

friends connect

Hospital and Community Friends 'Caring in Partnership'

Issue 4
Autumn 2003

A Younger Outlook
Making friends for the future

Volunteers Live Longer
This time we're not asking for your money

East go West
As Friends visit the USA

Friends Update
Latest news from groups across the UK



On the Move New Head Office

FROM SEPTEMBER 1ST 2003 the National Association of Hospital & Community Friends has a new home based within the King's Fund, off Cavendish Square, London. In the move from our old office in Colchester which has served us well over the last sixteen years, we hope to become more accessible to members and the Healthcare sector alike. NAHCF Chief Executive, David Wood said, "The move to London will bring greater accessibility to the membership, bring the organisation closer to other key charities in the sector and move us closer to the Department of Health, allowing better influencing and involvement in the development of policy."

Now is a very exciting time in the history of the NAHCF." So if you are visiting London, why not let us know? – Perhaps you can pop in for a coffee and to see the new head office. What's more there is great shopping only a stones throw away in Oxford Street, although the head office staff have been banned from conducting retail therapy sessions! We would be pleased to receive visitors on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays between 10.30am and 2.30pm. This may change however, so if you could let us know beforehand, it would be appreciated. If you are in London at other times, appointments can be booked, so just give us a call.

Right: Dean serves tea at the King's Fund Café



About Friends

Over 43,000 volunteer Friends raise around £45 million every year for health and social care in the UK. They also support by running hundreds of shops, cafes, social groups, transport and visiting services.

From September 1st 2003 the Colchester headquarters will be closed. All correspondence should now be sent to the new London address:

NAHCF
11-13 Cavendish Square
London
W1G 0AN
Tel: 0845 450 0285
Fax: 0207 307 2571
Email: info@hc-friends.org.uk
Web: www.hc-friends.org.uk

Friends Week 13th - 19th October

Support the Friends

Chosen because St Luke the Patron Saint of Medicine's national day is 18th October – this second annual Friends Week will see Friends groups across the UK promoting their work through special fundraising events, high street collections and volunteer recruitment drives. So if you see them please support them and say hello. If your Friends Group is taking part, send us your stories and we will feature the best ones in the next issue.



I remember my more active involvement with the NAHCF very fondly. The 'Friend Through Membership' scheme enables me to keep up to date with the work, and hear of the achievements of my many Friends.' *Baroness Jay, former NAHCF Chairman.*

You too can become a 'Friend Through Membership'. Find out how inside.

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Chairman's Welcome

Baroness Emerton



WELCOME TO 'Friends Connect', the quarterly magazine of the National Association of Hospital and Community Friends (NAHCF). As the new Chairman of the NAHCF, I am on a steep learning curve in to the range of activities that Friends groups are involved in. It is very clear to me in my short experience of six months, that the extent of activities is enormous and the opportunities even greater. In my local newspaper recently a photograph and account greeted me that the League of Friends in a village nearby had contributed £700,000 towards a £1,000,000 extension to the local Community Hospital. The hospital was some years ago threatened with closure only having 12 beds. The local Community has relied on the Hospital not only for In-Patient Care but the Support Services, which have prevented long journeys to the nearest District General Hospital. A good example of where the Friends has for

many years been central, contributing not only to the development of the Hospital but it's continuing status enjoyed in the community. I know there are many more examples where such stalwart support from the local Friends has contributed much to local communities, for which sincere thanks are due, for without the hard work of members the local community would be poorer. Throughout my career in the Nursing Profession and as a former Chairman of an NHS Trust, I have had close contact with many Leagues of Friends within Hospitals. I have never ceased to be appreciative of the long and faithful service given by so many members and the enormous benefits given to enhance the quality of services to the lives of patients, relatives and staff. Today we live in a fast moving society and attracting volunteers is not always easy. Personal experience gained by volunteering and being involved with

the sector for over 50 years has demonstrated to me how difficult it is to attract volunteers who are willing to give their time and skills, but once attracted they become committed and all is well! I have recently taken part in a Department of Health Working Party set up by the Secretary of Health to encourage a closer working between the NHS and Voluntary Sector. This new policy will provide the opportunity for Friends groups both in Hospital and Community to raise their profile. I am very keen to encourage the recruitment of volunteers both from young people to those of us who are more mature in years. With Citizenship now included in the School curriculum, there is the opportunity to include young people in innovative projects. This issue of Friends Connect features the article 'A Younger Outlook', which identifies ideas, opportunities, partnerships and schemes already in

place to help your group attract young people as volunteers – all very encouraging and exciting! As a National Association providing an umbrella service to Friends of both Hospitals and Communities, we are currently looking at how we can best support you. We aim to meet the many opportunities and challenges that present themselves in today's Health and Social services where volunteers can provide a suitable service to the benefit of patients, clients, relatives and staff. I look forward to meeting as many members as possible during the forthcoming year. I wish you well and thank you for all you do.

Audrey Emerton

Baroness Audrey Emerton

Letters

The work of Friends Groups is much appreciated by hospital staff and the patients alike, now and then we receive letters commending the work of local leagues – two such letters are below:

Dear NAHCF, Whitchurch Community Hospital is indebted to the Friends for their support. Not only do the Friends raise an exceptional amount of money they also are involved in voluntary work on the in-patient wards. This includes organising a number of very popular day trips for the patients on the mental health ward. Last year the hospital spent over £38,000 on vital equipment thanks to the Friends, ranging from patient hoists to vital signs monitors. The Friends tireless work is definitely appreciated by the hospital and the patients that we serve.

Andy Matthews Hospital Manager Whitchurch Community Hospital



Hospital Appreciates: Left, Andy Matthews, Manager Whitchurch Community Hospital ; Margaret Hiles, Friends Chairperson, Nancy Sillence & Tony Harrp organisers of the annual Golf Day fundraiser at Hawkstone Park

Dear NAHCF, In June of this year Ashford & St Peter's NHS Trust launched 'The Stephanie Marks Appeal' to raise £2.5 million to build and equip a specialist diabetes centre. The Friends of St. Peter's Hospital made the first major donation to the appeal - £25,000. This amount represents one per cent of the total required which certainly gets the appeal off to a flying start. The Friends play a key role in supporting the Hospital and we are extremely grateful for all their hard work and commitment, which has allowed this donation to be made. Should you find space for a small 'Well Done!' in the next Friends Connect that would be marvellous. Best wishes

Clare Hooper Fundraising Manager Ashford & St Peter's NHS Trust

This time we're not asking for your money..

Giving money to good causes is always important but it takes special people, who are willing to give up a little of their time, to make a real difference to the lives of others. Could you be one of them?

Flexible Friends

There is no such thing as a typical friends group. As independent charities they are flexible enough to work with local health care providers and respond to local needs. The scope of Friends' work is very wide. You may already know about the more popular friends activities in hospitals, like running shops, coffee bars and flower stalls. But did you know that friends also run welcome services, hairdressing, visit patients, and even run the hospital radio or maintain gardens? Friends are also active outside hospitals, helping to alleviate isolation and loneliness which can lead to deterioration in mental and physical health. Mobile shops, carer support groups, transport services, befriending and drop in centres are just a few of the ways in which Friends help people who need extra support in the community.



Making Life Better

Friends are famous for their fundraising work. They can supply things which fall outside NHS and other Health Care Bodies funding priorities, like items to brighten patients' environment, or fund special projects like art workshops and aromatherapy etc. Friends can also pay for equipment or buildings which can, for instance, enable patients to receive a particular treatment close to home rather than travelling to another centre.

Friends Change Lives

Hospital and Community Friends are independent local charities which work to support patients and staff in health and social care sector. Between them Friends give millions of hours of their time freely every year, to raise money and help those in need. We are looking for more people to join us in this rewarding work. You can usually arrange the hours that suit you and can give as much or as little time as you wish. No one is going to ask you to commit yourself for life, although many people do enjoy it enough to stay involved for many years.

Are You Inspired?

If you think you could get more out of life by becoming a Friend, contact your local Friends charity for further information. Alternatively you can phone, fax or write to the National Association of Hospital and Community Friends – address given on the front cover – for details of your nearest contact.

..Spare us some of your time instead!



Volunteers Live Longer!

Recently published research show that taking on voluntary work around retirement age prolongs life, even more than exercise.

Sign up to the new 'Friend Through Membership' scheme

You can now support the work of the National Association of Hospital and Community Friends by joining our new 'Friend Through Membership' scheme. The NAHCF is a membership organisation formed in 1949 which cares in partnership with around 800 UK charities working to enhance the quality of life for people suffering ill health, disability or social disadvantage. Through this partnership we aim to promote and support the work of our members through professional Regional Coordinators, grants, information and guidance on best

practice, a high rate deposit scheme, comprehensive low cost insurance, conferences, publications, negotiated discounts with suppliers, merchandise and support materials for fundraising. We also take an active interest in lobbying government and other health and social care agencies to make effective policy. If you believe in our work and would like to support us, please consider becoming a 'Friend Through Membership'. You will then receive:

- An exclusive 'Friend Through Membership' lapel badge.
•Subscription to the quarterly 'Friends Connect' magazine that will keep you up-to-date with all the great work being done by the Friends charities all over the UK – and also all the latest news from the NAHCF.
•A personal invite to the Annual General Meeting.
•Regional and National Conferences.

I would like to become a 'Friend Through Membership' of the NAHCF

Paying by Direct Debit Making your donation by Direct Debit allows us to plan financially. To obtain a Direct Debit Instruction Form please call 0845 4500285 or tick this box [] and complete and return the form to the address below.

Paying by Cheque [] I enclose a cheque for £ _____ (suggested minimum donation £20, made payable to NAHCF)

giftaid it Add nearly 30% to the value of your gift simply by ticking this box [] - we'll do the rest. Note: to qualify, you must pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax at least equal to the amount NAHCF will reclaim.

Please print your contact details here:

Title: Surname: Forename: Address: Postcode: Telephone (inc. area code): Mobile No: Email:

Feel free to photocopy this form for your friends

Please return this form to: Friend Through Membership, NAHCF, 11-13 Cavendish Square, London, W1G 0AN



A Younger Outlook



WHEN A Friends Group was questioned recently as to what age group they classed as young volunteers, their reply was 'Anyone Under 60!' When asked how many in their group fell into this category, the answer came 'one, and it's his 60th birthday soon!' Some people believe 'Friends Groups' to be mainly for those with extra time on their hands due to retirement. However this is not necessarily the case. Many groups are actively seeking ways to encourage volunteers from the other end of the age spectrum. The Friends of Eastbourne Hospitals (FoEH) are leading the way in youth orientated volunteering projects, with their recently launched 'GET Volunteering' pilot project (see separate article), as a development of their 'Helpers' scheme. They've been inspired by young people helping with their fundraising activities. Their annual fete sees Air Cadets, local Schools, colleges, football teams, Scouts, Girl Guides, and Friends' children helping with stalls, erecting tents, baking cakes, manning car parks, displaying their musical, acting and sporting skills in the main arena. Vanessa Saunders of FoEH said,

'The young energetic input is a tremendous boost for the day and the more mature of us organising the event! Young volunteers should be encouraged by everyone as it benefits both sides enormously.' Research says that 85% of young people would be willing to give up at least a day of their time to help a good cause, if only they were asked. However there is evidence that surpasses even this statistic. The government funded Millennium Volunteers currently have 20,000 young volunteers aged between 16-24 helping their local communities. The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme currently has around 223 000 young people taking part and all Award participants combine to undertake around 2 million hours of voluntary work each year. So how do Friends Groups access this 'font of willing volunteers'? The answer lies in making partnerships with youth-based organisations.

The following features detail how some of these organisations work and how young people, Friends groups, and ultimately those we aim to serve can benefit through partnership with them.

Friends for the Future

THE FRIENDS of the Eastbourne Hospitals are leading the way in Youth Orientated Volunteering projects, with their recently launched GET Volunteering Project.

This pilot project approaches volunteering for young adults between 17 and 24 through the arena of training, thus Gaining Experience Through Volunteering. GET aims to encourage young people into volunteering and to use volunteering as a means of introducing new people to the idea of a career within the NHS. GET will also offer young volunteers induction courses, training, work experience and develop the participants' transferable life skills. An initial group of five volunteers will join a formal programme of training and volunteering with Eastbourne Hospitals NHS Trust. Offering up to twenty half-day sessions that include modules on IT, Community and Team Working. Personal job search assistance will also factor in co-operation with local charity 'People Matter'. At the completion of the programme the ideal outcome will be that the volunteer moves into one of the following options:

- A voluntary position with the Trust itself (Ward or Office based)
- A voluntary position with the Friends (Retail or Fundraising)
- A voluntary position with another community organisation.
- Paid employment with the Trust.
- Paid employment with a local concern.
- Further training.

On completion of the course, the volunteers receive a certificate specifying the elements covered during their participation in the project. The project aims to develop community links between School Citizenship programmes, Millennium Volunteers, New Deal voluntary options, College Career Services, Volunteer Bureaux and agencies in touch with career changers. The NAHCF supports this innovative programme, and wish it every success. We look forward to watching GET Volunteering develop into an excellent model for other Friends groups that want to invest in young volunteers and their cause at the same time.

Contact the Award Regional Officers to find out how you can offer participants voluntary placements by calling:

Award Head Office
Vicky Armstrong - 01753 727400
www.theaward.org

2 Million Hours

THE DUKE of Edinburgh Award Scheme gives young people aged between 14 and 25, whether able bodied or with special needs, an opportunity to experience challenge and adventure, acquire new skills and make new friends.

The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme currently has around 223,000 young people taking part. It aims to be a vehicle for spiritual, personal and social development and one of the sections covered is that of Service. Through this aspect all Award participants combine to undertake around 2 million hours of voluntary community work each year. Many young people would be delighted to have the opportunity to volunteer with Friends Groups as a way of helping their community and achieving the requirements of the Award.

Make a Difference Day

ON THE 25th October 75,000 people will be giving up their time – let them volunteer with you. Run by CSV, the UK's leading volunteering charity, Make a Difference Day is a fantastic opportunity for Friends groups to show young people and the general public what they have to offer, and also to:

- Recruit new volunteers
In 2003, 77% of organisations successfully recruited new volunteers. 64% had never volunteered before, yet 61% have volunteered since!
- Build partnerships
Last year universities, businesses, sports clubs, schools and faith groups all worked with voluntary organisations.

Call 0800 284 533 or go to www.csv.org.uk for more information and to receive your FREE action pack. NAHCF actively supports Make A Difference Day – this is an opportunity not to be missed.



'Make a Difference Day gives you the opportunity to make a real difference to your community using just a few hours of your time. I choose to spend my voluntary time working with people suffering from HIV, AIDS and those battling with drink and drug problems. What will you be doing for Make a Difference Day?'
Davina McCall, TV Presenter



Face 2 Face with the Brownies

THE EXETER Leukaemia Fund (ELF) regularly enlists the help of young people in their fundraising efforts. In trying to crack the World Record for the number of faces painted in one hour the ELF and Face2Face joined forces with the Fifth Exeter Brownies from Broadfields and young visitors to Crealy Adventure Park, Devon. This artistic record attempt also painted the colour of money and raised around £1000 for ELF.



Millennium Volunteers

MILLENNIUM VOLUNTEERS (MV) are young people aged 16-24 who give up their free time to help their local communities. You might find them coaching a football team, working at a community radio station or helping create a garden for local residents. MV gives young people a chance to build on what they are into, to develop themselves and help their community at the same time. They are encouraged to give at least 100 hours community service although many go on to give over 200 hours. A MV at The Northern General Hospital Trust said, 'With MV you feel you're making a difference and helping others and I've made loads of friends!' To find out about a MV project close to you that you may be able to work in partnership with, use the contacts below:

England
Department for Education & Skills
0800 917 8185
www.mvonline.gov.uk

Wales
Wales Council for Voluntary Action
02920 431728

Scotland
Volunteer Development Agency
01786 479593
www.mvscotland.org.uk

Northern Ireland
Volunteer Development Agency
028 90236100

Young Friends Magnificent

AT THE head office of the National Association we have been benefiting from the gifts and skills of seven young people on a New Deal Placement. The 'Magnificent Seven', Haroon, Kerri, James, Zoë, Ben, Rob and Adam have been of great help to

'The time I spent volunteering helped me tremendously. I would definitely recommend it'

us at different periods over the last year. The NAHCF offered these administration placements as a way to tackle skills shortages in the organisation and found that this team of young people contributed greatly to our clerical efficiency. After contacting our local Jobcentre Plus we discovered that young people aged 18-24 who have been unemployed for six months or more enter a period of intensive, tailored help and advice to find work with New Deal. Those who are not offered a subsidised job in this period will be offered work experience in the voluntary sector. We were interested as to how New Deal placements could also benefit Friends Groups.

In a past issue of 'Hospital & Community Friend' we reported how Chris Coombs, Volunteer Co-ordinator of the League of Friends at Scarborough has used New Deal placements to great effect. With this scheme and encouraging local students and 'gap

year' participants, today around 35% of Scarborough's volunteers are young people. One of many success

stories stemming from this partnership – New Dealer Lauren Hopkins developed her research skills through a placement within the hospital that involved her developing a volunteer handbook, promoting the project and recruiting new members by inviting interviews from local press and radio. Lauren believes other young people would value the chance to build skills and experience through volunteering, 'The time I spent volunteering helped me tremendously. It really improved my confidence. I would definitely recommend it.'



'I have expanded my IT knowledge and have developed an understanding of how the NAHCF as a professional charity is organised'
Rob Lee (26), NAHCF New Dealer



'I now have the opportunity to work in the City. My time at the NAHCF has made me realise the amount of effort that goes into making a charity work – and the important work that volunteers do'
Adam Mears (18), NAHCF New Dealer

New Deal

New Deal is delivered by Jobcentre Plus through the national network of Jobcentres and Jobcentre Plus offices. Your local branch will be well placed to understand your organisation and the type of candidate you are looking for. Jobcentre Plus will handle all the preparing, screening and matching of candidates to your vacancies, so most of the work is done for you. The only decision you need to make is whether or not to accept the candidate after an interview. The support does not end there, naturally, as New Deal personal advisers will be available to help ensure the placement is a success.

New Deal offers you real benefits and little risk
•New recruits for your business/voluntary organization

There may be subsidies and grants towards training available

- Up to £60 a week for taking on a young person aged 18-24
- Up to £750 towards training a young person aged 18-24

How do I find out more?
Contact your local Jobcentre or Jobcentre Plus office.

Visit the website at www.newdeal.gov.uk or call 0845 606 2626. Textphone 0845 606 0680.



...independent since 1920

Friends Update

50 Years for Kent & Canterbury



Centre of Interest: From Left, Jean Byers, Chairman of K&CH Loff, sculptor Dawn Cole and Geoff Tulley, Principle of Canterbury College

A Commemorative Garden has been opened at Kent and Canterbury hospital to celebrate 50 years of Friends. The garden features 5 benches, one for each decade the Friends have been raising money for the hospital, and brick paths suitable for wheelchairs. This really was a community effort with the overall design and landscaping performed by Haywoods Landscapes and central sculpture designed and made by Canterbury College HND student, Dawn Cole placed in the centre of the planted bed.

Baroness Emerton Congratulates Achievement

One hundred Kent & Canterbury Hospital Friends met Baroness Emerton at their Golden Jubilee Luncheon as she performed her first official function as the new Chairman of NAHCF. Baroness Emerton was said to be delighted to share in the occasion and commended the volunteers on raising the fantastic total of over £4,000,000 since the League first began its activities in 1953.

Bexhill Better

The League of Friends of Bexhill Hospital has been honoured for all their much-appreciated work by the town of Bexhill. Bexhill Chamber of Commerce presented the 'Making Bexhill Better Award' which included a Silver Cup and a cheque for £250

Friends Look Gift Horse in the Mouth

For the third year in succession the Friends of Windsor Hospital were successful in being awarded a street collection at Royal Ascot Race Festival. Over the day 12 Friends collected over £1,400 from generous race goers including a number of 'celebrities'. Who said you should never look a gift horse in the mouth anyway?

George 85 Retires!



Colchester General Hospital friend George Smith retires after over fifteen years of much appreciated service. George along with his wife Ivy have been involved in 'all sorts' of tasks over the years. Duties have included taking confectionery trolleys around the wards, helping out at Christmas, to more recently running the flower shop at the Hospital. George and Ivy also recently appeared on Anglia TV News – it is amazing what opportunities volunteering brings.

Making a Splash



Cutting the ribbon: Left, Deputy Mayor, Cllr Jennifer Hillier with President of FOH, Dr. Keith Randall and Chairman of Bromley NHS Trust.

After more than four years of campaigning and fundraising, lead by the Friends of Orpington Hospital, the £650,000 replacement hydrotherapy pool at Orpington Hospital was finally opened in May of this year. Friends Chairman, Brenda Latham, said, 'The Friends are very grateful for the tremendous response from thousands of people which made this incredible achievement possible. It certainly is a reflection of our caring community.'

New Hospital

The completion of a £1million improvement and extension project at Hawkhurst Cottage Hospital, Kent owes a great deal to a donation of £700,000 from the Hospitals League of Friends. The new extension includes seven single bedrooms and a new day unit which will provide a base for a range of services for patients, from ante-natal classes to therapy sessions for older patients. The day unit has been named in memory of local businessman Jesse Norris, whose legacy to the League of Friends, helped fund the redevelopment.

Plaque display commemorates historical links

Those enterprising folks, the Friends of the Hospital of St Cross, Rugby have come up with a novel idea. As part of a scheme to decorate the hospital corridors the Friends have mounted a display of historic presentation plaques, two of which back date to the founding of the hospital in 1884!

Purrfect birthday



The Cat's Whiskers: celebrating 50 years of service

Friends of Whittington Hospital celebrate 50 years of service to their local hospital this year. A special tea was held with members and hospital staff, where all enjoyed a 'purrfect' piece of the 50th Anniversary cake decorated with the Friends logo, Dick Whittington's cat. Last years donations to the hospital amounted to £22,284

Radiating Generosity



League of Friends of Horsham Hospital Management Committee

Horsham Hospital League of Friends has given radiology services at Horsham Hospital a fantastic boost with the donation of £170,000 towards a new radiology room. The room with all the latest equipment will greatly improve services to Horsham patients with fewer of them needing to travel to Crawley Hospital.

Silver Jubilee

Freeman Hospital League of Friends celebrates 25 years of volunteering this year. A Silver Jubilee Tea was held to commemorate this achievement with hospital staff, Friends and special guests attending. In the last year £90,000 has been donated to the Hospital Trust to purchase award equipment. A Grand Draw is being held to raise money for a CUSA machine costing £38,000 to be used during surgery as the final fundraising initiative for this 'most memorable' Silver Jubilee year.

Society Wedding



From Left: Lord Fraser, Roger and Jane Nurse, and Lady Fraser

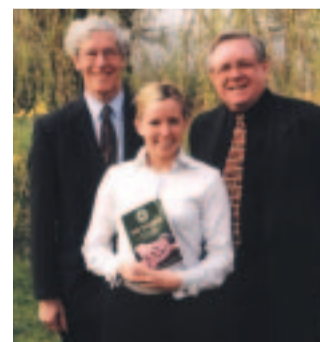
Jane Fraser and Roger Nurse were married on Saturday 5th July in Carmyllie Kirk, Scotland. Jane is the daughter of NAHCF President Lord Fraser. Congratulations to the happy couple – and the proud parents.

Thanks a Million



St Anne's Hospice in Gwent, South Wales knows who its Friends are – they have now raised an amazing £1million to support its invaluable work. The Friends of St Anne's Hospice handed over £100,000 when the hospice first opened and they have given a similar amount every year over the last decade, finally reaching the million mark on the tenth year. Congratulations and keep up the good work.

Writing Down the Facts



Duncan Cadbury, President Loff (left), Zoë Chamberlain, Author (centre) and Ed Doolan MBE of BBC Radio WM

The Royal Orthopaedic Hospital League of Friends, Birmingham, have launched a new history book entitled 'The Friends'. This new book researched and written by Zoë Chamberlain charts the tremendous work of the league since it started supporting the work of this hospital in Birmingham.

Let us know what your Friends Group has been up to. Send your stories and photos to newsdesk@hc-friends.org.uk, or to the address on the front cover. Also if you have any special plans for the Christmas season, we'd love to hear from you! Please get your articles to us before October 31st, for inclusion in the next issue. Thank you!

Shop Talk

20 Years of Charitable Trading

The League of Friends shop in Leighton Hospital, Crewe is celebrating 20 years of trading this year. The shop situated in the main entrance to the hospital helps raise funds for the purchase of essential hospital equipment, dealing with 50,000 transactions per month. The shop also provides a daily trolley service to all the hospital wards. The service has been improved recently by the purchase of an electric trolley, adding new meaning to the phrase 'fast food'! Three members of the sixteen strong shop crew, ably led by manager Sarra, have been volunteering at the shop since it began – even more reasons to celebrate. Well done! Here's to another 20 years of trading.

Mr. Unpunctual Pays the Price

Watch out! Jan McNichol, Shop Manager of the Friends of Moorfields Eye Hospital, London has her eyes open. She tells of a Moorfields member of staff who promised that he would donate £1 to them every time he arrived late for work. By the end of the month the Friends' funds had been boosted by more than £30! Unfortunately he seems to have learnt his lesson, as Jan comments 'lately he has been quite good!'

Want to contribute to Shop Talk? Send us your ideas to newsdesk@hc-friends.org.uk, or to the address on the front cover. We'd love to hear from you!

NAHCF Staff Profiles

Doctor Who?



ALLOW US to introduce Dr. David Sollis who took on the position of Membership Services Officer on July 1st. David has had an interesting life so far, on leaving school, his first job was with the Teachers Recruitment Team for Essex County Council. 'My job was to attract newly qualified teachers to work in Essex, especially to the south of the county – not an easy task'. After working his way through the local Government levels he was head hunted by Sedgwick Financial Services, 'I wanted something new to do and I was offered an excellent position.' This led to a six-year career, based in London and other area offices, 'I found the Insurance industry interesting and I have a strong foundation in working with brokers

and dealing with claims etc. I am looking forward to reusing those skills on the members behalf'. Having decided at the end of six years that Insurance wasn't fulfilling his personal and professional needs, David returned to full-time education. David said, 'It was a major decision, giving up job, money car etc, seemed very mad at the time, but I knew I had to go with my instincts.' This decision led David to King Alfred's College, Winchester, first to complete a BA Hons degree in Media & Religious Studies and then a three year post-doctorate in Theology. It was in this environment that David gained the research and presentation skills required for his new job. David said 'I was employed on the basis of my research skills, especially with the kind of questions Friends need us to answer!' To David, the challenge of the job is the diversity, and the amount of research and knowledge that the position of Membership Services Officer requires.

David also has a wide experience of volunteering, in areas such as Hospital radio where he once played four musical requests from a man who had died three hours previously ...oops! Although David's main volunteering experience comes from HIV/AIDS hospice work. David comments, 'I have always been involved in voluntary work, either through Church youth groups, local radio or hospices'. This is important to David, 'Its part of my character, of who I am' but it also means that David has been a volunteer and understands the important role that volunteers play.

David can be contacted at the head office address, by phone on 0845 450 0285, or by email: david.sollis@hc-friends.org.uk

Friends Connect Magazine

Friends Connect is published by the National Association of Hospital & Community Friends (NAHCF). NAHCF works in partnership with around 800 UK charities to provide volunteering in support of health and social care. We provide member charities with comprehensive advice and services. Membership is by subscription.

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East go West: Ten Friends Represent the East Region in US/UK exchange

2001 WAS The International Year of the Volunteer. At their spring meeting, the East Regional Officers agreed to look into the possibility of an exchange with volunteers in America. During that Spring and Summer, England East Regional Chairman Dr Jean Macheath had several meetings with contacts in the West Philadelphia area and the Voluntary Services Manager at Bryn Mawr Hospital. Out of these small beginnings came the exchange programme the East Region has recently enjoyed. The East Region Committee successfully applied for an 'Award for All' grant for the West coming East part of the exchange. This ensured that anyone wishing to be involved and host an American guest would be able to do so and travel costs during the visit could be met.

An invitation was extended to three US hospitals – Bryn Mawr, Laneknau, and Paoli, to visit the East Region at the end of September 2002. The programme was developed, hostesses requested and arranged, and worries taken care of. We were ready for our guests! Ten Americans took up the offer and a welcome buffet lunch was held at St Edmunds Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds where all Leagues present had the opportunity to meet and chat with our American guests. Following this, the guests and their hosts departed to their part of the region, be it Norfolk, Essex, or Suffolk. Together they had a wonderful week, talking a lot, learning a lot, making great friends, and seeing different aspects of volunteering. Our thanks go out to the help and generosity of our volunteers and their families; the Leagues who made us so welcome wherever we went; and above all the hospitals that entertained us so well. The 'Week of the Volunteer' in America fell in the last week of April 2003. This meant it was time for east

to fly west. Nine volunteers from Leagues of Friends in Essex, Hertfordshire, Suffolk, flew from Heathrow to the US for a fully packed itinerary. The group hardly stopped all week visiting facilities, shadowing volunteers; attending Volunteer Week Receptions at the three host Hospitals. They also visited Bryn Mawr Rehabilitation Hospital; then made time to enjoy the area with its historical sites and shopping malls. Our volunteers have had two memorable exchange visits that have benefited all the Leagues involved. Only good can come from such meetings of people and minds. Perhaps other regions might wish to consider organising their own exchanges and building relationships with overseas partners in this way. Well done the East Region for actively seeking to develop their knowledge of volunteering in the health care sector, both here and abroad.

Dr Jean Macheath
East Region Chairman.



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