

South East News

and update from



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What's New

First of all, I would like to say '*hello and welcome*' to all new members reading South East News this month for the first time. Good to have you with us. This newsletter is for members and all contributions and ideas are very welcome. So please do get in touch if you have something to contribute.

I hope you all enjoyed the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations. Very many of us will, no doubt, have treasured memories as a child of the coronation. I certainly do.

Thank you to those of you who entered the **Prize Quiz** in the May issue. I was pleasantly surprised at the number of entries and am pleased to announce the lucky winner - Irene Mannell of Suffolk West Branch. There is **Prize Quiz** again this month. Please see page 8.

We have some interesting pieces to read in this issue and I am grateful once again to Steve Greaves of Cambridge Branch who has contributed with his article on the Blood Runners.

On page 6 there is some information on the Free Online Events Week 13-17 June (Festival of Belonging) which our old friends Mirthy are running together with the Marmalade Trust.

On page 3 there is an invitation to join in some great London walks with Redbridge and Waltham Forest Branch. You would be very welcome to take part.

On page 5 you can see a photo of Lorraine Taylor, one of our long standing and hard working Regional Reps. receiving her volunteering award at West Middlesex Hospital. Well done Lorraine.

Finally, if you would like to help me to raise money for The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity please see page 7.

Take care everyone and enjoy the sunshine.

Sally



Basildon and Thurrock Branch

Our 35th AGM

Vic Griffiths

The branch held its 35th AGM at Ye Olde Plough hotel in Bulphan Essex on the 19th of May where 79 members enjoyed a 2 course meal, and the presentation of shields to the most improved 10 pin bowlers and golfer before the formal AGM.

With reports of the previous year's activities from the Chairman, Treasurer, Membership secretary, Welfare officer and day trip organisers, the branch Vice Chairman gave the outcome of the voting for committee members, reporting that all the post holders had been re-elected with a member being elected to one vacant position.

The branch members are now focused on the next 12 months with monthly meetings, day trips, luncheon clubs, golf and 10 pin bowling sessions, and are committed to the future success of the branch by bringing in new members to boost the current 124 membership.



West Middlesex, Hounslow & Spelthorne Branch

An early Platinum Jubilee party at the West Middlesex branch. Tiaras and crowns were worn (by some).
Chris McCrudden sent us these lovely photos.



Harjit Ahluwalia
Winner of the Tiara Competition



An invitation to join some interesting London Walks hosted by Redbridge and Waltham Forest Branch

Branch and Postal Members are invited to attend the following London Walks organized by Redbridge and Waltham Forest branch.

Monday 20th June 2022: meet at 11.30am at Hampstead underground station for a 4 mile circular walk around some hidden gems in Hampstead.

Wednesday 20th July 2022: Meet at 11am for a 4 mile circular walk in Hainault Forest, led by my friend June, from the Two Brewers Pub, 57 Lambourne Road IG7 6ET, a short walk from the end of the 150 bus route at Chigwell Row Church. Suggested lunch after the walk at the Two Brewers.

Wednesday 31st August 2022: Meet at 11.30am at Chingford Station for a 5 mile circular walk via The Owl pub for lunch. We should arrive at the Owl about 12.30pm. If you want to join us at The Owl just for the meal please let me know beforehand so that the correct number of places can be reserved for our group.

Please inform Eileen Brooks if you would like to go on any of these walks. You would be very welcome.

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The Redbridge and Waltham Forest branch were unable to meet during the pandemic for 18 months but bounced back in November 2021. After a few wobbly months, the executive committee are now functioning as a strong team, albeit without a chair, and members are returning.

We met on Monday 6th June to celebrate HM the Queen's Platinum Jubilee with a party. The committee arrived early to decorate the hall with flags, bunting and balloons and to plate up the cakes and other delicious nibbles. We were entertained by Dave, otherwise known as One Man Banned, who encouraged lots of singing and even some dancing. Our centrepiece was a beautifully decorated Jubilee cake which was cut by Sandra, our current President and one of our long serving members.

We were also delighted to welcome six new members (the result of the national recruitment drive) and are hoping to welcome some more over the next few months.

Jo Henderson reports





Blood Runners

Steve Greaves, Cambridge Branch reports on a spirited branch talk given by Malcolm Parkinson.

Malcolm Parkinson has been a Blood Runner volunteer since 2016 and has enjoyed a life-long affinity with motorcycles since his boyhood when his father introduced him to the machines while working as an AA patrol man.

The former Conservative Minister Norman Tebbit once achieved some notoriety by telling unemployed workers to do what his father and others before them did when searching for work: "Get on your bike." A motley crew of dedicated volunteers in Cambridge and Suffolk did just that and have since become a key asset in helping the NHS to continue its work.

According to the Cambridge English Dictionary the definition of a volunteer is "a person who does something for other people or for an organisation, willingly and without being forced or paid to do it". By that yardstick the team members who help to deliver a vital blood provision service to the NHS go above and beyond that frame of words every day of the week and every month of the year 24 hours a day.

The nature of their work is blood running and in Cambridge and Suffolk 120 volunteers and 12 controllers ensure that vital blood supplies are delivered on demand to the major hospitals in the two eastern counties: six in all, these being Cambridge, Papworth, Peterborough, Hinchingsbrooke, West Suffolk Hospital and Ipswich. They come from all walks of life, all shapes and sizes and from all age groups and, working from home, they are on call 24/7, ready at a moment's notice to undertake round trips of up to 100 miles in all kinds of weather to make sure emergency blood supplies are collected and delivered to a particular hospital on demand.

One of these riders is Malcolm Parkinson, who lives in Cockfield near Bury St Edmund's, who outlined the history of the Blood Runners during a fascinating and humorous talk to members of the Cambridge branch.

He and his fellow motor bike riders are part of an enthusiastic group of individuals known by the collective name of SERVSC - Service by Emergency Response Volunteers for the Suffolk and Cambridgeshire counties. The SERV volunteers operate nationally and in addition to delivering much needed blood supplies the riders also undertake to deliver other products such as platelets, samples, donated human milk, prescription medicines, x-rays, faecal matter, neural scans (dvds), surgical tools and even patient notes. The first service was established in Surrey in 1981, but motorcycle enthusiasts have been transporting blood since the 1960s.

All of this is done without payment and since they were formed locally in 2010 the group has saved the NHS more than £1million in Cambridge and Suffolk alone by reducing the need to use other expensive forms of transport such as private hire taxis.

Malcolm said: "We transport anything that is patient related and provided it is urgent enough that a hospital would be prepared to pay for a taxi or dedicated courier."

The riders show incredible commitment and willingness to take to the road whatever the conditions. "It's what we do," said Malcolm. "It is our way of putting something back into the community and all of the volunteers believe the job they do really does make a difference."

SERVSC provides four liveried motorcycles and a distinctive uniform, but mostly the transport is undertaken by privately-owned bikes and in some cases, privately-owned cars. Since their first successful transfer in 2011 the local group have made 12,000 deliveries consisting of more than 45,000 boxes.

Nationally the Blood Runners in 2017 completed 93,000 deliveries. The service costs an estimated £40,000 to run each year and each call out saves the NHS between £75 and £100, so the saving nationally is considerable, but so too is the personal financial input of the volunteers who pay for their own fuel while on SERV duty.

No wonder then their success has received widespread recognition and heaps of praise, so much so that word of their devoted volunteer work even reached Royal ears and in 2019 the Queen awarded them the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, a badge of honour now proudly worn on the sleeves of their bright yellow high-viz jackets.

On joining, the riders commit to doing two 12-hour shifts a month, each shift being 7am to 7pm or 7pm to 7am, but many of them willingly do far more hours than that. The volunteer riders are given a half day in the classroom when they receive training on product handling in addition to route familiarisation, a very important safety regulation as each rider sticks to the same route on all occasions so that controllers know which road they are using in the event of delay or accident.

The blood runners work closely with other sections of the medical world including support for the air ambulance teams of Magpas (Mid-Anglia General Practitioner Accident Service) and the East Anglia Air Ambulance in addition to undertaking deliveries for the National Blood Service who generally do not work in the evenings, bank holidays or weekends.

In August 2012 the Blood Runners branched out and became Milk Runners too when they created a service to ensure delivery of frozen bottles of donated human breast milk used to support premature babies in Neonatal Intensive Care. The speed of their motorcycles played a major role in delivering the milk quickly and in a nod to Benny Hill's popular TV song about Ernie the Fastest Milkman in the West they became known in the medical community as "the fastest milkmen in the East"! The riders liaise with volunteers from other county groups, of which there are 30 in the UK, and meet at pre-arranged destinations to continue the long-range transportation of whatever product is required.

One of the most notable distances involving the Suffolk and Cambridge team saw them take part in a relay to Bristol to deliver much needed milk to a baby patient; a journey which took three and a half hours, a travelling time considerably less than under normal motoring conditions, but this mission of mercy was undertaken at night and enjoyed the benefit of a blues and twos police escort for the last leg from Basingstoke in Wiltshire, courtesy of a police officer being the brother of one of the SERV riders and permission to do so being granted by the Chief Constable!

SERV receives no money from the Government, NHS or regulatory body and relies on donations from members of the public, corporate sponsorship and charitable organisations plus their own fund-raising activities to raise money to keep the service running.



Another blood delivery begins its journey.



A week of **FREE** on-line events

Our old friends, Mirthy, are working with the Marmalade Trust to deliver this week of free events.

Whilst the main theme is raising awareness of loneliness the events are interesting in their own right, and so it is well worth considering taking part in some of them.

Visit:

www.mirthy.co.uk/festival-of-belonging

for more information.

Volunteers' Week Thank You Party 2022

Chelsea and Westminster Hospital and West Middlesex University Hospital



Lorraine Taylor, Regional Representative for North West Thames and member of West Middlesex, Hounslow and Spelthorne Branch receives her Volunteer Award on Tuesday, 7th June at 'West Mid.'

Lorraine has been volunteering at the hospital on Tuesdays for quite some time now. A credit to us all!



Brighton and Hove Branch

Photo by Sheila
Sheppard



We are pleased to share with you a photo taken in the walled garden at Preston Manor in Preston Park from our recent walk in memory of Felicity, Brighton & Hove City Branch NHSRF. It was especially lovely to meet up again with Karen, Felicity's daughter who joined us for the walk.

What a lovely way to celebrate the life of a dear friend. Ed

**All royalties from the sales of this book will be paid to
The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity**



Kay has been haunted for over 40 years about what happened when her brother-in-law- died. Suffering from amnesia at the time she always wondered if she would ever learn the truth.

In 2018 Kay is mugged and as she recovers from concussion she starts to remember. She experiences flashbacks whilst sleeping and awake and is desperately afraid about what she might finally learn.

This paperback is available from Amazon at £6.50.

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Sisters-Mrs-Sally-Bundock/dp/B09XZJYHMH>

The End of the Month by Tina of Whittington Branch

From the moment you wake up
It's oh no oh no
From the minute you get there
It's go, go, go
The lifts either won't
Or they're terribly slow
The beds bash your thigh
Something drops on your toe

You're losing your voice
And your hair has gone grey
Sister's still there at 10
With no overtime pay
You should've done yesterday
What's been left for next day
If they offered a bed
You might have been tempted to stay

And after such worries and problems and fears
You open your payslip, and burst into tears



June's

Prize Competition

Below are the names of three well known NHSRF folk.

The puzzle is that the vowels have been taken out of their names leaving only the consonants.

Grg Kmptn

Ky Rbnsn

Vc Grffths

To enter into the prize draw for a **£25 M & S Voucher** please send the names to me at london.eastanglia@nhsrf.org.uk The draw will take place on **10 July**.

