

Fellowship

The newsletter of the NHS Retirement Fellowship

Pat, 90, takes sky dive in her stride

Fellowship member Pat Lockett has plunged from the sky aged 90 to raise funds for hospitals in Bristol – and she's unfazed by the experience.

Pat, a member of Bristol Central branch, did the sky dive in September and took it all in her stride.

"I read about somebody who had done a sky dive in a nursing magazine and I thought 'I could do that,'" she said. "I wasn't really nervous. There was lots of build up to it. I thoroughly enjoyed it. The man I was attached to was talking to me and showing me places. It was lovely, and I am happy I have done it, but I was glad to be back on the ground."

Pat began her health care career before the NHS, starting in London and then working in hospitals in Dorchester and Bristol before she retired 20 years ago. She joined the Fellowship about five years ago and has enjoyed sharing in its activities.

She chose Above and Beyond, the official charity for Bristol hospitals to receive the £2,200 she raised partly because of the care given to her late husband Mike.



A confident Pat Lockett prepares for the sky dive

New look for the Fellowship coming soon

A fresh look for the NHS Retirement Fellowship is being developed with support from a specialist design agency and will be launched to members shortly.

Chief Executive John Rostill explained: "Following the celebrations of the 40th anniversary of the Fellowship it is important to look to the next 40 years. The trustees felt that a fresh look could really set the tone for that and help us to project a good image of the Fellowship which will help spread awareness and attract new members.

"We had already had feedback from regional representatives and staff to say that they felt communications and marketing were key areas to the success of the Fellowship. I also think a fresh look will remind existing members that we remain a strong and ambitious charity which wants to offer great benefits to our members."

The new logo and branding will be rolled out across a range of materials including letters,

posters, leaflets, this newsletter and advertising materials. All branches are being asked to help make sure its implementation goes well and to use new materials which will be provided, once



John Rostill: new look for a strong ambitious charity

current materials have been used up.

Support will be available through local development officers or regional representatives. For items that have a financial value such as

conference banner stands, please contact the project manager directly (details below).

If you have any questions or queries about this work, please contact Lucia Hiden, development officer for the north east on [northeastengland@nhsrf.org.uk](mailto:nhsrf.org.uk) or 07739 138 954. Lucia is a former head of communications in the NHS and has experience of managing these types of projects.



Lucia Hiden, project manager for the new look

Dates fixed for members days

Dates have been fixed for the next round of members days when members get the chance to meet with staff from central office and regional representatives to hear more about the Fellowship's plans and discuss topics of interest.

Venues and times have still to be confirmed. Members in these areas will get a personal invitation nearer the time - but if you have not heard and would like to attend please email sherry.smith2@nhs.net.

The dates are:	
East Midlands	12 June
South West	24 July
North West	24 September

Coventry chosen for national conference

Coventry is the venue for this year's annual meeting and conference which runs from Thursday 31 October to Saturday 2 November.

Delegates will be staying at the Double Tree By Hilton Coventry where the two night conference package is being offered for £189 with the opportunity to add extra nights if members wish.

The package includes half board accommodation, morning coffee and afternoon

tea and a hot lunch during the conference and the gala dinner on Friday evening.

Entertainment will include Little Miss Sixties show on Thursday and the New Honeycombs on Friday with 60s disco. There will also be optional coach trips to historic Coventry on Friday afternoon (£7.50) and to Stratford with a cruise on the river Avon and a cream tea Saturday (£25).

Full details will be sent to branches shortly.

Remember the Benevolent Fund

writes Audrey Harris, fund chairman



"I have been the chairman of the Benevolent Fund committee for over a year now, so I thought I would remind members that the fund is there for you.

"The fund exists to help members in need who are faced with an unexpected expense. This could be for something like broken spectacles, or a washing machine or refrigerator replacement. Currently the limit of our help is £800. Members are not asked to provide proof of finances and there is no extensive documentation. The fund relies on trust that the information is correct. Applications are usually responded to within days, and are strictly confidential.

"The committee is reviewing the application form and information that a member would receive when making an application and is in discussion with the Trustees to increase the limit of savings that a member may hold, which at the moment is £4,000.

"The fund has a balance of nearly £22,000 and we were able to award four grants totalling £2,569 last year. We also received donations from three branches and a postal member.

Information about the fund is featured regularly in the national newsletter and on our website."

Launched in 2019, it is presently completely free to join. In fact, the first 250 women to do so will be entered in to a prize draw for a £100 Craft Courses voucher allowing the lucky winner to combine a few days away with joining in a local course.

Visit www.SisterStay.com to find out more.

New homestay community for women

Set up by a couple of 50-something women bent on enjoying life post-career / kids / maybe even partner, SisterStay is a new homestay organisation for interesting and interested women everywhere.

It's solo travel without any of the usual concerns. We open our homes to one another so we can travel as often as we like, making new friends, enjoying new experiences and exploring new destinations.

Based on mutual interests and nearby activities, members can choose where they'd like to travel and stay, contacting one another beforehand via SisterStay's online messaging facility.

There are plenty of solo travel organisations offering great trips and tours but we wanted to create something more nurturing than that – something really friendly which people could afford to make use of on a regular basis. We're unusual in that everyone acts as both host and guest. Also, we have a single overnight rate of £36 for every home, whatever the size or location, to foster a sense of belonging.



New chapter for Lorraine

Lorraine Tanner, who takes over from John Toman as the Fellowship's Development Officer for Wales in March, is starting a new chapter in her life.

After a successful 21 year career with House of Fraser, the last 11 of which were as a store manager, she was unexpectedly made redundant in 2018 and began the unfamiliar task of looking for work.

"As a store manager one of the favourite parts of my job was engaging with the local community. With my team we raised over £30,000 for local charities.

"I met some really inspirational people and I said to myself one day when the time is right I'm going to work for a charity. When I saw the Fellowship advertisement I thought: this is it - it's the job I

wanted. I feel privileged to have got it. I did not work for the NHS but that may be an advantage in some respects. I might be coming at things from a different angle."

Lorraine was born in London, within the sound of Bow Bells ("a proper cockney" she says) and moved to Kent when she bought her first house. She loves travelling, and it was on holiday that she met David, "a lovely Welsh man."

"Not only did I fall in love with him but also with Wales so it was an easy decision for me when David asked me to move to Wales." They live in Miskin, near Cardiff.

"I feel very blessed" she said. "I worked incredibly hard to achieve what I did. I am now looking forward to my next exciting chapter."



Lorraine Tanner: looking forward to the next exciting chapter

Debbie brings wide experience to Fellowship job



Debbie Arnold: joining the team in central office

Debbie Arnold, who joined Sherry Smith in central office at the end of March comes to the Fellowship with a varied career already behind her.

She is working as administrator in what is in effect a job share with Sherry, taking on many of the roles that Anthea Zell was doing until her retirement.

Debbie's most recent job has been with Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust leading a team of administrative staff supporting the health visitor teams throughout west Dorset.

But her early career after university was in marketing, initially for Rowntrees, BT and then Allied Breweries before marriage took her overseas for 10 years living in Asian countries where she took on voluntary work to support local charities.

Back in England after a divorce, she returned to her home town of Weymouth and began work in administration and finance management before starting work with the NHS.

Debbie lives in Weymouth with her husband John who she married two years ago and she's keen on fitness training including weight lifting, running and exercise classes and they are both rugby fans (they are often among the supporters at Bath) and they have a motor home which enables them to travel widely.

"This is an interesting role and one in which I look forward to using my administrative and other skills to help the Fellowship" she said. "I am of an age now where I can relate to people who have retired recently. I have been surprised to find that so many people did not know anything about the Fellowship and it will be nice if I can help in terms of promoting it. I am looking forward to being part of the team. It's a great organisation."

Debbie will be based at central office, working part time, mostly on the days when Sherry isn't there.

Moving on

Cosham branch recently said farewell to one of their longstanding and active members who had held several committee positions including branch secretary.

Vasos Antoniou came to the UK in 1966 from Cyprus and trained as a nurse and worked in

hospitals around Portsmouth before becoming a tutor and senior lecturer in Portsmouth School of Nursing. After retiring he continued as a volunteer at Queen Alexandra hospital and joined the Fellowship. He has moved to be nearer his family in Cornwall.



Ratna's inspiring experience

South West Surrey member Selvamalar Ratnasingam – known to all as Ratna – has completed a “life changing experience” by tackling a demanding trek to a holy lake and then around a mountain in Nepal.

The journey started in Katmandu and headed towards Mount Kailash, stopping on the way at Lake Manasarowar in Tibet, the highest fresh water lake in the world.

“I went with a group of eight other people I did not know, but made friends along the way” she said. They travelled first by jeep, stopping as they got used to the altitude, before setting out on horseback or on foot for the trek up the mountain.

“We all went to Lake Manasarowar first, as this is a holy lake, especially for Hindus. We immersed ourselves in the cold lake so that we could be cleansed. We prayed there and stayed there that night before leaving next day. We trekked for three days round the mountain. It is nearly 22,000 feet high and its summit is unclimbed.

“I went on foot. The second day up towards the Dolma Pass was steep and about 10 hours of walking. The next day we started the final trek. One has to walk slowly due to the altitude. The oxygen level is only 50 per cent and hydration was important.

“I am grateful to have done this trek with eight other friends. It was definitely a life

changing experience and an opportunity to view some of the most magical scenery on the planet. One has to be there to experience the magic of the place.

“My wish is for everyone to make this journey. No-one is too old. If you are fit and able to walk, you should do it. I hope everyone who reads this will be inspired to do something they always dreamt of, and see the magic for themselves.”

Ratna was also the Fellowship's first recipient of the “unsung hero” award announced at last year's conference, recognition for her support to the branch where she provides tea, coffee and biscuits at every meeting. “She is always willing to help in her own quiet way and always has such a lovely smile” her fellow members commented.

National chairman Margaret Moffat added: “I have seen how many ordinary members work so hard to help behind the scenes. We should say ‘thank you’ to all our unsung heroes who are still beavering away.”



*Ratna on the mountain.
“My wish is for everyone
to make this journey.”*



Mount Kailash

Liverpool help the BBC

Members of Liverpool branch have been able to help the BBC with a series of programmes about how ordinary people played a part in Britain's wartime victory.

Actress Sue Johnston, famous for TV roles in Brookside and the Royle Family, found out how nurses like her aunt battled through the bombing to treat the injured.

Liverpool branch was contacted to see if there was anyone that could help with this programme. One member was the wife of the consultant who started the plastic surgery department that Sue Johnston's aunty May worked in. The branch was able to provide the diary that the consultant had kept which showed how many air raids there were each day and his memories of the time.

The branch has passed a copy of the programme to the 70 Digital Archive Liverpool so that it will be available for everyone.



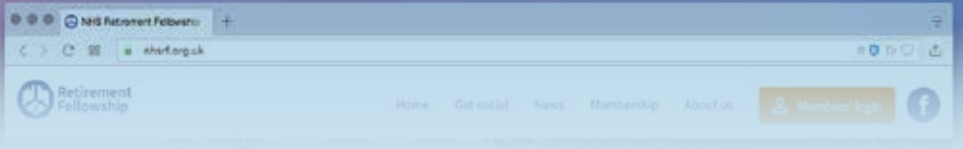
*Sue Johnston interviews
her guest during filming
for the BBC*

St George's welcome Chief Executive

Chief Executive John Rostill received a rousing and enthusiastic welcome at St George's, Merton and Wandsworth branch on a visit at the end of the year. He thanked members for celebrations marking 70 years of the NHS and 40 years of the Fellowship including hosting the heritage exhibition for London in partnership with St George's Hospital Trust.



*Carmen Brooks- Johnson
thanks John Rostill
for his support.*



NHS oral history seeks participants

Website has a facelift

The Fellowship's national website (www.nhsrf.org.uk) has had a facelift which makes it easier to use and full of useful, up to date, information.

It means we have said goodbye to the website that was developed 12 years ago in February 2007. In addition to news and events, the new website includes information about membership benefits, holidays and interest groups and, of course, branch information.

Members can access the members' area that holds a range of resources and information, national policies and National Council and Trustee Board minutes.

Click on the orange button **'Members' Area'** and enter the members' login details :-

user name: **member**
password: **nhsrf-2019**

From this section, branch or membership secretaries can also access their branch database using the membership number, ID and password that they already have.

Photographs for the website are always welcome; we recommend using images that are between 1500 and 2500 pixels wide. Images smaller than 1500 pixels may appear blurry or pixelated. If this sounds to you like jargon, simply send the digital photograph direct from your mobile or from the downloaded picture from your camera, and we will adjust if necessary.

We have introduced members' stories into the website; new stories will be posted, so if you have a story to tell about your working life or an activity or event of interest in which you have been involved, do send it in.

The website is now updated from Central Office by Sherry and Debbie and news and articles should be sent to website@nhsrf.org.uk.

We have over 530 members on facebook with posts showing many interesting activities from across the UK. If you are not a member of the facebook group, search for NHS Retirement Fellowship, join in with the discussions and check out what other members and branches are involved in.

"NHS at 70 - The Story of Our Lives," a national project led by the University of Manchester, is seeking members of the Fellowship who would like to contribute to a definitive national oral history archive of the first 70 years of the NHS.

"We'd like to talk to all of those whose lives have touched the NHS since 1948 - especially employees and former employees. Whether you were a porter, a senior manager, a surgeon, a community health worker, a midwife, a lab technician, a care worker, a cleaner, a nurse, a politician or an administrator, we'd like to record your story and add it to an archive that will be open to the public and deposited permanently in the British Library as a legacy to the nation," said Dr Peter Mitchell, Oral History and Public Engagement Officer - North East.

Members can find out more about the project and listen to some of the testimonies already collected at www.nhs70.org.uk.

"We are currently looking for participants in Bristol / Bath, Liverpool, the North East and Durham, and the Glasgow area" said Dr Mitchell. If members are interested in contributing, or would like to find out more, please contact us at nhs70@manchester.ac.uk or phone 0161 275 0560."

Cosham members honoured by Portsmouth Trust



Two members of Cosham Branch have been honoured by their local NHS Trust in Portsmouth for their role as Patient Research Ambassadors.

Tim Coney and Noreen Cole are members of a team at Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust who help promote healthcare research by getting involved in activities such as public speaking and presentations about research, to highlight specific trials in the hospital, university and community healthcare centres. They spread the word and

promote research by meeting with patients and the public in hospital departments and other places such as shopping centres. The ambassadors also attend meetings with consultants and help to put their sometimes complicated trial summaries and funding requests into plain English.

At a ceremony in Portsmouth Guildhall in November to celebrate the "Pride of Portsmouth" the research ambassadors were presented with the Chief Executive Officer Award for Outstanding Achievement which recognises individuals or teams who have made an outstanding contribution above and beyond the call of duty.

"We knew we had been nominated but it was a pleasant surprise to be called up" said Tim. "It made us feel our efforts had been recognised and appreciated. It was the personal award of The Chief Executive Officer Mark Cubbon, and as a result we now have a good working relationship and find Mark and his team very approachable and supportive."

The Queen Alexandra Hospital is the Trust's main acute Hospital based in Portsmouth and where Tim also volunteers on the renal transplant ward. "I was a nurse by background and later a senior lecturer at the university" said Tim. "I was told by the unit manager that nurses seldom have time to

talk to patients so I go in once a week and spend time talking to them. The patients often come from a wide area and don't always have visitors. I was a bit worried about this activity at first, but I now find that the patients value my input".

Both Tim and Noreen worked as nurses in the Portsmouth Hospital Trust for many years and continue to give their time as volunteers to the hospital and to Cosham branch where Tim is secretary and Noreen one of two support /welfare officers.



AROUND THE BRANCHES

Combined celebrations for Tunbridge Wells

Tunbridge Wells branch combined several celebrations in December and enjoyed a special meal at a pub in Pembury to mark the 70th Anniversary of the NHS, the 40th anniversary of the Fellowship and the 20th anniversary of the branch.



20 – 40 – 70: a year for celebration in Tunbridge Wells

The committee commissioned ball point pens with an inscription so that everyone was able to keep a memento. A much-appreciated grant from head office helped towards the cost.

Christmas was not forgotten and the committee gave everyone a Christmas card. The branch goes forward into 2019 with a full programme of speakers and a healthy membership of over 40.

New branch in Banbury



A new branch of the Fellowship has opened in Banbury thanks to the initiative of Oxford branch member Linda Young, who recently moved to the area, with support from Development Officer Sally Bundock.

It's early days yet, but after a positive response to emails and posters, the branch has established a committee and is planning a programme of meetings and events.

"We are still finding our way" said Linda. "It's a matter of finding out what people want."



Freda's 90th

Brighton and Hove members helped to celebrate the ninetieth birthday of their member Freda Long, former matron of the Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital, Brighton.

She began her nurse training before 1948 at Westminster Hospital, London and also worked at Great Ormond Street.

Celebrations

Middlesex



Members of Middlesex branch celebrated the 40th anniversary with special guests the Mayor of Hounslow and the Chief Executive, a non executive director and the Director of Communications from their local NHS Trust.

Bournemouth



Sixty members and guests of Christchurch & Bournemouth branch had their annual lunch at the Dudsbury Golf, Hotel and Spa in January.

Exeter



Exeter & District branch held their Christmas lunch in December at Exeter Golf & Country Club.

Brighton



Brighton members celebrated Christmas with a lunch "full of festive merriment."

"We look forward to supporting each other with friendship in 2019, enjoying the popular lunch club and other social events" said branch secretary Sheila Sheppard.

Members meet the challenge

St George's, Merton and Wandsworth branch members have responded very positively to the challenge from Chief Executive John Rostill at last year's national conference to get more involved with their local NHS Trust by becoming Foundation Trust members.

At the last count about three quarters of the membership had signed up and several were taking advantage of the opportunity to attend talks and share discussions.

Annie Johnson, branch secretary has actively promoted the idea of joining the Trust and the Patients Association at meetings and sent reminders of the challenges by emailing information to members as well as printing application forms, which members were enthusiastic about.

Male membership continues to be a problem, but they are working on it, and as members returned from winter holidays the branch was hoping to increase participation even more.

Bella Torto – a member alongside her identical twin Belinda – has embraced the membership enthusiastically. "I am so pleased I joined the Foundation Trust" she said. "I have already been invited to join various groups and comment on services. I went for a workshop on cancer and I learnt so much. I am looking forward to being a member of the Foundation Trust, thank you for encouraging us to join."

John Rostill commented: "I am delighted with the response it is very impressive."

OBITUARIES

Dawn Hurst

It is with deep sadness that the North Herts Branch report the death of their founder member and secretary, Mrs Dawn Hurst. She, together with the late chairman Alan Brown, started the branch in 1998. Dawn worked tirelessly for members, and was passionate about the whole ethos of the retirement fellowship. She will be sorely missed by all members.



Editor's note: this obituary should have appeared in our September issue last year, with this picture, which was mistakenly identified as Barbara Jarrold. We apologise to all concerned.

Gloria Berry



Exeter & District branch is sad to announce the death of Gloria Berry, one of its founder members.

Gloria started work in 1940 making parachutes at a local firm before starting work as a clerical officer at Southernhay, Exeter in 1942, before the start of the NHS.

She was also a machinist for the NHS. Later she

worked in the salary and wages department at St. David's Hill and moved with that department in 1974 to Wonford hospital. In 1977 this department moved back to Southernhay, where she worked until she retired in 1985.

She was a very smart, petite lady who always had a smile on her face. She will be sadly missed by the members. Gloria is pictured here being presented with honorary membership of the branch when she turned 90.

Deirdre Keeble

Cosham (Portsmouth) branch are saddened to report the death of Deirdre, a long-standing member of the Fellowship.



Deirdre trained at the Middlesex Hospital, and after a period in London, moved to the USA where she worked as a theatre sister in Stanford. After moving back to the UK, Deirdre became a health visitor, and later a nurse tutor, in Portsmouth School of Nursing, where she had a particular commitment to child and community health.

Deirdre was dedicated to her work, supporting students and her colleagues with enthusiasm and vision. On her retirement she joined the Fellowship and quickly became involved in the branch, serving as chair and then vice-chair, attending meetings regularly until ill-health in her last year severely restricted her physical capacity.

Betty Skiggs

Members of Hastings & District Branch were saddened to hear of the death of Betty Skiggs in November last year.

Betty was a hard-working and enthusiastic chairperson for over 15 years before giving up the position but continued to be a loyal supporter. She started working in the NHS as a doctors' receptionist after bringing up her family. During the 1980s when the South East Thames Regional Health Authority relocated to Bexhill, Betty trained as an advisor on the NHS helpline.



She retired in 1993 and joined the Fellowship in 1995. The branch has grown over the years, mainly due to Betty's excellent leadership. Betty was a caring, supportive member and will be remembered with love and affection by fellow members.

Avril Poole

Poole branch are very sad to report the death in January of Avril Poole aged 83. Avril was a tutor at Poole Hospital for many years having previously worked as a nurse at the Royal Marsden Hospital. She was also a trained Midwife.

Avril had been an active member of the Poole Branch for several years, including being the chairman of the branch for a short time, which unfortunately she had to give up due to ill health. She continued attending meetings and events for a short while, but her health deteriorated and she moved into a care home.

Northampton give generously

Members of Northampton branch have shown again how supportive they are by raising £585 toward an emergency assessment bay for oncology and haematology patients at Northampton General Hospital.

A fund raising event was organized by vice chairman Carol Mabbutt and members were asked to bring cakes to the September meeting.



They arrived with loads of cakes and gave generously to such a good cause. The Emergency Assessment Bay provides a purpose built facility specifically for emergency oncology/haematology patients.

Ruth Gould, Carol Mabbutt and Mary Morgan are pictured handing over a very large cheque.

Scottish gathering

The Federation of Scottish branches annual gathering this year will be held in possibly the oldest hotel in Scotland and feature speakers on important subjects for Fellowship members.



The gathering is on Wednesday 8 May in the Salutation Hotel in Perth, thought to have been in existence since 1699, making it the oldest hotel in Scotland (possibly) and guests can still stay in the room that was occupied by Bonnie Prince Charlie.

“We are delighted to be able to welcome national chairman, Margaret Moffat, to the event” said Hilary Robb, Scotland’s development officer. “As well as our AGM, we will be hearing from Janet Reay, Trading Standards Officer from Perth & Kinross, who will tackle the topical subject of scams and how to spot them, and Graeme Addison from the Police Treatment Centre who will tell us about the rehabilitation work they carry out with Police Officers who have been injured or are suffering from mental health issues as a result of their work.”

The event will be rounded off by joining Road Runner (a musical duo) in a wee bit of singing and dancing.

Gwent contribute ideas for art works

Gwent members were impressed by work produced by art students for local hospitals and had the chance to contribute ideas for future projects at a recent branch meeting.

The speakers were Heloise Godfrey-Talbot from the University of South Wales and Sarah Goodey from Gwent Arts in Health (GARTH).

GARTH is a charity that aims to promote and develop an arts and health programme for patients and public in healthcare and community settings throughout the Aneurin Bevan Health Board.

Members were very impressed with the beautiful work produced by the art students taking part in the project and how this is so beneficial to the students and to improving the hospital environment for patients.

Members were asked for ideas for the ideal NHS

of the future which were pasted onto a balloon to form a ‘wish list’ which will be used by the students in designing future artwork for the new Grange University Hospital which is being built at Llanfrechfa Grange.



Branch members Marilyn Beardmore, Carole Cunnell and Delyn Hunt with the balloon full of ideas which students will use to create art work for the new hospital.

Water theme for summer photos



“Calling all members who take photographs whether with a mobile phone or with a top of the range digital or film camera” writes Anthea Zell, Photography Group co-ordinator.

“The theme for the competition ending 30 September is ‘By the water’. Members can interpret this to include the sea, lakes, a puddle – any subject as long as it features at least a drip of water.”

Four entries per person is the maximum; details are on the website, under Get Social – Interest groups, or you can email Anthea at photography@nhsrf.org.uk

Royal London and Newham

Royal London branch and Newham branch celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Fellowship together and also took part in Bartshealth Trust NHS 70th year celebrations in July 2018.



The poster shows the diversity of the branch. Members come from 16 nations including eight Caribbean islands, England, Africa and Malaysia.