New award recognises Trust support

NHS organisations in England which give exceptional support to their local branch of the Fellowship are to be recognised by a national award.

Branches will be asked to nominate trusts or other health organisations that they feel have made a special effort to maintain contact and provide continued support for retired staff and the local Fellowship branch.

“As I go round the country I have been very impressed by the remarkable relationship that exists between some branches and the local trust. It’s only right that this exceptional level of support should be recognised” said John Rostill, Fellowship Director.

“This is going to be a prestigious award, sponsored by the NHS Employers. Trusts are under a lot of pressure and we can’t expect them to have the Fellowship uppermost in their mind all the time. It’s important that we should recognise organisations that continue to support the Fellowship.”

The scheme mirrors a successful one in Wales which began in 2006. This year Dr Ruth Hussey, Chief Medical Officer, Welsh Government presented the award on behalf of the Gwent branch to the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board in February at the Welsh Government, Cardiff Bay.

English branches are invited to send nominations to central office by 30 April and the award will be presented at the Fellowship’s annual conference in July.

Martin steps down

Martin Davis is standing down after 16 years as Honorary Treasurer and the Fellowship is starting the process to recruit a replacement.

“I’ve enjoyed it immensely and I have worked alongside many interesting and dedicated people, but I think it is now in the wider interests of the NHSRF that I should relinquish the role” he said.

“I intend to continue to contribute to the NHSRF at a national level through the valuable links we have established with Age UK.”

Any member with appropriate qualifications who may be interested, or who knows someone who could be interested, should contact the Director, John Rostill via central office email sherry.smith@dhuft.nhs.uk

This is a voluntary role and further details are available on the website www.nhsrf.org.uk The closing date is 31 March.
THE DIRECTOR’S COLUMN

Now is the time

Now is the time to write to your MP and ask them what they are going to do for the NHS.

We are a non-political organisation but we have spent our working lives in the NHS and we are entitled to be concerned about its future. If I were to want to see a service that remains free at the point of delivery and retains its status as the best health service in the world.

We have already made a start and your president Ethel Armstrong and myself have been to see Andy Burnham, the Shadow Health Secretary and we are trying to make arrangements to see the Secretary of State, Jeremy Hunt.

Andy Burnham listened with interest when we talked about our Fellowship and recognised that our members could have a role as a sounding board on health matters.

Strengthening links with CSRF

A new initiative has been launched to see if the Fellowship could work more closely with the Civil Service Retirement Fellowship to the benefit of both.

NHSPRF already works closely with CSRF with successful partnerships in the photography group, the book club and the golf competition. Now we want to see if we can do more by encouraging joint activity at branch level.

I have written to 40 of our branches – for example Bradford, Bournemouth, Coventry, Norwich, Harrogate and Llandudno – which know cover much the same area as CSRF local groups, to see if there is support for the idea of joint activities – for example sharing coach trips, holidays or theatre trips. If the idea gets an enthusiastic response we will try some pilot projects.

Governance changes

Possible changes to the way the Fellowship is governed were due to be considered by National Council at its meeting in February. A working party has been looking at the role of regional representatives and the trustees and the way the Fellowship works to see if it could be done better. If national council decides to recommend changes they will be reported to branches and debated at the AGM in Leeds.

Looking for a new venue? Try “Pub is the hub”

Are you having trouble as a branch finding somewhere that you can afford to meet? Is parking an issue? If so you might want to consider a local pub.

Chris Iremonger, NHSPRF Development Officer, has discovered an organisation called the Pub is the Hub which could put you in touch with a local landlord and give you a potentially free venue and parking in exchange for having teas and coffees, or some members having a meal before or after the meeting. See the Pub is the Hub website http://www.pubisthehub.org.uk/case-studies/ and at the bottom of the page click on the projects by region. You will be directed to a map to find your region. The website will direct you to pubs in the area which may be able to help you and you can make direct contact with the pub.

New chairman

NHSPRF chairman Cynthia Matthews chats to members at the London postal members meeting.

Two more events for postal members are planned for early 2015.

They follow a successful event in London in December where speakers included the Fellowship national chairman, Dr Cynthia Matthews and Chris Iremonger, Development Officer who is also a representative of the Patients’ Association.

The next events are:

17 March – LEEDS, St James University Hospital, Lecture Theatre
23 March – BRISTOL, Engine Shed, Temple Mead Station

Events are from 11am – 3pm. Speakers to include Ken Jarrold CBE, Patron; Dr Cynthia Matthews, John Rontell, Director and a representative from the Patients’ Association. Please contact central office if you wish to attend. Places are limited.

“The best event in my calendar year” was how one member described last year’s conference weekend in Stratford on Avon – and the Fellowship is set to match it in 2015 with another top class venue and an excellent list of speakers.

The conference weekend this year is from July 3 to 6 at the Queens Hotel in Leeds, a famous landmark in the city centre. It’s a grade two listed building famous for its art deco design.

Speakers at the conference include Katherine Murphy, Chief Executive of the Patients’ Association and Angela Hopkins, Executive Director of Nursing and Midwifery for the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board.

The Saturday afternoon panel discussion will focus entirely on “The future of the NHS Retirement Fellowship.”

The Fellowship is able to offer a subsidised package at £250 per person sharing and £300 single occupancy which includes:

• Dinner, bed and breakfast from Friday evening to Monday breakfast
• Full delegate package on AGM day (including coffee, lunch and tea)
• Drinks reception and welcome dinner on Friday
• Gala dinner and dance on Saturday
• Free wi-fi in the hotel

For an additional £15 there is a trip to York on Sunday.

“We are appealing to members to share a room if at all possible” said Sherry Smith, Fellowship Administrative Officer, “all the rooms are of a high standard, but there is a limited number.”

Listed building status means the structure of the hotel can not be changed so there are some stairs between floors and to the restaurant. There are lifts to most areas but for those who have greatest difficulty there are some bedrooms on the top floor as the conference area.

“We are asking members with mobility problems to tell us on the booking form so that we can allocate rooms accordingly” said Sherry. “We have made detailed arrangements with the hotel to overcome any issues with stairs – but please contact central office if you need more information.”

Bookings should be made through branch secretaries, or through central office for postal members, by 28 February.

Tsitsi Masukume, from Guy’s and St Thomas’s branch, who attended her first conference in 2014 wrote afterwards: “I was enriched by the various works/ experiences shared by some branches… the true Fellowship spirit prevailed.”

Landmark hotel for Leeds conference

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Cornwall West branch members are planning a book of NHSPRF members' recipes. If you have a favourite recipe then please share it and say which branch it comes from. If you are able to add a photo of yourself and a little bit about why you chose it or how it came about then so much the better. Please email it to England.south@nhsrf.org.uk.

Cornwall West Recipe Initiative

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Cyprus holiday success!

The Fellowship holiday to Cyprus in October drew lots of positive feedback on a trip which included an excellent hotel, fascinating excursions to archaeological ruins and a cruise on a chartered yacht.

Members also rode in a jeep across the Akamas National Park and some brave members donned diving helmets for an underwater walk. For information on 2015 holidays, see page 6.

Members take an underwater walk in Cyprus

20 x 43
[20 x 57]
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New chairman

Jack Yan (centre right) took over from Frank Pyke (centre left) as chairman of East Sussex regional meeting in October.
Vivienne’s proud day

Vivienne Brooke, 92, a founder member of Liverpool branch, was one of six veterans of the Battle of the Atlantic invited to receive a special award at a ceremony in London hosted by ITV and the Sun newspaper.

Vivian became a WREN aged 18 in 1941 and spent the wartime years in the Liver Building working as a plotter of Atlantic convoys and shipping. She and her colleagues were responsible for the ships as they entered the western approaches.

She was given the red carpet treatment from her home to a London hotel and then next day to the Sun Military awards in the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich where she was presented with the award by motoring broadcaster Jeremy Clarkson.

The day included a reception in 10 Downing Street attended by the Prime Minister and a champagne reception.

Eastbourne visits Sistine Chapel

The last outing of 2014 for Eastbourne branch was a visit to the English Martyrs Church at Goring in Sussex where the ceiling has been painted in the style of the Sistine Chapel. The branch has enjoyed many activities this year including trips to Chartwell, Sissinghurst, Chichester Cathedral Flower Festival, Hever Castle and Greenwich.

A good day out

Chelmsford and District branch members gained knowledge about riverside industries, shared lunch by the sea and still had time to soak up the sun on a good day out in September.

They were given a very informative talk from the captain who had worked on the river for Suffolk, down the River Debden. Along the way they found themselves in Chantry Park, Ipswich two members took the chance to go back to childhood. The well attended walks take place once a month.

Swings tempt walkers

Fellowship members are well known for adventure and nostalgia, so it was no surprise when East Suffolk branch walking group found themselves in Chantry Park, Ipswich two members took the chance to go back to childhood. The well attended walks take place once a month.

Wycombe celebrate 25 years

Wycombe branch marked its 25th anniversary with a celebratory lunch at which guests included the national chairman, Cynthia Matthews, regional representative, Gareth Ogden, members from other local branches and several founder members and past chairmen.

Cynthia, Gareth and Olive Harris, a founder member and lifelong president of the branch, all gave interesting talks which were greatly appreciated and a cake was cut by Olive.

North Staffs celebrate 25th

North Staffordshire branch celebrated their 25th anniversary with a dinner at a golf club in Nantwich attended by 80 members.

A celebration cake, made by Alison Cowen, the chairman’s daughter, was cut by Mrs Kate Horan, widow of the founder chairman Tom Horan, who was chairman from 1989 to 2001.

Our picture shows Bill Cowen (chairman) with Kate Horan, Ann Cowen and founder member Annette Sutherland, the only founder member able to attend.

Thirty years on

Two founder members, Gordon Jackson and Marjorie Weaver, cut the anniversary cake when Barking, Havering and Brentwood branch celebrated its 30th Anniversary in September with a high tea at the Merry Green Manor Brentwood.

Ethel Armstrong when they celebrated the 20th anniversary of the branch in December.

The chairman, Val Barker had a surprise when Ethel invested her with a chairman’s badge, provided by the branch to celebrate the anniversary, which will pass on to future chairmen.

“Was a lovely celebration day” said Ethel afterwards, “well organised and well attended, including new members, the regional representative Sue Williams and a member of the H.R. Department of the Derby Royal NHS Foundation Trust.”

Branch innovations to meet the challenges

National vice president Vic Griffiths reports on positive initiatives in three branches which others might follow.

“When the NHS is short of money our Fellowship needs to look for ways to make branches stronger and demonstrate to the bodies that give us grants that we are aiming to sustain ourselves and to help the NHS by giving something back” he writes.

“It would be good to hear of more examples of how branches have increased membership, raised money and “given back” service to local trusts.”

Harlingey - membership and funds

“Most of our recent success has come through the national recruitment initiative, but about a third of our new members come through “word of mouth” contacts with recent retirees. We meet in the local library and they have included our monthly meetings in their literature.

We are a small branch and were having difficulty raising revenue and covering the cost of our venue. We agreed to pay a “venue fee” of £2 each at meetings – or £1 if we could not attend. This has given us enough to pay the hire charge and a fall back for speakers’ fees.

We also have a raffle.

Basildon & Thurrock - giving something back

We do two things to support our local trust:

• Become a Foundation Trust member: It costs nothing and gives you and your branch a say in how things are run and keeps you informed. You could also progress to being a board member. A good idea would be for the branch chairman to visit the Trust office, get a batch of application forms, hand them to members at a meeting and return them in bloc.

• Become a volunteer: Trusts are always looking for people to be greeters, helpers, ward visitors or to help with tasks like patient feeding. Contact the volunteer co-ordinator and ask. Many members have experience of working in hospitals and have the sympathy and “bedside manner” that is so welcomed by patients.

Dartford & Gravesend - inter branch activities

Inter branch activities can help with member retention – especially in smaller branches. In our case the branch invited members from a branch about 20 miles away to join them for a murder mystery lunch. It was a great success and the visiting branch members are working on returning the favour.

Please send your ideas as a branch or an individual to the Fellowship’s Central Office – we’d like to share them in future issues of “Fellowship.”
Torquay, Ireland & France
in holiday programme

Della Holidays, the travel company which has organised many successful holidays for Fellowship members, has announced a new programme for 2015.

Top of the list is a five day holiday in Torquay and the Devon Riviera which is a holiday for the Fellowship open to members from all over the UK, starting on 25 May.

Staying at a hotel close to the sea the holiday includes two half day trips, one to Dartmoor and one a boat ride along the coast to Brixham. Half board is £295 sharing. The first eight singles book at the same price, thereafter there is a £44 supplement.

There is also a chance to join other branches on holidays they have already booked. A branch from the East Midlands is going to Southern Ireland in May with pick up points in the Midlands and the north, and a branch from the north east is going to the South of France in the summer, with pick ups in Yorkshire, East Midlands and London.

Call Della Holidays if you are interested.

Other Della Holidays include: Majorca and Lanzarote (both in April) and Malta, which topped the list of members’ favourites, in October. If members would like to receive holiday information directly each month, please email Della Holidays at enquiries@dellaholidays.co.uk. If you branch has an idea for a holiday or a short break and would like Della to fix it please call 01934 420318 or email as above.

John Dow MBE - A kind and generous man

John Dow the first chairman and more recently president of the Federation of Scottish Branches, died aged 85 in November after a short illness. His friend and colleague of many years, Renee Gibb, has sent us this tribute:

“It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of our Scottish Federation President, John Dow, MBE.

“John had been a lifelong employee in the health service in Scotland, after serving as an officer in the Royal Air Force during the Second World War. His career started in 1948 as an accountant in Dunbartonshire NHS before being appointed Clerk and Finance Officer for its executive between 1953 and 1972. In 1974 he was appointed the Administrator for Primary Health Care in the Argyll and Clyde Health Board until his retirement in 1984. In 1985 he was awarded the MBE for his service to the NHS in Scotland.

“He was determined to maintain his links with the NHS after his retirement and became the founding chairman of Argyll and Clyde branch of the Fellowship. It was his inspirational leadership which led to the establishment of further branches in Mid-Argyll, Inverclyde, and Cowal and Ruthroff. They also actively supported local hospices and the Erskine Hospital for Disabled Service Personnel.

“On his retirement from the chairmanship, his many friends and colleagues in Scotland elected John to a newly created position of President of the Federation of Scottish Branches – a position which he held with great enthusiasm, always willing to participate in discussion and attendance at all meetings and events. His wise and considered counsel was invaluable in establishing the Scottish Federation as we know it today.

“His activities within his local community, in Dumbarton, were legendary, holding posts as treasurer in his church, president of his bowling club, a sport in which he excelled, and as a passionate devotee of Scotland’s national bard, as president of Dumbarton Burns Club. His rendition of “Tam O’Shanter” was well known and, even this latter years, word perfect.

“Mr Dow was married to Pat for over 60 years and was a devoted husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather to his family dispersed in Europe and Australia. His enthusiasm for travel ensured he maintained these family ties.

“John will be sadly missed by all his friends and colleagues. He was a kind, generous, man, of spirit, who displayed a commitment and dedication to the cause we all hold so dear. The example he set us all will never be forgotten.”

Renee Gibb - former chairman, Federation of Scottish Branches.

John Evans

John Pritchard Evans, John Trombone, John X-Ray, or simply JP, has died aged 82. He was a man of many talents, many interests and above all, many friends. Those who were privileged to have known him remember him as a dear kinsman, a great teacher, a wonderful colleague, an inspirational speaker and a calm and steady influence in all of his endeavours.

John trained in radiography in 1952 during National Service and although he was surprised to learn that radiography was unrelated to radio, as with most endeavours in his life, he tackled it with aplomb and excelled. In 1969 the family moved to Aberystwyth where John became Clinical Tutor of Radiographer at Bronglas Hospital.

He was a founder member of the Ceredigion branch and a staunch supporter of the principles of the Fellowship at both all Wales and UK levels.

During his time as chairman, Shirley Harris

Shirley Harris

Chichester branch sadly reports the passing of a long time member of their Fellowship. Shirley Harris, aged 80. Shirley started work aged 16 at a convalescent children's hospital near Birmingham, moving on to a private mental hospital in Henley in Arden when 18.

She later worked at Solshull treating soldiers who had seen action at Dunkirk and at Worcester Royal Infirmary and The Royal West Sussex Hospital in Chichester. She returned to Worcester in 1959, working in local hospitals until she retired in 1976 to marry a local farmer. Their retirement years were spent in Selby. Shirley will be sadly missed for her sense of humour and hospitality.

Isabel Swan

Royal Berkshire Branch reports with great sadness the death of Isabel Swan, 93, a longstanding member who was programme secretary for many years, only retiring from the role last year.

Rena Daniels

Rena Daniels, the oldest member of East Suffolk branch died late last year aged 105. Rena was a nurse and a committed Christian and when she was 100 she told “Fellowship” her longevity was due to not smoking, swearing or drinking. She remained active even in her later years and attended keep fit classes until she was 95.

Monica Price and Valerie Humphrey-Moore

Two members of Brent branch who will be much missed recently. Monica Price was a midwife and Valerie Humphrey-Moore a health visitor.

The annual meeting of the Fellowship took place on Tuesday 12 May and held a Cavell Coffee Morning.

Simply whip up a batch of your signature cakes get together with friends and colleagues and hold a cake sale or coffee morning to remember.

Cavell Nurses’ Trust, which was featured at the NHSRF conference last year, certainly has the health board, in partnership with the CHAaT project, died suddenly in their time of need.

Over 1,000 UK nurses, midwives and HCAs over 25 years.

Margaret was a long time member of their Fellowship, Shirley Harris, aged 80. Shirley started work aged 16 at a convalescent children's hospital near Birmingham, moving on to a private mental hospital in Henley in Arden when 18.

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Suzanne wins photography prize

Suzanne Veal, from Suffolk West branch was the NHSRF winner of the “Travel” photography competition and the Civil Service Retirement Fellowship winner was Lynne Wilkinson.

Anthea Graham, who co-ordinated the competition said: “Congratulations to them both. They had strong competition from 240 entries, many of which you can see online at http://tinyurl.com/CSRFF-NHSRFtravelcompetition. The judges were Sue Jarvis, Vice Chair of the CSRF and Margaret Moffat, Trustee of the NHSRF and Regional Representative from East Anglia.

“Suzanne’s print entitled “Gone for a quick cup of coffee while the tide is out” was beautifully simple but demonstrated her good eye for colour and composition.”

Highly Commended awards were made to Ruth Tyrrell, Judy Spencer, Suzanne Taylor, Fred Archer, Jill Evans, Maureen Salmon, Cynthia Gough (two entries), Terry Gough, John Dixon and Michael Turner.

Honourable Mention awards were made to Stuart McGough, Cynthia Gough, Roger Harris, Kevin Williams, Patricia Preshaw, John Dixon (two entries) and Malcolm Gibbon.

The Civil Service Insurance Society (www.csis.co.uk) generously sponsored the prizes.

Next time...

The theme for the first photography competition of 2015 is “Fitness & Fun” and members have until 31 May to decide how to interpret this.

You may have a walking group in your branch, perhaps you take your grandchildren out, go greyhound racing, participate in the Seniors Golf Tour or maybe you exercise your mind with a game of Sudoku. The competition judges are always imaginative when it comes to the interpretation of a theme.

Who can enter?

Any member of the NHS Retirement Fellowship. It doesn’t matter whether you are a “happy snapper” or an experienced amateur, whether you take pictures on your mobile phone or a serious SLR camera with more lenses than you can carry.

Prizes

There will be prizes of £100 of gift vouchers for the NHSRF and the CSRF winner and two runner-up prizes of £50 of vouchers, for each retirement fellowship.

Closing date

The closing date is 31st May and the awards will be announced in June.

How to enter

You can submit up to four print entries. The full conditions of entry can be downloaded from the website (www.nhsrf.org.uk) or you can contact the Competition Co-ordinator: Anthea Graham, Competition Co-ordinator, Glais Bheinn, Lochcarron, Ross-shire, IV54 8YB.

Email: photography@nhsrf.org.uk Tel: 01520 722951

Membership benefits

As well as branch activities, belonging to the NHSRF offers lots of opportunities and benefits to members. This is the first of a regular column which will highlight a few of them each time.

Book club

Read and share your views and opinions on set books posted to you for free. To register contact David Tickner at bookclub@nhsrf.org.uk or phone 020 8691 7411. Run jointly with the Civil Service Retirement Fellowship.

Benevolent Fund

The Fellowship has a benevolent fund to help members in need. Members can apply for a grant after a full year of membership. Download an application form from the website or contact central office. All applications are treated in confidence.

Insurance

The Civil Service Insurance Society is a not-for-profit organisation providing competitive home, motor and travel insurance. It gives its surplus to charitable causes and supports several NHSRF initiatives. Visit their website www.csis.co.uk or phone 0845 6077444

Shopping discounts

NHSRF members can be part of Health Service Discounts which offers benefits and savings for members including money saving shopping, printable vouchers and staff helpline services. www.healthservicediscounts.com

Lobbying

Fellowship members can contact central office with issues that concern them. National Council can take up issues with government or present them for debate at conference.

New ideas

The Fellowship is always looking for new benefits and activities for members and we like to receive suggestions. Please contact us either through the website www.nhsrf.org.uk, by email: info@nhsrf.org.uk, through our Facebook page (link from website) or write to the Director at NHS Retirement Fellowship, Forston Clinic, Charminster, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 9TB. Tel 01305 361317.

Details of all member benefits are available on the website www.nhsrf.org.uk in the members section and the password is nhsrf1978