any interest in forming a branch. In February 1981 the first meeting was held, and Charles Thompson from the Croydon branch came along to tell those present how to form a successful group (Croydon was one of the original three Fellowship branches). Brent Branch grew slowly, and activities increased from meetings with a cup of tea to occasional outings.

I joined the committee in April 1996 and enjoyed being a team member again. The group were now having regular summer outings and a Christmas lunch. The membership was just over 100. In April 2000 Ray Hummerston, our enthusiastic chairman and founder member, asked me to take over as chairman and he sadly died that July. Some of the other committee members retired at that AGM, so we had a good mix of old and new.

Over the years the numbers have gradually increased to 250 and this has mostly happened by word of mouth. Our members also belong to other clubs and churches, so the word quickly gets around that it's good fun to meet up. We have a mixture from all aspects of the NHS - admin., domestic, porters, G.Ps. clerical, secretarial, nurses and midwives. Being a London branch, we are also lucky to have a very diverse ethnic mix with a huge range of expectations - life is never boring! We have a small committee of eight very different personalities, but we blend beautifully. Everything is discussed via phone calls and e-mails so only one or two formal meetings are needed each year. In spite of our official titles we all help with the work, meeting up in the hospital cafe to stuff envelopes or help check 80-90 cheques before Joyce pops into the bank just opposite.

Our secretary, Theresa, is very involved with her church and in return the priest allows her to do all our photocopying free, which at over 200 copies of everything is a huge saving. Because we have a healthy bank balance it was decided to charge the basic £20 membership and not to charge for refreshments at indoor meetings. This allows anyone on a small pension to enjoy being a member and a cup of tea (it also attracts new members). Monica arranges very interesting speakers and theatre visits. Peggy sells raffle tickets and makes over £100 at each meeting to pay for the speaker and refreshments. The summer coach outings are very popular with two coaches needed each month. We try to do something festive in November like a Christmas lunch cruise and an annual lunch in March. In September 40+ of us plan to go to a Warner's Hotel and enjoy daily trips plus the camaraderie on the coach.

It was interesting and heart-warming that in October 2004 we were invited by Brian Saunders to go and talk at a meeting in Croydon. He was trying to restart the branch and needed a 'successful branch' to enthuse potential members. Needless to say, we were more than delighted to return the favour.

## Pharmacy2U explained

Free delivery of your regular medications through your door, to any UK address

Handy reminders to re-order so you don't run out

Save time, with no need for repeated trips to your GP or Pharmacy, very useful with Covid-19

[www.pharmacy2u.co.uk/](http://www.pharmacy2u.co.uk/) or call 0113 265 0222



Bury St. Edmunds Event

## Bob Middleton, Project Officer, reports on the Heritage Project 2020

A programme of NHS Heritage events has been planned to take place from November 2019 to November 2020.

However, this may well have to be extended to June 2021 because of Covid-19. The actual timetable will need to be defined in due course. The project is being funded largely by a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £10,000 won in June 2019.

The events are being staged in four regions: North West, East Anglia, South West and the North East enabled by Bob Middleton, Heritage Project Manager, and Development Officers, (NW) Karen Kennedy, (SW) Paul Pople, (NE) Lucia Hiden, East Anglia Chairs Chris Harper and Jeannette Lee, Regional Representative, Jenny King and Project Team from Poole and Torbay.

As well as celebrating the NHS from 1948 to 2020, and looking back on its past, the events (exhibitions and heritage presentations) will all generate both interest in the Fellowship and importantly generate new member recruitment. Some 20 events have been developed, but in East Anglia the focus has been to include engaging with primary and secondary schools led by Jeanette Lee of West Suffolk branch. This innovative collaborative working will involve an NHS Painting Competition, NHS Quiz for each group and a 'Future Nurse' Scrubs Uniform for each prize winner, together with events in Bury St Edmunds, Sudbury, and Newmarket arranged.

In the North West Region, collaborative working with Manchester City Council resulted in a St Ann's Square City Centre Event in November 2019 and four events to be held in the Arndale Centre starting in early January 2020. The project has engaged with a charity associated with the "Windrush" generation to plan a shared heritage event with the NHS and the planning of a new branch in the Manchester area. The region held a Heritage Event at Wythenshawe Hospital in November 2019, with a planned event also at Liverpool Alder Hey Hospital.

Events are being planned for the North East in Newcastle and in the South West region at Torbay and Poole together with other venues to be planned.

The 2020 Project has built on evaluation and experience gained in 2018 from the '70-40' Heritage Project and the good practice and lessons learned. All of the events will be in areas that attract established footfall so that maximum reach to people is achieved and attraction to both new members and to generate new branches.

A new Heritage Leaflet has been produced together with a new Exhibition Stand to promote NHS Heritage from 1948 to 2020. The leaflet includes innovative collaborative working with Manchester University 'NHS@70' in incorporating 100 NHSRF member memories.

**Editor note** – The leaflet is really rather good. If you would like to view it or have any questions about this project please contact Bob Middleton at [maxietom@yahoo.com](mailto:maxietom@yahoo.com)

And finally, keep well everyone. If you would like to contribute to the next issue or you know of anyone who would like to be added to the mailing list or sent a hard copy then please do make contact via phone 07960 425956 or email [london.eastanglia@nhsrf.org.uk](mailto:london.eastanglia@nhsrf.org.uk)

**Sally Bundock**  
Development Officer