



## FORMALISING THE FEDERATION

**THE FEDERATION** of Scottish Branches was set up as an informal way of streamlining communications between Scotland and Central Office. We have been able to give a single view on matters affecting the Fellowship, and to organise events such as the Gathering and the Seminar. Recently, however, it has become necessary to formalise the Federation. We have closer supervision of our finances, especially the grant awarded to us by the Scottish Government.

At an Extraordinary meeting of the Federation on 3 October, it was agreed to adopt a Constitution. An AGM will be held in the spring of next year when all members will be invited to attend. More details about the AGM will be published in the February edition of "Scotland's NHS RF News", and branches will be sent nomination papers for the posts of Chairman, Vice-chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, and two Trustees to represent Scotland on the UK National Council.

In the meantime the key difference will be that branches should send "delegates" rather than "representatives" to Federation meetings; thus, if there is a vote, delegates vote in line with their branch's agreed views, rather than voting as they themselves wish, or as they believe the branch probably would like.



*Renee Gibb, the current chairman, and Helen Anderson, the current Vice-Chairman, signed the Constitution after it was adopted.*

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

#### 17 October 2012

National Council, London

#### 6 February 2013

1.00 Scottish Federation meeting, Queens Hotel, Perth

#### 27 February 2013

National Council, London

#### 5 July - 8 July 2013

Annual Holiday & Conference, Midland Hotel, Manchester



## DUNDEE DONATE TO MAGGIE'S CENTRE

**DUNDEE BRANCH** gave a £300 cheque to the Dundee Maggie's Centre, which was the branch's choice of charity for the annual donation. The presentation was made at the branch meeting on 6 September. Kay Campbell, a member who had made use of their services in the past, presented the cheque to Ms Boucher, the Centre's fund raiser.

# HIGHLAND BRANCH VISIT DUNDEE

**HIGHLAND BRANCH** took a summer trip to Dundee. We parked at the Discovery centre museum to view the Dundee-built Royal Research Ship Discovery. We enjoyed musing among the artefacts of Captain Scott and the interesting history of the British Antarctic Expedition in 1901-04.

Then we moved on to the Verdant Jute mill, the only one left in Dundee. John Quinn and Lilly gave us a great tour of the factory explaining all stages of jute production and completion. John had many anecdotes about the “ladies” of the mill which made us laugh. Lilly is one of those ladies, working there since she was 14 until it closed recently. She showed us the process, from the jute plants imported from India to the finished items. Lilly did a lot of talking with her hands as well as shouting because she was made deaf by the machines on which she had worked for so many years.



Lilly had been used to speaking in sign language to her fellow workers because the machines were extremely noisy. We only had one of each version shown us, but it must have been dreadful when the floor was full of working machines. Most of them had no safety mechanisms. She was keen to show us how industrial accidents happened; one machine in particular could take an arm into the mechanism followed by the entire person ... death by misadventure!

The weather stayed good for us and both the venues we visited in Dundee were excellent. Members enjoyed the ‘social history’ of the mill as it reminded them of olden days, playing games in the street and recalling the types of houses available to most people in days gone by. The small ship which had triumphed in arctic waters was a credit to the dedicated ship-builders of Dundee for building it in just a year.



*Anne at Discovery (above) and Lilly (above right) demonstrates jute processing.*

## CHRISTMAS STAMPS AT 2011 PRICES

**FROM 6 NOVEMBER**, Royal Mail will be selling Christmas stamps at 2011 prices to people in receipt of pension credit, employment and support allowance or incapacity benefit. 36 first and second-class stamps will be offered for 46p and 36p.





## SEMINAR

**THE 2012** Annual Seminar was held on Thursday 11 October, in the Queens Hotel in Perth. Sixty-nine members attended and we were delighted to welcome Ethel Armstrong as our guest. Ethel is the Chairman of the NHS RF UK-wide. Although her train connections failed and she was delayed on a cold wet Waverley for over an hour, she persevered with the journey, and during the day she managed to speak to almost everyone attending.

The day began with coffee and the Queen's Hotel's famous home-made shortbread, and then we heard from Lesley Booth of NHS Tayside. She described the new nursing role of Assistant Practitioner that is being tried out in the area, and bravely fielded some very challenging questions. Mary Blair of Glasgow branch gave her a vote of thanks.

After a soup-and-buffet lunch (with some rather odd egg mayo wraps!) our next speaker was Sheena Fletcher. Sheena described NHS24, NHS Inform and the Care Information hotline. Her enthusiasm for these informative web-sites shone through in a very upbeat and chatty presentation. Margaret Chisholm of Perth & Kinross branch thanked Sheena.

After another round of tea, coffee, and delicious shortbread, the final session was by Laura Gallon of Angus Community Health Partnership and Judith Fletcher of Angus Care & Repair. They described the Falls project, and included a DVD of an amusing short play that had been produced to show the everyday situations that risk falls in the home. Alice Christie of Dundee branch thanked Laura and Judith.

By the close of the Seminar, many people were commenting that it had been a most interesting and pleasant day. One nice comment was that it is good to hear from the young people who now are working in the NHS on these varied and innovative projects.

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## NEWS FROM ANGUS

**AT THE** meeting in June a talk on China and pandas was given by Linda Robbie who had travelled to the country to study these fascinating animals. The photography was great and an insight into the rare breed's habitat and way of life. It left us all inspired to go (at least) to Edinburgh zoo and see for ourselves how amazing these animals are.

On a nice warm day in July forty-three members and friends travelled to St Andrews. As it was such a good day everyone wandered around the town doing their own thing. Some went to the shops while others did a bit of history exploring and some just enjoyed the pleasure of sitting at a pavement cafe watching the world go by. High tea was taken at The Meldrums Hotel in Ceres. The whole day turned out very well and the icing on the cake was the weather.

Our speaker in September was a lady well known to any member living in the Tayside area as she was until recently a weekly contributor to the Dundee Courier newspaper. Mrs Helen Gardiner is known as "the Farmer's Wife". She went over some of her more exciting short stories and then recited poetry and sang to entertain us. Most of her repertoire was very funny and she made everything sound so alive. Mrs Gardiner has now published several books which were available for members to buy.



# CONFERENCE AT LEAMINGTON SPA

**THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE** and Holiday took place this year at the Chesford Grange Hotel, set in lovely countryside near Leamington Spa. Scotland was well represented, as always, and a good time was had by all.

One change to the programme proved to be a success; instead of debating a few well-meaning but uncontroversial motions, a "Question Time" session was chaired by our Patron, Ken Jarrod CBE. The theme of the discussion was

Dignity in Care, and the panel put forward fascinating perspectives on this, from inspection, care delivery, care in the private care home sector, and the view from officials at the centre.

The social side of the weekend was most enjoyable, and the Scottish branches all appreciated sitting right at the front during the evening dinners. A particular triumph for Scotland was that

Anthea Graham of Highland branch won the photographic competition. We didn't lift the Sefton Cup or the Silver Cup (both are given to the star membership-recruitment branches) but it was nice to see Scotland up there with the winners all the same.

The event will be held at the Midland Hotel in Manchester next July. This is a lovely hotel, and a very simple journey for Scots to make, so we hope to be there in big numbers again in 2013.



## THE PRESIDENT REFLECTS ON CHANGE

**WE ASKED** our President, John Dow MBE, to write a few words for the News. Here is what he said.

I am looking back over twenty-six years since I was privileged to be appointed Chairman of the newly-formed Argyll & Clyde branch. It is now named Clyde & Lomond branch, the change following one of the many restructurings of the NHS. Another change is the turnover of personnel; it is good to see so many of the younger retirees joining the branch and accepting responsibility as office-bearers. A third is a more general observation in that is disappointing to see so many Health Boards removing branches from Board premises, thus loosening the ties between Boards and branches.

In Scotland, the most significant change is the recognition of the Federation in an official Constitution. The Federation meetings are well attended and the Annual Gathering of around two hundred members is a continuing success. On the UK scene, the most significant development was the replacement of the one-day Conference and AGM with a five-day holiday, although this may soon be restricted for economic reasons.

Throughout it all the one constant is the friendship engendered by the Fellowship and I think summed up in these lines by Hilaire Belloc:

From quiet homes and first beginning  
Out to the undiscovered ends  
There's nothing worth the wear of winning  
But laughter and the love of friends.

*Hilaire Belloc (1870-1953), Dedicatory Ode," Verses (1910)*

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



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Never heard of the NHS Retirement Fellowship?

Like to know more?

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