

**September
2022**

**Recruitment
campaign puts
Fellowship on the
map**

Page 4

**Special thanks to
June Hewett**

Page 10

**Janine's climb of
a lifetime**

Page 12

Patron:
Ken Jarrold CBE

Edinburgh celebrates in style Fellowship energy inspires minister

Edinburgh branch celebrated its fortieth anniversary and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June with an afternoon tea at which they were thrilled to welcome the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care in the Scottish Government, Mr Humza Yousaf, as guest of honour.

Mr Yousaf was delighted to mingle with members and was pleased to present four long-standing members – Helen Anderson, Agnes Archibald, Marion Dunlop and Alison Swan – with honorary memberships in recognition of their contribution to the branch over many years. A fifth member, Margaret Brown, was also made an honorary member but was in a care home and sadly could not attend. Trish Douglas (branch chair) and Irene Rex visited her that evening and presented her with her scroll. Sadly, Margaret passed away in early July.

Afterwards Mr Yousaf said: "I was delighted to join your birthday celebrations. There was so much energy in the room and I loved talking to your members about their experiences in our NHS and the great work they are doing, supporting each other. It was really inspiring



A relaxed and friendly Humza Yousaf, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care in Scotland, meets members of the Edinburgh branch. "Truly an afternoon of fellowship, friendship and fun" he said afterwards."

and truly an afternoon of fellowship, friendship and fun.

"We'll do everything we can to help recruitment."

"You have my word that we will do everything we can to help you recruit new members from all our health boards. The work the

NHS Retirement Fellowship has undertaken since its foundation has been hugely beneficial to the wellbeing of staff after their service in the NHS. It has also served as much needed deterrent to social isolation for NHS retirees during the pandemic. I would like to acknowledge and thank everyone in the Fellowship

who volunteered to support the NHS during its time of need over the past two years."

Alison Swan, one of the new honorary members, gave a fascinating speech reminiscing on the early days of the branch. The event finished with singing and dancing. *Continued on back page*



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

Heritage project “a huge success”

The NHS Retirement Fellowship became better known as it spread knowledge of the history and culture of the NHS across England in a series of projects funded by a £10,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

In a comprehensive report to the fund, Heritage Lead Bob Middleton has shown how the money was spent and described the outcome of the voluntary effort by members which has resulted in the Fellowship becoming recognised as a valued source of heritage learning.

The mission goes on

Now the reports have been submitted, Bob is already turning his mind to further projects. “The mission goes on” he said. “We want to continue to spread knowledge of the heritage of the NHS and the role of the Fellowship.”

The Heritage Project was conducted between September 2019 and July 2022 and was severely and adversely affected by the pandemic. Even so heritage events and activities were

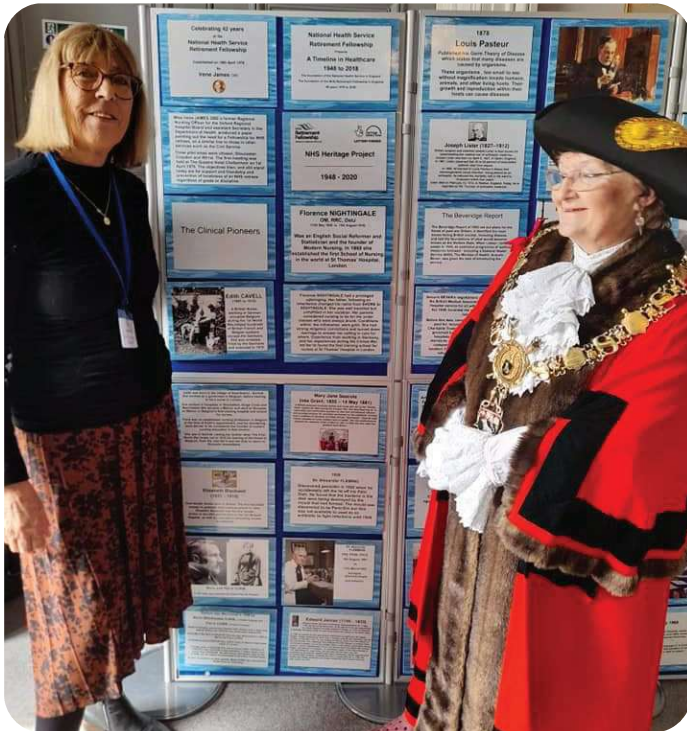
delivered to more than 2,000 people in a range of settings enabled by 168 volunteers. During the period the exhibition about the NHS heritage was improved and used in various locations and a leaflet was produced that showed how the NHS has changed since it began. Those attending events included civic leaders, community organisations, schools, charities, media, religious organisations and the public.



Above: Jeanette Lee chairman, Jan Bloomfield a nurse from West Suffolk Hospital and a branch volunteer at Bury St Edmunds, just before Covid stopped the project. Suffolk West branch ran a very successful project linking with a primary school.

Left: Karen Kennedy, Development Officer for the north west, chats with a volunteer at the event at Wythenshawe Hospital. Karen has been a key supporter of the heritage project, using it effectively as an aid to recruitment.

- and the mission goes on



Above: Jenny King and the Mayor of Sudbury (a former nurse) who was very interested in the event at Sudbury Heritage Centre in April 2022.

Projects aid recruitment

In Manchester the event in the Arndale Centre, attended by nurses from the Windrush generation, sparked an associated bid to the National Lottery Community Fund which supported ex nurses in lock down by providing Samsung Galaxy Tablets to help connectivity, and led to setting up a new "virtual" branch in Central Manchester. Using heritage as the key, the Fellowship has also recruited new members and formed new branches in Stockport and Trafford.

In Suffolk the Bury St Edmunds NHS Heritage Schools Project led by Suffolk West branch aimed to develop understanding of health and care among



young people. A plan of action was presented to a primary school head teacher and met with an enthusiastic response involving the whole school in colouring competitions with NHS themes. It was put on hold in the

pandemic, but resumed later and has provided a model which could be used to spread knowledge of the NHS and the Fellowship in new areas.

Making the Fellowship more resilient

Key objectives for the project were to involve a wider range of people in heritage, to better explain the NHS heritage, and to make the Fellowship more resilient. In evaluations half the respondents said explanation of the NHS heritage had been "good" the other half "excellent." Most people said their knowledge or perception of the NHS had been changed either partially or substantially, and 65% said they now had "good awareness" of the NHSRF.

"The project was delivered by a widening range of people" said Bob. "In the early days it was difficult because we did not have the expertise. We now have skills and experience which can be used to build up Fellowship awareness. In some areas it has proved an aid to recruitment. Alongside all the hard work, people have enjoyed it. There was no pain in it. They were really keen and passionate to present their service heritage in their own context. We are now thinking in terms of more development across the country."

Above Middle: Sheila Edbury, chairman of Salisbury branch, with a new member recruited at the exhibition.



Above: A junior size "future nurse" uniform awarded to the best entries in the colouring competition in the Heritage Schools Project led by Suffolk West branch, chosen by Ruth May, NHS Chief Nursing Officer and funded by West Suffolk NHS Trust.

Chief Executive John Rostill said:

"This has been a huge success despite the pandemic. It would have been easy to lose sight of it - but we never did. I want to add my personal thanks to all those that have contributed."

Recruitment campaign puts Fellowship on the map

The P60 recruitment campaign has put the Fellowship on the map as well as drawing in more than 3,000 new members.

By late August total membership stood at nearly 9,000, with a steady stream of new members still coming in at the rate of 40 to 50 a week. “Although the increase is not as big as we had hoped, I think it has been a success. If we had not run the campaign our numbers would be down to 6,000” said John Rostill, Chief Executive.

“The campaign generated a lot of interest and it has regenerated some branches. The influx of new members will lead to the Fellowship taking on new things and coming up with different ideas. It has given us a higher profile – for example we now have 3,800 Face Book followers. That would not have happened without the campaign.”

April, May and June brought in significant numbers. Many of the new members have joined as postal members – up from about 700 to over 2,000 which is a significant change and reinforces the decision to recommend to the AGM that we have two postal members on the new members council.

“What we need to do now is to convert the surge of interest into continued membership. We have to accept that to see the benefits of an organisation like ours you have to join it. When people see the fellowship and the camaraderie it becomes part of life, a community within a community. It’s a marvellous concept and you become attracted to it, wanting to do more for you fellow retirees. It does what it says on the tin: fellowship, friendship and fun.”

One of the challenges has been that some branches have closed, at least in part because during the pandemic members lost touch and drifted away. It can also happen that an established team of officers reach an age where



they want to retire, and no-one wants to step up. Building back, and drawing our new cohort of postal members to make sure they fully share the Fellowship experience is one of the tasks that lies ahead – in which we can all take part.

Above: On the map: John Rostill with Amanda Pritchard, Chief Executive of the NHS at the NHS Confederation Conference. She knew of the Fellowship and took an interest in its activities.



Above: Interest in travel insurance has always been strong among Fellowship members, as was shown at a recent conference. Now it has stepped up a gear due to the P60 campaign.

Travel insurance interest grows

Interest in our travel insurance offer has increased significantly over the last few months as a result of our P60 campaign. In that regard, we continue to provide travel cover for over a thousand members, their partners and families.

However, The Fellowship is aware that some members may not meet the scheme’s eligibility requirements, perhaps due to age or medical conditions. With that in mind, the supplier of our travel insurance scheme, P J Hayman & Co Ltd, has secured alternative cover for members to consider via CoverMyStay.

CoverMyStay offers a broad range of cover and prices by using an insurer panel (Insurance Companies

and Lloyd’s Syndicates), a single call to provide for all ages, holiday types, destinations and, if needed, medical conditions – with no upper age limit. The number to call (freephone from a UK landline) is 0800 542 7161 or visit www.CoverMyStay.com to find out more.

Please note, we continue to work with the CSIS as the NHSRF Travel Insurance Scheme Administrator, so enquiries on that offer remain unchanged.

Lively conference set to shine

This year's conference at the four star Jury's Inn, Hinckley Island in Leicestershire promises to be one of the best yet with a full programme of visits, some big decisions to be made at the AGM and a top sixties band after the gala dinner on Sunday.

Arrival day is **Saturday 22 October** where the evening meal will be followed by a disco. The AGM is on Sunday and the gala dinner in the evening is followed by Union Gap, who many will remember were a leading pop group in the late 1960s and are still appearing at major UK holiday resorts and sixties festivals.

The AGM and conference will also feature messages of support on video from Amanda Pritchard, the new Chief Executive of the NHS and the Cabinet Secretary

for Health and Social Care in Scotland, Mr Humza Yousaf.

In addition there are coach outings on Sunday to Kenilworth Castle and on Monday to the National Memorial Arboretum where there are nearly 400 memorials - many with NHS or nursing themes – among acres of woodland.

Getting up and dancing has become one of the features of conference and seems to catch a spark in everyone's memory. John Rostill remembers being amazed



"A chance to let your hair down" – members take to the floor at a previous conference.

at his first conference by the eagerness with which members took the floor. "Usually when a band starts up nobody gets up" he said. "But in the Fellowship as soon as a note is played the floor is full. It's a chance to let your hair down and put troubles on one side and become a bit nostalgic. Everyone knows all the words."

...It's a chance to let your hair down and put troubles on one side...

Branches to vote on key changes

Delegates will vote on the future shape of the Fellowship at a critical point in its history when they meet for the AGM at Hinckley Island, near Leicester on **October 23**.

Each branch will have one vote on changes that aim to change the shape of the organisation by giving more members more opportunity to take part so that we are truly a membership organisation, and the ideas for the future come from the grass roots though the new members council.

"These might seem to be minor changes in bureaucracy, but they are a complete change in the culture" said John Rostill, Chief Executive. "The whole idea is for members to have more say – including postal members."

The proposals were widely consulted on in a series of roadshows last year and after listening carefully to the views expressed the trustees have concluded that we need an organisation that gets members more involved in the "Fellowship family" and links members and branches with each other.

In a new structure the counties of England would form the basis of the new structure, and groups of counties make a re-designed regional structure. A new national membership council would be established, including

postal members for the first time. And terms of office would be limited.

The benefits expected are:

- **More local member engagement**
- **Members control business in the new members council**
- **Improved communication**
- **Postal members have a voice for the first time**
- **Members can see the Board of Trustees at work.**

Branch activities, however, continue as usual and branches manage their own business and activities and decide on their subscription.

At the AGM a named delegate from each branch will be able to vote on proposals which create the new membership council, on limits to the term of office of representatives and on the new structure. Branches not represented at the AGM can vote by post by completing the ballot paper that must reach central office by 5 October. A two thirds majority is required to change the constitution.



Members listen attentively to a conference speaker

Chelmsford welcome High Sheriff

Chelmsford branch welcomed the new High Sheriff of Essex, Nick Alston to their annual meeting which was attended by 43 members.

Mr Alston introduced himself to many members talking to each of them. Lining up for the camera are Margaret Bell, treasurer, Sally Archer social secretary, Lynn Armstrong (back) raffle organiser, Robbie Welham, kitchen organiser, Nick Alston, Marlene Plumb, welfare officer, Pat Clark, secretary, and Chris Playle, membership secretary.



Garden visits for Taunton

Taunton & District members enjoyed a two day excursion to North Devon - visiting Marwood Hill Gardens and RHS Rosemoor Gardens with an overnight stay in Barnstaple. Our picture shows the members and friends by their coach about to leave Rosemoor.



Royal London join open day



Royal London branch took part in an open day at the Royal London Hospital, organised by Bartshealth. Pamela Hills, chair of the branch, said: "We ran a stall promoting the NHS Retirement Fellowship and our branch. The event was well attended and was the first such event for Bartshealth since Covid-19."

Tea party get together in NW Thames



Lorraine Taylor (right) and husband Bob (left) with Vic and Penny Griffiths



Right: West Middlesex members line up for the camera

About 60 members from across North West Thames region gathered at Putteridge Bury, a country house near Luton for afternoon tea – an annual event hosted by Regional Representative Lorraine Taylor.

Among the guests were former Fellowship chairman Margaret Moffat and her husband Tony, and Vic Griffiths, national vice president and his wife Penny. "People came from all over the region" said Lorraine, "it was a very happy event."



A mistake – and apology

Sincere apologies to North West Surrey and South West Surrey branches. In our last issue we said that Yvonne Budd was retiring as chairman of North West Surrey branch, which prompted a response from Jackie Douch to remind us that she is chairman there – and is not retiring. Yvonne, of course, was chairman of South West Surrey. Apologies all round.

Volunteers honoured



East Hertfordshire branch celebrated Volunteers Week by presenting gifts to two long standing volunteers. Our picture shows chairman Chris Kitchin with Barbara (left) who provided tea and coffee for many years and Maria who supported the branch over the years, including a period as branch secretary.

Oxford's weather nightmare



Oxford branch just could not get the weather right this year. A picnic in a local park in June took place on the only day of heavy rain for months and an outing to Holdenby House, a historic mansion in Northamptonshire took place in record breaking heat. Fortunately it was a bit more temperate for a trip to Coventry in August, but Outings Secretary Andrew Moss was anxiously scanning the weather forecasts as he made plans for a trip to Poole Harbour in September.



Above: Chairman Cheryl Booth (right) leads the toast to the Queen and the NHS at Oxford's picnic in a downpour...and Andrew dodges a deluge.

Top Right: Holdenby House at the peak of a heatwave



Cosham celebrations

Cosham members got together in June to congratulate the Queen on her long reign. About 60 members, including some new ones, shared refreshments and a special cake in the decorated hall before an interesting and informative talk on Hampshire Search and Rescue.

The event brought back memories of what the older members were doing 70 years ago in 1952 and thoughts of the coming 70-year coronation parties in 2023.



Basildon plan ahead

Basildon and Thurrock branch celebrated its 35th year in May when 79 members enjoyed a meal at a local hotel before the presentation of shields to the most improved 10 pin bowlers and golfer before the annual meeting.

Officers reported on last year's activities and the committee was re-elected. Members are now focussed on next year with monthly meetings, day trips, luncheon clubs, golf and 10 pin bowling sessions.

"This was a celebration not only of 35 years but also of continuing success which we will take forward" said Vic Giffiths, branch chairman.

The long term future of our Fellowship

By Vic Griffiths, Honorary National Vice President

Don't opt out, get stuck in

The result of the P60 recruitment initiative has seen an increase in membership numbers from around 6,800 in March to nearly 9,000 in August but below 10,000 which is the number we should achieve to sustain our future.



In 2013 we had 169 branches and around 13,000 members, and today just 111 branches and nearly 9,000 members. This staggering decrease is because of three things: a failure to find committee members, too few retired colleagues, partners or spouses recruited as members and a failure to make branches interesting and exciting. One of our past presidents, Gordon Jackson, often said that if each member brought in one new member it would double our membership.

Good practice in Suffolk

There are examples of "good practice" that we can all follow. For example Jeanette Lee, the chairperson of the Suffolk West branch says: "We are so fortunate to have a strong committee, dedicated to the success of the Suffolk West branch. The committee has 12 members all totally loyal and reliable. All committee members have an active role, we also have a list of friends of the committee whose help is invaluable." Celebrating their 10th anniversary this year, Jeanette went on to say, "We continue to stay active during each month offering 12 monthly group rambles, Nordic walking, 10 pin bowling, history, genealogy, canasta, scrabble, photography and gardening and not forgetting the book club, theatre group and knit and matter. None of these could take place without a strong committee, friends of the committee and the generosity of members."

Busy Liverpool

The Liverpool branch, according to their chairperson, Marie Dewhurst has "always been a welcoming friendly group, and we try and keep the

meetings lively with interesting speakers and give an opportunity for members to mingle and chat. In addition we run a range of activities, a lunch club, book club, theatre group, cinema club and we are open to suggestions from members for any additional activities.

"We have had 15 new members since April and the numbers are rising. We continue to promote the branch in social media and by word of mouth, but most importantly we listen and are loyal to our long standing membership to ensure we provide the environment they want."

A full programme in Basildon

In my branch, Basildon and Thurrock where I have been privileged to be chairman for 22 years, we also have a dedicated committee, a current membership of 127 and a full programme of events, but we continuously strive to attract new members and are organising recruitment days at local hospitals. I can also confirm that meetings have been arranged at Canterbury to hopefully open a new branch and at Folkestone to rekindle an existing branch.

We can all help

We can help the Fellowship by ensuring in the short term there are no further branch closures by volunteering to become committee members and bring in new members. In the medium and long term we must open new branches.

It is not my intention to undermine the excellent work of so many branch committee members, regional representatives and development officers, but to highlight the problem we currently face.

I think this verse from a poem sums up what I am saying:

*It's not just the cost
of your annual fee,
but attending the
branch instead of TV,
of actively helping to
arrange branch "dos"
and not opting out
whenever you choose.*



Sir Muir Gray: leading lifestyle changes for older people

Discount deal on “*Live longer, better*” course

A new course which aims to help reduce the risk of frailty and dementia is being offered to Fellowship members at a 20% discount.

“Live longer, better” features Sir Muir Gray who was a popular speaker at last year’s conference in Manchester. The course, normally £45 and available to members for £36, teaches you how to change your lifestyle to live longer, better.

Sir Muir, former Chief Knowledge Officer for the NHS, looks at the science behind the ageing process, what you can do to stay active mentally and physically into old age, and reduce the risk of dementia.

As you learn you'll be thinking about the ageing process, creating a personal plan to be more active, and understanding the small changes you can make to live longer, better. You can choose the expert option for personal feedback from Sir Muir on your 'live longer better' assignments.

The course includes:

- Flexible on-demand video lessons
- Personal feedback from your tutor on your projects (choose the expert option)
- Lifetime access to the videos and course notes
- Practical projects for each lesson
- Join a small interactive class with students from around the world

To take up the discount on the Live Longer Better course on Learning with Experts:

1. Go to <https://www.learningwithexperts.com/wellbeing/courses/living-longer-better>
2. Click to add the peer or expert version to your basket
3. Then click redeem code and copy and paste the following code in for 20% off your course: **NHSFELLOW**
4. Click apply
5. Enter your name, email and password to set up an account and continue to add the course to your account
6. Your course will be available to start by clicking the My Courses button at the top of the website, click start and then click 1. on the side to watch the video lesson. You can start any time, and you have access to the course for life.

A special thank you to June

A very special thank you coincided with Volunteers Week this year as thanks and congratulations were given to Bristol Central secretary June Hewett who retired from the role following a mammoth 33 year stretch.



June gave her branch three years notice that she would step down at the age of 90 but unfortunately Covid got in the way so she extended her term for a year before handing over the reins to Janet Donnelly.

June said she really enjoyed being branch secretary and added: "It is not an onerous job and I took on other roles as well - it is interesting and you can attend regional meetings, and conferences.

My advice would be to anyone is to have a go at it - and make sure you get a good handover from your predecessor."

Former chairman Maureen Cockram said: "Other people have worked hard, but it is June's leadership that has made our retirement fellowship what it is. She is so enthusiastic about everything – she's amazing."

Jante Donnelly added:

'She has done so much for the branch. She has been a leader for us and she has encouraged people to take on roles when they thought they couldn't. It's an outstanding record.'



Photography Group re-launches

The Fellowship's photography group has been re-launched with an exciting new competition.

The group will run under the guidance of Lucia Hiden, the Fellowship's Head of Communications, who writes: "Firstly my thanks must go to Anthea Zell, not only for her excellent stewardship of the group but also for the support she has given me during the transition phase. It has taken a long time to get to this position, mainly due to the impact of Covid but also there has been a massive exercise that needed to be carried out with the group's database and this had to go on the back burner during the peak of the P60 campaign."

The new competition invites group members to submit entries on the theme of "Life in the Fellowship." Entries will be shared at the Fellowship's conference in October where the winners will be announced from a judging panel from within the Fellowship. Prizes are

vouchers worth £100 for first prize, £50 for runner up and £25 for third place.

Lucia explained: "Entries can be submitted electronically or in print and we welcome entries from any camera from mobile phone to professional SLR. What we are interested in is your composition and how effectively you can tell the story of what life in the Fellowship looks like to you – what you enjoy, how you benefit and how branch life looks to you. I'm really looking forward to seeing the entries come in and very much hope to be able to use some of these pictures for our corporate publicity going forward."

Anyone interested in joining the Photography Group can contact Lucia at: comms@nhsrf.org.uk or telephone **07739 138 954**.

Fellowship chosen for pensions views

The Fellowship has built a successful relationship with the NHS Business Services Authority during the P60 campaign and beyond, making us the "go to" organisation for issues to do with NHS pensions.

Most recently the Fellowship has been asked for views on plans to develop a "digital portal" called My NHS Pension which would allow pensioners to view and manage their NHS pension on line. Members who register would be able to see information about their pension, view and download payslips, P60s, or change address information or bank details.

It will not fully replace paper processes but provides users with a secure digital way to access information.

Writing to John Rostill, Bernadette Portasman from the authority says: "Before we engage in a wider roll out we wanted to engage with you to receive feedback and understanding of your needs as pensioners."

"It is easy to think of the business authority as a bureaucratic agency" said John. "We have found them not to be like that at all. We have become one of the go to organisations to involved in the early stages of anything to do with pensions. It is very encouraging."

Plans for 75th anniversary of NHS

Further evidence that the Fellowship is fast becoming the voice of retired NHS staff is shown by our being

asked by the government to play a part in plans for the 75th anniversary of the NHS. Lucia Hiden, Head of Communications will join a national steering group.

The Fellowship will be setting up its own team to oversee our own response to the milestone in the NHS story. The team will include trustees, regional representatives, development officers and at least one postal member.

Obituaries



Alison Beaney

It is with a heavy heart that the Eastbourne & District branch reports the death of Alison Beaney. Alison was a stalwart of the branch and was treasurer for over 13 years. She was often the first, welcoming face members saw as they came through the door at monthly meetings. Branch chairman Jane Dubery writes: "I relied on Alison more than I realised—she kept me on my toes, reminding me to pay our speakers and checking that we kept to our schedule. We often spoke on the phone particularly during Covid lockdowns. The space Alison has left is a big one to fill."



Jean Gordon

Eastbourne and District branch is also very sad to report the death of Jean Gordon a long standing member and at 91 one of the oldest members. She was always very active having served on the committee, acted as welfare officer, arranged speakers and with her husband Roger, who survives her, organised coach trips and holidays. Jean was a lively character and continued to attend meetings with Roger until late 2021. Jean, with her lovely smile, was one of the first members through the door when meetings resumed after Covid restrictions.



Percia French

Enfield branch has lost a much loved member in Percia French, who was a mental health nurse in north London for more than 40 years.

She was born in Jamaica in the cool hills of StAnns, the oldest of 13 children. She came to England in 1962 to pursue a career begun in Jamaica, and continued nurse training at Hellingly Hospital in Eastbourne, where she qualified as a nurse working in mental health.

She later worked in north London and thoroughly enjoyed her work. After retirement in 2004, she often returned to help out. Percia loved her

family commitments and her cooking, which she loved to share with others. She enjoyed gardening, socialising and shopping, she loved to laugh and diligently conducted her church duties as a steward. Always willing to lend a listening ear and give support to any who needed it, she was reliable, punctual, disciplined, organised and firm in her beliefs and attitude. She is greatly missed.

Gill Norwood

It is with great sadness that Brighton & Hove members announce that Gill Norwood has died following an illness bravely fought. Gill was a dear friend, colleague and committee member. A kind caring person who always thought of others. She will be missed by all who knew her.



Doreen Quammie, chairperson, and branch members present the cheque to Emily Thompson

Remembering Dorothy

Wolverhampton Health Workers Fellowship branch presented £150 to Emily Thompson from Compton Care, the charity caring for local people with a terminal illness.

Members raised the money in the memory of founder member Dorothy McDonald who died in 2020 after contracting covid. Emily gave a very informative and valued talk on the services provided by Compton Care and was very appreciative of the donation.



Remembering Felicity

Members of Brighton branch met for a walk in Preston Park in May to remember their member Felicity Leenders who lived in Preston and loved to walk in the park.





Continued from page 1

"These events take a lot of planning, time and energy in the organising and huge thanks go to the members of the committee and volunteer helpers for making the day a success," said Hilary Robb, Development Officer for Scotland.

Other special guests included John Rostill, Fellowship Chief Executive, Judith McMurray (Regional Representative and Chair of

the Federation of Scottish Branches), David Paterson (Trustee and Secretary of the Federation of Scottish Branches) and Lucia Hiden, Head of Communications and North East and Yorkshire Development Officer.

Edinburgh Branch has 155 members and meets every Thursday morning for coffee and a chat and would be delighted to welcome new members – for more information please contact: Hilary – scotland@nhsrf.org.uk

Cynthia plans to step down

Cynthia Matthews, an outstanding servant of the Fellowship for many years, has signalled her intention to stand down as a trustee – and the search is on for a replacement.

Hers has been an important voice for Wales for decades since she joined the national council in 2006 and as a trustee since 2019. Cynthia was a founder member and secretary of Gwent branch before becoming country representative on the national council, vice chairman of the Fellowship from 2011 to 2013 and chairman from 2013 to 2015.

Trustees manage the business of the charity and its finances and make sure it complies with the

purposes for which it was set up. They are expected to act with reasonable care and skill and make sure the Fellowship is accountable. Board membership is made up of chair, vice chair and honorary treasurer, up to five external trustees who are not members of the Fellowship and six member representatives. It meets three times a year.

It is important that at least one trustee has knowledge of the Fellowship in Wales. Members interested in the role should contact central office by **30 September**.

Janine's climb of a lifetime raises cash for charity



Trekking up the narrow path on Kilimanjaro

Trustee Janine Brooks fulfilled a lifetime ambition and raised thousands for a dental charity by climbing Kilimanjaro.

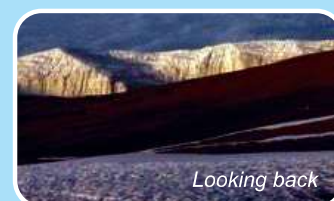
Janine said the adventure had been on her bucket list since she worked in Tanzania in the 1980s and had been in the planning stages since before Covid. In June she and four friends packed their rucksacks and set off for the trip of a lifetime.

She said: "We were part of a big group of 34 with a mix of ages and fitness levels. We could only take 20kg packs including a sleeping bag and mat plus 15kg in a rucksack. We had guides, plus porters who went ahead and pitched the tents and cooked for us - the food was really good. Temperatures dropped below freezing at night and camping was a challenge."

The trip took six days to the summit and two days to come down and there were some challenges along the way. For Janine this was a two hour cliff face climb as she suffers from vertigo. However, the effort was all worth it. "When you get above the clouds and see the stars, it is incredible. There's no pollution and I didn't realise there could be so many stars.



At the exit gate "an extraordinary sense of achievement"



Looking back

"We set off to reach the summit at 11pm so we were there for the sun rising which was just unbelievable. Coming down, you kind of end up almost skiing down the scree slopes quite fast and then it starts to sink in that you have done it. It was an endurance thing but there's an extraordinary sense of achievement."

Janine and her friends raised about £5,000 for the Dentists Health Support Trust.