

South East News

and update from



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November/December 2022



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What's News

Members who attended the AGM/Conference in October will have been the first to know of the forthcoming changes within the Fellowship. The main issue is, of course, our current CEO, John Rostill OBE, standing down at the end of March 2023. Next year will, therefore, see changes within the Fellowship management alongside other activities such as the celebration of the 75th birthday of the NHS. JR will, of course, be missed but it will be interesting to see who and what will follow him.

My thanks to those who entered the **Prize Quiz** in the October issue and well done to the winner, Niloufer S., whose email read 'I'm so excited. First time I've won anything'. Please do think about taking part in the **Prize Quiz** in this issue which is being sponsored by Frank Bundock.

I am aware that there are some new postal members receiving South East News for the first time. Anyone interested in joining a branch who needs help with deciding which one is invited to visit our website (www.nhsrf.org.uk) or they can contact me. East Kent (Canterbury) is the newest branch in the area, and they are currently welcoming new members.

As this is the last newsletter for the year, I would like to say a special thank you to our Regional Reps., branch committees and all those who have contributed to this publication. Without you all the Fellowship would not function so well as it does. Please do keep up all the good work and please do keep your news coming. Always good to see it in my inbox.

And finally, our very best wishes for Christmas and the New Year to you all. Please look after yourselves and your loved ones and keep warm in the cold weather to come!

Sally



AGM/Conference 22

Jurys Inn Hinckley Island Hotel



By the time you read this newsletter, I think it quite likely that if you weren't actually at conference, you will have heard that the event went very well, with praise recorded for the organization, the hotel and speakers. There were a few surprises at the AGM including the news that our Patron, Ken Jarrold CBE, was standing down and the news that John Rostill OBE, our CEO for the past eight years, would be standing down at the end of March 2023. Thanks was recorded to both Ken and John for their work and commitment to the Fellowship over the years.

During the AGM the result of the ballot on the proposed changes was announced. The National Council will henceforth be changed to the Members' Council, with two representative members from our large group of postal members being invited to join. The second proposal relating to terms of office was also carried.

The winner of the short story competition was announced. Congratulations to Lorraine Hoskins of Coventry branch.

All in all, the whole event went well with several members also enjoying a trip to Kenilworth Castle and the National Arboretum. Here's to next year!

NHSRF Benevolent Fund

It was reported at the AGM by the Benevolent Fund Chair, Margaret Moffat, that only one application to the Fund had been successful since the last AGM. She stated that this was very disappointing as, with the state of the economy, she was sure that there must be members who could benefit from the Fund.

To clarify, the Fund only offers one-off payments, i.e. replacement or purchase of appliances; but can now fund interim treatment to bridge the gap whilst a person is on a waiting list for NHS treatment for physiotherapy, chiropody or counselling, especially bereavement counselling. The Fund would need to know that the member was currently on the waiting list and the limit is £800. There is also help towards funeral expenses, if necessary. After consultation with the Trustees, it is regretted that help with ongoing expenses such as fuel and grocery bills is not available.

To apply, a person needs to have been a member for at least a year. To make an application please contact Central Office on 01305 361317 or email info@nhsrf.org.uk All applications are handled in confidence.

Season's Greetings



George Kempton, Fellowship Chair

I wish all our members a very Happy and enjoyable Christmas. It is a time of fun and friendship which is what our Fellowship is all about. I also wish you all a peaceful and healthy 2023 and hope it will be a year in which we grow our wonderful organisation and in which we can continue to enjoy all the benefits of being a member. Season's greetings to you all.



Angela Johnson, Development Officer for Wales

Just had to say hello from Wales to our South East/East Anglia Branches. It was so wonderful to meet so many of you at this year's NHS Retirement Fellowship conference. Such fun dancing the night away too! 😊

Like you all we are busy over here in Wales, planning Christmas activity which mostly involves lunches out! It's pantomime season as well, with one of our branches in North Wales making all the costumes- busy bees they are. The photo shows them enjoying a well-deserved day out on one of our barge trips!



Like you we are all looking forward to a season filled with warmth, comfort and good cheer and we send heart felt Holiday Greetings and Best Wishes for a New Year of happiness in a world of peace. May the special joys of the Season be yours today and always - love from all your friends in Wales.

Ange x



and then some....



News from Basildon and Thurrock Branch

A photo of Vic Griffiths with Mike Ostler, branch member for over 25 years, with his certificate from the Mayor of Grays which states:

'His Worshipful the Mayor is pleased to induct Mike Ostler into the Mayoral Roll of Honour in recognition of exceptional services to the community and local heritage in the year 2022 in the reign of his majesty the King Charles III. A grateful borough thanks you. James Haleen 38th mayor of Thurrock.'

Well done Mike!

Ed

Season's Greetings



Glasgow



The beauty of Glencoe

Season's Greetings from your friends in Scotland

Hilary Robb – Development Officer for Scotland

We say it every year but what a fast year 2022 has been. It is hard to believe that we are already looking to the start of another year. It has been wonderful to see branches across the UK getting back to normal and up here in Scotland some branches have decided to use the disruption caused by Covid as an opportunity to make changes in line with members' needs and wishes. Meetings have been streamlined allowing more time for chatting and fun and cutting back on the "official" tasks has encouraged more people to join committees. Job roles are being shared to reduce the number of tasks each individual has to take on. Some branches have increased the number of activities they offer their members and it is safe to say that members really appreciate the friendship that they find in their branch and I am sure the same can be said for the branches in your area.

As always, there is a warm invitation to any of you who are visiting Scotland to come along to the nearest branch - just let us know in advance so we can put the kettle on! We all send you our best wishes for a happy, healthy and peaceful Christmas and New Year. The world is facing many challenges and it would be easy to only look on the downside of life but the friendship of members of the Fellowship lets us all see that there is an upside too.

As we say here in Scotland – *Lang May Yer Lum Reek!*
(Translation available via Google!)



Anglesey Abbey on our shared trip with Northampton Branch



News from Kettering Branch

Kettering Branch in Northampton is a fairly large branch with around 90 members. They have a great newsletter which is produced quarterly at present by Terry Young. I was very pleased to receive a copy of the October issue recently and it has enabled me, with Terry's approval, to give you a brief overview of what they have been doing in Kettering in recent months.

One thing I was very pleased to read about was the shared events with Northampton Branch when they visited the King Richard III Visitor Centre in Leicester and the trip to Anglesey Abbey in September. There is distinct enthusiasm to continue with these shared events.

In May, 26 members of the branch enjoyed a three-night excursion to Scarborough. The group stayed at The Red Lea in Scarborough, a pleasant family run hotel with excellent food and great entertainment, a singing postman originally from the Philippines and a lady who worked in Musical Theatre. They even had room to dance. The trip included visits to York and Whitby and a visit to Lincoln cathedral. A great time was had by one and all.

On the front page of the newsletter are two memorable stories from members concerning their experiences relating to the loss of our Queen.

On 8 September, Margaret Payne visited Buckingham Palace. The visit was originally planned for July but had to be postponed due to a train strike. In the taxi from St. Pancras, the cabbie shared the news that members of the Royal family had been summoned to Balmoral. Margaret writes that the palace tour was wonderful but when she reached the Queen's jewels at about 3.45pm she had the most awful feeling of foreboding as she stood in the room. Prior to leaving the palace her group was warned that the press were gathering at the gates, obviously waiting for a statement. The most uncanny feeling for Margaret, was when King Charles III spoke to the nation on Friday evening from the Blue Room – only 24 hours earlier Margaret had been standing in that lovely room.

A couple of days after receiving the shocking news that our Queen had passed away, Maria Somauroo felt she had to travel to London to pay her respects. She duly set off with her cousin and joined the queue for Westminster Hall. Maria reports that there was a stillness and silence as she passed by the Queen's coffin. Back in Kettering Maria wrote in the Book of Condolence at the Council Chamber and laid yellow roses on the grass in front of the flagpole on Bowling Green Road on behalf of Kettering NHSRF.

The branch has a Christmas Meal planned for December and speakers planned for the early part of 2023 including a talk from the RNLI in February. All in all, 2023 looks to be a good year for Kettering Branch.



**An invitation to join an interesting
London Walk hosted by
Redbridge and Waltham Forest Branch**

Branch and Postal Members are invited to attend the following London Walks.

Friday 16th December - Meet at 11am outside St Paul's station for The Great Fire of London walk.

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

07956 819008 02085901827 eileen_brooks@yahoo.co.uk

SNIP SNAP JACK

By Tina, Whittington Branch

Snip snap Jack, I'm a surgeon on my toes
I know just where to put it
I know just where it goes
I know which holes stay open
I know which holes to close

I've worked with people screaming
I've worked while people bled
I've worked with people dreaming
I've worked with people dead

Snip snap Jack, I'll work with these and those
I don't care if you're naked
Don't care about your clothes
I cut it, clamp it and stitch it
And that's the way it goes

I operate all morning
I operate all night
I operate at dawning
And in the full daylight
Snip snap Jack has his blessings and his woes

But he keeps them tightly buttoned up
So, no one ever knows
With polished shoe and laundered shirt
And briefcase off he goes

In a High Street Laundry:

AUTOMATIC WASHING MACHINES: PLEASE REMOVE ALL YOUR CLOTHES WHEN THE LIGHT GOES OUT.

In a London department store:

BARGAIN BASEMENT UPSTAIRS ...





Royal Marsden Branch VISIT TO MORDEN HALL PARK

Thursday 27th October 2022

by Susan



We were fortunate that we had another warm sunny day for this event. There were 13 attendees from seven different branches.

Linda showed us around, telling us some of the history of the park and its previous owners and pointing out the main features. Sally Bishop from the Sutton & District Branch, who volunteers at Morden, very kindly joined us and added to the occasion. She also persuaded the café staff to allow us to reserve a table for lunch. There were too many 'real' children on the White Bridge for us to indulge in pooh-sticks, but we were fortunate to see one of the resident herons posing in front of the main house.

The river Wandle was sparkling in the sun and the trees were just beginning to take on their autumn hue. Some of us walked around the south area of the park after lunch, finishing in the garden centre and shop.

A most enjoyable day out for one and all!

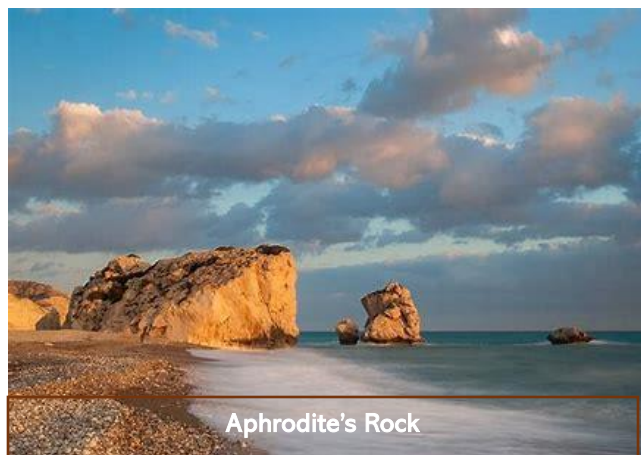
Our thanks to branches who have shared events this year.

If your branch would like to share an event, please do make contact via
london.eastanglia@nhsrf.org.uk

Thank you.



Ed



Cyprus Discovered

NHSRF Holiday

by Lorraine Taylor

The members who went on the recent holiday to Cyprus enjoyed hot sunshine (one day it was 40c) and interesting trips.

The excursions were very good, and the Tour Guide and Driver were both excellent. On the trip to the Troodos Mountains, he navigated over 300 bends, and the views were amazing. There was a trip to Aphrodite's Rock where legend states that if you swim round the rock three times at midnight you will have everlasting life. A trip to the Tombs of the Kings (which actually isn't for Kings) was interesting as was a trip to Limassol. One of the optional excursions was boat trip on Cyprus Independence Day with dinner and entertainment. The entertainment was amazing and thoroughly enjoyed by all.

There were a few hiccups, which I have spoken to Newmarket Holidays about, but by and large I think everyone enjoyed themselves. We will begin planning next year's holiday in the New Year. More news in due course.



November/December
Prize Competition

Below are the names of four NHSRF hospitals in the South East/East Anglia.

ddnbrks

Ryl Lndn

St Grgs

Cmbrdg

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

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 31 December 2022.



South West Surrey Branch

Terry Duhig reports on two enjoyable branch outings over the summer

Our first was to Loseley Park Gardens on Wednesday 17 August 2022. Having had a fantastically hot and very dry summer, to get up in the morning to find that the hot blue sky had vanished to be replaced by storm clouds and a wet and rainy day, was a little disheartening. However, those of us who were not away on holiday met up at the ticket office gates. Upon arriving at the ticket office in raincoats etc. we looked to the sky and since all we could see was white cloud, we decided that we would get our tickets. Aren't we pleased that we did because it didn't rain, well not while we looked around the various gardens and took a look to see just how low the river was.

Being as we are all former or partners of NHS staff, we had to inspect the Herb and Spices Garden to ensure that the vital herbs etc. that are required for medicinal use are still being grown.

Following our stroll around the many different gardens at Loseley Park we went along to the Tea Area. We decided that it would be prudent to sit under cover and we moved a table or two along with a few chairs so that we could sit together as a group and then we ordered our cream teas. No sooner were we seated with our cream teas, when the wind increased and the thunder arrived along with a few inches of rain.

Once we had finished our cream teas and it was time for us to return to the car park and our cars, the rain and thunder moved on and the wind dropped.

Did we get wet? — No, we didn't! Did we all have an enjoyable afternoon — Yes, we all Certainly Did!

Our second outing of the summer was on 23 September 2022, to the Sidney Sime Gallery in Wolplesdon, Surrey.

We all found this visit to be very enjoyable and above all informative and we all left having learned something about this local person. Sidney Sime started life in hardship and poverty and in his early days had to work in the mines to help support his family. He was, however, a very talented self-taught artist who became famous in his own lifetime. Sidney Sime was described as having not a painter's imagination but a writer's and his two principal patrons, Dunsany and Howard de Walden, were men of letters and it was Sidney Sime who did all the illustrations for their works such as *The Gods of Pegana* in Dunsany's tales and *The Blue Bird* designs at The Theatre Royal Haymarket, along with many other works of art. Unfortunately, however Sidney Sime ultimately died in 1941 as a forgotten recluse in his home village of Wolplesdon. Thankfully his wife and friends including Thomas Seymour the Grandson of Lord Howard de Walden and Lady Dunsany, ensured that Sidney Sime would not be forgotten, and we now have a museum in Worplesdon containing his work which is open to the public.

Following our visit to the Gallery we went to the tea rooms for tea and cake after which we visited Sidney Sime's grave at St Mary's Church Wolplesdon.

This was an excellent afternoon out which left all of us with the desire to learn more about this local man and the wish to visit again.

Branch Life



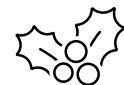
Many of you reading this will be branch members and will be enjoying regular meet-ups with friends and ex-colleagues. If you are not a branch member and would like to join a branch then please do visit our website for more information (www.nhsrf.org.uk) or contact me at london.eastanglia@nhsrf.org.uk

Our newest branch in the South East is East Kent (Canterbury) and I am pleased to report that the new branch has an enthusiastic committee and is welcoming new members. If you are a postal member in this area please do think about joining up.

Remember membership of the Fellowship is open to NHSRF/Social Care staff/retirees/volunteers. Membership is also available to spouses/partners/relatives and close friends. In essence the more the merrier. Members with varied backgrounds do bring with them a diversity which can only enrich the branch.

The P60 Exercise has brought many new members to the Fellowship but as was pointed out to me the other day, many folk join via 'word of mouth' so please do bear this in mind and do encourage people to join NHSRF.

Ed



**A Merry Christmas and
A Happy New Year to All**

Ed

The Christmas Tree – Trafalgar Square



A Personal Reflection

Eighteen Months On

by Mary Macer

Suffolk West Branch

The last time I wrote for this Newsletter was in June 2021, a little over a year since the beginning of the Covid pandemic. Those were difficult times, and looking over that article brings back memories of how uncertain our futures were then despite the vaccination programme kicking-in and turning the tide of infection. I still feel so grateful that in this country, thanks to the amazing work of the scientists who developed the products, and all the doctors, nurses and volunteers who made up the army who administered them, saved so many of us who otherwise might not have made it. Of course, many of us did not make it, and that is the truth of a global pandemic which can attack us in such a relentless and pitiless manner.

Having said that, it seems we are now enjoying getting back to a much more normal state of affairs despite the fact that Covid hasn't gone away, just changed its personality to ensure its own survival, very sneakily in my opinion!

After all that, hopefully things would get better - wouldn't they? Well! What a surprise! A collection of difficulties put their heads over the parapet; for example, all the trouble about Boris and his exploits, Russia invading Ukraine, a massive heatwave in July, the death of our dear Queen and lately all the upheavals about who would be our Prime Minister. Add to that the strikes and economic downturn and it's all enough to exhaust and worry pretty much everybody in one way or another.

However, it's not all gloom and doom, although it pretty much seems that way sometimes. So far, our wonderful NHS Retirement Fellowship is holding in there, and there are still many good people doing their best for our organisation, and indeed for the wider world.

Our Suffolk West Branch has been fortunate enough to maintain a healthy membership, and we are a lively bunch to say the least! We have many regular groups of varied interest, and our monthly meetings are full of good humour and lively chatter as well as some excellent speakers. Monthly lunches at our local College Restaurant have started again (very yummy), we have had a recent theatre trip to Norwich, a very fun Quiz Night and are now in the throes of planning our Christmas Lunch for members, so as you see we do not need to sit idly by letting everything get us down for lack of sociability.

Good luck, and best wishes to you all.

Mary Macer

Whittington Branch

by Maureen Cronin

Like most branches, Whittington didn't get their room back at the hospital when Covid restrictions eased. Initially we met outdoors in smaller groups. We held our branch meetings in a local pub from September 2021 until May 2022

Michael, our chairman, successfully negotiated a room for free with Islington Council in one of their buildings. We met there in June 2022 and continue there for the present. We keep in touch with the Whittington Trust as we hope to be able to meet there again in the future.

We received seven enquires so far from the P60 campaign. Two have shown interest but not joined as yet.

We have enjoyed a number of events this year. Visits to the Design Museum, Museum of the Home, Windsor, Wembley antique market, Leigh-on-Sea, Alexandra Palace, a ride on the Emirates Cable Car. One of our favourite events was the performance of the London Children's Ballet at the Peacock Theatre.



Three of our members attended the Conference/AGM in Hinkley Island, Leicester. The highlight was the visit to the National Memorial Arboretum where the Fellowship organised a Service at the Memorial to the nurses who died in the first and second World Wars. A wreath was laid by George Kempton and members were able to place their poppies there.