



GATHERING REELED ALONG HAPPILY



A HUNDRED AND NINETY members attended this year's Annual Gathering in the Dewar Centre, Perth. After a sandwich lunch our first speaker was Dorothy-Grace Elder, a former MSP who is also a well-known journalist. Dorothy-Grace told us some hilarious tales, including hospital ones, ran a "Guess-the-newspaper" quiz, then talked about her visits to Russia and her time in the Scottish Parliament. She made us laugh, and she nearly made us cry, with her sad descriptions of street children in St Petersburg. The vote of thanks was made sincerely by Sheena Ferguson of the Fife Branch.

Entertainment was provided by the Dunkeld Strathspey & Reel Society. It was a wonderful mixture of traditional reels and songs, including some to sing along to, and couple to dance to. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed it, and the vote of thanks was given by Bill Grant of the Edinburgh & Lothians Branch.

After a short break during which members mingled with a drink, we enjoyed High Tea. Moira and the staff at Dewars excelled themselves once again with the standard of the meal and the friendly welcome extended to everyone. People commented especially favourably on the salmon in its béarnaise sauce. The final vote of thanks, to Dewars and to the organisers, was made by Maggie Lawrence of the Elgin Branch.

Everyone agreed that it had been a great day out and it was a joy to see so many people having fun together.

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SEMINAR

THE Annual Scottish Seminar will be held in Perth on 13 October this year. We will commence with tea, coffee and shortbread at 11:00 am. Our first speaker, from 11:30 to 12:30 will be Sonia Cotton from the Pain Association Scotland talking about up-to-date approaches to managing pain.

Then, lunch. Members attending in previous years have commented on how good this was, so the Queen's has been asked to reach their usual standards.

Next will be two speakers from the Payments Council, to tell us about the proposal by the High Street banks to cease the use of cheques. Tea, coffee and shortbread will be served again at 2:30. Our final slot from 3:00 to 4:00 will comprise a workshop-style session run by Age UK (Scotland) who want to find out what issues most concern older people in Scotland today.

The price will be £25 per person and Branch Secretaries will be asked to make bookings in the very near future.



What will replace the chequebook?



Vicki making friends with the locals at Caversham Animal Farm.

ADOPT A STATION

DO YOU like gardening? No garden but you'd love to put your green fingers to use?

Could your branch do with more publicity in your local area? What about this great idea from Scotrail – adopt a station!

Here's what John Yellowlees, the scheme's manager says; "Adoption is mostly about gardening (unless there is an opportunity for community use of surplus accommodation), not about cleaning or maintenance, which we do ourselves. Adopters range from individuals and Community Councils to Rotary Clubs and Beautiful Scotland member organisations. The full list of 110 stations adopted by volunteer gardeners is on the ScotRail website. Basically the adopters decide how many planters they feel able to maintain, we bolt the planters to the platform, they fill, plant and weed and water them in accordance with our safety instructions (wear hi-vis jackets which we can supply, no hoses, sign in and out on each visit), then send me the receipts so that I may arrange reimbursement".

A VISIT TO AUSTRALIA

VICKI RITCHIE, Membership Secretary of the Ayrshire & Arran Branch, recently visited Perth in Western Australia. Vicki saw Jim and Anne Murphy, who have previously featured in Scotland's NHS RF News with their updates from down under. Vicki says "I had a wonderful holiday and returned with a lovely tan. The weather was excellent with 22 days of sunshine and temperatures in the 30s.

The highlights included a visit to the Pinnacles, wine tasting in the Swan Valley and at Margaret River, gold pouring at the Royal Mint, retail therapy in many large indoor shopping malls, and the sandy beaches of the Indian Ocean.

I felt honoured to be offered a tour of Princess Margaret Hospital for Children. It was an amazing experience to see and hear about the tremendous developments in child health care since my days at the Seafeld Children's Hospital in Ayr".



A planter adopted at Dalgety Bay station



It's not like Seafeld at the PMH

The Branch will have a plaque crediting them, as shown in this picture of a planter at Dalgety Bay station, in the hope that passengers will say "I've never heard of the Fellowship. I must find out more." John Yellowlees goes on to say "We want adopters to identify themselves at their stations so credit goes where it's due. Our insurance covers adopters where they are operating in accordance with our safety instructions. Gardening need not be labour-intensive to make a difference, and schemes range from a few tubs with conifers and ivies to displays where the station has helped the town win awards at Beautiful Scotland or Britain in Bloom."

This is a scheme that will surely appeal to Fellowship members. Think about which station you can adopt and get in touch with John at johnyellowlees@firstgroup.com

PERTH & KINROSS CELEBRATE 30 HAPPY YEARS

MANY Scottish Branches are celebrating their 30th birthday this year, and Perth & Kinross, a successful branch with around 130 members, had a special lunch to commemorate theirs. A birthday cake had been made with the clever computerised trick of turning our blue logo into icing-sugar. Three senior honorary members cut the cake, Miss J Lunan, Miss Elsie Mitchell, and Mrs Jen Davidson. Then there was musical entertainment from “The Third Generation” of Katie Adamson, Irene Cook & Eileen Atkinson.

PS Your Development Officer was delighted to attend, but is ashamed to say that she fell off her high heels on the way there. Branch members went into full healthcare mode and looked after her wonderfully, even providing a pair of (sensible, flat) shoes for her to go home in. Thank you to you all!



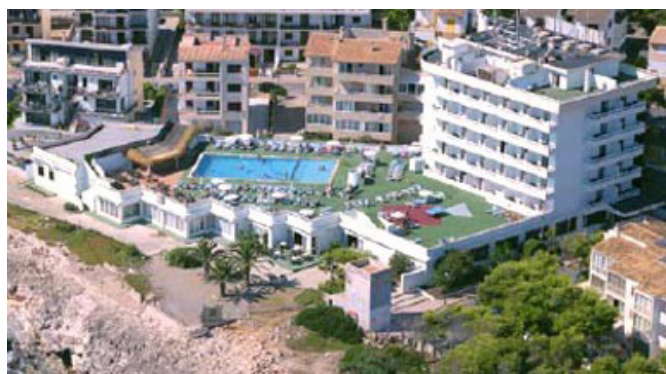
Members wait for the next course to be served ... and the birthday cake



FIFE IS 30 TOO

DAVID MUIR, Branch Secretary, writes - We marked our 30th year celebration with a nice lunch before our AGM. Irene, our Chairman Sheena Ferguson's sister, made and decorated a lovely celebratory cake which was enjoyed by all at afternoon tea following the AGM.

We also handed over a cheque to the Hearing Dogs for the Deaf as our charity donation for this year. The photo shows this being done and the cake being cut by two of our longest-standing members. Unfortunately we have no founder member still able to attend meetings.



The hotel seen from the air



The beach at Porto Colom

HOLIDAY IN MAJORCA, ANYONE?

THE NHS Retirement Fellowship has formed a partnership with Della Holidays to offer a week-long holiday in Porto Colom, Majorca, from 14 – 22 October. The price of £572 includes a return flight from Gatwick (but see below for Scottish departures), transfer to and from the Bellevue Belsana Hotel, seven nights fully inclusive accommodation, a welcome reception, two full-day excursions, insurance, and the services of a Della tour guide. This represents great value, and it makes a holiday even better when you are among Fellowship friends from all over the UK.

If you would like to go (and if you can bear to miss our Seminar), call Della Holidays on Freephone 0800 216182. Individuals should call; Branch Secretaries do not have to do anything. Single room supplement, depending on availability, is just £25. Be quick, because rooms are going fast!

From Scotland, book the holiday with Della first, then book your own flights to and from a Scottish airport (book with a “no-frills” airline). Call Della back and tell them the flight, the cost, and the time it arrives in Palma. They will deduct the flight cost from the price of the holiday and do their best to arrange transfers from Palma airport to the hotel.

OBITUARIES

Jimmy Taylor, Perth & Kinross Branch

James "Jimmy" Taylor, died on 28 April 2011. He was an active member of Perth & Kinross Branch for twenty-five years, and was Secretary from 1988 to 1999. Latterly the Branch made him an Honorary Member. He attended every meeting, outing, and the national Conference and Holidays, which he enjoyed so much. People often said "Jimmy was a true gentleman". His health declined very quickly over the last ten months and he spent his last few weeks in a Nursing Home. He will be remembered with great affection, sadly missed by his family, and many friends in the Fellowship.

Durham Branch adds "We met Jimmy at the Blackpool Conference and kept up a lovely warm friendship with him since then. He will be missed, especially for his cheery smile and infectious chuckle! We had such fun with him over the years."

Peggy Grieve, Dumfries Branch

Margaret Mary Grieve MBE, or Peggy, as she was fondly known, peacefully passed away on May 14, 2011. Peggy first joined the Fife NHSRF. She established the Dumfries Branch in 2005, chairing it for four years. At her last meeting, just after her ninety-first birthday, she was elected President.

Peggy left school at fifteen and could recall conditions in the days prior to the NHS and remembered its creation well. She rose to be Senior Tutor of Midwifery in Dumfries and Divisional Midwifery Officer in East Fife. For her dedication she was deservedly awarded the MBE.

The thriving Dumfries Branch is the result of Peggy's foresight and endeavour; she never missed a meeting and enthusiastically took part in any organised outing or event. The Fellowship has lost a dear friend, but so too has Lockerbie, her home.

Peggy Grieve was an inspiration, a wise leader, caring and endeared by all. The pews full of local people and those who had travelled from Fife to pay tribute were testament to this.

Helen Brunton, Clyde & Lomond Branch

Clyde & Lomond Branch intimate with great sadness the death of Helen Brunton earlier this year. Helen was a long serving member of the Branch Committee and Membership Secretary for many years. Helen trained and worked as a midwife all her working days. Another great love was swimming; she served as National President of Paisley Amateur Swimming Club. She leaves a son and two granddaughters. Helen is sadly missed by all.

Julia Gilbert, Clyde & Lomond Branch

It was also with great sadness that members of Clyde & Lomond Branch learned of the death of one of their Founder Members, Julia Gilbert. Julia served on the Committee for over 20 years as Minute Secretary, a post which she carried out with meticulous detail. She was a regular attendee at both the Scottish Federation meetings and at monthly Branch meetings, until her recent admission to hospital. She will be sadly missed by the Branch and all who knew her.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

1-4 July 2011

Annual Holiday and Conference
Harrogate

5 October 2011

1.00 Scottish Federation meeting
Queens Hotel, Perth

13 October 2011

Annual Seminar
Queens Hotel, Perth

22 October 2011

National Council, London

8 February 2012

1.00 Scottish Federation meeting
Queens Hotel, Perth

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.