

South East News

and update from



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What's New

Well, a few things really. April showers for one and that the garden is really starting to grow now. I just love the grape hyacinths at this time of the year.

In this issue I have written a piece about the 3000+ benevolent funds/charitable trusts in the UK and emphasizing to members that we are fortunate to have our very own benevolent fund for Fellowship members. Applications to our fund are welcomed and treated in the strictest confidence. Members and branches finding the increase in the capitation fee difficult to cope with are invited to approach the fund and/or myself to see how help may be obtained. The emphasis is – that the Fellowship is for all regardless of financial circumstances. It is also worth remembering that members who are eligible to sign the Fellowship Gift Aid form are helping the NHSRF and their branch financially by doing so.

As a reminder, Mike Seaton's and George Kempton's recent letter to members stated *'The Board understands that the increase in the capitation fee may place an additional burden on some branches and could jeopardise their existence. It is particularly keen to respond to requests for help wherever possibly, particularly during this transitional year.'*

This issue contains details of the *Fellowship Annual Holiday* which this year will be to Switzerland in September. More information on page 9 and full marks once again to Lorraine Taylor for organizing this.

It is always pleasing to hear about members/branches sharing events and it was good to learn that Susan Gunning's request for members to take part in the planned visit to Lewes and St. Albans resulted in a number of positive responses.

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.

Please do keep up all the good work and do keep your news coming. Always good to see it in my inbox. Ideas for content and topics are always welcome.

Take care and keep well everyone.

Sally



As all branch committee members know it is not always easy to find a speaker for branch meetings. Below are some ideas. If anyone would like to let me know of any suggestions, I can include in a future issue of this newsletter. Ed

To access details of possible speakers for branch meetings please click on the link below to view the relevant pages on the NHSRF website.

<https://nhsrf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/NHSRF-Website-Branch-activities.pdf>

Monica Sado of Brent Branch recently reported that her branch had an extremely informative talk about the London Air Ambulance.

The speaker was Nigel Richardson and he was excellent.

Requests are made through: info@londonairambulance.org.uk



To book a talk please
Email: [Ria Hambridge](mailto:Ria.Hambridge@silvertimelegal.co.uk)
Ria@silvertimelegal.co.uk

Silvertime offer a one-hour seminar free of charge to branches. The talk is called **Tax, Care, and the New Guy**.

Your speaker would cover Inheritance Tax and provide information on threshold, rules and allowances. The importance of having a great estate plan in place will be explained. The issue of long-term care fees will be discussed. Your speaker will cover the different options available in different circumstances. Lasting Powers of Attorney will be covered and the importance of setting one up when a person is on the edge of losing mental capacity emphasized.

The New Guy part of the talk covers re-marriage of a surviving spouse, and the wills/inheritance issues to consider in these circumstances.

Lorraine Taylor recently emailed to say that her branch, West Middlesex, Hounslow and Spelthorne, recently enjoyed an interesting talk from the RNLI.

The contact is Colin Brown, Community Presenter Volunteer Crew. Email colin.rnli@gmail.com or telephone 07547444742



Help available from Benevolent Funds Ed



MANY MEMBERS may be surprised to learn there are 3000+ benevolent funds/charitable trusts operating in the UK. With such a pool of help out there, it's useful to be aware of what is potentially available. Benevolent funds are like the people they help; they come in all shapes and sizes and from a variety of backgrounds.

The Directory of Social Change regularly publishes *A Guide to Grants for Individuals in Need*. This contains information on more than 2000 trusts, with millions of pounds available for grants. It provides a comprehensive list of sources of non-statutory help and other support available for the relief of individual poverty and hardship. Many local libraries, Citizens' Advice Bureaux and Council for Voluntary Service offices hold copies of the guide, as do the welfare or careers departments at universities/schools.

These organisations range from occupational charities to service and ex-service, sickness and disability, national and general and local charities. Funds vary in size and level of funding. They all rely on donations, contributions and, of course, legacies.

Another excellent source of information on benevolent funds is Turn2Us – an organisation that exists to help people access the money available to them – through benefits, grants and other financial help. Its website www.turn2us.org.uk helps people find appropriate sources of financial support, quickly and easily, based on their needs and circumstances. Each fund has its own eligibility criteria. In many cases there is eligibility for the member and their dependents for life. The golden rule is that 'it's always worth asking'. The Association of Charitable Organisations www.aco.uk.net is another good source of information.

Benevolent funds welcome approaches from individuals and will always do their best to assist. Even if they cannot help, they may be able to point someone to another source of help. With such a large number of funds, it is likely that an individual is eligible for help from one or more of them, if not in their own right, then in that of a close relative.

So, what sort of help do these organisations offer? There is a wide range of assistance available, from general help and advice to financial awards. Traditionally, benevolent funds supplied much-needed cash to individuals in need. There are, however, funds who supply more than this, adopting a preventative and more holistic approach.

You can contact a fund by phone, via their website or in writing. Many have helplines where the caller will be made to

feel at ease and encouraged to speak freely about their worries in a confidential manner. The helpline offers a listening ear and advice, and sometimes this is all that is needed. Helplines vary, with the more robustly funded offering a full '24/7' advice and counselling service, 'signposting' to other organisations, and providing practical help and support. Many funds also offer a legal helpline and/or an outplacement service to those seeking employment. Home visits are sometimes carried out to assess needs.

All funds offer one-off grants, both large and small. For example, holiday grants allow elderly carers to take a much-needed break while the person they care for goes into respite care. Many funds are only able to offer one-off grants while others provide weekly grants to help balance an individual's income and expenditure. These are more likely to be awarded to those who are either elderly and/or disabled.

As charities, funds have a duty to ensure individuals claim their full entitlement to benefits from the State in the first instance. Many employ their own benefits adviser in this respect. Many applicants do find that once they have claimed the benefits they are entitled to, they no longer need help.

Some funds own their own care homes for eligible individuals, while some offer 'top-up' fees for those living in care homes. Forward-looking funds are continually looking at new ways to help, such as the Befriending Scheme www.thebefriendingscheme.org.uk and The Silver Line www.thesilverline.org.uk which involve keeping in touch with people who are likely to benefit from a regular phone call or visit.

Where a person has a sizeable need, funds will often work together to fund the requirement. The Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen Families Association (SSAFA) Forces Help is particularly known for excellent sourcing of funds for serving and ex-service personnel. SSAFA can offer help even if a person has served for just a single day, website: (www.ssafa.org).

In the current economic climate, many people could benefit from the help that benevolent funds can offer.

Why not keep them in mind for any possible future need of your own, a friend or loved one.

Remember NHSRF has its own [Benevolent Fund](#) – all applications dealt with at Central Office in strictest confidence. To download a form, visit www.nhsrf.org.uk or call 01305 361317.

More Funnies

My thanks to those who have contributed.

Boy Aged 4: Dad, I've decided to get married.

Dad : Wonderful. Do you have a girl in mind?!

Boy : Yes... grandma ! She said she loves me, I love her, too....and she's the best cook and storyteller in the whole world!

Dad : That's nice, but we have a small problem there!

Boy : What problem ?!

Dad : She happens to be my mother. How can you marry my mother!

Boy : Why not ?! You married mine!

Answers offered by British students in the public examinations for 15-year-olds.

Medical

What are steroids?

Things for keeping carpets still on the stairs.

What is a common treatment for a bad nosebleed?

Put the nose much lower than the body until the heart stops.

What is an enema?

Someone who is not your friend.

What has to be established before giving a blood transfusion?

If the blood is affirmative or negative.

Mother says...

Through the centuries, mothers have been giving their children plenty of good advice and notable quotes. Here's just a small sampling....found in the Redbridge and Waltham Forest Branch newsletter.

Mona Lisa's Mother – “After all that money your father and I spent on braces, Mona, and that's the biggest smile you can give us?”

Columbus's Mother – “I don't care what you've discovered Christopher. You still could have written!”

Michelangelo's Mother – Mike, can't you paint on walls like other children? Do you have any idea how hard it is to get that stuff off the ceiling?”

Batman's Mother – “It's a nice car, Bruce, but do you realise how much the insurance is going to be?”

Humpty Dumpty's Mother – “Humpty, if I've told you once, I've told you a hundred times not to sit on that wall. But would you listen to me? Nooo!”

A woman was trying hard to get the ketchup out of a jar. During her struggle the phone rang so she asked her 4-year-old daughter to answer it. 'Mummy can't come to the phone to talk to you at the moment. She's hitting the bottle!'

Biology

Give the meaning of the term 'Caesarean Section.

The caesarean section is a district in Rome.

What is the Fibula?

A small lie.

What happens to your body as you age?

When you get old, so do your bowels and you get intercontinental.



by Pamela Hills

Royal London Branch

Members of the Royal London Branch recently enjoyed a very interesting tour of the only fan museum in the UK. This small museum in Greenwich, south-east London holds an array of fans through the ages from around the world. It details the designs, history and culture of fan making. The tour was particularly interesting as part of the narration was given by the 90-year old lady who started the museum along with her husband in 1991.

The photograph shows us having tea, coffee and biscuits in the beautiful orangery.

For more information on the museum please visit <https://www.thefanmuseum.org.uk/>



**Basildon and Thurrock
Branch**

by Vic Griffiths

On the 22nd of March, 34 members of the Basildon and Thurrock branch enjoyed a day trip to the Theresa Joanne, a boat in the London docks, for a two-course lunch and entertainment from an Abba Tribute band.

Our branch is currently flourishing with 130 members with a full programme for the rest of the year with our special celebration tea and jazz on the 31st of August.

We look forward to being part of the Fellowship for many years to come.



A Celebration of Life

Merle Adams

by Jackie Douch, North West Surrey Branch

Merle was the first face that members saw when they came to our meetings. Merle used to greet people warmly as they arrived and collected from each £1.50 for a tea and biscuit and a raffle ticket. She always wore her NHSRF tee shirt (as in the photograph), which she probably had from one of the conferences.

Merle was our treasurer. Although, she would have been the first to tell you that she did not have an accountancy background, she kept our finances under control for 23 years.

In fact, her background was in nursing. She started her nurse training at the age of 18, and once qualified as a State Registered Nurse, she then went on to work as a Midwife, Queens District Nurse and finally a Health Visitor.

She loved being part of the NHSRF. When she could fit it in with her other commitments, she would go on our outings and take part in our other activities. She also attended Regional Meetings when time permitted.

Merle was a staunch Christian since early childhood, and her faith saw her through life's difficulties and tribulations. She was a strong supporter of her local church, where she was greatly respected. She was one of the instigators of the chaplaincy visitors team at St Peter's Hospital, which she was part of for many years. She passed away at a local care home aged 86.

We remember her with fondness for her commitment, caring, the twinkle in her eye and a slightly mischievous sense of humour.

Ed: Merle was certainly a credit to the Fellowship.

Wise Words to Ponder Over thanks to Redbridge and Waltham Forest Branch

One never notices what has been done; one can only see what remains to be done. **Marie Curie**

Success is the ability to go from one failure to another with no loss of enthusiasm. **Winston Churchill**

There can't be a crisis next week. My schedule is already full. **Henry Kissinger**

Laughter is the closest distance between two people. **Victor Borge**

Glory is fleeting, but obscurity is forever. **Napoleon Bonaparte**



Whittington's Cat and Winchester Geese Walk – 9 February

Redbridge and Waltham Forest Branch

by Wilma Holloway



The
Monument

It was a slightly chilly start to our walk when 15 of us met at Monument Station but the sun soon came out with blue skies all the way.

The Monument was built as a memorial to commemorate the Great Fire of Medieval London in 1666. The destruction was devastating to the City of London. Trade had to be restored before the economic centre moved elsewhere, and it would take many years to buy up the properties in the City. Today of course there are many modern and thriving businesses and the memorial that used to dominate the skyline is now dwarfed by modern office blocks.

Crossing the road from the Monument we came to the Church of St Magnus the Martyr. In the church there is a beautiful model of the old London Bridge made in 1957. The craftsmanship is very detailed with over 1,000 figures on the model bridge.

In the centre of the old bridge there had been a chapel to Thomas Becket, who had signed an Act licensing the Bankside brothels. This was the sleazier side of medieval London, when bawdy women were known as the Bishop of Winchester's Geese! He had signed this Act before he became Archbishop.

Having crossed the bridge we came to Southwark Cathedral which was previously known as the Priory Church of St Mary Overie, as "over the river". We then passed the 'Golden Hind' which is being renovated at present. The original vessel was the world's first floating maritime museum after Elizabeth I ordered that the ship be preserved, following Drake's epic voyage around the world.

The narrow street from there to the 'Globe Theatre' was a contrast of old and new. The old being the ruins of the brothels owned by the Bishops of Winchester and the old prison known as 'The Clink', which was probably given its name due to the constant clinking and clanking of manacles, fetters, chains and bolts, and giving rise to the ominous name 'The Clink'. Now it is a museum where a man in irons welcomes you in.

Walking under the bridge there is the 'Anchor' pub from where Samuel Pepys watched the Great Fire "*All over the Thames, with one's face to the wind, you were almost burned with a shower of firedrops.*"

Walking back to the north bank of the Thames there is Dick Whittington's parish church, St Michael Paternoster Royal. The real Richard Whittington was born in 1358 and by the age of 35 had become a mercer, an alderman and sheriff. He became an imaginative benefactor, building drinking fountains and public conveniences in many parts of the City. He was made Mayor of London in 1396, 1397, 1406 and 1419, and was a London MP in 1416. He died in March 1423. In the church there was a stone marking his last burial area but the Great Fire destroyed all traces of his tomb. There is also a beautiful stained glass window of Richard with, of course, his cat. He left his wealth to the City as he had no children and all anyone remembers today is that he had a cat!

Our next stop was the Church of St-Mary-le-Bow which houses the 'Great Bell of Bow'. Just as Eileen, our leader, was relating the story of the bells they chimed, right on cue! The bells are still rung at weddings and funerals and if history is correct, anyone born within the sound of Bow Bells is a cockney. As we walked across the courtyard we passed a statue of Captain John Smith, who was the founder of Virginia. Making our way to St Paul's we decided to stop for lunch and agreed to continue with second part of this walk at a later date.

Our thanks to Eileen for a very interesting walk.



Walkers on the January Medieval City Walk



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.

Friday 14th April 2023 - meet at 11a.m. at Wapping station for a 4-mile walk to Canary Wharf led by Peter, including transformed dock lands, a variety of trees, two basins and a rooftop garden. Wapping has a short platform, it is interesting to climb the stairs.

Thursday 11th May 2023 - meet at 11am at Vauxhall underground station, exit 1 (no ladies toilets at start) for a 4-mile walk led by Peter to Pimlico underground station via a riverside path, an embassy, use 2 newish underground stations, time for [window] shopping in Battersea Power Station, Albert Bridge. a rectangular square.

Friday 9th June 2023 - meet at 11am at Sloane Square Station (district line) for a 6 3/4 mile circular walk around Chelsea and Brompton cemetery.

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



Report on visit to the Victoria & Albert Museum -Thursday, 16 March

by Shirley Willock, Royal Marsden Branch

In March the Royal Marsden branch of the NHSRF together with fellow members from four other branches, enjoyed a visit to the Victoria & Albert Museum in South Kensington. Our group would have been larger but unfortunately our date co-incided with a rail strike. We met up in the vast entrance hall and then set off for the lecture theatre in order to listen to the free Thursday lunchtime public lecture at 1.00pm. This was given by Dr Sally Dormer and titled "Tales of the Unexpected from the V & A's Medieval Collection". The talk and slide show were excellent and warmly received by the audience. The hall was 2/3rds full. Afterwards there was ample time for further conversation, refreshments and exploration of the magnificent building.



An invitation to all branch and postal members
to the
Annual Fellowship Holiday
by Lorraine Taylor

NEED A HOLIDAY? – THEN WHY NOT COME AND JOIN US?

This year's holiday is to Switzerland on the 10-17 September 2023 for eight days. Excursions include a trip on the GoldenPass train to Montreux and a Mountain Scenery Tour as well as optional tours. The hotel is bed and breakfast plus five dinners (sorry this was the best I could get). When arranging this year's holiday, I have taken care to ensure the trip is suitable for our group's requirements. For example, I have ensured that we will avoid too early flights (5am) and too late returns (12 midnight). I have carefully considered cost and ensured that the group will not have to move hotels during the stay.

Further details and to book contact Newmarket Holidays on 0330 160 8098 or email Sian Nugent on sian.nugent@newmarketholidays.co.uk. I understand that members had problems getting through to them last year, but they have a new telephone system now, so it should be easier to contact them. Remember to quote NHSRF.

DON'T DELAY - BOOK TODAY

Help reduce food
waste and
save money!



Become a food-saving hero with Too Good To Go.

Download the 'Too Good to Go' app and find delicious food ready to be saved in your area.

Many restaurants and supermarkets are offering food at cut price on a daily basis (usually evening time). For example Aldi are offering **Magic Bags for £3.30 which contain at least £10 worth of food**. They key is that the products are at or near their sell by date and rather than throw the items away they prefer to sell them at cut price. In my area, Morrisons are offering these bags. The app allows you to input the area in which you live to see what is on offer near where you live.

Ed



Suffolk West Branch

Sew, Knit N Natter Group

Elaine Ramsden

& Chris Harper

Fundraising Ideas

At Suffolk West we are always looking at ways to fund raise for our branch. These include having a stall at local village fetes and charity events, with Tombola's, guess the weight of the cake, plant sales, jam making and crafts, etc.

The Sew, Knit N Natter Group have been very busy during the year knitting and sewing for various charities such as the Dog Trust, stray cats and local hospital charity "My WISH" and the special baby care unit.

2022, with Christmas season beckoning, the group upped the tempo to produce enough goods for a table at a local Craft Fair. We knitted, stitched, cut and glued, taking us back to our Blue Peter days, other members who were not part of the group, joined in and we had some very professionally produced items on the stall, such as tree decorations, Christmas stockings, Christmas Angels, Christmas wreaths, soft toys, hats, scarves and gloves. The Christmas gift tags went down a storm!

It was held in early December, there were not as many people attending as there were many events the same day in and around the town which was a bit unfortunate. So, this year we have booked for November.

This was such a great and fun way to make a bit of money and although very quiet, managed to raise a total of £200 which was profit and will support our branch funds for 2023. With this being an unusually quiet event, what could we make next time when busier!

This also was a great opportunity to advertise joining the Fellowship to attract new members. We appreciated the support from our members who visited and made their festive purchases.

It is time for the Sew Knit N Natter group to start planning for next Christmas, a scary thought, but there will be lots of nattering over tea and cake too!