

Fellowship

The newsletter of the NHS Retirement Fellowship

Fellowship launches cruise deals for members

The Fellowship has teamed up with the award winning Fred.Olsen Cruise Lines to offer three cruises in 2018 at special discounted rates and with extra benefits for members.

The three “NHS Retirement Fellowship Cruises” will be to the Norwegian Fjords in April (sailing from Liverpool) down the river Seine to Rouen in November (sailing from Southampton) and to European Christmas markets in December, also from Southampton.



In a Norwegian fjord: reaching parts and places other liners can't.



Fred.Olsen’s fleet of smaller more intimate cruise liners can take guests to the heart of a destination, docking only a short walk from city centres or sailing down narrow fjords where the bigger ships can’t go.

Prices include ensuite accommodation, breakfast, lunch, tea and dinner, daytime activities, lectures and talks, swimming pool, jacuzzi and gym and a choice of evening entertainment.

NHSRF chairman Audrey Harris and vice president Vic Griffiths visited the Fred.Olsen ship Black Watch in Dover recently, on a trip for group leaders.

“I think the fact that the ships are smaller and can navigate to the heart of towns is a big plus for this type of holiday” said Audrey. “They can reach parts and places that other liners can’t. The ships do give a feeling of friendliness and personal attention with two crew members to every passenger.

“We were shown round to see the different types of cabins from single or double inside cabins to luxurious suites and we had lunch in the restaurant which was excellently served by very friendly waiters. It was a positive visit and the river cruises are certainly ones I shall be looking in to.”

Prices start at £429 per person for the five night cruise on the Seine, £679 for the eight night cruise to the Christmas markets and £789 for the Norwegian Fjords. Full details are in the insert with this newsletter or from the reservations team on 01473 742 424 quoting GRP0231.

John Rostill, Fellowship Chief Executive said: “This is an example of what we are trying to do for our members. We’d like to hear of other suggestions.”

New insurance deal starts in October, see page 3

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Fellowship bids for funds for new projects

The Fellowship is actively bidding for funds which will enhance the lives of members, add to the success of branches and encourage getting together for shared experiences.

Bid number one is to the Big Lottery fund for a six figure sum to support an e-learning project that will enable members to improve or learn the skills they need to make full use of the internet.

The bid has been compiled by Bob Middleton, who recently completed valuable work on the Fellowship's Benevolent Fund and is now leading a project to seek external funding.

"We did a survey when I was working on the benevolent fund project and talking about it with John Rostill the more we thought about it, the more it seemed that IT learning was the single thing we needed to do to improve the lives of members" he said.

"It can counter isolation and improve well being. Many people think it is too difficult to learn, but once the mist is blown away, all of a sudden it

starts to grow. People develop a web of contacts, they can book tickets and holidays, contact family, shop on line and lots of other things. It is quite a powerful tool."

If the funding bid is successful the plan is to recruit an IT facilitator working part time for a limited period, staging workshops and training events in branches and groups of branches in England.

Bid number two, to Lloyds Bank Foundation Trust, is for £15,000 to support initiatives for collaborative working between branches, the forums in Liverpool, Harrogate, Oxford and Brighton, meetings of postal members (who don't belong to a branch) and to set up lunch clubs where branches have closed. There may also be regional day trips, attracting members from a wide area, and more work on attracting a more diverse membership.

"I am optimistic we shall get some money" said Bob. "But it may take some time."

Dates fixed for members' events

Dates have now been fixed for the next in the popular series of members' meetings which add to communication and provide opportunities to ask questions and give views.

More than 50 members have signed up for the event in Liverpool on 20 September when the Fellowship's patron Ken Jarrold and vice chairman Margaret Moffat will be taking part. Chief Executive John Rostill will be answering questions.

Dates now fixed for the next events are:

Brighton 6 December 2017

Harrogate 15 February 2018

Oxford 25 April 2018

London 27 June 2018

Details will be issued to members in those areas in due course.

Strategy takes shape

Work is continuing on the development of a strategy for the future of the Fellowship, as described in our last issue.

Chief Executive John Rostill reports on progress in his letter to branches (included with this issue) which will keep every member informed of the way it is shaping up. The aim is to have it completed for launch at the national conference in November.

One of the themes will be communication so that the full membership is aware of all that the Fellowship offers and the work being done on their behalf. Part of the plan is to use the seventieth anniversary of the NHS and the fortieth anniversary of the Fellowship (both in 2018) to raise our profile with NHS organisations both locally and nationally, and with retired NHS employees who are not yet members.

Two meetings have been held involving a cross section of the membership and staff, trustees, national council members and branch members out of which the strategy and an action plan are shaping up.

Support to branches is high on the list, as is publicity and promotion of the Fellowship, deals and benefits and support to improve the operation of branches (for example by events to support or develop branch officers) and the use of social media.

Fellowship seeks nominations for new trustees

The Fellowship is looking for members with common sense and experience who could become elected trustees and take part in managing the business and finances of the charity.

There are three vacancies for trustees to serve for a three year term. Any member can put their name forward or can nominate another



John Rostill: "Good trustees need common sense and life experience."

member (with their agreement). Nominations have to be in by 20 September. They will be considered by national council who will forward a list of recommended names to the trustees, who make any appointments.

Trustees are responsible for managing the business and finances of NHSRF. They would be expected to attend two board meetings a year, and if possible the AGM and conference, as well as being involved in a number of ad hoc initiatives which may involve further meetings – for example the recent strategy meetings.

"It does not require special training, but it would be helpful if people have some experience of committee meetings. We have external trustees and our honorary treasurer who bring specialist skills and experience" said John Rostill, Chief Executive.

"What we are looking for is people with common sense who have lived a bit. What makes a good trustee is life experience which they can draw on to help guide the ship"

For more information see the Fellowship website www.nhsrf.org.uk

Sunshine and ceremony for royal garden parties

The weather was warm, the bands played, the tea was good and the fashions were “something to behold” at the first royal garden party of the season at Buckingham Palace.

Cynthia Matthews, former national chairman who attended with her husband Bruce writes: “We very much enjoyed our visit. The weather was warm and dry, the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh and Kate, Duchess of Cambridge attended.

The gardens looked very good with roses and rhododendrons and azaleas in peak condition. Many thanks to the NHSRF for making this memorable visit possible.

Michael Bennett, regional representative for North East Thames and his wife Linda attended a later event and really enjoyed their day. Having successfully passed through exhaustive security checks to join the guests as the Queen and royal family walked through to tea. “We would like to thank the Fellowship for asking us to



Cynthia and Bruce “a memorable visit.”

represent them at this special occasion” he writes.

For Lorraine Taylor, regional representative for North West Thames, it was a special treat as the garden party took place on her birthday. Our picture shows her “all dressed up and somewhere to go.”



Lorraine: “a birthday treat.”



Michael and Linda “a special occasion.”

NHSRF to launch new travel insurance deal

A new insurance deal which will offer members travel insurance as they grow older is to be launched by the Fellowship on 1 October.

The NHS Retirement Fellowship Travel Insurance scheme will be open to members aged between 50 and 79 and their families. Once you have joined there is no upper age limit so it continues beyond age 80. Setting up a direct debit is a condition of the deal.

It’s an annual policy for worldwide cover, no medical screening is required, there is no limit to the number of journeys and a total of 183 days can be spent overseas during any period of insurance. Pre-existing medical conditions are covered, as long as members are fit to travel and not terminally ill.

The policy is underwritten by Acasta European Insurance Company and is only for NHSRF members. It aims to provide insurance at a

competitive price for frequent travellers. It will be available online through the NHSRF website or by contacting the company’s travel team. Details will be on the website from 1 October.

“One of the problems members face is that once you are over 80, premiums become sky high” said John Rostill, Chief Executive. “This is relatively competitive and as long as you sign up before you are 80 and you keep paying the premiums, it exists for life.”

AROUND THE BRANCHES

Lift problem prompts return invitation



Cosham members have been invited back for a return visit to the Spinnaker Tower at Portsmouth – including a second tea – after the lift was out of action during their trip in June.

“We could not climb the 570 steps so we had to have tea in the ground floor restaurant” said social secretary Shirley Stalker, “but it was delicious and they have invited us back.”

The tower was the final part of a visit to Portsmouth Historic Dockyard which included the Mary Rose Museum and a boat trip round the harbour.

Cosham members on their boat trip round Portsmouth harbour



Wisbech branch members thoroughly enjoyed “a lovely five days” in Portsmouth. Our picture shows them beside the famous statue.

Scottish gathering

National chairman Audrey Harris enjoyed a “super” visit to the Scottish Gathering in Perth. Our pictures show Audrey with with Renee Gibb, president of the Scottish Federation and with Hilary Robb, Scottish Development Officer.



Audrey with Hilary



Audrey with Renee

Midwives united

Basildon and Thurrock member Tina Aparicio was joined by five of her former midwifery trainees (also members) at the branch Christmas lunch.

Our picture shows Tina (seated) with l to r: Mary Wilks, Barbara Lummis, Margaret Dixon, Connie Wong, Carol Wright and Marie Ragoobar. Margaret Dixon was not a trainee midwife but now produces the monthly branch newsletter which Tina started 25 years ago.



Creative members



North West Surrey branch did not know their members were so creative until this year’s AGM when they asked them to bring items to the meeting. It turned out to be a wonderful display of paintings, photographs, cards, calligraphy, quilting and knitting.

Pearl receives her medal

Pearl Reid, who was awarded the BEM last year for services to the community (as we reported in Fellowship at the time) was presented with her medal at a ceremony at Birmingham’s Council House in September.

Pearl, 80, is a member of Sandwell and West Birmingham branch and a former nursing assistant at Sandwell Hospital. She was a school governor for more than 30 years and a devoted member of All Saints Church where she has many roles including being licensed to take communion to people who can not get to church.

Warwickshire



Warwickshire members spent a very enjoyable day at BBC Kensington Palace to an exhibition of the late Princess of V

AROUND THE BRANCHES

Angels of the North



...e days" in the beautiful county of Northumberland in May.

Useful advice from PCSOs



Pontefract members were given a lot of useful advice on how to keep safe during a talk by Police Community Support Officers, who also handed out leaflets and provided bells to attach to purses. "Everyone found the talk very interesting" said branch member Val Rushton.

Poole thank retiring treasurer

Maureen Adkins chairperson for Poole branch presented a voucher to Pauline Britton, thanking her for her hard work and support as treasurer for the past 13 years.



Harrogate's charity donation



Harrogate branch's main fund raising event for their chosen charity, Hearing Dogs for Deaf People, was a coffee morning held in January. The total raised from this event and other donations was £630.

The coffee morning was attended by Harrogate MP Andrew Jones, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Ministry of Transport, representatives from the charity and branch members.

Chairman Mary Bradley (on the right) presented the cheque to a representative of the charity at the March meeting.

Two cakes for Watford celebration



Watford branch celebrated their twenty fifth anniversary in March with not one, but two special cakes.

Our picture shows three of the original members, l to r Mary Studley, Pearl Williams and Deloris Smith, cutting one of the cakes.

...e at the BBC



... Birmingham in June. Their next outing in August was to Wales's dresses.

Brighton members enjoy life

Brighton and Hove City branch members are enjoying their summer which has included sitting in the Royal Pavilion Gardens eating ice creams (pictured) after an enjoyable lunch, and a successful visit to the Riverside Brewery followed by a walk along the river with views over the Adur valley and an excellent meal at the King's Head.



Picture puzzle

We are puzzled by this picture which has somehow got detached from any words to go with it. Please tell us who you are celebrating your branch thirtieth anniversary.



New competitions for the Fellowship

Three new competitions are to be judged at this year's AGM in November.

First we need a new logo for our fortieth anniversary year.

Please let central office have your ideas and a winner will be chosen from the entries submitted, which will be used in promotional material in 2018. Entries can be from individual members or branches.

Second, and new for this year, is a competition for the branch with the best promotional material.

And third is the return of our branch newsletter competition.

If you think your branch has good promotional material or a popular newsletter, please encourage your branch secretary to submit it to central office.

All competitions have a closing date of 31 October 2017.

How do you see the Fellowship?

What images of the Fellowship would attract new members? The Photography Group is calling for digital photographs from members that show what the Fellowship has to offer: perhaps a leisure activity, socialising, volunteering, walking, taking photographs, playing golf - whatever you think would be interesting to potential members.

Every picture that is used in our promotional leaflets, the website or other publicity materials will attract a £20 gift voucher for the photography member.

There are some rules about copyright so please check out the website or contact Anthea Graham, Photography Coordinator by email: anthea.graham@nhsrf.org.uk or telephone 01520 722951



NHS DISCOUNTS

NHS Discounts www.healthservicediscounts.com

This short article follows the article in the last issue of the Fellowship Newsletter about the NHS discount scheme, writes Sally Bundock, Development Officer for South East England.

"I wrote of the benefits of the scheme both in terms of the discounts available on travel, insurance, motoring and other purchases and the prepaid discount card which offers savings such as 3% on shopping in Sainsbury's.

"Having joined the scheme and acquired a discount card myself, I was not aware that retired NHS employees could join only the discount scheme and were not eligible for the shopping card.

"As some of you may be aware I have only been employed by the Fellowship since January last year and my previous employment was not with the NHS.

"I was extremely dismayed to learn that NHS retirees, some of whom have very many years of NHS service behind them, are not currently eligible to acquire a discount card. John Rostill and I have taken up this issue with the CEO of NHS Discounts and we are hoping to resolve it satisfactorily. More news will be available in due course. In the meantime, may I offer my apologies for misleading members."

250 sign up for Nottingham

About 250 members have signed up to attend the Fellowship's annual conference and AGM at Eastwood Hall Hotel, near Nottingham.

It's a weekend event from Friday 24 to Sunday 26 November. A partner organisation, Isle of Wight Tours (not central office) are dealing with all the bookings.

Delight at Scotland grant

The Scottish government has awarded a grant of £30,000 to the Fellowship for this year to support continued development in Scotland.

"We are delighted" said John Rostill, Chief Executive. "Hilary Robb, our development officer in Scotland is making a real impact and I am sure this has influenced the government to continue supporting us."



Active Quita, 82, earns branch praise

South West Surrey branch members are justly proud of their member Quita King and her active lifestyle at age 82, which includes riding her horses at least five times a week and competing successfully in dressage competitions.

Quita had a letter published in the Daily Mail in June after the paper featured active people over 70. "How about those of us still living a full life in our 80s?" she wrote, going on to describe how she walks her dog every day, rides regularly and came away with placings in seven of the nine dressage competitions she took part in last season.

"Life is great and long may I manage to stay active, but I do realise how lucky I am to have such good health despite, I have to admit, some after effects from horse related accidents."

"We feel this is a great achievement" said branch secretary Diane Grainger.

OBITUARIES

Maurice Peel

Maurice Peel, a former chairman and president of the Fellowship, died in January aged 84.

A member of Northampton branch he was very popular at both local and national level, as was shown by the many messages of sympathy received by his family.

Maurice was a Senior Chief Biomedical Scientist with Northampton Health Authority. He retired in 1993 after a working life spent entirely in the NHS, except for national service.



His involvement with the Fellowship included being regional representative, branch vice chairman and chairman, national chairman and president (2003-2008). He also attended a royal garden party at Buckingham Palace and the sixtieth anniversary service for the NHS at Westminster Abbey. He was president of Northampton branch from 2009-2015.

Maurice was married to Joan and was a father and grandfather. He died in hospital in January. Leading members of the Fellowship attended his funeral at Wootton, Northampton in February.

Margaret Fordham

Peterborough & District Branch report with much sadness the sudden death of their beloved ex-president Margaret Fordham.



Margaret transferred from Boston branch some 20 years ago, where she and her husband Brian had been members since she retired from the catering department at Skegness Hospital.

She was a great enthusiast for the Fellowship, holding various committee positions including vice-chairman, chairman, vice president and finally president, with great vigour and diligence. She never missed a national conference and was always available to help.

Alan Sykes

Clwyd Branch are sad to announce the death of Alan Sykes, 78. He was a loyal member for 13 years.

Yvonne Brownett

It was with sadness that Leeds branch members learnt of the death of their long time member Yvonne Brownett. Yvonne was born in Southport but moved to Yorkshire when she was a baby.



Her nursing career started in May 1954 at Leeds General Infirmary and in 1958 she went to Queen Charlotte's Hospital in London to train as a midwife.

She returned to the LGI in 1961 where she stayed until her retirement in 1991, the last 20 years as

a ward sister. After retiring she worked for 15 years as a volunteer in Leeds Crown Court for the witness service. Yvonne led a full and varied life and enjoyed walking, theatre, and holidays.

Len Speller

Norwich and district branch sadly report the death of their president, Len Speller.



Len worked for the NHS in pathology services, moving to Norfolk in 1966 and progressed to become Chief MLSO of the clinical pathology section. In the 90s he had a role as Support Services Co-ordinator which involved looking after and developing the pathology computer system. He retired in March 2002.

Len became heavily involved in the Norwich branch holding many roles, committee member, treasurer, chairperson and president. He loved gardening, travel, bridge, photography and IT.

Frances Dawson

Frances, who died in June aged 92, joined East Surrey branch in 2016 having transferred in from South West Surrey Branch (Guildford).

She spent her working life as a medical secretary. She was a dedicated fund raiser for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal and had been a Poppy Organiser for many years and was a standard bearer for her branch.

Amongst other charities Frances knitted hundreds of hats for premature babies both in the UK and abroad. She also knitted beanies for the

homeless in Guildford and she started a scheme for Christmas lunches for them. Frances was a guide at Guildford Cathedral.

Norrie Smith, Joan Cook and Mary Duffy

Three members of Brent branch died late last year. Norrie Smith and her husband were due to join the branch holiday in September but shortly before she was suddenly unwell and died in hospital two days later. Joan Cook died after a long and painful battle with cancer and Mary Duffy died suddenly of an aortic aneurism.

Sheila Scott

Sheila Scott died last year following a battle with cancer. She was an active member of North Tyneside branch and held various roles over 20 years, including being treasurer and chair, and was well known in the northern region. She leaves a son, daughter and three grandchildren.



Patricia Simpson



Pat Simpson had a career in travel before joining the NHS where she worked at Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospital until retirement in 2013. She joined the Fellowship in 2014, attended meetings regularly and enjoyed being part of the branch out and about group visiting places of local interest.

Ron Prior: a lifetime of service

When Ron Prior joined the NHS in July 1948 it wasn't by choice it was by official ruling.

Now aged 97, and still an active member of Chelmsford branch, he reflected on the start of his NHS career. "At the time I was working in the county council treasurer's department. I happened to be doing the public health ledgers so when they started the health service anybody working in public health was transferred" he said. "I did not get much choice: there was nothing you could do, you just accepted it. The only thing was you had to find yourself another job."

He joined Chelmsford Hospital Management Committee and began a long NHS career that ended when he retired from the finance officer post in Greenwich. "At the time there was another re-organisation – I think I went through five of them – and I took redundancy."

He joined the Fellowship as soon as the branch started in Chelmsford, and was immediately chosen as treasurer, later becoming chairman and remaining on the committee in various roles until only a year ago. Did he feel a glutton for punishment? "Not really, you just do it" he said.

How does he view those early days? "We had a lot of fun. It was a bit less restrictive I suppose. It was organised, but you were not told so much what you had to do." Ron and his wife Avice regularly attend the monthly branch meetings.

More memories from members of early days in the NHS will be featured in "Fellowship" during the next few months, especially in 2018 during celebrations of the seventieth anniversary.



Ron and Avice Prior

10% discount on UK cottage holidays.

As "Fellowship" went to press a new offer for members has been finalised.

The Fellowship has teamed up with cottages.com and Hoseasons to bring members a 10% discount on all UK breaks.

Secluded hideways, coastal cottages, and larger properties for family gatherings are among the 15,000 properties in UK, France, Italy and Ireland in the cottages.com collection.

To book a cottage visit www.chooseacottage.co.uk/NRF or call 0345 268 1595 and quote PART10.



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.



Cottages, lodges and narrowboats are among holiday choices available at a discount for NHSRF members.

There are also lodge breaks all over the UK set in beautiful scenery and offering space, peace and quiet. To book a lodge break visit partners. hoseasons.co.uk/NRF or call 0345 498 6258 and quote NHSRF.

And there are boating breaks on narrowboats or cruisers available in a wide range of sizes and styles. To book a boating break visit partners. hoseasons.co.uk/NRF or call 0345 498 6258 and quote NHSRF.

We'll have more information in our next issue.