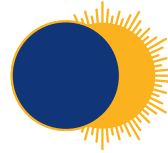


# RHN Supporter NEWS



Royal Hospital for  
Neuro-disability

Registered Charity No. 205907

NEWS FOR SUPPORTERS OF THE ROYAL HOSPITAL FOR NEURO-DISABILITY

WINTER 2023



Staff and volunteers in the art room assist patients with a pressed flower project.

Follow us: [twitter.com/rhnuk](https://twitter.com/rhnuk) [facebook.com/rhnuk](https://facebook.com/rhnuk) [instagram.com/rhnuk](https://instagram.com/rhnuk)



A remarkable place and a lovely community:

# Volunteering with the RHN Chaplaincy.

Serious brain injury and illness can be devastating for people and their families. Adjusting to the effects of life-changing injury on daily life and personal relationships can be incredibly isolating and challenging for both patients and their loved ones. The RHN's Chaplaincy service provides much needed emotional and spiritual support for patients and their families at this difficult time. The RHN caters for all religions, however the majority of people supported by the service are Christian. The Chaplaincy team is led by resident chaplain, Geoff Coyne, a Baptist minister and trained counsellor, and is backed up by a group of dedicated volunteers; people like Nicky and Emile.

## Nicky's story

"I became interested in volunteering at the RHN as an elderly neighbour of mine had a son who was a patient at the RHN. On one occasion I chose to visit him, and after my visit I considered offering some of my time to the hospital and that led to me being a volunteer. I've been volunteering for twenty years now and have loved every moment of it.



As a Chaplaincy volunteer I help out in bringing patients and residents from their respective wards to the RHN Sunday church service. I will often sit with the patients during the service and if any patient is particularly agitated, I would help to comfort them and it's great to see them relax again.

After the service, I assist in taking the patients back to their rooms and sometimes if they are out on our grounds, I'll sit with them and just keep them company. The lead chaplain Geoff Coyne and his team offer a great service to the RHN community. The Sunday church service is always well led and uplifting, which is a great encouragement to all who attend. Geoff also gives a news round-up on current affairs from across the world after the service and this helps everyone to feel welcome and relaxed. It is lovely being able to engage with the patients and residents and get to know them. It is also very encouraging to see some small, positive changes in their lives, as time goes by.

Volunteering gives me the opportunity of giving a little something back to the world and I'm ever so grateful. Serving as part of the Chaplaincy team is very rewarding. The RHN is a remarkable place with a lovely community.



## Emile's story

"I've been working at the RHN as the database and Operations Manager since 2011. Being a member of staff gave me insight into the work we do in providing care to our patients and residents, - and this got me thinking of what more I could do, to help make a difference no matter how small. In 2019 I became a staff volunteer for the Chaplaincy service.

On Sunday mornings I collect patients and residents from their respective wards and take them to one of our function rooms – the Assembly Room - for our Sunday church service. I then help out in taking them back to their wards after the service. Other responsibilities include doing a bible reading which involves the participation of others in the service, saying prayers and occasionally covering for our lead chaplain Geoff, if he's unavailable.

Serving others, meeting family members and getting to know more of our patients and residents is very rewarding. It is as I seek to serve within the Chaplaincy team that I am reminded of the great value of relationships and our human need for love and compassion.

Without a doubt, the service provided by the Chaplaincy team is vital in the work we do in caring for our patients and residents. This is because, alongside the medical and physical care provided, there is a great need for emotional, pastoral and spiritual support to our patients, residents and their families - and this is offered with great respect, humility and love by the Chaplaincy team.

Another benefit of the service for our patients and residents is knowing that someone journeys with them, in the most trying of circumstances, and offers simply to listen, encourage and help where possible."

As well as the church services which our volunteers assist with, the Chaplaincy service offers one to one counselling and support, including end of life support for terminally ill patients, and support for hospital staff. The Chaplaincy is based in the hospital's beautiful sanctuary, which is open 24 hours a day to anyone requiring a private space for prayer and reflection.

The Chaplaincy service is entirely funded by donations from our supporters, and in 2024 we'll need to raise £73,000 to ensure that the emotional, spiritual and practical support offered by the members of the Chaplaincy team continues to be available to everyone in the RHN community.

If you would like to support our Chaplaincy service, please see the last page of this newsletter for information on how to donate.



# From mansion to hospital: The evolution of the RHN

In the 1860s, the Royal Hospital for Incurables (as the RHN was then known) first moved into Melrose Hall, an elegant mansion built in the late eighteenth century near Putney in south west London. At the time, its 25 acres of grounds encompassed landscaped gardens designed by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, a working farm, and an orchard and market garden.



A number of necessary expansions to the building soon followed, annexed to the original building, which still sits at the heart of the Hospital. Of particular note was the 'Great Extension' of 1879, an entire new wing whose façade ran parallel to the main road. With accommodation for an extra 100 patients, this also provided light and spacious new communal areas; kitchens and a dining room; much-needed additional storage; and basement level accommodation space for staff.



By the turn of the new century, the provision of fresh milk had been outsourced to the Dairy Supply Co., and in 1931 the House Committee decided to also phase out pigs and poultry, marking the end of livestock on the farm. The vegetable garden survived and continued to be cultivated, alongside the now thriving orchard.

In 1909, electric lifts were installed, replacing the existing hydraulic lifts (which had themselves replaced the original hand-operated ones).



In 1935, the Duchess of York (the late Queen Mother) opened a new block of accommodation for the nurses (who had until then resided within the main building) behind Holy Trinity Church on the western edge of the site.



As you can see from the map above (from 1946) and the aerial photograph from our archive collection below (taken in the 1960s), the site changed very little over these two decades.



The subsequent half century would see the Hospital's site shrink even further in the wake of redevelopment. It now sits on a busy main trunk road into the Capital, closely surrounded by the expanded urban city of London. And yet, the eighteenth century Melrose Hall still survives – it is now the main reception area which welcomes visitors to the RHN. The architectural splendour of the nineteenth century 'Great Extension' wing remains largely unchanged, most notably the Assembly Room – complete with restored stained glass windows – and the De Lancey Lowe Room. Most importantly, we proudly continue our 169 year legacy (and counting) of providing support, rehabilitation, and care for people with complex disabilities.

Written by Dr Sarah E Hayward

Freelance historical researcher and heritage assistant, and volunteer at the RHN archives.

Maps reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland

# RHN Events Update

## The River Walk



Sunday 16 July 2023 was an active and enjoyable day for the Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability (RHN)! Starting early with our River Walk, 37 participants trekked along the sunny River Thames for 5.5 miles in support of the RHN. A past resident, recently discharged due to their great progress, joined in on the challenge, completing the final 1.5 miles! The group crossed the finish line at the RHN, ready to enjoy the sunny, warm, and cheerful atmosphere of the RHN Summer Fete.

## The Summer Fete

After a several year hiatus, the Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability hosted its annual Summer Fete in its beautiful back gardens. Over 250 attendees delighted in a lively atmosphere, soaking in the live music and rare sunshine!

There was something for everyone to enjoy, one visitor said "It was a joy seeing the hospital this busy and patients come with their families to enjoy themselves."

There was a great variety of stalls, these included plants, personalised handmade gifts, wax melts, African scarves, bags and jewellery, books and puzzles, and our own RHN shop. There were also classic carnival games, good hot food, free face painting and an inflatable slide!



Together the RHN River Walk and the Summer Fete raised an astonishing **£6,210!** This is amazing and will help the hospital by contributing to the essential therapies and services for our patients and residents. We would also like to thank all the wonderful volunteers that helped throughout the day at both events. We could not hold these events without you!

## Want to get involved?

If you are interested in any volunteer opportunities or in having a stall at a future event, please email [events@rhn.org.uk](mailto:events@rhn.org.uk)

To see what else is happening at the RHN please visit our website [www.rhn.org.uk/events](http://www.rhn.org.uk/events)

# Lavender Remembrance Fund

Below are the names of past patients, volunteers and staff at the RHN, whose loved ones have chosen to set up a tribute fund and plant a lavender bush in their memory. The tribute lavender beds can be found in the RHN gardens. Please feel free to visit the hospital and take a look.

*Adeh Murray Sellar  
Anne Prosser  
Antony Olley  
Avis June Smith  
Barbara Garnham  
Barbara Kelly  
Catherine Ann Fitzgerald  
Christopher Bedford  
David Driver  
David John Fincham  
David John Gillett  
David Richard Perry  
Diana Merrick  
Edith Kitty Roper  
Eileen Dorothy Barrett  
Eileen McKay  
France-Raoul Chateau  
Gabrielle Orchard  
Ghulam Sarwar  
Graham Boiling*

*Graham Phillips  
Henry John Old  
Hugh Munro  
James Pirie  
Jean Ann Stowe  
Jonathan Panaguiton  
Kamaljit Toor  
Lesley Jean Hyams  
Lucy Jane Denniston  
Margaret Deller  
Mark Goodfellow  
Marvin Couson  
Maud Riley  
Maureen Lesley O'Brien  
Megan Paton  
Megan Walters  
Michael Brocklehurst  
Michael Lindsay  
Neale Gordon-Wilson  
Omar Hayat Shaikh*

*Patricia Burston  
Paul Loft  
Peggy Stannard  
Peter Gow  
Peter John Davies  
Peter Newton  
Roger Smith  
Rosemary Ann Shurrock  
Sean Hamilton  
Shirley Gill  
Sirima Suansiri  
Stephen John Mitchell  
Stuart - Copping  
Taranjit Kaur Chadha  
Ted & Gladys Black  
Tom McClure  
Trevor George Kingham  
Ved & Helena Aggarwal  
Winifred Warwick-Mayo*

Lavender Funds are a way of celebrating the life of a loved one while helping others in need of our specialist care and support. After setting up a fund you will also have the opportunity to plant a special memorial lavender in our peaceful garden.

For more information please contact Isabel Barrett in Fundraising on 020 8780 4557 or at [ibarrett@rhn.org.uk](mailto:ibarrett@rhn.org.uk)

## - Dates for your Diary -

### Christmas Carol Concert

On Thursday 7 December 2023 join us for our most popular event of the year, the RHN's festive Christmas Carol Concert! Taking place at Holy Trinity Church, SW19, this is sure to be a very special evening.

### Christmas Fair

On Saturday 9 December 2023 join us for some festive excitement as you shop for all your Christmas necessities here at RHN.

### Sip & Paint

In November join us for a social painting event, led by a professional artist, where adults can enjoy unleashing their creativity in a fun and non-judgemental environment.

### RHN Winter Walk

Enjoy a group walk through the local commons and green spaces near the RHN. You may even celebrate your achievement with a warm treat at our site after! Dates are being finalised for February/ March so keep your eyes peeled for more information.

If you would like further information on any of these events then please visit [www.rhn.org.uk](http://www.rhn.org.uk) or contact the events team by email [events@rhn.org.uk](mailto:events@rhn.org.uk) or call us on **020 8780 4560**.



Please click [here](#) if you'd like to support The Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability's Chaplaincy Appeal.

I'm sending my gift of:

- £20** will support the upkeep of the hospital sanctuary.
- £50** will support the provision of regular religious services at the RHN.
- £100** will support one-to-one chaplaincy guidance and counselling for patients in end of life care.
- £** \_\_\_\_\_ my preferred amount today.

*giftaid it* Don't forget to let us know whether or not you're a UK tax payer.

We can reclaim the tax on your donation and any future donations, to make your donation 25% more, at no cost to you!



Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability



*Thank you for your support!*

**Donate online:** [www.rhn.org.uk/online-donation](http://www.rhn.org.uk/online-donation) / **Or call:** **020 8780 4568**

You can also donate by post, sending your gift to: **Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability, FREEPOST, London SW15 3SW**. Using a stamp will save RHN money. When sending a donation by post, we would appreciate it if you could include your address and email details so that we can continue to keep you updated on our work.

You can change the way we contact you or stop our communication to you by calling **020 8780 4568** or emailing [fundraising@rhn.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@rhn.org.uk)

If this project is fully funded by the time we receive your donation, your gift will be used for the general benefit of patients at the RHN.