

South East News

and update from



Editor: Sally Bundock
london.eastanglia@nhsrf.org.uk

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What's New

A New Year and new beginnings!

On 15 January John Rostill will be standing down as Chief Executive of the Fellowship and we will be welcoming Mike Seaton who will be our new CE. I spoke with John on the phone this week and we wished each other well and agreed we had enjoyed working together. John, I understand, will remain with the Fellowship and even has ideas about opening a new branch in his area. I have yet to speak with Mike Seaton but certainly look forward to doing so in the near future.

The New Year also sees the first meeting of our new Members' Council with Lorraine Taylor as Chair and Ros Lobo as Vice Chair.

It is good that so many members are enjoying our Facebook page and sharing with others details of their activities. May I also, at this point, remind members of the M25 Group. Branches who are happy to share events with other members are invited to contact me to circulate information.

My thanks to those who entered the Prize Quiz in the last issue and well done to the winner, Marilyn Davis, Chair of East Grinstead, whose email read 'Great news for 2023. Hope my luck stays for the rest of year!' We hope so too Marilyn!

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.

We have two big birthdays this year – the NHS itself and the Fellowship and so there will be ample opportunity for celebration. It is going to be a busy year. Please do keep up all the good work and do keep your news coming. Always good to see it in my inbox.

Take care and keep well everyone.

Sally

Mike Seaton, Chief Executive

The Fellowship is pleased to announce the appointment of Mike Seaton as our new Chief Executive who takes up post on January 16.

Mike brings more than 30 years' experience in the charity sector at local, regional and national level. He is delighted to be joining the NHS Retirement Fellowship and said: "This opportunity came along, and it is really exciting to be part of something that has members at its heart. I think that is really important. The health service is such a valuable asset and I see that within my own family. My oldest son is in his fourth year at medical school, whilst my youngest son is a second year physiotherapy student and my mother in law was a district nurse for many years.

"This charity is so important in terms of supporting people in retirement and I think we can build on that for the future and how we can look to extend the reach through new branches, growing our membership and reaching out to social care staff. I'm looking forward to getting to know the trustees, staff and Members' Council as well as the branches and members to see how we can work together to ensure growth and sustainability for the Fellowship now and in the future."



Lorraine Taylor

Chair – Members' Council

I know that many readers know Lorraine but for the benefit of those who don't, I have included this photograph of her taken by Gloria Carr.

Lorraine is an enthusiastic Regional Representative and I know she is looking forward to her new role as Chair of the Members Council.



An update from Crawley and District Branch

by

Cecelia Turpin



On our way to the conference supporting 'Wear red to give the red card to racism day'.



Relaxing in the Jurys Inn Hotel



The wreath laid at the Nurses Memorial

Crawley and District Branch would like to say a big thank you to John Rostill and his team and to Isle of Wight Tours (Geoff, Ollie and Gillian) for the wonderful AGM and Conference in Leicestershire.

We really enjoyed it and really appreciate all the work that went into organising it. The Jurys Inn Hotel was very comfortable especially with the large Slumberland beds!

The Conference itself was interesting. We especially enjoyed the talk given by Professor Tony Moffat "From Hospital Pharmacist to Forensic Scientist". We felt it was a very good idea to have video presentations from Amanda Pritchard, CEO of the NHS, and Humza Yousaf, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, Scotland.

The evening meals and entertainments were great fun. Also, a good opportunity for meeting others.

A big thank you to IOW Tours, especially Geoff, Ollie and Gillian, for looking after us so well. We really enjoyed the excursion to Kenilworth Castle to hear the romantic story of Robert Dudley's efforts to woo Queen Elizabeth 1 and the visit to The National Memorial Arboretum with the road train trip and the cream tea with the most enormous scones anyone had ever seen.

Also, thanks to George Kempton and the Revd Vic Morris who conducted the service for us at the Nurses Memorial to give thanks to all the nurses who died whilst serving their country during the two World Wars. Also, he gave his blessing and give thanks for the Health Service. A beautiful wreath was laid and those who wished to, laid their own memorial crosses.



Branch members at the Prince Regent November 2022

An update from Redbridge and Waltham Forest Branch

Frances Heaslip is the editor of the Redbridge and Waltham Forest Branch newsletter which is produced quarterly. I was pleased to receive a copy of the December 2022 in my inbox recently.

Joy Henderson is the branch chair and in the newsletter. she writes that membership is slowly increasing and at the time of writing the branch has 111 members. They enjoyed a varied and interesting programme of speakers and other events in 2022 and plans are currently in progress for 2023. Jo writes that although the branch is currently working well, the executive committee would welcome more volunteers to spread the load.

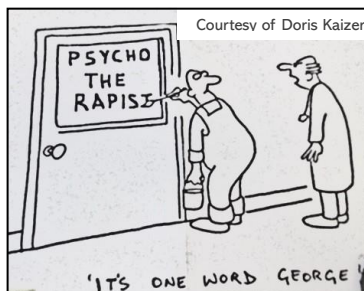
The branch has a number of activity groups including Bowls, Computer Forum, Concert Trips, Walks and the occasional coffee morning. The walks are very popular, and the branch welcomes non-branch members to attend if they wish. Details of walks planned for early 2023 are shown in this newsletter under the **M25 Group** section. The branch's newsletter contains some excellent write ups on the 2022 walks. The branch events team are constantly looking at ways to extend activities and welcome suggestions from branch members for speakers and events.

One very useful item in the newsletter is the following website which gives helpful information about scams. Unfortunately for us all these are becoming more prevalent and sophisticated.
<https://www.met.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/central/advice/fraud/met/the-little-book-of-big-scams.pdf>

One of the enjoyable events for 2022 was when over 20 members booked for the ABBA-based entertainment and Christmas lunch at the Prince Regent. The service and the food that was served was quick, responsive and hot. A great plus when there were over 150 people to be served. The duo that kept everyone entertained with a quiz, raffle and ABBA lookalike contest and lots of dancing to familiar ABBA music were really good. They kept members up dancing and enjoying the songs. Everyone enjoyed the occasion.

In March 2023 the branch has an organised visit to the Houses of Parliament. This is just one of the activities planned for the New Year. All in all, the branch is catering well for its members. *Ed*

Some funnies from the R and WF newsletter



“PUSH.....If that doesn't work PULL. If that doesn't work, we must be closed.”

A drunk tramp arrives in front of the parliament building and parks his bicycle. In no time a police officer arrives and says to him, “You can't leave your bike here, you are in front of the parliament building. The Prime Minister, Ministers, and numerous political personalities pass by here.” The drunks man looks at him from head to toe and replies, “Don't worry, I'll lock it up!”

“C Z W I X N O S T A CZ+ Z.” “Can you read this?” the optician asked. “Read it?” the Polish man replied, “I know the guy!”



London Marathon 2022

What an Amazing Day!

**Judy Hicks-Davies
Royal Berkshire Branch**

On 2nd September I was one of the 42,000 people who took part in the London Marathon. This landmark race is the second largest annual road race in the UK, after the Great North Run. This iconic event has been going strong for 42 years giving people the opportunity to run round the (traffic free) streets of London taking in the wonderful sights, old and new, of the capital. This year 18 Guinness World Records were achieved, and thousands of pounds were raised for some great charitable causes.

I was raising money for a local charity, BIBS (Babies in Buscot Support) BIBS supports babies and their families on the special care baby unit (Buscot Ward) in the Royal Berkshire Hospital.

The 26.2-mile marathon course has remained largely unchanged since the inaugural race in 1981. The start is at Greenwich Park and Blackheath where all the runners meet and get ready for the run. Rows of lorries are lined up waiting to transport clothes and belongings not needed during the run across to the finish area. The organisation to get everyone to the start on time is a fine-tuned operation. Runners are allocated wave numbers and set off in timed waves. I had to be at my allotted wave area at 10.30am.

By now the early drizzle had passed over and the sun was trying to come out. As we approached the start line the excitement and anticipation was palpable. Masses of runners were all steadily moving in one direction towards the start. Once we got to the start line the mass seemed to open up and I was able to set off at a steady jog. The atmosphere was fantastic with crowds of supporters calling out, waving flags and taking pictures and the runners all raring to go.

The course is flat with no hills to speak of which makes for a fast course for the elite runners. From Greenwich Park we set off towards Woolwich. After three miles runners from the three separate start areas joined together into the same route and the volume of runners increased. At six and a half miles we went past the Cutty Sark. Here there were TV cameras following our progress. The crowds cheering us on were several rows deep. Just before the halfway mark we ran over Tower Bridge which was truly amazing. Running in the middle of the road with so many other inspirational runners was an incredible feeling. The crowds were cheering loudly, and the TV cameras were in evidence again. We continue out towards Canary Wharf. At this point we could see the fast runners (who had started earlier) on the other side of the road on their way back to the finish. They only had four more miles to go, whilst we still had 13 miles to go.

Having run out to Docklands we looped round and were heading in the direction of home. There were slightly less supporters here but at 21 miles music was blasting out by Limehouse town hall to spur us on. At 22 miles we passed the Tower of London. Along the Embankment the crowds seemed to increase, and the enthusiastic cheering got louder. The London Eye was clear to see on the other side of the river. As we headed towards Westminster, we could see Big Ben glistening in the sunshine.

There was only just over a mile to go now, the last little bit and I would be at the finish. We ran along the edge of St James Park with crowds several rows deep urging us on. Buckingham Palace came into sight, then we turned into the Mall and with 300 metres to go the finish line was in sight. The crowds were roaring and runners were surging with a final kick towards the finish line, the atmosphere was incredible. It was a great feeling going over the line, I had completed the London Marathon in 4hours 56mins.

Contd. overleaf

Judy's Marathon continued from previous page.

It was a great day. The enthusiastic crowds and music from various bands got me round the course. I met some incredible people. Many were raising money for all sorts of charities, and others were hoping to get a Guinness World Record wearing fabulous costumes. On my way round I saw three Rhinos, Mr Blobby, Batman, a red-letter box with the new letters for King Charles on the front. Men in army uniform were carrying loaded rucksacks and firemen with heavy cylinders on their backs. I don't know how they managed to get round carrying all that weight. Thank goodness there were plenty of drink stations en route to keep them well hydrated.

Running 26.2 miles is a challenge but a rewarding experience. The going got tough at times but the thought of raising money for BIBS kept me going. I'd like to say a big thank you to everyone who helped me raise money for this well deserving local charity. Your donations are very much appreciated, and I know BIBS are very grateful.



Ed: Well done July!

More news from the Royal Berkshire Branch

Joan Walker



The first photo shows our three newest members, whilst the second photo shows the interaction of some of the older members on table three. The lady in the light top with her back to the camera is in her mid-nineties.

Between the two photos we have the youngest and the oldest. The oldest was an early member of the branch and has been chair during her time with us. The youngest members are enthusiastic and so we have great hopes for the future of the branch in their hands.



Walkers on the September 2022 Cutty Sark



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.

Wednesday 18th January 2023 – Meet at St Paul's station for a 3½ mile circular walk "The Medieval City", Discover the people and places that defined the square mile in the Middle Ages c.1066-1500.

Thursday 9th February 2023 – Meet at Monument station, Fish Street exit, at 11 a.m. for a 3½ mile circular walk – Whittington's Cat and Winchester geese.

Friday 10th March 2023 – Meet at North Dulwich station at 11 a.m. for a 5-mile circular walk including a park, a wood and a nature reserve.

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

Northampton Branch Christmas Meeting

Pat Oliver



Northampton Christmas Meeting - Santa giving out the raffle prizes!



An Update from Lowestoft Branch (by the sea) **by Jenny Henwood**

We had our first meeting of the New Year on 3 January. Only 17 members attended as there is a lot of illness around at present. Members enjoyed drinks and nibbles and chatting about their Christmas and New Year experiences. I talked to them about the report for South East News and below is my contribution.

Last year our branch welcomed nine new members, one of which was a postal member and a direct response from the P60 project. We now have 46 members in total.

The year started in April with Smudges Story, which was about his experiences during WW1 told in a book researched and written by his granddaughter who presented the talk. Members found this talk both interesting and enjoyable.

In May, Angela came to take us back to the 50's & 60's with music, magazines, photos etc. and she dressed the part with a circular skirt with masses of petticoats on show. It was wonderful to hear all the voices singing along with the music of our youth.

June was natter and chatter, which our members always enjoy, talking with colleagues they once worked with.

July was a talk given by the local RNLI volunteers.

In August we all met at the Sparrows Nest Park for a picnic. A grand day out!

In September Angela bought Varley to meet us to talk about his time spent with Daniel, her son, who has been profoundly deaf since birth. Varley is a hearing dog, who has made Daniel feel safe and secure since the age of five. It was an amazing talk and made us all realise how isolated and frightened this little boy must have felt before Varley came into his life.

In October Jenny King came to visit us and talked about her role in the NHS. It was also our Annual Quiz for the Shield. Jenny joined Mavis, Sheila and Geraldine at their table and they went on to win!

November found us making inexpensive Christmas wreaths.

In December 38 members had Christmas lunch and entertainment at the Victoria Hotel, which we all thoroughly enjoyed. Also, we attended our annual service of carols and readings followed by tea and mince pies. The collection went to our local Air ambulance.

Ed: Well done Lowestoft!