

**February  
2023**

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## Membership cost rise shock as Fellowship faces crisis

**Capitation fees for members are to rise from £20 to £30 a year from April after the trust board's decision to increase them was reluctantly endorsed by the new Members Council in January.**

The council met for the first time and heard from the chairman of the board George Kempton that the increase was inescapable.

Grants from the NHS or from Scottish and Welsh governments were no longer possible and despite cost cutting changes the Fellowship would run out of money in 2023 unless the increase goes ahead.

While the P60 campaign has recruited 3,000 new



*George Kempton,  
Chairman of Trustees*

members (bringing the total to about 9,000) without an increase the charity's income would only be £180,000 towards a budget of £240,000.

Already decisions have been taken to stop publication of this newsletter (and its huge postage costs), to hold nearly all trustee board and members council meetings on zoom and to

postpone other planned spending, but the gap still remains.

*"We would have been in danger of being unable to pay our bills" George Kempton told the council, "we are in a very difficult position. The only way we can be financially sustainable is to increase the capitation fee (the money sent to central office to support leadership and development) to £30."*

Branches will be asked to send in subscriptions at the new rate by June 2023 to keep the Fellowship alive. New Chief Executive Mike Seaton has written to all branches with full information.

*Mike Seaton is new Chief Executive*



**Mike Seaton, who has 30 years of experience in the charity sector at local, regional and national level, is our new Chief Executive.**

His career has included chief executive and leadership roles with many charities, most recently a carer support charity in the Lake District where he lives.

*Full story page 2.*



You can also get a flavour of what we do by seeing our members stories on our Facebook page – just search for NHS Retirement Fellowship or follow us on Twitter @NHSRetire

[www.nhsrf.org.uk](http://www.nhsrf.org.uk)

# Introducing Mike Seaton

**Mike Seaton, our new Chief Executive, started his new job in January and told Fellowship: "It is really exciting to be part of something that has members at its heart. I think that is really important. I think we can build on that for the future and grow our membership, including reaching out to social care staff."**

Already he has felt warmth and energy from the members he has met and is expanding his knowledge of work in branches. "I'm looking forward to getting to know the trustees, staff and the members council as well as the branches and members and see how we can work together to ensure growth and sustainability now and in future," he said.

Mike has strong links with the NHS with his eldest son in his fourth year in medical school, his youngest son a second year physiotherapy student and his mother in law a former district nurse.



Meeting the new members council for the first time he said: "I am very, very excited about working with you. We have some challenges ahead. It is about how we grow and maintain the Fellowship, get ideas and drive them forward including reaching out to those on the fringes and engaging with postal members."

Mike's career has included chief executive and leadership roles with many charities, most recently a carer support charity in the Lake District where he lives. He is also a grants assessor for BBC Children in Need and holds voluntary positions with other charities. He likes hill walking and has completed 10 marathons.

## Fellowship makes plans for NHS birthday celebrations

**July marks the 75th birthday of the NHS - and the Fellowship is planning to celebrate.**

A steering group of key staff and members council representatives has been set up, chaired by trustee Mabel Saw. The group's aim is to co-ordinate plans for celebrating the anniversary and secondly to take part in the national steering group led by NHS England where our job is to find our members who are willing to share their stories of working in the NHS in its earliest days.

The Fellowship's Head of Communications, Lucia Hiden, said: "We know that many branches always like to celebrate the NHS's birthday and this special birthday feels more pertinent than ever as we recognise the achievements of the service through Covid and in dealing with a very tough front line at the moment. Our members quite rightly are proud of their role in the story of the NHS and we know from NHS70 that people love to hear those stories.

"Please let me know what your branch is planning

or thinking - even if you haven't got it firmed up yet. We'd love to share ideas across the Fellowship and encourage our postal members to join in locally.

"I'm also really keen to hear from people willing to share their stories of their experiences of working in the NHS in its earliest days right from 1948 through to the early 1950s and beyond. We know that NHS England (who are working with the NHS in Scotland and Wales to ensure that everyone is part of this) are really grateful to the Fellowship for our participation in the



national efforts and they really see us as a fountain of those stories - it's a great opportunity to raise our profile."

To let Lucia know of your branch plans - and to share your stories - please email [comms@nhsrf.org.uk](mailto:comms@nhsrf.org.uk) or telephone Lucia on: **07739 138 954**. You can also reach her in writing at the Central Office address.

# The members council gets to work

The new members council met for the first time in January. Fellowship introduces some of the members.

## Energetic Lorraine is new chairman

Lorraine Taylor, who has become the first chairman of the new members council, comes with a history of energetic involvement in promoting the Fellowship.

She joined Middlesex, Hounslow and Spelthorne branch 20 years ago and quickly became treasurer (a role she continues) and has been regional representative for North West Thames for nearly 14 years.

During that time she has helped to found three new branches at St George's, Ealing and Hammersmith. When South East Thames was without a representative she offered to "oversee" the region for a while and helped Sally Bundock who had started a new branch in Canterbury, as well as visiting all the branches.



*"I am really looking forward to my new role" she said. "It gives me the chance to be more involved with both members and the trustees."*

Lorraine was an orthopaedic nurse in the NHS and then ran residential homes for the elderly for the last 20 years of her career. She lives in Chiswick and has been married for over 60 years to husband Robert. They have two sons, six grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Ros Lobo, Regional Representative for South West Thames and a great enthusiast for the Fellowship, is vice chairman.

## No "nodding through" for new council

The new members council will not be a collection of "noddors" its chairman Lorraine Taylor has vowed.

Addressing the first meeting she said: "We need to be more pro active and questioning of decisions on behalf of our members. I am hoping this council will have more input – I don't want to be chair of a council that agrees with everything – we are not "noddors" who

just nod through everything. We will ask questions and speak on members behalf."

The new council would represent members, and bring to the board what members are saying, not in a "them and us" way but all of us together.

## Postal members join the team

For the first time in the history of the Fellowship postal members have an official voice in plans for its future.

The new members council includes two members, Barbara Kolator and Jenny Sharp, who represent more than 2,000 members who do not belong to one of the branches.



Barbara Kolator

Barbara, who lives in south east London, joined the Fellowship about 10 years ago and was involved with the book club and other on line activities. One thing that really impressed her was the Fellowship's response to the pandemic.

*"I liked the way they stepped up through Covid" she said. "Other organisations gave up. The Fellowship did not."*

Barbara started her NHS career in as a scientist in microbiology before working in a number of roles in virology, neurosurgery and clinical trials in ophthalmology. She is now a gemmologist.

Jenny's 30 year NHS career began as tea lady and cleaner. Then they got a vending machine and she switched to office jobs, becoming an office manager before working on



Jenny Sharp

the merger of three London hospitals and setting up millions of meetings followed by a varied career.

*"I loved it" she said "it was lovely to see people grow and become leaders."*

Jenny is a widow with a daughter and granddaughter and joins the members council at the time when her ideas on how to link people more effectively by making connections through modern technology will be valuable. It's a lesson she learned from Slimming World which she joined in the pandemic and made good friends online before meeting people in person.

Both Barbara and Jenny are keen to hear from other postal members about what they would like from them and the Fellowship.

## Inspirational Nanda heads for transplant games

**Kidney transplant patient Nanda Appadoo, a member of Edinburgh and Forth Valley branches, has been selected to represent Great Britain and Northern Ireland in the World Transplant Games in Perth, Australia in April.**

Nanda's story is inspirational: having trained as a nurse in 1973, he worked as a general and psychiatric nurse before moving to the urology unit at Monkland Hospital. He had to retire from the NHS as a health visitor when he was diagnosed with Iga Nephropathy.

He had a kidney transplant in December 2018 and was determined to keep fit and decided to take part seven months later in his first transplant games in Newport. He was successful in becoming a British champion in ball throw and gained a bronze medal in tenpin bowling. Covid put a stop to the games for two years but Nanda kept training.



In 2022 he took part in the British Transplant Games with more success, winning one gold and three silver medals. He also took part in the European transplant games where he won three bronze medals.

Nanda has to take 23 tablets a day and pushes himself to walk between seven and eight kilometres every day to stay healthy. He makes the following plea *"I am eternally grateful to my donor who has made it possible for me to lead a normal life. Please give donor consent for the benefit of our family, friends and fellow human beings."* We wish Nanda every success in the games.

## Cheery Edna celebrates 100

**Edna Eckersley, president of Coventry branch, was 100 on 23 December a few days after celebrations with members at their Christmas lunch.**

How does it feel to be 100? "Not a lot of difference really" she said. "I can't get about so much and that's all there is to it."

Edna has been a long term member of the branch, joining in 1988. She held several committee roles as well as being chairman, and also regional representative for West Midlands from 2002 to 2008.

*"I did all the little jobs to start with" she said. "Then I was chairman and now I am honorary president. I still go to all the dinners and that. We used to have no end of trips and holidays – they still have – and now they have a ramblers group as well."*



Edna describes herself as having been "a clerical person" in the NHS, working in Coventry and North Warwickshire Hospital and Walsgrave Hospital. "There is something about working in a hospital – it's nice, you feel you are doing something useful" she said.

She remembers one occasion when a consultant was fuming because there were no notes or X rays for an upcoming appointment. She managed to find the notes, but the X rays were nowhere. In desperation she rang the patient ("lucky she had a phone") to be told that

she had them on top of the wardrobe. The clinic she was attending had closed by the time the X ray had been done, so she just took them home. Edna fixed for someone to go and get them (the patient couldn't reach) and all was recovered.

Edna's husband George, a photographer with the Coventry Evening Telegraph, died some years ago, but she is now supported by her family which includes three daughters and a son. She continues to live at home in Coventry.

Branch Secretary Melvina McKenzie added: "Edna has been a committed member and still gives active guidance to us all. We presented her with a bouquet and a birthday cake at the Christmas lunch."

## Tree planted at Forth Valley to remember the Queen

The Fellowship was represented when an acer tree (Crimson King) was planted in the grounds of Forth Valley Royal Hospital as part of a living legacy to commemorate the Queen's platinum jubilee.

David Paterson, a trustee of the Fellowship representing Forth Valley branch joined the Lord Lieutenant and Forth Valley's Chief Executive Cathie Cowan and members of staff at the planting which is part of the Queen's Green Canopy project which has seen more than a million trees take root across the UK.

The Queen, accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh, opened the hospital in 2011. The new tree provides a lasting legacy for staff, patients and visitors to enjoy.



Judith McMurray from Dundee Branch will be receiving a "small forest"

of 12 saplings between 6-17th March to be planted at the end of March or

early April. She would be delighted to supply some of them to other branches.

If you are interested, please contact Judith.



### Joyce takes up the challenge

**When North West Durham branch members were given the chance to straddle a giant motor bike after a talk on the work of the Blood Bikers, one member could not resist.**

Joyce McDonald stepped forward and posed confidently for the camera astride the bright yellow machine watched by members.

"We had an excellent talk about the Northumbria Blood Bikes" said branch chairman Mary Heatherington, "when he suggested we go to look at the bike everyone was very keen – but only Joyce took the chance to get on."



Can you help in research project?

**Are you a nurse who returned to practice during Covid-19? If so, your help in an important research project would be much appreciated!**

Sarah Morton, from Bournemouth (a postal member who joined as a result of the P60 campaign) did exactly that and the experience has so inspired her she is now doing a part-time PhD to gain a better understanding of the experience for nurses like her and how that can contribute to understanding people motivations, behaviours and help planning for the future.

If you think you fit the bill then Sarah would love to have one and half hours of your time - at your convenience - to chat through your experiences. If you would like to take part, please contact Sarah at:

**email: [smorton@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:smorton@bournemouth.ac.uk)  
tel: 07813 570 818**

# John Rostill retires

**John Rostill, who has been the Fellowship's dynamic and committed Chief Executive since 2013, retired in January.**

In his final report to conference he reviewed the past year and then told members:

*"I have thoroughly enjoyed working with everybody, the trustees, the members and the staff. It has been a delight. So thank you very much indeed for your fellowship and commitment over the years. I shall miss it."*

Fellowship chairman George Kempton spoke of the huge amount of time John has put in to the Fellowship. "It is far more than he is expected to do. He has shown tremendous commitment and enthusiasm and deserves thanks and applause," a view which members warmly endorsed.

Reflecting on his 10 years as Chief Executive John recalled how he immediately warmed to the team at the interview panel and the



welcome he received at his first conference in Manchester. "The fun, fellowship and friendship shone through" he said.

"I said I would do five years, I have done 10 – and I have thoroughly enjoyed them.

There have been some difficult decisions and I have been disappointed by the way the number of members has dropped. A high point was the 70th anniversary of the NHS where the Fellowship was almost leading it. A low point is me

leaving now. Inevitably I can't stay for ever but I think I have probably done as much as I can and it is time for somebody new. It has been a privilege and a pleasure to work with such wonderful people and I'd like to thank them all. I shall miss you."

George Kempton added: "I have had the pleasure of working with John for over four years. It quickly became obvious he was dedicated to the sustainability of the Fellowship both through growth in membership and financial stability. The Fellowship has benefited hugely from his dedication in pursuit of these goals.

"One of John's pleasures was to meet members through visits to branches and workshops and at the annual conference where we remember his prowess on the dance floor. I personally will miss his support and wise words as I am sure will many members."

*Above centre: John in full flow as he delivered his final report to conference last year.*

## Editor Andrew calls it a day

**Andrew Moss, who has edited "Fellowship" since he started the newsletter in 1997 has decided that this issue will be his last (even before the trust board decided to cease publication).**

John Rostill, the fourth chief executive that Andrew has worked with in producing the newsletter said "When I first joined the Fellowship, I was immediately impressed with the Fellowship newsletter and over the years have come to rely very heavily on its editor.

"The newsletter has been one of the jewels of the Fellowship, imparting strategic news as well as covering all the other issues that are in the hearts of



*Andrew on an outing to Bath with Oxford branch members.*

members. Andrew has very successfully maintained that balance over more than a decade. His magical terminology has conveyed

interestingly to members what many would have thought boring and routine. He has also been a regular attendee at conference and avidly recorded the flavour of those events. He has even made some of my speeches sound interesting!"

Andrew added: *"I never thought that when Roger Titley asked me to start the newsletter that I would still be doing it more than 25 years later. But the Fellowship gets into*

*your soul. I have loved meeting members and I'd like to thank them for their unfailing kindness in sharing their stories so readily. It has been a privilege to play a part in an organisation I have come to cherish."*

Memorable moments in what is now a rich archive of 25 years of the Fellowship include interviews with Irene James, the Fellowship's founder, and with a member who had written a book which she said had been "well received." It's title? Call the Midwife. Whatever happened to that?

## Hilary leaves Scotland role

Hilary Robb, who has been the enthusiastic development officer for Scotland for the last six years, is stepping down from her role in March.



*Relaxed and smiling: Hilary plans to take a well-earned rest after six years in the job which has been "the most rewarding at a personal level" and to which she has dedicated herself with commitment and enthusiasm.*

*"It's been lovely to meet such wonderful people in the branches" she said, "but I have reached a time where I want to do other things. I have a huge amount of respect for our members and it has been fantastic to hear their stories and watch their long-standing friendships. Out of all the jobs I have had, this has been the most rewarding at a personal level."*

The development officer role has had its frustrations too, particularly with regard to getting health boards to support and recognise the work that the Fellowship does.

What she will remember most, perhaps, is the

celebrations around the 70th anniversary of the NHS and there was particular delight when the Scottish Health Minister visited Edinburgh branch last year. She has also cherished the "life force" energy of members, particularly Ethel Armstrong and Renee Gibb and many, many others. "When you meet people who have had amazing lives and still have time to help others, it is inspiring."

Hilary now plans to travel with her husband Iain and start to tick off the list of places they have always wanted to go. But she isn't losing touch: she plans to remain a member of Edinburgh branch for many years to come.

## Ken Jarrold steps down as Fellowship patron

Ken Jarrold, who has been the Fellowship's patron and supporter for the last 15 years, has stepped down. In a farewell message he writes:.

*"It has been a great privilege to be the patron of the Retirement Fellowship. I have met many members and spoken at many conferences and meetings including the national conferences in England and Wales and regional conferences including the north east and south east regional conferences.*

"In this very challenging world of economic uncertainty and the NHS in the worst position I can remember, Fellowship is needed more than ever. What is Fellowship? It is a friendly association of people with shared interests. That is what the NHSRF is all about. I wish the Fellowship well and I hope that it will flourish for many years to come."



*Ken Jarrold (centre) led many "question time" panels with apparently effortless grace and courtesy and was always a welcome guest at conference. His ability to "open doors" for the Fellowship was much valued.*



Making your retirement work for you.

# Conference report

## KEYNOTE SPEECH

### Team work is key says HR leader

The NHS needs a more compassionate, collaborative team work approach to management if it is to meet the challenges of the future was the message from Dean Royles, President of Health Care People Management in a thought-provoking speech to launch the conference.

Mixing personal memories with serious messages he recalled how well NHS staff had responded to the pandemic, and how when “one more push” was called for they stepped up to the plate again and again with dedication and commitment.

#### Employee rights

Recalling the maturity with which trade unions responded he said: “They largely worked hand in glove with us. I for one will stand with trade unions to argue the case for an effective floor of employee rights. We must preserve and respect the mature working relationship we have if we are to plot our way safely through difficult times.”

#### Speak truth to power

Part of his role as president was to speak truth to power and had written to the Secretary of State urging government not to make the mistake of undervaluing people who work in the background in support of frontline care. “They too are part of the team that has delivered” he said.

He urged ministers to enhance partnership working, pay agreed pay increases promptly and pay apprentices a living wage. Most of all they should lead by example with a positive, compassionate and inclusive culture built on trust.

#### Four things people want from work

Summing up, he said people wanted four things from their work:

##### Meaning:

“We need to think that what we are doing makes a difference. I have always been in awe of clinicians in the front line, but I also know that the people who work in support jobs are there because they want to make a difference.”

##### Hope:

“We need some hope. All of us want to believe that next year will be better than the year before. Leadership is about bringing hope to the NHS.”

##### Belonging:

“Being with like-minded people in a team.”

##### Growth:

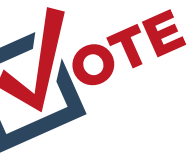
“We all want growth. We all want to believe we can grow more in our understanding of the way we do our job. And that means investing in training and development so we can do our job better.”



Dean Royles “Team work is key.”

“We need some hope”





## Re-structure plans halted by branch votes

A change in the structure of the Fellowship which aimed to link the membership better with the centre through creating county representatives failed to reach the two thirds support needed from branches.

But two other measures – re-shaping the national council into a new members council which includes two postal members and setting the terms of office for members – were approved and will go ahead.

Reporting the result of the ballot, Chief Executive John Rostill said the board was quite clear that this was the wish of the membership and there was no intention to re-visit it.

Eighty six branches cast votes (by post or in person) on the first two resolutions and 82 on the third. Although a majority supported the

structural changes, it was not enough to allow a change in the constitution. The figures were:

**Changes to create a new members council:**

65 for, 21 against

**Terms of office:**

67 for, 19 against

**Revised structure:**

54 for, 28 against

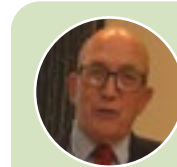
Postal members have been invited to nominate two of their number for membership of the new council (reflecting the rise in postal membership from the recruitment campaign) and regional representatives chose two members to be chairman and vice chairman.

The defeat of the third proposal means that regional boundaries will remain the same (matching the 1974 NHS regions) as does the present method for electing regional representatives. There will be no county representatives.

## Thanks for a great conference

**Crawley members wrote to Chief Executive John Rostill to thank him and the team (including Isle of Wight Tours) for organising a “wonderful” conference.**

“We really enjoyed it and appreciate all the work that went into organising it” they say. Highlights for them were the interesting conference, the fun of the evening meals and entertainments and the visit to the National Memorial Arboretum.



## The Chief Executive's report

John Rostill reported on several topics in a wide ranging report.

### The P60 recruitment campaign

Membership has risen from 6,000 to about 9,000 and reversed the decline in membership of the last decade. *“It was always going to be expensive, but it was well worth the cost. If we had not turned the corner, goodness knows where we would have been”*

### Grants from governments

The Fellowship used to get grants from English, Welsh and Scottish governments. The Welsh grant stopped a while ago, and while Scotland continues its support, a grant of £50,000 agreed by the outgoing NHS Chief Executive for England has not yet been received. It is the 75th anniversary of the NHS in 2023 when there will be a chance to promote the decades of service members have given to the NHS. “That is the message we shall be stressing. We hope it will be turned into cash – but realistically the prospects are slim.”

### Finances

Most of the Fellowship's money is held by the branches – and a lot of it is committed to future spending, although some branches have substantial reserves. “If we receive the £50,000 grant and capitation funds arrive in January we shall be reasonably comfortable this year. We are now putting together a plan to reduce spending to match our future budget.”

### The 75th anniversary and the coronation

Both these events provide opportunities for branches to celebrate and to raise awareness. Fellowship has been invited to join an NHS steering group. We will have our own group, chaired by trustee Mabel Saw. “There is no doubt that branches will want to celebrate in the usual way. The search is now on for innovative ideas to mark the occasion. Let's make it an anniversary to be remembered.”

### Congratulations

“I want to congratulate the branches and the officers who have made the Fellowship what it is today. People who have retired and not joined simply don't know what they are missing. Somehow we need to convey to them the benefits of this organisation that celebrates 45 years next year. Every time you look you see people joining together, enjoying themselves and getting fun, friendship and fellowship – plus the financial benefits and discounts.” Telling more people about it was always the challenge ahead.

Left: Crawley members on their way to conference, dressed in red for “Wear red to give the red card to racism” day.

## Tony shares a lifetime of memories

A lively, engaging and amusing speech by Tony Moffat, Emeritus Professor of Pharmaceutical Analysis at UCL School of Pharmacy (better known to all as the husband of Margaret) drew laughter and applause from members who delighted in tales from his distinguished career.

Remembering his early career he recalled how pain control was often delivered by something called “The Brompton cocktail” which was a mix of whatever strong spirit the patient requested and the pain relief.

He learned an early lesson when a professor explained to him that the absence of senior people had limited effect, while the more essential you were to the organisation.

As his career moved on he led work on testing urine



*Sharing memories: Tony Moffat at the lectern during his entertaining talk*

samples from players in the 1966 football world cup. After repeated results came back negative he was alarmed to find an extra

sample in the box which was seriously positive. Nervously, he rang to report the result, only to be warmly congratulated. Some people, including the media, had been sceptical of the series of negative results so a test sample from someone who had taken a banned substance had been included, to demonstrate the efficiency of the service.

Tony later became an expert witness giving evidence in some prominent court cases, both clinical and criminal.

## Tea tale wins story competition

Lorraine Hoskins, from Coventry branch won the Fellowship's short story competition with a story about life in the NHS as seen from the perspective of a cup of tea.

Her story was chosen from more than 50 entries where members were challenged to write a story of not more than 1,500 words with a link to the NHS.

*“It's just a story from a very different angle” said Lorraine, “it's the way tea sees the circle of life in the NHS. Whatever happens in life we always go and put the kettle on.”*

Lorraine spent 30 years in industry, rising to become assistant company secretary with GEC before she joined the health service, working in administrative roles mostly in primary care. She has, in the past, volunteered for hospital radio, helped



people to learn to read and write and led creative writing sessions. Since retirement she finds herself volunteering for Oxfam and teaching needlework and embroidery. “I have met and continue to meet some incredible people – you never know who might turn up in my next story” she said.

Lorraine lives in Coventry with her husband Paul and has been a member of the Fellowship for four years. Mags Lancaster-Cook, a postal member from Buckinghamshire since 2010 won second prize and Dianna Oxley from London a postal member since 2020 came third. The first prize was £200. All three stories have been posted on the NHSRF website.

The short story competition was the initiative of Fellowship member Peter Sykes, and was sponsored by solicitors Hempsons.

*Above centre: Lorraine receives the winners certificate from Fellowship board chairman George Kempton.*



## Janine reveals the dentist who was wild west legend

**The extraordinary life of John Henry “Doc” Holliday the gunfighter and gambler with the manners of a southern gentleman who became a wild west legend was revealed to members by Janine Brooks, one of the Fellowship's trustees.**

What “piqued her interest” in this unlikely character was that he was also a dentist – a profession which she shares. Unfortunately his dental career was short lived. He was troubled by a serious cough which did not go down well with patients and died aged 36 not in a gunfight, but from TB.

In his short life he gained a reputation as a gunfighter and gambler. His friend Wyatt Earp described him as “the deadliest and fastest man with a six gun he had ever seen.” But he was also a cultured man, played the piano, dressed snappily, married, tempestuously, the intriguing “big nose Kate” and was sworn in as a deputy sheriff in Tombstone Arizona and featured in what, thanks to Hollywood, became known as the gunfight in OK Corral.





### Joan Weller

It is with sadness that the NW Surrey Branch, report the passing of Joan Weller who has died aged 91. A long standing member, she served the branch as chairperson for many years in the 1990s until 2008. She remained a staunch supporter until ill health took over and she was no longer able to attend meetings or outings. Members of the branch attended her memorial service, which was a colourful occasion, at her request.

Joan trained at St Thomas' Hospital between 1951-1954 and then went on to work at Ashford, Rowley Bristol and West Middlesex before joining St Peter's Hospital, Chertsey. Joan was the District Superintendent Physiotherapist at St Peter's Hospital for many years, where she was well known and much respected.

### Doreen Turner

It is with much sadness that the Cheltenham branch reports the passing of Doreen Turner, at the remarkable age of 104 after a short illness.



Doreen was at the inaugural meeting in Cheltenham in 1978 to discuss forming an organisation for NHS retirees and their spouses. She became a founder member of Cheltenham branch and often recalled the early days of when a small group would meet in members' homes and compared that to the thriving branch it is today.

She was an enthusiastic, supportive member, who attended meetings regularly for almost 40 years. She was always impeccably dressed and ensured that she sat in the front row to see that things were handled properly.

Doreen grew up in Derbyshire and worked for the Public Health Laboratory at the Derbyshire Royal Infirmary where she became the Chief Administrator. She and her husband Reggie were

accomplished dancers and travelled extensively in Europe, USA, Japan and the far east. She enjoyed sewing and embroidery, the latter of which she did until she died. She had an amazing life, lived to the full.

### Diane Castledine

Coventry branch are very sorry to report the passing of Dian Castledine, a long term loyal member, following a period of illness. She was a committee member and then chairman and later a life member and very much enjoyed the fellowship events and the annual holidays.



Diane trained as a nurse in Coventry and worked in a number of departments before becoming sister, matron and eventually Director of Nursing for the then eight hospitals in Coventry, where she was known to be an effective yet strict manager: the words "what would Miss Castledine say?" would echo round the wards long after she left.

Always willing to give something back, Diane volunteered for the Territorial Army becoming a member of Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps. Reaching the rank of Major, she later confided that she never got used to soldiers having to salute her. Later she was a British Legion Volunteer Welfare Advisor. She was also a stalwart supporter of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, where she served for many years on the Coventry RNLI fundraising committee, eventually receiving the RNLI's Silver Medal for her service to the charity. Retirement allowed Diane to indulge in her passions for gardening and water colour painting.

### Frances du Toit

Frances du Toit, OBE, a former chairman of Brighton and City branch died in September, aged 87. Frances was one of the first members of the branch when

it was founded in 2011 and served as chairman from 2016 to 2019.

A former nurse, she trained at the Westminster Hospital in London and was one of those who shared her early experiences at the time of the seventieth anniversary of the NHS both in Brighton branch and on the Fellowship's 40th anniversary campaign video made at the time. A much loved mother and grandmother and friend, she is remembered fondly by Brighton members.



### *New topic for Photography Group*

**There's a new topic for photographs in the latest competition for the photography group, with entries due in by the end of March.**

Lucia Hiden, Head of Communications writes: "It's hard to think when there's snow on the ground, but spring is round the corner and personally I think it is the season that photographs the best. New life in the ground and in the fields, the welcome return of the sunshine, longer days, amazing sunrises and sunsets... need I go on??!! I'd love to see your submissions on spring to share with the our photography group members over Easter."

#### **Submissions:**

Submissions can be made to Lucia by email at [northeastengland@nhsrf.org.uk](mailto:northeastengland@nhsrf.org.uk) or hard copies can be addressed to her at central office. Consent forms for any Fellowship members/visitors/ guests must be attached as well as consent from the parents or guardians of any children in the picture.

## From the conference

### *You are part of something special says CEO*

**Fellowship members are still a valued part of the NHS community, the NHS Chief Executive Amanda Pritchard promised in an encouraging video message to conference.**

“The NHS is more than a place of work, it’s a community. Without people like you, there would not be an NHS,” she said as she reminded members of the upcoming 75th anniversary and the enormous changes that have taken place in science and medicine in a service which is still available for everyone – a principle that remains fundamental.

“You work is greatly valued and shows me that we need to work with the Fellowship and to use your experience – you are still part of the NHS community and you always will be. You are still as valued a part of the NHS story as you ever have been. You will always be part of something special.”

### *You are a trusted partner, says Scottish Secretary*

**The Fellowship is a trusted and valued partner, Humza Yousaf the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care in Scotland told members in his video presentation.**

“The benefits of working with the Fellowship are clear to me. The NHS should give something back to the people who have spent their careers looking after others” he said. “A heartfelt thank you for all you have done, and all you intend to do.”

### *We are committed to survival, says chairman*

**Summing up the conference at the end of his first year, the chairman George Kempton said the Fellowship was a wonderful organisation providing fun and fellowship to its members and resources to the NHS.**

“No matter what, the board is totally committed to the survival of the organisation. I don’t see a future when we do not exist. A lot of the work that has gone in is to ensure we really are a membership organisation and that the trust board listens to what you want. The effort must come from you to tell us what you want. If you don’t tell us we don’t know whether what we are doing is meeting expectations.”

Looking back he paid tribute to the contribution of three trustees retiring from office this year – past chairmen Cynthia Matthews and Margaret Moffat and Claire Panniker who has moved to an even more demanding job in the NHS. “I want to thank them all for the time they have given to the organisation,” he said. And he warmly thanked the staff who have worked so hard to help members.

# SPREAD THE WORD

## WE NEED TRUSTEES

who are existing members of the Fellowship or have public or voluntary sector experience.

We need members:-

who want to ensure the future of the Fellowship

who want to ensure the financial stability of the Fellowship

who will ensure the Fellowship abides by the rules and regulations of the Charity Commission.

For more information and to apply contact [sherry.smith2@nhs.net](mailto:sherry.smith2@nhs.net)

**‘Thanking a previous generation of people who helped build the NHS’**

We offer support for those retiring, or have retired, from some of the most stressful jobs in health and social care.

We are committed to building a more diverse and inclusive organisation and particularly welcome applications from candidates from black and minority communities and heritage.

Information Pack from [sherry.smith2@nhs.net](mailto:sherry.smith2@nhs.net)

Closing date: 24<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Interview date: 11<sup>th</sup> April 2023



## BENEVOLENT FUND Spread the word

Branches were urged to make sure that their members know more about the Fellowship’s Benevolent Fund when the fund chairman Margaret Moffat reported. “I was astonished that in the last year we only had one application for support” she said. “Please make sure that everyone knows it is there for us.” Margaret will be standing down from her role as she is no longer a trustee. A collection at the conference raised nearly £500 for the fund.

Fellowship is published by the NHS Retirement Fellowship, Weymouth Community Hospital, 3 Melcombe Avenue, Weymouth, DT4 7TB. **Telephone 01305 361317**