



AGM AND GATHERING 2013

TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FOUR members attended our first AGM, which was held in May at the Thistle Hotel in Glasgow. The day began with no little drama, as the microphone had not been set up, so after some impossible attempts at shouting to the back of a huge ballroom we abandoned the meeting and adjourned for an early lunch. Luckily it was a very good lunch, and cheered everyone up.

We then reconvened the AGM (with a microphone now in place) and as always with these formalities it was very quick. Then we heard from Geoff Huggins of St Andrew's House who described the Scottish Government's policy and activities around dementia. Geoff was very interesting and his descriptions were clear. After he took a couple of questions from the floor, he was thanked sincerely and we moved on to the entertaining part of the day.

First, Bill Copeland was a very funny retired lawyer who told a string of jokes in quick-fire Chic Murray style, tailoring many of them to the themes of the NHS or retirement. Everyone was in stitches, and John Dow our President thanked Bill with a comic turn of his own.

After a tea-break with some beautiful patisserie (the hotel must have been trying to make up for the missing microphone) we heard Grand Central, a duo of Karen and Scott. They played a selection of Country & Western numbers and Karen encouraged us to join in and even dance. Several people did the slosh and the alley-cat, which must be a rarity for the middle of a Wednesday afternoon.

After the early crisis all was well that ended well!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

5 July - 8 July 2013

Annual Holiday and Conference
Midland Hotel, Manchester

24 September 2013

Welfare Forum, Perth

9 October 2013

Federation of Scottish Branches, Perth

16 October 2013

Annual Seminar, Perth

23 October 2013

National Council, London



Enjoying the band and Dancing the slosh.

SPPA FLYER RESPONSES

AS WE GO TO PRESS, there have been 342 responses to the 151,300 flyers that the Scottish Public Pensions Agency sent out, and clearly they will keep on coming for the next few weeks.

The responses are being sent to branches in batches. Your Honorary Officers are aware that branches prefer to recruit by word of mouth, but over the years we know from the figures that this is not sufficient to maintain our membership numbers. A “boost” now and again can only help to reverse any declining numbers, but the key is to make new members feel welcomed and included. We want them to stay as members and enjoy branch life for many years.

Just one blip – the SPPA mistakenly sent some flyers to retired teachers! You can recruit them if you (and they) would like to, as our constitution says membership is open to anyone a branch committee is prepared to enrol, but it is unlikely any branch will find they have more than one or two of these people in their response, and certainly not enough to “skew” the essential NHS nature of our membership.

SEMINAR

THE SEMINAR has been organised for 16 October in the Queens Hotel, Perth and Branch Secretaries will soon receive information about the day. It will follow our tried and tested format, of an 11.00 welcome cup of tea or coffee, a speaker, lunch, and two further speakers in the afternoon. Last year, when we had speakers on pain, community pharmacy, and Age Scotland the feedback from the day was very positive. We hope word gets around that the Seminar is always very worthwhile, so as to encourage a full turnout this year. Speakers are always told that the NHS RF in Scotland is a very good audience; people can be relied upon to ask interesting questions, and never rattle crisp-packets during the talks!

TWO NEW PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITIONS FOR 2013/2014



CSRF / NHSRF Photography Group

The theme for the competition closing on 30 November 2013 will be

“Wildlife and Pets”

The theme for the competition closing on 31 May 2014 will be

“Seasonal Colours”

The 2013 Photography competition closed on 1st May and attracted over 180 entries. The winners will be announced at the Fellowship’s annual conference in Manchester on Saturday 6th July and a selection of the entries can be seen by visiting the Fellowship’s website

www.nhsrf.org.uk

For full information and to register your name, contact the Competition Co-ordinator:

Anthea Graham, Glais Bheinn, Lochcarron, Ross-shire, IV54 8YB

Email: photography@nhsrf.org.uk

Tel: 01520 722951

Mobile: 078 5287 6802

The NHSRF and the CSRF express their warm thanks to the Civil Service Insurance Society who have generously sponsored the prizes (www.csis.co.uk)



NEW DIRECTOR FOR THE FELLOWSHIP

JOHN ROSTILL OBE has been appointed as the new Director of the Fellowship from the beginning of September.

John has spent 47 years in the NHS, and “retired” as Chief Executive of Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust at the end of July 2011.

He writes: “I feel very privileged in taking up this post and look forward to building on the firm foundations laid by Mike Brown. The warm welcome I have already been given is very much appreciated and I look forward to meeting many of the members at the Conference in Manchester”.



KNITTING GROUP

BASILDON & THURROCK branch had a brainwave that can be shared by branches across the UK. It involves knitting tiny outfits for new-borns in poor countries, or other knitting that charities can use for their good works. Their branch Secretary writes “Each Branch would have an organiser of the Knitting Group and choose the charity it wished to support. They select one person to be the organiser. I would be prepared to help find a relevant charity, establish contact initially, and put the organiser in touch. It must be organised on a local basis to make the transferring of items easier and cost effective. Elderly or frail members who cannot attend branch events could also be sent patterns and details so they can feel part of the local branch or feel that they are helping others.

It may be that a charity is selected which requires items all year, whereas some charities only collect annually. It is essential to make what the charities need or want, particularly for items going abroad as some of the Customs checks will only allow certain items. Please email me at RitaNHSRFKnittingSociety@outlook.com or call me on 01 268 793864 and I will gladly get you started!

*Rita Keeler,
Treasurer, Basildon & Thurrock Branch NHSRF*



NEW UK-WIDE FUND FOR VENUE SUPPORT

LAST YEAR the Fellowship in Scotland set aside a sum of money to help branches who found themselves with difficulty in paying the required rents for suitable venues. Two branches took advantage of this and we were happy to be able to help them out of a tight corner.

This year we are pleased to hear that the NHS RF has set up a UK-wide fund for the same purpose, and the same fund is also earmarked for assisting branches with local recruitment campaigns. The criteria for considering claims are:

- 1 The branch levies an annual subscription of at least £10 per year
- 2 The branch has been refused a grant from their local health service for at least two financial years
- 3 The branch reserve balance is under £1000
- 4 The branch has a minimum of 15 members
- 5 The branch has an active programme of events over the year
- 6 Evidence is presented of health service premises being no longer suitable for branch meetings
- 7 The branch supplies costed plans of how they propose to recruit new members

No more than £250 a year will be granted to a branch.

If you are one of the branches who found good use for the £250 Scottish “mini-grant” and believe you could build on your success a second time round, apply! Or, if you did not have much success but feel you have learned from others’ imaginative ideas, then also apply!



Dumfries branch with the banner they bought



MERCY SHIPS

MERCY SHIPS uses hospital ships to deliver health care at no charge to the world's forgotten poor.

The Africa Mercy is the world's largest non-governmental hospital ship with six operating theatres and a 78 bedded recovery ward. The international staff give their time and services completely free, paying their own airfares and subsistence costs whilst on board. Volunteers come from all disciplines from surgeons to administrators, engineers, plumbers and electricians.

The specialist services provided cover orthopaedic, eye, facial reconstruction, dental surgery, obstetric fistula and cleft lip and palate repair. Also provided are mental health programmes, palliative care, training and education.

Working with the poorest countries on the West Coast of Africa the Africa Mercy is currently in Guinea, and will move later this year for ten months in Congo Brazzaville. This will provide the regular surgical programmes but also feature education and training of health care professionals within their own hospital situations.

If your branch would like to hear more about the work of Mercy Ships, speakers can be arranged.

Please contact Jane.Palmer@mercyships.org.uk or ring **01438 727800**.

For further information on Mercy Ships please see: www.mercyships.org.uk.



WELFARE FORUM

AS A CONDITION of our Scottish Government grant we are asked to increase our focus on "welfare". On 24 September we will be holding a forum to find out what branches currently do, and share good ideas including the "Phone a Friend" initiative. The day is to be led by Lynn Ireland, Development Officer for the north of England, and Secretaries will receive more information very soon.



The NHS Retirement Fellowship in Scotland

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Never heard of the NHS Retirement Fellowship?

Like to know more?

Contact Maggie (as above) to arrange an invitation from your nearest Branch.

Copies of Scotland's NHSRF News are posted individually to every member, using the list held by Central Office in Dorset. This means contact details must be up to date for everyone, so please ensure Central Office has an accurate list.