

friends connect

Hospital & Community Friends 'Caring in Partnership'

Issue 10 Spring 2005

Year of the Volunteer 2005

Updates from Health Month

Friends update

News from groups across the UK

Shop talk

A positive partnership with
Remploy Healthcare

Membership services

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**YEAR
OF THE
VOLUNTEER
2005**



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By Baroness Emerton

A year of opportunity



Firstly, can I welcome you to the new look Friends Connect. It has been in the previous format for three years and listening to your comments we have made a number of changes. You will have already noticed its new compact size, but we have also increased the number of pages and added more regular features to make the magazine a much more useful resource to our members.

As I write, I can hear some of you saying 'about time too' and others saying 'I quite liked the old one' and still others 'well, if it was me, I wouldn't have done that' and, finally 'yet another change.'

However, as Disraeli said 'Change is inevitable. In a progressive country change is constant', and this will be the agenda for the next twelve months. I am sure as you are greeted with the many developments some of which are for reasons of compliance, some of which are to meet the challenges of the modern health and social care agenda, and some of them will be to ensure we maintain our position as a leading force in health and social care; at some stage with one of the developments your reaction will be similar to that to my conjectures on Friends Connect. I would like to say we do know, and we are doing our best!

With best wishes,

Audrey, Baroness Emerton
Your Chairman



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Opportunities for Volunteering

MP launches OFV Annual Review



Keith Bell (Cathja) & Alison Harker (Rosetta Life) with Stephen Ladyman MP.

On 26 January, Stephen Ladyman MP launched the Opportunities for Volunteering 2004 Annual Review. He took time to thank everyone involved with volunteering for all their hard work and to stress how important volunteers are in providing health and social care support for individuals and their communities.

Mr. Ladyman mentioned the goals of this year as the Year of the Volunteer: to increase the number of volunteers, particularly from marginalised groups; to open more volunteering opportunities in

the public and voluntary sectors; to raise the profile of the work that volunteers are doing nationwide; and to thank volunteers everywhere for their time and commitment.

Mr. Ladyman has plans for the future development of social care for adults in the country. His Green Paper, in which he shares these plans, will soon be published. Volunteers are going to be needed to meet the growing demands of social care. Volunteers are so important because they know what service users and their families really want, and they operate on the same level as those who use the services. Professionals, on the other hand, have a tendency to make people feel patronized and unheard. Mr. Ladyman said this needs to change. Speaking of the volunteers, he said,

'We will need to look to you for help and to show us the way.'

Mr. Ladyman concluded his speech by thanking the volunteers and reminding them that his dream of reshaping social care will not become a reality without their help. ■

Special guest

Royal visit for 50th anniversary



The Duke of York with George Todd and Rae Straton. Rae's mother and aunt, as children had been the official 'horse warmers' – warming the saddles – for the Queen and Princess Margaret during their visits to Windsor.

The visit of HRH Duke of York to Salisbury District Hospital on the 28 October 2004 celebrated two major milestones. The 50th anniversary of the League of Friends of Salisbury Hospital, and the opening of the

new cardiac unit. The Duke of York had just returned from a visit to a hospital in Russia, and Salisbury was the first of five engagements that day. George Todd, the chairman of Salisbury League of Friends, received a letter from the Duke's private secretary following his visit, in which he said: 'His Royal Highness thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to visit the Friends of the Hospital and to meet the individuals who have contributed so much in supporting the hospital over the past 50 years. His Royal Highness particularly enjoyed meeting a founder member (Elizabeth Batten) from 50 years ago. It was clear the hospital is thriving, and that the different contributions by the Friends, from the Friends' shop to funds to purchase vital equipment which would not be forthcoming through the NHS, is a key element of this happy, efficient and caring hospital.' ■

NAHCF developments

New Friends website



The end of January saw the launch of our new website. You will be able to download back issues of Friends Connect as well as other publications we have produced such as the 'More Than Good Intentions' research paper. We will be adding to and improving the website on a regular basis, so check back regularly.

When you next visit the site, don't forget to visit the Friends Showcase section. Launched as part of our activities during Health Month, it is an area where you can read inspiring accounts of the work of Friends Groups across the UK. If your group does not already have a showcase, you can easily submit your own using the online form. For more information about the showcase, turn to page eight or visit the website.

Tell us what you think!

If you have any comments, ideas, or suggestions to do with the website please send an email to: matt.kevan@hc-friends.org.uk. ■

● www.hc-friends.org.uk

Honours and awards

Publicly recognising the work of volunteers

Volunteers are a naturally self-effacing bunch and don't want any recognition for their work. However, we all know someone who really ought to be recognised, not least because they are wonderful ambassadors for volunteering generally.

This year, volunteering has a higher profile than usual as it is the Year of the Volunteer. Let's make sure our members are part of that recognition. The NAHCF can help in a number of ways:

National Honours

We have an Honours and Awards Committee, led by Lady Aird, which considers and supports applications for outstanding volunteers at a local regional or national level. It holds meetings twice a year, and is happy to consider up to two applications from each of the 11 NAHCF regions.

All nominations should come from a Regional Chairman, but can be channelled to them by anyone in the region. Nominations should be for individuals whose service is current, and will be for the next nine months. Unfortunately this cannot be used to recognise the contribution of those who have already retired.

Honorary Life Membership

Honorary Life Membership is awarded by the Trustees to individuals who have made a sustained and significant contribution to the work of the NAHCF. Honorary Life Membership is not intended to recognise a purely local contribution and is awarded at the Annual General Meeting.

Volunteer Medals

Volunteer medals are designed to reward the work of outstanding volunteers. We want to encourage as many people as possible to nominate people who they believe deserve recognition. Nomination forms will soon be available on the Year of the Volunteer website, www.yearofthevolunteer.org. ■

● If you have any questions please contact the NAHCF office, and if you have any nominations please contact your Regional Chairman.

News in brief

Welcome to new NAHCF members

Disability Sports Focus
Revive Enterprise
Hull & District Cerebral Palsy Society
Community List
RISE
SAIL
FLARES
Carillon Radio
Friends of Berwood Court
Sophie Thorne Shrewsbury Arthritis Support Group
Grocott Centre
Edward Street & Community Friends

Wedding bells!



Lisa Lomax, the friendly face of the Barclays Group Deposit Scheme married recently, and is now Lisa Melton. Congratulations!

New Christmas Card Scheme

We are close to clinching a deal with a supplier for Friends Christmas cards. You will be able to order cards with your own groups details printed on them for onward sale.

- More details can be obtained by calling David Elcock on 0845 4500285 or david.elcock@hc-friends.org.uk

Latest reports

Volunteer fund raising code launched

The Volunteer Fund raising Code was launched at the beginning of this year to establish guidelines for organisations working with volunteer fund raisers. Developed by a working party of volunteers, the Code is available on line at www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk. It will be also be printed in the new fund raiser's handbook for Institute members and Codes of Fund raising Practice, to be published in Spring 2005.

Chris Penberthy, Director of Capacity Building & Infrastructure Development, Volunteering England, said: 'With 2005 being the Year of the Volunteer it is important that we all work to ensure that we not only recruit more volunteers but also that we retain those that we have; I believe that this code is an important tool to assist organisations to be successful in these activities and in so doing build their own capacity and more importantly

ensure that they have happy and effective volunteer fund raisers.'

The Code differentiates between volunteers who are working 'on behalf of' an organization (where the responsibility lies with the charity) and 'in aid of' an organization (where the responsibility remains with the volunteers) and provides guidance specific to each of these. The Code is not only relevant to managers of fund raising organizations but also to senior management and trustees who will need to establish their own policies and define how their fund-raising activities fit within the guidelines of the Code. The Volunteer Fund raising Code is the 22nd of the Codes of Fund raising Practice established by the Institute. Each Code covers a separate fund raising technique and presents the high standards for fund raisers in the UK. ■

Obituaries

Harold Cranswick

Mr. Harold Cranswick, former rector of Montrose Academy and Friends of Sunnyside and Montrose Infirmary Chairman has died aged 89 in Stracatho Hospital after a short illness.

He was founder Chairman of the Friends of Sunnyside and Montrose Infirmary, a post he held until 1996 after 21 years in office. He also served on the NAHCF board of trustees and management committee. George Beedie, current Friends of Sunnyside and Montrose Infirmary Chairman says 'He will be sorely missed by all the members of the committees and of course the other organisations in the town.'

Ray Horsley

Mr. Ray Horsely, NAHCF Regional Officer for Nottinghamshire and Vice Chairman of the University Hospital Nottingham League of Friends died suddenly in his sleep. He will be greatly missed. ■

Profiles

Why do you volunteer?

Edna Brookes

Five years ago after having recovered from major surgery, I felt I wanted to give some of my time to help sick people as I had been helped.

I became a member of the League of Friends of Milford Hospital and have volunteered at the hospital every Monday morning, serving drinks, setting the tables for the patients' lunch and helping where needed. I love the work I do and find it so rewarding just to see a patient smile with pleasure at some small service I can do. I have met so many lovely people during the five years and at times I get more from them than I give.

Elsie Smith

I have volunteered with the League of Friends of Milford Hospital for five years and I get great satisfaction from the job. The patients are always very pleased to see us, and enjoy having a little chat as we serve them drinks and biscuits. I would recommend being a volunteer to anybody. ■

Year of the Volunteer

What's Your Passion?

What is the Year of the Volunteer?

The Year of the Volunteer is a Home Office sponsored initiative to raise the profile of volunteering and emphasise the benefits that it brings to all areas of society.

Months are led by either a group of organisations or a single lead co-ordinating organisation. Events may include major volunteering activities, opportunities to share best practice, volunteer recognition events or project launches.

Each month is focused on a different sector of the community, such as health and social care or the environment. See pages 8 and 9 for the full list of themes for the year.

The aims of the Year of the Volunteer are to:

- celebrate the hard work of the voluntary sector and thank those individuals who devote their time to others.
- raise the profile about voluntary work nationwide.
- increase the number of volunteers, particularly individuals from marginalised groups and young people.
- open up more volunteering opportunities in the public and voluntary sector.

What was Health Month?

The NAHCF kicked off the year by leading Health Month. Throughout January the NAHCF worked in partnership with groups across the UK to make the month a success. Over 75 events took place throughout the month.

Health month's aims were to show that anyone can get involved with the health and social care sector. Studies have shown that volunteering can have significant health benefits for both the patients and the volunteers. The act of volunteering can build self-esteem and confidence. Many health care professionals prescribe volunteering as a way to reduce stress and help with physical and mental problems.

Read on to discover some of the many things that happened during Health Month.



Health Month activities

Campaign attracts young volunteers

*Left:
Helen Moss
at the Royal
Orthopaedic
Hospital,
Birmingham*

*Middle:
Alistair Marick,
volunteer at the
Birmingham
Heartland
Hospital and
Solihull Hospital
Photo: WRVS*

*Right:
James Purnell
MP volunteering
at the League of
Friends Snack
Bar at Tameside
Hospital with
Barbra Thompson
as part of Health
Month.
Photo: Tameside
Reporter*

As part of Health Month, the National Association of Hospital & Community Friends (NAHCF), launched a media campaign along with Timebank, The National Association of Voluntary Service Managers (NAVSM) and WRVS that aims to bring more 18-30 year olds into hospital volunteering.

Focusing on specific areas such as befriending, arts, patient transport, adopt-a-granny projects, and many more, the aim of the campaign was to dispel the myth that hospital volunteering is boring, and to show younger people how they can make a difference.

The campaign consisted of press adverts, and a website where prospective volunteers could find out more information and sign their names to a mailing list.

Alistair Marick, 22, has made a big difference with the patients he works with. Alistair volunteers at Birmingham Heartland Hospital and Solihull Hospital. Mr. Marick helps out the hospitals by taking the trolley carts into patient's rooms.

'There are people on the ward who don't have any visitors so I like stopping the trolley and having a bit of a chat. You have to be very sensitive to a patient's needs

and let them initiate the conversation.

The job can be quite difficult, especially when a patient dies or is in an isolation unit and you have to speak to them through an intercom. But if I can do something to make their stay in hospital more pleasant it's got to be a good thing – and it makes me feel good about my job.' Says Alistair.

Helen Moss, 20, volunteers at the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital and also at the Selly Oak Hospital in Birmingham.

At the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital, Helen does ward visitations which involves talking to people and helping out the nurses.

Helen explains her work experience, 'It's really rewarding as well.

Sometimes if someone comes in for an operation, their family gets to know you and send cards saying thank you for your care – it's really nice.'

Arthur McKeown, the Volunteer Coordinator at the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital, says they have between 1,600 and 2,000 patients that come through their wards every week and he often hears patients say, 'Isn't it nice to see a young face about the place.' ■

"If I can make a stay in hospital more pleasant it's got to be a good thing – and it makes me feel good about my job."



New 'Friends' for GP surgeries

A pilot project is setting up community-based Friends groups to support patients, services and staff of large GP surgeries. This project will target three surgeries in the county of Kent in the South East region. The total cost will amount to £4,000.

The new groups will be based on the existing best practice model of the Friends of the Whitstable Hospital and Healthcare. In addition to raising funds for new equipment and refurbishments, the Friends run a community befriending service. The Friends visit people who are being cared for at home to have a chat, write a letter, go for a walk, do some light shopping or just offer a sympathetic, friendly ear. The project will be based in Kent so that new groups can network and be supported by the Friends of Whitstable.

There is no doubt that volunteers have an extremely positive impact on patients following their GP surgeries. By helping to provide transport, running fitness classes and taking part in befriending projects, research has shown that volunteers can reduce patient prescriptions by 30 percent and hospital appointments by 35 percent.

Across the country, GPs are now regularly 'prescribing' volunteers to their patients and even encouraging patients to use volunteering as a form of self-treatment. Volunteers don't have to be medically trained or have a health profession background; they simply have to give a little of their time each week.

Volunteers are helpful to more than just the patients. They are a vital resource to GPs and nurses by assisting with non-medical responsibilities such as managing preventative healthcare libraries and manning help desks in doctors' surgeries and pharmacies. Volunteers help lighten the workload and allow GPs and nurses to concentrate on providing medical care. ■

Cranleigh Community Day a huge success

The League of Friends of Cranleigh Village Hospital held a Community Open Day on Thursday, 27 January to showcase and promote various groups in the community. About 60 groups set up displays in the Cranleigh Village Hall. These included volunteer organizations, schools, churches and environmental agencies. Everyone agreed that the day was a great success.

The purpose of the event was to allow groups to advertise their services and recruit new volunteers. Additionally, it allowed them to communicate with other groups to share ideas, network and see if they had common goals that they could possibly work toward together in the future.

Julie Cooke, one of the organisers of the event, said that even groups who had not responded to the original invitation showed up unexpectedly. Of course, the League of Friends was delighted to have them all and quite impressed with the professional displays they brought. Julie estimated that at least 500 people in total participated.

'There were points of the day when you couldn't get through the crowd because it was so packed. It was brilliant,' she said.

Terry Bishop, Regional Development Officer for the NAHCF, was thrilled with the success of the day and called it 'the best event of its kind.'

The Cranleigh Village Hall was an ideal location because it is central to the village, and there is plenty of places for parking. However, Julie said that next year they would almost certainly need a larger venue with more available space.

As a follow up to the event, the League of Friends sent out a thank you letter and questionnaire to all of the groups that attended. They want feedback to determine how helpful the day was in terms of recruiting new volunteers, networking, etc. Julie said they are still going through the information, but the general consensus that she is getting is that the groups were very pleased and would like to participate again next year. ■

The Friends showcase is an opportunity to read inspirational accounts of how Friends serve the health and social care sector and improve their communities in doing so.

Launched as part of Health Month by the NAHCF it is an excellent opportunity to bring greater attention to the things your group does. If your group does not yet have a showcase online, you can easily add your own by using the submission form. Below are extracts of just two of the showcases already online.

● Visit www.hc-friends.org.uk/showcase for more details.

Friends showcase



Scarborough Hospital League of Friends Charity Shop

The Friends formed in 1997. The then new Chair of the NHS Trust for the area was sure of the value that Friends groups can give and asked if anyone would consider establishing one. The Friends have some great volunteers helping in many ways from fundraising to working in a charity shop in the town, and range in age between 30 to 80 years.

The shop is situated in the centre of the town and sells goods donated by the local community. Open six days a week, the shop is staffed entirely by volunteers. The turnover of volunteers is very low with some who have volunteered for the whole of the shop's five year life. The items sold include toys, bric-a-brac, clothing, books, and collectables.

The shop has an annual turnover of between £20,100 and £34,000 with all profits being put back into the hospital.

'The shop provides the Friends with two opportunities', said Eleanor Patterson, Volunteer Shop Manager. 'It raises the profile of the work of the Friends in the local community and also raises much

needed funds for our work in the hospital.' The Friends have been able to buy equipment such as profile beds, and chairs to improve patient comfort.

Recently, the shop had to be moved. From a previous location that had plenty of passing trade, the shop is now situated in a side street. The main worry was that the shoppers would not follow them. However, they needn't have worried.

With the help of a local company, the new location gave an opportunity for a re-design of the shop layout. This was a great example of working in partnership with local businesses.

The shop is seen by the local community to be a very friendly place where the volunteers are always helpful and cheerful. This means that many people pop in when they are in the area to see how things are. There is always a poster displaying the items that have been donated by people's purchases. This helps people to feel part of what the Friends are doing. The Friends work is also supported by celebrities. Coronation Street's Fred

Elliot (John Savident) and Heartbeat's PC Rob Walker (Jonathan Kerrigan) opened their Annual Hospital Fair.

The shop performs more of a service than is initially seen. Some of the volunteers in the shop have suffered strokes and through volunteering in the shop, they are gaining self esteem as part of the rehabilitation process. In the future the Friends hope that this will become another part of the great work that these Friends do through their shop in Scarborough.

'We really enjoy coming into the shop because of the friendliness of the volunteers. Due to the shop being staffed entirely by volunteers it is great to know that every penny raised is going to support the hospital.' ■

Stay involved!

The year of the volunteer doesn't just end with the health month.

Here is a list of months and themes for the rest of the year.

- Visit www.yearofthevolunteer.org for more information

• March

Older People

• April

Justice

• May

Environment

• June

Recognition

• July

Veterans

• August

Sport

• September

Ability

• October

Citizenship & Community

Friends Week – 24-30th

CSV Make a Difference Day – 29th

• November

Europe

• December

Animals

The Friends and Volunteers of Leeds Mental Health First Friday Club

The Friends and Volunteers of Leeds Mental Health have been in existence for around 20 years and currently elicit the services of around 200 volunteers.

The First Friday Club lasts for two hours and was set up over 20 years ago. It serves between 10 to 25 clients a month. This outstanding project provides a space for social contact, fun and activities ranging from exercise and arts and crafts, to visits from theatre groups and beauticians. The club is organised and arranged by a paid Activity Co-ordinator, however all other helpers are volunteers or carers of the clients.

This project was a direct response to an urgent need expressed by the patients themselves after the closure of Monwood Park Psychiatric Home for a safe and neutral space to meet up with past residents after they were moved to different places within the community.

A little while back, the service was closed for around 6 months for a rethink due to concerns regarding Health and Safety.

A Health and Safety policy was then drawn up after evaluating the practices of this service. The activities were brought in line and new procedures were implemented. The service was successfully re-launched with the following main changes. All carers had to stay with their clients during the sessions. A new paid position was created, that of an Activity Organiser. This person has the responsibility of creating a varied programme of activities that do not contravene Health and Safety provisions.

The group hopes to continue to raise awareness of this project. By doing so it can meet the needs of new people that arise from greater exposure in their community.

'This really is a fantastic service afforded by the Friends of Leeds Mental Health, adding value to the lives of it's users.' ■

More than good intentions

A report published by the NAHCF as part of Health Month reveals that volunteers have more than good intentions.

Helen Caton Hughes who authored the report says: 'The health service seems preoccupied with so many targets that people are too busy to give volunteering the priority it deserves. Patients, other service users and carers will often speak more freely to a volunteer than with a professional. They want to be seen as more than just their symptoms and they appreciate the informality of the volunteer culture as a chance to unwind. Volunteers help create a calm working environment and help free up health care professionals to focus more fully on their duties. Volunteering is also a way for people to extend their skills, developing the healthcare professionals of tomorrow.' ■

- To download a copy of the report, visit www.hc-friends.org.uk/publications

Forging partnerships

The NAHCF became involved in the Year of the Volunteer and took the lead in Health Month thanks to its membership of the National Network of Volunteer Involving Agencies (NNIVA).

The NNIVA was set up to ensure that the views of national volunteer involving agencies were heard in government and to help its members work together more efficiently on common issues. NNIVA is not funded by the government so it is able to speak out on issues such as draft legislation, criminal records checks, and access to volunteering.

The members of NNIVA mobilise over one million volunteers per year. NNIVA is currently responsible for delivering a programme of actions for the Year of the Volunteer ■

Friends update

Bodelwyddan Friends do it again



Mrs. Menna Owen, League Chairman; Chris Ruane MP; Cllr Meirig Lloyd Davies, Chairman Denbighshire County Council and his Consort; Cllr Richard Bunny, Mayor of Bodelwyddan; Mrs Hilary Stevens, Chairman NHS trust; Mr. Gren Kershaw, Chief Executive NHS Trust; Dr. David Goddard, Medical Director.

Last year a £200,000 plus donation of equipment was made by the Bodelwyddan Friends and the association have raised and donated £200,000 worth of equipment this year alone. Medical equipment costing over £200,000 has also been given to the hospital this past January at a special banquet attended by over 70 league members, hospital trustees, physicians, and managers.

Friends set for Silver Jubilee

Christina Cameron, Regional Chairman of Scotland cuts the ribbon with the Friends group.



The League of Friends of the Western Isles will open their Silver Jubilee celebrations this spring by hosting the National Conference and AGM of the Scottish Region of the NAHCF. The good news was revealed at the league's AGM by Chairman, Donald Martin. Over fifty delegates from Friends Groups throughout Scotland are expected to attend the event on Friday 23 and Saturday 24 of April 2005. Christina Cameron also recently opened the new Friends offices.

New Scanner



Chairman Mr. John Saunders and Nurse Liz Ware.

The Good Companions Volunteer Organisation was founded in 1946 and has just completed 40 years of fund raising this year. Mr. Saunders with Nurse Ware present a bladder scanner costing £8,000 to Holywell Community Hospital. The scanner will be used as a diagnostic aid along with a flow rate machine for the patients. The great advantage to the patient is that this procedure can be carried out locally without a visit to Glan Clwyd.

Mummy's or MRI scans?



Radiology services manager Libby Watkins, chief assistant Carol Dryden and senior radiographer Chris Burke.

Harrogate Hospital and Community Friends show how a patient can be moved from bed to scanning table with dignity and comfort. The 'patient' is Friends Chairman Andy Wilkinson. Last year the Friends spearheaded a public appeal that raised over £325,000 to bring the Hospital's new MRI scanner into use. This year's effort is to fund a widening range of items for hospital and community health care. 'We cannot afford to relax,' says Andy.

A special visitor for a special achievement



The Lord Lieutenant took time to visit with the patients and staff before opening the new extension of the Irvine Unit.

The Bexhill Hospital League of Friends have much to be excited about. The community raised £1.175m which the Friends invested in an extension of the Irvine Unit of the hospital. Helping to celebrate this great achievement was the Lord Lieutenant of the county, Mrs. Phyllida Stewart-Roberts. She praised the Friends and the people of Bexhill, 'It is quite remarkable, and it does show what an incredible amount of voluntary support does exist in this country. It is not just 'icing on the cake' but the substance where needed.'

A bed of roses for Colchester Friends



The Mayor and Mayoress of Colchester along with members of the Friends toast the spectacular garden.

Last year marked the 50th anniversary of the Colchester League of Hospital and Community Friends. To thank the Friends for all they have done, the Colchester Borough Council dedicated the Castle Park's 'Badge Bed 2004' to them. Various colour flowers depict the Friends' logo, dates and name. What a stunning sight!

Summer fun



Beans meanz cash: extreme ways to raise funds.

The Friends of the Hospitals Port Talbot summer fete raised more than £14,000. Many of the stalls were run by hospital staff, and there were a number of displays from local organizations. The dermatology staff won the Hospital Departmental Shield for 2003, a trophy that is awarded to the department that raises the most money throughout the year.

The Friends also had great success with their car boot sales that were held in the car park at Neath Port Talbot Hospital. The sales were held every Sunday from April to September and raised almost £6,000. Some of the proceeds have been used to purchase 12 PCX Diabetic Blood Glucose Monitors.

Golden Anniversary Celebration

The Royal Surrey County Hospital League of Friends celebrates its 50th anniversary. To commemorate this special year, the chairman and chief executive of the Trust invited members of the Friends to afternoon tea. Vera Allford, founder of the Friends who still helps out in the shop, was given the honour of cutting the cake.

The Trust wanted to thank the volunteers for all their years of dedication and hard work with the hospital shop and trolley. It was noted that the League has raised more than £1 million for the hospital in the last ten years. The money has been spent on dialysis machines, a telephone exchange auto attendant, ultrasound machines, mobile x-rays, manual handling apparatus, wheelchairs and many other items to benefit the patients and staff.

50 years and going strong



Clifford Searle, president of the Friends, with Chairman Judith Allen, Secretary Betty Francis and Treasurer Tony Hearn. Also pictured is Mike Robbins, past president of the Bridgewater Rotary Club, as well as grateful members of the Outpatients Department staff.

The League of Friends of the Bridgewater Hospital and Community are celebrating their 50th anniversary, and they plan to make it a great year. They started off by presenting the Bridgewater Hospital's Outpatients Department with a £4300 hoist at the beginning of the year.

The Friends are also planning two large fund raising events: A 'Midsummer Melodies' (2 night) Concert in June and a Dinner Dance in October.

This group may be small, only 21 in number, but they are very hard-working. They are constantly looking for new ways to raise funds for much-needed equipment at the local hospital.

Hard working Helpers

The Friends of Royal Shrewsbury North Hospital have donated over £4 million by way of equipment and tools used since the hospitals construction in 1961. In 2004 over £983,000 worth of items were given to the hospital benefiting patients and staff alike. The Friends also organise fund raisers and activities, run shops and tea bars, and put on flower displays for the patients.

Less is More



Friends of Southernhay House Surgery: Committee, Volunteers annual together at Buckeull Lodge Hotel for a conference.

Their funding is not great but their hearts are large. The Friends of Southelp aim to provide additional care, comfort and support for all patients at the Southernhay Surgery. They do this by working closely with doctors, district nurses, health visitors and social services.

Falling for a good cause

Sheila Dearlove, a member of the Friends



of York House at Stourport on Severn, Worcestershire.

This breathtaking photograph was taken at 14 000 feet when 69 year old Sheila Dearlove undertook a parachute jump. Courageous Mrs.. Dearlove, in the yellow suit, was given this experience by her son as a birthday gift, and in return she raised sponsorship money for the Friends of York House.

Freezing for a good cause



Does digging and sleeping in a snow hole, walking in snow shoes, ice fishing and living on food rations sound like fun to you? It did for the brave souls who participated in the Exeter Leukaemia Fund's Arctic Challenge (ELF). The challenge was a huge success, raising more than £25,000. It was so successful that ELF is already planning Arctic Challenge 2006, which is to take place between 7-14 January. In addition to raising money to benefit leukaemia patients, participants of this challenge will get the chance to drive a team of husky dogs, go snow-mobiling and experience true Swedish relaxation in an outdoor hot tub.

Friends win prizes

The League of Friends of Sittingbourne and Community have had quite a successful year. They won first prize in the public buildings class for Sittingbourne in Bloom, Certificate of Excellence for South and Southeast in Bloom and the Aspire Award for their work in raising money to improve the experience of patients and staff in the Sittingbourne Memorial Hospital. Congratulations!

All change!

The League of Friends of Nottingham City Hospital has seen a bit of change recently as some members step down and others take over. Mrs. Wendy Parsons has retired after 10 years as Chairman, and Mrs. Joan Doubleday ably takes her place.

Mrs. Mary James was presented with a long service award to commemorate nearly 40 years of service. Both Wendy Parsons and Mary James will continue to support the Friends on an active basis.

Friends Gift



Mary Isaacs with the delighted Poplar Ward staff.

Poplar Ward staff and patients were delighted to receive a gift from St. Margaret's Hospital League of Friends at a ceremony on the Older People's Services ward on Monday, 13th December. Chair of the Friends, Mary Isaacs, joined them all to present ten superb bedside tables at a total cost of £1390.

Mary was delighted that these tables would make a significant improvement to the facilities provided for patients during their stay on Poplar Ward.



Festive fund raisers

The Duke and Duchess Of Devonshire draw the raffle helped by Beryl Cockman, Friends Chairman.

The Duke and Duchess of Devonshire were the special guests at the Chesterfield and District League of Friends annual Christmas Fayre. While the amount raised has not yet been finalised, the money will go towards essential equipment needed for the hospital. Lisa Griffiths, Hospital Trust representative said, 'It was great to see so many people supporting such a worthy cause. The League would like to thank anyone who attended and helped make it a worthwhile event.'

Friends set for Silver Jubilee

The Friends of Royal Shrewsbury Hospital have donated over £4 million by way of equipment since the group began in 1961. Last year they donated items to the hospital worth over £983 000 and many patients have benefited from their sterling work. The Friends run three shops and a tea bar and the sales last year amounted to over £500 000.

In addition, volunteers run many more fund raising activities and arrange beautiful displays of flowers in various locations around the hospital. Here's to an equally successful 2005!

Boosting laser surgery

Hospital patents are likely to benefit from significant advances in treatment thanks to the gift from a special group of Friends. The equipment was the latest gift from the League of Friends for the Royal Gwent and St. Woolos Hospitals.

David McLain, consultant vascular surgeon at the Royal Gwent Hospital said, 'It allows us to look at arteries in greater detail. If people are too ill to come to the vascular clinic we can bring it to them on the ward.' David went on to thank the group for their help and generosity over the years.

The group was set up in 1956 and has been supporting the hospitals ever since, raising almost £300 000.

Let us know what your friends group has been doing. Send your stories and photos to newsdesk@hc-friends.org.uk, or to the address on the inside back cover.

Please get your articles to us before 29 April 2005 for inclusion in the next issue. Thank you!

Shop talk

A positive partnership with Remploy



The STAXI mobility system for patient transport, and the Breatheband pillows that block bacterial growth. Just a few of the products available from Remploy Healthcare.

Remploy Healthcare is proud to be in partnership with the NAHCF. For the past fifty years our organisation has focused on helping people with all kinds of different disabilities to find and settle into a productive work environment. Every penny of surplus gained from our business enterprises is reinvested in the training and development of our people, assets, facilities and into customer service enhancements.

At the vanguard of design and development in healthcare products and services, the company has achieved a reputation for innovative solutions particularly in the fields of mobility, orthopaedics and footwear. In fact, Remploy Mobility is the largest supplier of manual wheelchairs to the NHS and brings over 50 years of expertise and insight to that ongoing relationship. Our Positive Momentum™ brand is called such, because it reflects the company's constant push to pre-empt the evolving demands of both prescribers and end users. Our goal is to exceed the expectations of our customers, whether their demand is for portering chairs, chairs for active or occasional users through to modular solutions.

We are keenly aware of the valuable role the NAHCF plays within our society today, having already supported

The Friends of the Hospital in Mansfield with the STAXI System from Positive Momentum™. The world's leading stackable transport chair is ideal for the hospital setting as it is designed for people with mobility issues that prevent them from walking long distances. Easy to push and steer with one hand and suitable for indoor or outdoor use, the STAXI holds up to 204 kg – almost double that of many transport wheelchairs.

The Friends of the Friarage Hospital on Teeside have completely replaced the hospital's pillows by funding the purchase from Remploy Healthcare of 900 Breatheband pillows. This new patented system allows pillows to 'breathe' whilst blocking the microns that aid infection and bacterial growth inside the fabric. Healthy, clean bedding is a prerequisite for the work at The Friarage and Breatheband has proven beneficial for allergy sufferers, people with breathing disorders and for babies. ■

● If you are interested in any of Remploy Healthcare products please tel: 0870 6090600 fax: 01685 881755 or Email: sales@remployhealthcare.com Web: www.remployhealthcare.com

Ops for shops

Do you run a retail unit as part of the work of your Friends Group? We have been developing our base of Corporate Partners wanting to help Friends shops to develop their skills and increase turnover. This in turn means more funds are raised to support your cause.

Plans for the future are:

- Regional Retail Manager Training Days
- Guides and advice on running/setting up retail outlets
- Friends retail website including the latest negotiated offers with suppliers, retail guidance, training events, online forums (where you can share information) and online wholesale ordering system.
- Email updates
- Corporate partners providing volunteers from their businesses to visit you and provide expert advice on things such as merchandising, shop layout etc
- Your own copy of Friends Connect with the all new Shop Talk section direct to you

You will not be pestered. At all times you have the right to pick and choose who you deal with, but you would receive useful information to benefit what you do.

Suppliers we are currently working with are:

GlaxoSmithKline
Cadbury Trebor Bassett
United Biscuits
Danone Waters UK & Ireland Ltd
Palmer & Harvey
Key Lekkerland
Blueheath
Ginsters
Masterfoods
Amber Valley Toy Company Ltd
Pro-Fibre Nutrition
Nurse 2 Nurse Magazine
Impress Publishing
JTP Graphics
Samuel Lamont Textiles

We value the support and investment these companies give to the NAHCF. If you are a shop manager or have a shop manager in your Friends Group please register your intent by contacting David Elcock at david.elcock@hc-friends.org.uk We can then work together to provide the best possible service to your customers. ■

Pete's bit...



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Membership Services pages, a chance to share some news and advice on the issues facing the Friends Groups around the UK.

The theme of Friends Connect, 'Year of the Volunteer', is an exciting opportunity to celebrate the contribution of Friends' Charities and promote volunteering in your local community. The article opposite on 'publicising your work' is a reminder of what can be done to increase support and attract new volunteers. It is also a gentle reminder to keep sending in your stories to us for publication. With a Home Office committed to volunteering and an impending general election, your local MP should be queuing up for an opportunity to visit with your charity.

Unfortunately the election may prove a barrier to the long-awaited Charities Bill, the first major reform to charity law proposed in England in 400 years. The Bill is hoped to empower the Charity sector and tighten legislation but deference of Lords committee debates could mean waiting a little longer... Meanwhile, the Scottish Executive has put forward a Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Bill which aims to bring charity regulation into the 21st Century.

Advice on VAT is a topic that has been frequently asked by Friends Groups and I have included some guidance (right) in this issue. If you have any further queries on topics in this magazine or those facing your charity, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Peter Lewis
Membership Services Manager

● If you have any questions that you would like answered in our magazine please contact me on 0207 307 2574 or peter.lewis@hc-friends.org.uk

This quarter we have had questions about...

VAT and Friends Groups

Value Added Tax was introduced as a 'simple tax' but unfortunately straightforward beginnings were soon made rather more complicated, including for charities!

VAT is a tax on supply of goods or services sold in the UK for business purposes and the standard rate is 17.5%. However business activities can be considered 'exempt' or 'zero rated'. Also, many charitable activities are regarded as 'outside of the scope' of VAT and not business.

There are two key 'sides' to the tax: tax on supplies to the charity and 'input tax' i.e. VAT on purchases for business activity (see below). With the majority of Friends Groups it is not a case of claiming back VAT paid but ensuring that VAT is not paid for supplies that can be exempted or zero rated. Registering for VAT with the Inland Revenue is the only way to claim

some of the VAT back but you must have a yearly VATable turnover of more than £58,000!

Unfortunately the scope of zero-rating still falls far off the mark; for example there is no relief for non-medical goods donated to a trust or for medical goods donated to GP surgeries. Non-payment of VAT would save UK charities over £400m per year! ■

● If you have any queries about VAT or would like some more information please contact Peter Lewis at the NAHCF Head Office, alternatively you can visit www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk or www.charitytax.info.

So is our income taxable?

Supplies that are outside the scope include:

- donations & Legacies
- grants
- investment Income
- supply of Voluntary Services.

Exempt supplies include:

- education
- welfare services
- certain Fundraising events
- research provision
- cultural admissions – museums, zoos etc.

Zero rate (tax at 0%) supplies include:

- sale of donated goods to the public
- printed matter & publications
- exports.

Standard rate supplies include:

- everything not covered above
- catering
- merchandise sales
- conferences
- sponsorship. ■

Should I be paying VAT on purchases?

A contentious issue, paying VAT for goods used for charitable purposes and especially when supplementing statutory services can be seen as an unnecessary use of donated funds. Below are the key supplies that can be zero-rated:

- donation of goods to an eligible body
- certain medical or veterinary equipment can be zero-rated if they are donated to a NHS trust, PCT or health authorities*
- advertising – applies to advertising that promotes the objects of a charity*
- supply to charity providing medical care or performing medical research*
- prepared catering for non-business – eg 'meals on wheels'.

*A certificate will need to be given to the supplier – available from NAHCF or Inland Revenue. ■

● The Membership Services Department can provide or refer advice and support for the following issues:
Constitutions and insurance
Grant applications and Fund raising
Volunteer Recruitment and Management
VAT, Gift Aid and Shop Management
And any other relevant issues...

Regional focus

Introducing Gareth Sharman



Hello! My name is Gareth Sharman and I started my new job as Regional Development Officer (RDO) for England South West on 1 February of this year.

So, where do I come from and how did I end up in this post? I have been working in the voluntary sector for over 6 years primarily in the field of volunteer recruitment, training and support and much of my work has revolved around mental health issues. I have also been involved with voluntary work in Uganda, which made for some interesting experiences.

I've done a spot of fund raising, run self-help groups and have supervised a helpline.

I know the region pretty well having lived in Bristol (the old Avon area) for 7 years. Before that I lived in Bridgwater and Taunton (both Somerset) and I proposed to my wife and holiday every year in Devon where we still visit the tree under which I asked that life-changing (for the better!) question. I have holidayed many times in Cornwall where my grandmother's ashes are scattered at the Lost Gardens of Heligan which has since gained a special place in my heart. I spent several years in the lovely county of Wiltshire when I was a soldier based near Salisbury. Mind you, it didn't always seem lovely when one was running around bits of it in boots and wearing a helmet! I have travelled extensively in Gloucestershire where I ran self-help groups and was establishing relationships with an open prison there. There is also a beautiful bird sanctuary in Gloucestershire

that we visit often as a family. So that just leaves me to find some connection with Dorset. Oh dear.... Well, my wife's best friend comes from Poole. That's obviously not good enough so if there are any Friend's groups who need my assistance or would like me to visit them please contact me and give me a reason to get to know your county!

I live in Bristol with my wife Emma and three children aged 3, 2 and 6 months. I am really relishing the task of working for the NAHCF here in the South West and look forward to meeting as many of you as possible. ■

● If you want to contact me my details are:
Gareth Sharman, NAHCF
PO Box 392
BRISTOL
BS34 8WW
Tel: 0117 3306293
Email: gareth.sharman@hc-friends.org.uk

How to...

Publicise your work effectively

You have an exciting event coming up that your fund raising efforts have helped pay for. Your members are attending along with the Mayor and a local MP, but does anybody else want to know about it?

Yes! Local media are always interested in covering stories in their area and the Year of the Volunteer is no exception. Local media consists of the newspapers, radio, television, newsletters and internet sites and can be professionally run or produced by a local school or university.

When considering your Friends Group's activities, think about what you would wish to tell others that would inspire and motivate them. Journalists are always looking for a new story or an old one from an unusual angle. What would you find interesting to read or hear about?

Once you have an event planned you can start to put together your publicity timetable.

A couple of weeks before the event:

Call the local media and succinctly introduce who you are and the event you are promoting. Offer to send in a press release and get an address to send it to. Enquire whether a photographer can be sent to take professional photographs.

On the day:

If a reporter did not attend during the day, contact the media again and tell them about the success of the event. Send an updated press release with good quality photos and highlight the importance of what happened.

After the event:

Monitor the success of your story in the press and keep and display clippings outside your office/shop for further publicity and as a reminder of your successes. Remember that the NAHCF and other Friends Groups would love to hear about what you have been up to and send us your stories for inclusion in Friends Connect! ■

Writing a press release

- Start with a bold and concise sentence explaining the most important information first (Who, what, why, where and when).
- Sentences should be kept short.
- Paragraphs should only be one sentence long.
- Stick to one side of A4 or less.
- Give plenty of quotes, including from yourself!
- Always ask for permission for quotes.
- Put your contact details at the end.
- Proof read what you have written.

● For more information visit:
www.mediatrust.org
www.radio-now.co.uk
www.holdthefrontpage.co.uk

Friends Week '05 begins



Friends Week is all about celebrating Friends Groups and their activities.

It is a great opportunity to do something on a local level that will have a national impact to raise awareness of the hard work and support that Friends give to those people affected by ill health, disability or social disadvantage.

Over the last two years we have gone from two registered events across UK to over 65, a fantastic achievement. We hope to do even better this year. This year CSV Make a Difference Day falls on Saturday 29th October at the end of Friends Week, meaning we will be able to work in partnership even more than last year. The CSV Action Desks within local BBC Radio stations will be able to help promote your event. 90,000 volunteers took part in last year's CSV Make a Difference Day, what about making some of them yours?

Friends have seen the power of being involved with Friends Week last year.

Doris Thomas, Friends of the Cefni Hospital, Wales said, 'We were delighted! The press seemed to take much more interest in our day when they realised that this was part of Friends Week.'

'We made the front page of the Brentford

and Chiswick Times this week. We felt that this was a good opportunity to launch Friends Week,' added Shirley Rollitt, Brentford Lodge League of Friends

How you celebrate Friends Week is up to you. Here are a few ideas to get you going:

- organise a special fund raising event
- hold an open day
- put on a sample volunteering day
- arrange a high street collection
- honour volunteers with merit & long service certificates
- put up displays about your work in public places
- take assemblies in local schools
- encourage your community to buy a Friends Badge (available from head office) and donate a minimum of £1.

Don't forget!

You can register your event/activity online at www.friendsweek.org.uk. Alternatively, complete and send us the form below and we can publicise your event on the website. Whatever you do take lots of photos let us and your local media know. Most of all have fun doing it. ■

Friends Week checklist

- Decide what you want to achieve from your event
- Set a date and time within Friends Week, consider the availability of volunteers and other events that may detract from yours.
- Set a budget – try to get as much as you can for free
- Plan you activity – why not get help from a local schools or businesses?
- Identify potential sponsors for food, drinks, prizes, equipment, publicity etc.
- Approach celebrities, local politicians, sports personalities or speakers well in advance and brief them on the purpose of the event and what you want them to do.
- Invite guests, making sure to ask them to RSVP so you can cater properly for the event.
- Have you got banners, flag day stickers, certificates for volunteers? Do you need the NAHCF logo for publicity? Contact us for these.
- Don't forget to let us know what you are doing so that we can highlight your event in Friends Connect, on the Friends Week website – www.friendsweek.org.uk and possibly use it to get national media coverage – fill in the form or email friendsweek@hc-friends.org.uk
- Tell your local media. Set up photo opportunities, invite them to get involved, for example, they could help you to run a volunteer recruitment campaign by running stories on your volunteers. You could get them to judge a photo competition of volunteering within your group – to broaden the scope of entries you could do this with other Friends groups.
- Have fun doing it!



Let us know what you're up to!

Firstname: _____	Venue: _____
Surname: _____	Address: _____
Position: _____	_____
Friends Group: _____	County: _____
Telephone (day): _____	Postcode _____
Email: _____	Description: _____
Group website: _____	_____
Membership ref. no: _____	Start and end date: _____
Title of activity/event: _____	Start and end time: _____

Please return this form to: NAHCF Friends Week, 11-13 Cavendish Square, London, W1G 0AN
Remember, it's not a real Friends Week event if it's not registered.