

## “Huge vote of confidence”

### Members back the Fellowship future

Fellowship members have delivered a huge vote of confidence in our future as a national organisation by backing the increase in capitation fees from £10 to £20.

Ballot papers were sent to 12,210 members of whom 8,345 returned their vote.

**6,746 voted in favour of the increase.**

**1,217 voted against.**

**382 papers were spoiled.**

“It’s a huge vote of confidence in the continuation of the Fellowship” said John Rostill, Chief Executive. “But none of us is complacent. We are well aware that there are a number of aspects that members and branches are not happy with. It is our responsibility now to see which of these measures we can deliver. We can’t stand still, we have to move forward.”



Regrettably, some branches have said they are planning to close. In all it would mean a loss of about 400 members. “We wish them well as we concentrate on developing the future of the Fellowship” said John.

The ballot prompted lots of ideas and comments from members and branches which the national council and the trustees will be working on. Among them are the need for a mechanism for engaging with members, the development of the website, and a clearer focus for the role of development officers and regional representatives.

“I think it is important that any changes should be led by the membership” said John. “A group of members were involved in discussions in early May to help guide the officers in making plans.”

The outcome will be a refreshed strategy document outlining the way ahead to be produced by the end of May for discussion by national council and the trustees.



## Twiddle Mitts

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# Fellowship future focus for 2017 conference



Eastwood Hall Hotel, near Nottingham – the venue for the 2017 conference

A superb conference and AGM weekend staying at a four star hotel near Nottingham has been arranged for members through a partner company, Isle of Wight Tours.

Top items on the agenda will be the future of the Fellowship with Chief Executive John Rostill outlining the way ahead and Patron Ken Jarrold leading a question time style discussion on the future of the Fellowship. Danny Mortimer, Chief Executive of NHS Employers will speak on a topical NHS issue in a keynote speech.

The weekend is from Friday 24 to Sunday 26 November at the Eastwood Hall Hotel and includes two nights half board, the conference, a gala dinner followed by a 60s band and disco. The hotel is near Eastwood, the former coal mining town that was the birthplace of D.H. Lawrence, about 10 miles north west of Nottingham.

There will be a coach shuttle service from mainline train stations on Friday and Sunday, and coach trips to East Midlands Designer Outlet and Nottingham Christmas Market on Saturday.

The full package costs £185 and there are smaller scale choices including a day delegate rate of £35 or conference plus gala dinner for £89. An optional coach trip to the peak district on Sunday is £17.50 and there's a £20 supplement for single occupancy of a double room. There is also the opportunity to extend the weekend and stay on Sunday night.

Details have been sent to branches. Booking is through IOW tours (not Fellowship central office) and a £20 deposit is required by 30 June.

## NHS grant eases changes

The Fellowship has been given a £150,000 “tiding over” grant from NHS England to keep us going until the increased subscriptions get us close to being self sufficient.

The money is spread over three years and will reduce the call on reserves and support any critically important changes that need to be made. It has been obtained through the efforts of the patron, Ken Jarrold, in recognition of the fact that the Fellowship has lost its grant from Health Education England.

“This is very good news” said John Rostill, Fellowship Director. “But it is only short term help. It will help us to plan our budgets and move forward. National council has thanked Ken for his hard work on our behalf.”



Ken Jarrold

## CSIS offers more help

The Civil Service Insurance Society Charity Fund has supported the Fellowship with further grants totalling £27,000 to support three projects.

The first is a grant of £10,000 for a project officer to undertake research to identify grant giving organisations that could be interested in supporting the aims of the Fellowship and provide new sources of funding.

The second is £7,000 for work on the NHSRF website which national council has agreed should be modernised. Members are invited to send in comments for improvements they would like to see.

And the third is £10,000 to continue the project to encourage people retiring from social care work to join their local branch of the Fellowship. A pilot project went reasonably well last year and the plan is to extend it to other areas.

The CSIS Charity Fund is an independent charity linked to the Civil Service Insurance Society which provides insurance products to civil and public servants. The charity's income comes from the trading surplus of the insurance business and is distributed widely, putting money back into the community from which it came.

## Extra places at royal garden parties

The Fellowship has been given the chance to make 20 nominations (nominee and one guest) to royal garden parties in 2018 – the seventieth anniversary of the NHS. The royal parties will either be at Buckingham Palace or Holyrood, Edinburgh.



# NHS reaches 70

## your chance to take part

Fellowship branches and members have the chance to play a significant part in celebrations for the seventieth anniversary of the NHS in 2018.

Plans are already being laid for a year-long national celebration marking the achievements of the NHS so far, and looking ahead to potential achievements in the future.

And the Fellowship is in on the ground floor. Chief Executive John Rostill has met with communication leaders at the Department of Health who were delighted we had made contact.

“From our discussions I can see there will be plenty of opportunities for our members to be involved locally, regionally and nationally” said John. “They will be seeking our advice and involving us in the things they do.

“The NHS is 70 in the same year that we celebrate 40 years and we’ll be taking a similar approach of celebrating the past and looking forward to the future. I see it as an opportunity to raise our profile with the NHS locally and nationally.”

### 5 July 1948: the start of the NHS

#### Were you there?

The Fellowship is keen to hear from any member who was working in the NHS on the day it started in 1948.

If that’s you, please contact central office on 01305 361317 and speak to Sherry, Kay or Lucy or send an email to [info@nhsrf.org.uk](mailto:info@nhsrf.org.uk).

If branches know of members in the NHS on day one (who are likely to be in their late eighties at least) please talk to them and help them to get in touch.

### 18 April 1978: the start of the Fellowship

#### Were you there?

If you attended that first ever meeting at the Queens Hotel, Cheltenham, in 1978 please contact central office.

One way the Fellowship will be contributing is to find members who were in at the start of the NHS –working on the day it began on 5 July 1948. Members who were working for the NHS then are asked to get in touch with NHSRF central office.

The same applies to members who were present at the first ever meeting of the Fellowship in April 1978 at the Queen’s Hotel in Cheltenham.

“We’d like to put on some sort of celebration for the founder members” said John. “It’s one of the benefits of belonging to a national organisation that we can contact our members and tie in to major events. It can’t be done unless there is a central office to co-ordinate.”



## Bromley knitters answer plea for help

Members of Bromley branch have gone into action with their knitting needles in response to a plea for help from the hospital where they meet.

Staff at the Princes Royal University Hospital asked the branch if they could knit “Twiddle Mitts” which provide simple stimulation for patients with dementia and other memory problems.

At the branch meeting in January committee member Jan Brunton presented 73 twiddle mitts to Glynis Collumbell, Practice Development Nurse and Katherine Gausden, Head Falls Practitioner.

Glynis and Katherine explained how the textures, added accessories and warmth of the mitt provide stimulation, minimise agitation and soothe fidgety hands. The mitts will be used at Princes Royal and at Orpington Hospital where two new wards have been opened. Members have been asked to keep up the supply, as they can only be used by one patient before being discarded.



Jan Brunton hands over 73 twiddle mitts, flanked by nurses Katherine Gausden (left) and Glynis Collumbell.

# Hazel wins photography competition

“Cousins reunion” is the winning picture in the recent photography group competition on the theme “Pleasure and enjoyment.”

Submitted by Hazel Arnold from the Southmead branch this award was her second win in a week after scooping a prize in the Audley Travel / Sunday Times weekly competition. Hazel’s picture of four of her grandchildren was taken at Newark Park in Gloucestershire

Runners up were Michael Turner from Liverpool with his picture “Jack and Charlie loved playing dangerously” and Val Hemmings from Bedford “Enjoying a cruise to Goring.” The entries can be seen in an album on the Fellowship’s Facebook site.

Highly Commended awards were made to Sue Pettet, Hilary Cole, Ruth Tyrrell, Michael Turner, Elaine Ramsden and Janet Smith. Honorary



Mention awards went to Janet Smith, Sheila Lodge, Sally Smith, Elaine Johnson, Norma Garthwaite, Marina Briers and Elizabeth Malin.

In the diary for this year is a return trip to the Wildlife Photographer of the Year Competition at the Natural History Museum at 12 noon on Tuesday 6 June. Please contact Anthea Graham, Photography Group Co-ordinator, for details.. Requests have been made to photography group

members to host a photography day in their local area.

The next photography competition is on the theme “Landscape.” Details can be found on the website or from Anthea Graham.

**Email: [anthea.graham@nhsrf.org.uk](mailto:anthea.graham@nhsrf.org.uk)  
Telephone: 01520 722 951**

## Oxford member writes “tongue in cheek” novel

Anyone who has ever struggled with the avalanche of acronyms and initials in the NHS or wondered why getting a coat hook fixed takes more trouble than unwanted adaptations to the workplace will relish a recently published book by Oxford branch member Outi Pickering.

“Two point five cheers for the library” is loosely based on her experience working as assistant librarian in Oxford and recounts a series of amusing incidents prompted by memories of her 16 years in the NHS.

“I started writing stories almost as soon as I could write” said Outi, who was born in Finland and studied English and Italian at Turku University. “All my life I have had this slightly wicked streak that could see humour in every situation. I think this book has helped me to find my voice.”

The book is “half truth, half fiction” but there’s lots that rings true for anyone with experience of working in a big organisation with its own obscure jargon and its office politics. It began life as a series of articles for an online newsletter for librarians but developed into a novel which then took approaches to 12 publishers before one of them took it on.

Now there is a sequel in the pipeline, due out later this year. “I never expected my book to sell like Harry Potter” said Outi, “but it has not done too badly.”



Outi came to England in 1999 with her English husband Michael. She retired from the NHS a year ago and immediately joined the Fellowship and found herself at home among people with shared experience.

“Two point five cheers for the library” is published by Olympia Publishing at £8.99.

## Website offers a mine of information



If you have ever wondered what goes on in the Fellowship and what lies behind the success of our charity, have another look at the NHSRF website.

If you use the members’ password nhsrf1978 it’s a passport to a huge amount of useful information about who to contact for what, plus all the documents and advice branches may need for officers, to help with their roles.

Even before you enter the members’ section there is information about Fellowship holidays, back numbers of newsletters, interest groups like photography or golf, future events and a list of local branches.

Confidential information is kept secure (only branch officers with the right credentials can access member details and update membership lists), but there’s lots of information available in the open pages.

Take a look. It’s an eye opener.

# Michael steps forward to help

Always the man to step forward when he is needed, Michael Bennett has resigned from being a trustee of the Fellowship to become regional representative for North East Thames.

Michael joined Barking, Havering and Redbridge branch as soon as he retired about 10 years ago and was on the committee within weeks. He took over from Audrey Harris as regional representative in 2013 and left that role to become a Fellowship trustee about two years ago. Since then Vic Griffiths has been holding the fort as regional representative while the search for a replacement took place.



“I thought perhaps it was easier to get a new trustee than a regional representative” he said. “I have enjoyed my time as a trustee but I think being a regional representative has become very important. We are all about trying to feed information up and down. That’s my role now.”

Michael worked in the NHS for 39 years in various engineering roles in the Barking, Havering and Brentwood area, finishing as Assistant Director of Estates and Hotel Services. He is married with a son and daughter and two grandchildren and lives in Billericay.

## Can you step forward?

The Fellowship has vacancies for regional representative in the North East, in Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire and in North Wales

**It's a rewarding role which provides co-ordination and leadership as well as helping to shape the future, forming a link between what goes on nationally and what is happening locally.**

If you are interested – in any region – please see the nhsrf website for more details, or contact central office on 01305 361317.

## New regional representative for North West Fellowship can move forward, says Barbara

Barbara Smart, the energetic member who founded the Liverpool branch five years ago, is the new regional representative for the North West Region.

“I am looking forward to it” she said. “I have been fairly vocal in the past, which is one of the reasons I have taken it on. I think we should wipe the slate clean and start afresh. Things have been OK but now we need to move forward.”

Barbara was still in her job as Data Protection Liaison Officer at the Royal Liverpool Hospital when she led the way in setting up the Liverpool branch, of which she is now the secretary. “At first



it was difficult, but now we have 63 members and we have a really good time.

“One of the reasons I started it was that I don’t like the idea of colleagues worrying about retiring because they will be lonely. Now that we have a branch, a lot of our members would not be without it. It has given them another lease of life. They make new friends and meet old colleagues.”

Barbara has two children and two grand children and lives in West Kirby on the Wirral. In her spare time she is deeply absorbed in researching her family history and enjoys gardening, reading and sewing.

## Golf classic goes from strength to strength

This year’s golf classic is on Tuesday 12 September at the Marriott St Pierre Golf & Country Club, Chepstow.

Now in its sixth year, “the tournament goes from strength to strength” was the view expressed by Dame Yvonne Moores, tournament patron after the 2016 event. She added: “Seldom have I enjoyed such a marvellous day. The golf arrangements and the social side were just right and exceptionally good value for money.”

The tournament is now well established as “the friendly games.” Last year 68 enthusiastic golfers, of which 21 were new members, competed

for the CSIS trophy. Open to existing and retired NHS staff, their families and friends the tournament is designed to meet the needs of golfers of all standards.

For a brochure and further information,

please contact:  
John Toman Tournament Director

Telephone: 01666 505266 / Mobile: 07768 406233

E:mail [john\\_toman@btconnect.com](mailto:john_toman@btconnect.com)



# New ways to stay involved as NHS changes

There are chances for Fellowship members to get more involved in today's NHS as the service seeks to "democratise" itself through public participation groups and governor appointments.

The Fellowship website currently features an opportunity to be a governor at Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital for its Merseyside, Cheshire and North Wales constituencies, and Nottingham

Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust recently advertised a similar post.

Governors are members of the public who help to shape the future of NHS Trusts and represent the views of patients. Details of the Liverpool role and who to contact are on the website.

Volunteering in all its forms, is likely to be part of the anniversary celebrations of the NHS next

year and the Fellowship could play a worthwhile role. "Trying to put something back is part of our rationale" said John Rostill, Chief Executive. "Being a governor is very influential in the way trusts are managed and developed, and from our point of view, the more members we have involved, the more the profile of the Fellowship increases."

## Whittington's first outing

Whittington branch had a lovely sunny day for their first trip out as a branch which took them to the new King's Cross development in London.

Chairman, Michael Hotts, arranged the tour and members were met at the visitor centre by Maxine, their guide, who gave a detailed history of the old site and told them about the present development and future plans. They

were then taken on a guided tour and were able to enjoy the open spaces, new parks and squares.

Kings Cross has a rich and varied history and the mix of old and new gives the area unique character. Historic buildings are being preserved and restored and complemented by contemporary architecture. They ended the day with coffee and a chat.

## Suffolk West support charity

Members of Suffolk West branch handed a cheque for £400 to West Suffolk Hospital NHS Foundation Trust 'My Wish Charity, Forget me not Dementia'.



"We were given a tour of the memory walk, which provoked a lot of memories of our teenage years" said chairman Christine Harper.

## Croatia holiday beckons

One of the most picturesque coastal areas in Croatia is the destination for a Fellowship holiday from 30 September to 7 October.

The town of Cavtat, not far from Dubrovnik, is set among beautiful beaches and secluded coves with a backdrop of impressive mountains. The hotel is near the beach and a short level stroll beside the water to the old town.

Della Holidays, our group holiday partner, are offering the trip for £696 in a shared twin room with some single rooms for an extra £69. The holiday includes flights from many areas of the UK, airport transfers, halfboard, a day excursion to Dubrovnik, other entertainment and Della guides throughout.

Della Holidays has also teamed up with River Cruise Line to offer some exciting river cruises.

For more details contact Della Holidays on 01934 420318.



# Don't miss out on NHS savings scheme

Fellowship members are missing out on easy savings on day to day spending if they don't join the health service discounts scheme.

That's the experience of Sally Bundock, Development Officer for South East England and East Anglia who asked the question at a recent North East Thames regional meeting – and found that only a couple of members used it.

The updated national scheme, with over a million members, is open to retired NHS staff as well as current employees, and offers a cash back scheme which means you can pay for ordinary shopping using a card which you put money on first.

It works like a credit card, but members are in control of their spending because they can only spend what they have loaded on the card.

"I use mine for regular shopping" said Sally, "it gives me 3% in Sainsbury's or 5% in Marks and

Spencers. I have also bought a carpet in John Lewis with a 5% discount and a cottage holiday in Wales where I got about £40 off the price."

As well as normal shopping with discounts in scores of high street brands and popular restaurant chains, there are discount offers on travel, insurance, finance, mobile phones, motoring, TV and many other topics.

To join the scheme it's easiest if you can do it on line by going to [www.healthservicediscounts.com](http://www.healthservicediscounts.com) and registering your details and password and completing a profile.

"I think more people should know about it" said Sally. "For members with access to a computer it's worth having a look at it."



Sally Bundock

## OBITUARIES

### Elizabeth Roberts

Members will be sorry to hear of the death of Elizabeth Roberts, who devoted many years to the development of the Fellowship, particularly in the south east.

She served as national chairman from 1999-2001 and then president until 2003, but it was as a pioneer and leader in promoting the Fellowship in her region that she will be best remembered.



Elizabeth with Gordon Jackson, receiving the membership cup on behalf of Bromley branch in 2009

Elizabeth dedicated a huge amount of her retirement to the Fellowship. She founded Bromley branch in 1982, followed by fourteen other branches in the South East.

She became regional representative on the national council, rising to chairman and then president,

always ably supported by her husband, Bob, who predeceased her.

She was chairman of Bromley branch from its inception until 1990 and then president. She was also the branch welfare officer for many years. Before retirement Elizabeth was Head of Medical Records at Bromley Hospital. Her enthusiasm for the NHSRF was undiminished and she attended the 30th anniversary branch celebrations in 2012.

### Geoffrey John William Hunt (Geoff)

Royal Berkshire Branch is sad to report the death of Geoff Hunt in September.

Geoff had a distinguished naval career before joining the NHS as a nurse. He rose to become a manager of the Reading Community Nursing service before his retirement.

Geoff had many interests, one of which was technology. When he realised that some of our members were not hearing speakers clearly he made it his mission to obtain and adapt a sound system. Throughout his membership Geoff was a significant figure and a long term committee member.

Although unable to attend meetings in recent years he was made an honorary member in May 2014 and kept his keen interest in branch activities. Several members attended his funeral.

### Patricia Tolmaer

Patricia joined the Liverpool Branch soon after we started around 2012 and had recently celebrated her 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday with family and friends. Patricia had previously been Chairman of the local branch



of Parkinson UK and was in fact the originator of that branch. She was aware via her role of how hard it can be to find interesting speakers and so she regularly supported our committee by provided us with information about speakers she was aware of. Both the Committee and members were very grateful for all her support and she will be sadly missed by all at her friends.

Please keep  
this page –  
your members may  
need it one day

# THE NHSRF BENEVOLENT FUND



*Help when you need it most*

## What do we do?

We offer grants to NHSRF members in a crisis, where they need to spend at least £300 on a specific item, for example replacement glasses, a disability scooter or wheelchair, a new cooker, fridge or washing machine or any specific crisis such as travel to an overseas funeral.

We can help members facing problems which need emergency action, like fire or flood – subject to it not being covered by their own insurance.

We may be able to help in other ways: please apply if you feel we could help, even though it is not one of the standard types of support.

## What you can't apply for :-

We don't make grants for house improvements, to repay debts or for financial/capital commitments.

## Who qualifies for help?

Members applying for a grant must  
have been a member for at least 12 months.  
be claiming for a genuine and real need in a crisis that needs financial support.  
have less than £4,000 in personal savings.  
be able to provide evidence of the need, either themselves or with help from a named representative.

The fund is intended to help members facing a single crisis. You can not make a claim year after year.

## How do I apply?

Complete the form from the members' section of the website  
<http://www.nhsrf.org.uk/members.html>  
or by post from Sherry Smith at Central Office on  
01305 361317.

## Where else can I get help?

Cavell Nurses Trust for nursing members at  
[www.cavellnursestrust.org](http://www.cavellnursestrust.org)  
or 01257 595999.

NHS Pensioners Trust at  
[nhsptinfo@gmail.com](mailto:nhsptinfo@gmail.com) or 01372 805760.

Social Services – to check whether there is disability support (for example for a scooter).

Citizens Advice Bureau to check eligibility for state benefits.

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