



ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE
WVS/WRVS ASSOCIATION



ASSOCIATION
NEWS

No.26 May 1987

WVS/WRVS ASSOCIATION

17 Old Park Lane, London W1Y 4AJ

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Area Representatives are ex officio members of the Committee

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RE M I N D E R

We hope to meet as many members as possible at
the next

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

to be held on

WEDNESDAY 10th JUNE 1987

at

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

Full details are enclosed with this edition of the
Association News

PLEASE NOTE: THE SUBSCRIPTION TO THE ASSOCIATION
HAS GONE UP FROM £1.00 TO £1.50.

YOUR CHAIRMAN WRITES

Dear Member,

Since writing to you last Autumn I have been most fortunate in being invited to several reunions and meetings in different parts of the country and have been delighted to meet so many members in their Areas.

The London Annual Reunion took place in October. It covered five Areas, and I much enjoyed meeting again so many old friends from the days when I worked in London Region.

In November there was a most happy pre-Christmas lunchtime Get-together in a member's charming house in Worcester which was attended by Dame Frances Clode and the Area Association Representative, Mrs Pengilly. What was especially good was that many "working" WRVS were also there and everyone so interested in the other's activities.

The Annual Carol Service was held in St. Nicholas Cathedral, Newcastle upon Tyne, on 16th December and afterwards we were able to get together over a most welcome lunch of delicious home-made soup and sandwiches - doubly welcome as it was a cold, snowy day. I met many members including the smart Colour Party who paraded the WRVS standard during the Service.

Now we are all looking forward to our Annual General Meeting to be held in Newcastle this year and are hoping that as many members as possible will attend from

the North of England and maybe some from "across the border" in Scotland as well.

On 21st April, after this letter has gone to press, I have been asked to an Area meeting of Humberside and Lincolnshire; on 27th and 28th April to two meetings in Suffolk for the East Anglia Area, and also the Annual Reunion in Wales which is being held at Llandrindod Wells on 12th May. I look forward very much to have the opportunity of meeting so many of you.

Your Committee, which meets in London twice a year, has decided that, should there be more nominations than vacancies for the Chairman and Committee of nine members, to be elected at the AGM in Newcastle upon Tyne on 10th June 1987, there will be a postal vote this year so that all members may express their wishes. Should this prove necessary, the ballot papers and envelopes in which to seal and return your votes will be sent in May, together with the invitation and Agenda for the Annual General Meeting.

The membership of the Association, which was formed in 1973, has now increased to over 4,000 in England and Wales, which includes 1,133 Life Members. The Scottish membership is approximately 450. The best news is to hear of the formation of many successful new groups which are springing up throughout the country, and an increased membership in existing ones.

With my very best wishes to you all,

Arja Christophersen
Chairman

EDITORIAL

Very many thanks to those of you who wrote to me in response to my last Editorial. In particular to Mrs Barbara Flinn of Sherborne, who made some interesting suggestions which we are following up. Also to Miss Rosemary Amies (late of Services Welfare in Kuala Lumpur and Germany), Mrs Molly Dawson (who was with NAAFI) and Mrs Molly Kent (Singapore and Japan).

Thank you also to all of you who sent in your personal Archives of St. James' Palace and the Hungarian refugees. These have been included in this edition of the News and I hope you will find them both as touching and as amusing as I did.

I am sure we could well go on producing our own Archives in this way. All of us must have our own favourite "WVS/WRVS Story" after so many years in the Service. But it is difficult to go on finding subjects which involved the whole country. So perhaps we could try it from a different angle by selecting one general aspect of WRVS work and asking you to send in your stories on CLOTHING for the November edition. This is just about the most universal of all projects, often regarded as the Cinderella of the Services, perhaps because of the old jumble we so often receive. I personally think that members who undertake this work need to have the patience of Job, the sympathy of a friend and the understanding of a good social worker.

Finally, but by no means least, very many thanks to Mrs Chris Smurthwaite and Mrs Margaret Wilkinson who have produced the illustrations for this - and future - editions of the News. The front cover is, of course, adorned with the Rosemary and Ivy. Comments, or more illustrations, would be gratefully received.

I look forward very much to receiving more of your letters, and plenty of them!

Editor



ROUND THE COUNTRY

1. Dame Barbara Shenfield DBE, Chairman of WRVS, visited Portugal from 14th to 18th January. While there she presented six Long Service Medals and two First Clasps to Members of the WRVS in Portugal.

2. Rosemary Amies (ex Services Welfare) tells the following tale of two WVS members who, as well as herself, took tea with the Queen at Buckingham Palace in, she thinks, 1958. "I shall never forget looking out of the palace windows and seeing a sea of green and beetroot figures making their way down the Mall. One was an elderly member from a tiny Welsh village who had never been to London before. The villagers had clubbed together to buy her a new uniform. Another told us her son was an undertaker and had sent her to the Palace in the Rolls Royce! From all this nostalgia, you will realise that at least one of your readers appreciates the Association News."

3. From the Kensington & Chelsea Times 31.10.86
"ARNOLD STEVENSON AWARD for services to the Borough - the WRVS".

4. Maldon Branch welcomed back their 95-year old member, Mrs Warwick-Smith BEM. She had returned from her first ever visit to hospital after an accident. Mrs Warwick-Smith had never seen a male nurse before. When one said to her, "Well, shall we go to bed now?" she replied, "It is a long time since a young man said that to me!"

5. One new Skegness member, 80 years young, has just retired from the Clothing Store. No-one can guess how many little boys and girls she has dried out and clothed after falls in the paddling pools, etc.

NEW YEAR'S HONOURS 1987

We send our sincere congratulations to the following:

MBE

Mrs Annette Clark
District Organiser, Inverclyde Scotland

BEM

Mrs Patricia Andrews
Toy Library Organiser, Holme Valley NE4

Mrs Eileen Cummin
Blind Club Organiser, York NE2

Mrs Rona England
Borough Organiser, Havering London NE

Mrs Phyllis Rawson
Luncheon Club Organiser, Lytham St. Annes NW1

Mrs Isabel Taylor
District Organiser, Maidstone SE1

Mrs Sheila Wallwork
District Organiser, High Peak MID 2

The following members also received honours for services to the community:

Mrs Joyce Beynon
Clothing Organiser, Bristol City SW1

Mrs Marjorie Benson
Metropolitan Organiser, Wigan NW2

Mrs Evelyn Hawes
Stradbroke HC/Anglia 1

Mrs Nora Newsome
Local Organiser, Barnoldswick NW1

OBITUARY

We are sorry to learn that the following members have died since the publication of the November 1986 "News".

Mrs L.R. Duckers	NW4
Mrs M.M. Markham	MID 3
Mrs M.M. Jenkins	SE1
Mrs P.K. Bristow MBE	MID 1
Dr T.S. Russell DCL, OBE	NE2
Miss G.M. Stettauer MBE	London SE
Mrs C.M. Stampa OBE, JP	Wales
Mrs C.L. Yeomans	Mid 2
Mrs L. Bailey	HC1
Miss D.C. Hughes	HC3
Miss K.A. Parsons	SE1
Miss D.C. Johnson	SE2
Mrs M. Vincent	London SE
Mrs E.M. Pollitt	NW4
Mrs E. Kenyon	NE4
Miss E. Ealand MBE	SE1
Mrs K. Weatherall	NE1
Miss O. Swingler	MID1
Mrs F.E.G. Kemp	London N
Mrs M. Helliart	SE2
Miss F. Cooper	London NW
Mrs J. Hewett BEM	London N
Mrs C. Fitzakerly	NE2
Mrs D. Evans	HC3
Miss D. Gould	SE2
Miss C.E. Harrison	NE2
Mrs M.A. Rankin	NW4



VOLUNTARY
SERVICE
ARCHIVES

ST. JAMES PALACE 1956

1. Eleanor MacGregor led a contingent from Islington WRVS. She remembers that at one point "Her Majesty could not persuade one of the corgis to move". However, eventually the sit-down strike ended and the Queen Mother spoke to each member. Mrs MacGregor is now nearly 92, lives in a Home for the Elderly in Croydon, where she is visited by Croydon WRVS members. (Thank you for your letters, Mrs MacGregor. Yes, I can read your writing. Ed.)
2. Joan Rae (then of Romford and now of Southend) still has her admission card to the Throne Room for that day. She remembers "several corgis". "It was fascinating to see Her Majesty at close quarters in her usual blue, with matching hat". And Gwendoline Dowsett (now of Rother District) remembers what a happy occasion it was.
3. Phyllis Robinson (then of Barnet, now of West Sussex) has a photograph of Marjorie Downing giving a wonderful curtsey to the Queen Mother.
4. Marjorie Downing (London North Rep) tells us that this was a Reception to celebrate the "Royal" being added to the WVS. She recalls two corgis. Barnet Borough contingent was assembled in the Queen Anne Room.
5. Connie White of Barnet recalls the comment made to her Group by the Queen Mother. "I like the different styles of hats you are wearing. Now you can choose the one that suits you best". The photograph, according to Connie, shows members wearing the original beret, the flower-pot style and the large wide-brimmed hat.

From the Editor: This hat problem highlights a constant source of disagreement within the Service. How do Association members view WRVS hats? Variety or uniformity?

HUNGARIAN REFUGEES

1. Let us start again with Eleanor MacGregor. Islington WVS already had a working party at an Old People's Home called "Hillside". So naturally they were called on to help when it was decided to use it as a reception centre for refugees. They helped with making beds and then, of course, clothing. One of the refugees was a tailor, so he was soon in demand.
2. Paulette James of Nuneaton had to help deliver clothing to men billeted in Youth Hostels in the District. "I remember driving in dense fog to a colliery canteen where we met young men who were shocked to see two young women (as we were then) taking their measurements, but at the end of the day we left with a pat on the back and kisses, of course".
3. Phyllis Neville then of Stafford now of Tewkesbury, helped serve coffee to the refugees at Stafford station on their arrival at 1 am.
4. Marjorie Fox then of Chigwell and Loughton, now of Harrogate, helped with clothing distribution at Grange Farm Centre. "Some were still in their nightclothes having left in such a hurry when the fighting reached their homes".
5. Daphne Davenport then of Shropshire, now of Northants, helped set up a clothing store and depot in a disused RAF Hangar where "for six weeks we all worked tirelessly sorting, packing and labelling. Though this was a very tiring job we all enjoyed doing it - and I, personally, made many life-long friends".
6. Joan Graham of Bury WRVS tells us that at one of their meetings members brought along press cuttings and photographs of their work with the Hungarian refugees. Mrs Ruth Calcron was then the local Clothing Organiser. She well remembers one family with several children who, it transpired were never actually married. The WVS Clothing Section much enjoyed finding clothing for them for the wedding! The WVS gave them the ring as a wedding present.

There are two reports of particular interest. So we thought we might use them almost in their entirety.

From Daphne Young. Caterham.

Memories of the Hungarian Influx
Fraught, but Happy and Privileged

A family of Hungarian refugees arrived in the UK and we, the WVS in Caterham, were alerted by HQ to find and furnish a house for them.

We had been instrumental, under County Hall in Kingston, in organising the influx of refugees - opening a Rest Centre, clothing, feeding and housing temporarily many, many sad and forlorn people.

The language was a difficult part of the operation: we were not sure of their "wants", one of which (sign language) was it bananas, cucumber, etc., all of which seemed reasonable. In fact, it was caraway seeds, a herb which in Hungary was widely used and a "must".

So, when it came to housing a family, we were forewarned.

A house, almost derelict but dry, was found by the Local Authority, after which the WVS members and the wonderful people of Caterham, not only gave their support but help in making good, decorating and furnishing.

The family arrived in 1957 and were thrilled to have a house after all their tribulations. The family comprised Mother, Father and two boys: Mother heavily pregnant. We put them in touch with doctor, midwife, local amenities, schools for the boys, etc., "held their hands" until we felt they could cope. One job we thought was done. How stupid!

At 9.30 one night a month later a distraught voice, speaking somewhat garbled English, cried for help. His wife was in labour and he couldn't reach any of the experts.

Off I took, heart in mouth, armed with my very sketchy knowledge of "How to deliver a baby" never thinking, despite my training, I would have to put it into practice. An extremely worried father and two very frightened young boys greeted me, and an awful lot of noise was coming from upstairs.

Hot water, newspapers - thank heaven for that film. Father told to go on ringing the doctor and midwife, they boys to fetch and carry, anything to keep them occupied and out of the way.

In the nick of time both doctor and midwife arrived to tie the umbilical cord, and I was able to tell the family they had a beautiful little girl.

The baby was christened Elizabeth after our beloved Queen, and the family still live and thrive in Caterham.

*** *** *** ***

From Carola Binnington and Rita Tomlinson

City of Hull

In November 1956, 50 refugees arrived in Hull and were housed at the Salvation Army Hostel. All men and boys, some in their very early teens, they were bewildered, worried about families left behind, inadequately clothed and lacking all personal possessions.

WVS promptly answered a call for help and we attended daily at the hostel for two full weeks, helping the refugees to settle in and supplying them with warm clothing, toiletries, etc. During this period we became very familiar with two words of Hungarian - "kitchi", too small, and "narj", too big.

Eventually the task was completed, and many of the refugees were found jobs, some in other cities, but quite a few went into employment in Hull, and for these WVS helped to find suitable lodgings. Many of them kept in touch for some years.

We know of two who are still in Hull today.

Joseph whose wife was able to join him in later years. Joseph, an engineer, was successful in obtaining employment with a reputable firm in Hull. He is still with them 30 years later, having become a naturalised British subject. They have one son and a small grand-daughter, who is a great joy to Joseph and his wife.

Janos who was 13 years old. He "drifted" through to Hull some weeks after the others and made contact with the refugees. On their advice he presented himself to Miss Muriel Read, County Borough Organiser for Hull. How lucky he was!

Through official channels Miss Read organised his naturalisation, obtained grants for his education and eventually became his guardian. At the time of her death Janos was at Sheffield University, and shortly afterwards obtained his degree and became a teacher. He met his wife at University and they have three young children. Now, at the age of 43, Janos is Head of the Maths. department at one of the leading schools in Hull. His mother is still in Hungary and they have visited her on several occasions, happy to find all well with the family.

Janos has said, "I cannot believe I have come so far. Miss Read told me I must work hard and be successful for myself, but I wanted to do it for her".

On Christmas Eve, 1986, Janos and his two little daughters (delightful characters) called on Rita Tomlinson bearing boxes of home-made fudge.

Leo eventually left Hull for the South and became a representative of a big firm in London. He is now a successful antique dealer in Kent.

There must be many success stories, but to those of us in Hull who remember their arrival, these three bring a warm glow of happiness. We feel we have been true to the name the young ones gave us: Mamma Ve Ve S.

REPORT FROM SCOTLAND Mrs A.P. HART, CHAIRMAN

Membership continues to grow, and much knitting is done for the SCF. The AGM will be held on 30th April in the Walpole Hall, Edinburgh.

Central Region hold regular meetings in Falkirk and Stirling. The annual lunch in October had as guest speakers Mrs Hart, Chairman, and Mrs P. Cram, former Regional Organiser.

Grampian Region had a Christmas lunch attended by Mrs Ballantine, WRVS Vice-Chairman for Scotland. It is hoped to form a group in Moray.

Lothian and SHQ. Coffee mornings continue, with occasional speakers and demonstrations.

Strathclyde Region. Their visit to the Panto was cancelled because of very heavy snow, but they "made it" in January.

REPORT FROM WALES Mrs L. BROTHERTON

The exceptionally bad winter seems to have curtailed activities and there is little to report. But membership increases slowly.

Colwyn Bay had a luncheon in a local hotel, and in October Clwyd held a meeting in Wrexham for 55 members with a talk from Mr W. Stewart.

REPORTS FROM THE AREAS

A warm welcome to the new groups who have been reported: HEREFORD .. NORTH NORFOLK .. POCKLINGTON .. WINDERMERE .. and SCARBOROUGH & WHITBY.

Next, apologies to Rushcliffe for omitting an important event in the last News. This was the coffee morning at the home of Mrs Garratt at Elton. The Mayor of Rushcliffe, Mrs C. Whiting, gave an account of her year in office. A Sale realised £60 for the WRVS/WRVS Benevolent Fund. Mansfield branch also sent £12.

NW AREA 1. Mrs B.F. WILSON MBE

Cumbria. Mrs Wilson called a meeting to discuss county representation. It was decided to divide the

Association work in this very far-spread part of the country between Mrs Whitson, Mrs McCambridge and Miss Stevenson MBE, and to approach the D.Os in the hope that as many retired members as possible could join in the 1988 Golden Jubilee celebrations.

Miss Stevenson reports that Windermere is the only active group as yet. Ten members met together in September and decided they would like to keep in touch with each other. Lancashire: Eighteen members went to the Charter Theatre in October, courtesy of the Mayor of Preston. The AGM was held on 19th January at the WRVS Office, Blackburn, where there was a raffle "to help our financial situation".

NW AREA 2. Welcome to Mrs C. CHURCHILL

Mrs Warburton reports that the Altrincham group meets regularly and included a New Year party. There was tea in the garden of Mrs Preston in Cumberbatch, and at a sale at Mrs Stead's coffee morning, money was raised for a "welfare fund". The annual get-together was held in November, and a half-day trip to Potts Shrigley is planned for the Spring, using the minibus. Mrs Churchill adds that this group has the free use of the Council's Day Centre in Trafford for its meetings. WRVS operates MOW and a Luncheon Club there, and the minibus was originally provided for general use under the DHSS grant. This shows there is co-operation between WRVS and the Association

NW AREA 4. Mrs M.J. PRESTON

The membership is growing steadily, especially where groups have been formed, and in 1987 we should like to see more started. All groups meet on a regular basis, and the form the meetings take depends on the members. Some like to meet for coffee in each other's homes, whilst some prefer a pub lunch and a chat. The rendezvous is immaterial as it is the contact with old friends which is a prime importance. The Area reunion for 1986 was held in October in a church hall in Wilmslow. We were well catered for by a member's daughter.

It was a pleasure to welcome the new Area Organiser, Mrs P. Edmondson.

Cheshire. Mrs Purdon: There was a successful Christmas lunch in December, and membership has grown

to 50. Those who were unable to get to meetings appreciated the flowers sent to them. This included the Organiser, who broke her leg on Good Friday, and found herself the recipient of many visits and expressions of goodwill! Macclesfield hosted the Area reunion, which was much enjoyed. Wirral. Here the membership continues to grow and is around 80. Mrs Borroughs of Heswall continues to be Secretary.

NE AREA 1. Mrs C.V. SMURTHWAITE MBE

Newcastle continues to produce an excellent Newsletter. One of the highlights of the year was the Area outing to the Tall Ships Race at Tynemouth. 92 members were to join in, but unfortunately dense traffic prevented all of them getting there. Members were glad to welcome Mrs Ava Christophersen, the Chairman of the Association, who was with them for the annual Carol Service.

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY. Mrs Eastwood tells us that members throughout the county are still knitting for Africa.

Ashington. Mrs Pratt reports that members have been to local plays and had their birthday dinner in Bedlington. The weather was kind for an outing to Carlisle and there was another to the Metro Centre.

Sunderland. Mrs Ainsley reports coffee mornings and a talk by WPC Bell on "Woman Alone". July was a visit to Cragside, and in September Mrs Owen completed her travel talk on China.

Newcastle. Mrs Yarrington tells of regular meetings and an outing to a Flower Festival at Delaval Hall. A coffee morning raised a further £50 for the Hospice.

NORTH TYNESIDE. Mrs Frew and Mrs Weallens.

North Shields. The Easter coffee pot was moved to Good Friday, with Easter eggs and cards. £25 was raised for the Benevolent Fund. The annual river trip enjoyed a large turnout on a very fine day. Sewing classes continue and sales of items raised £150 for the SCF for the Sudan making £650 to date.

Whitley Bay. Mrs Dawson reports that members enjoyed an outing to the theatre. The coffee mornings have not been well attended and a new venue is being tried.

NE AREA 2. Mrs B. BURKITT

The first Area meeting was held in Darlington in September, with excellent catering by the Darlington WRVS. We were delighted to have Helena Foster with us.

Darlington. Mrs G. Evans and Mrs B. Newman. They meet regularly and had a Christmas lunch. "We all enjoy a treat".

Harrogate. Mrs R. Taylor. This group meets monthly with a variety of activities - including a Bring and Buy Sale when the proceeds were donated to WRVS Children's holidays in North Yorkshire.

Hartlepool. Mrs E. Stamp. This group has been going for less than a year but is thriving. They keep mind and body active with quizzes, Scottish dancing and a choir.

Scarborough and Whitby. Another new group, formed at a luncheon gathering at the home of Lady Whittaker.

Mrs Ward and Mrs Sanderson are the joint organisers.

Mrs Hyatt writes: "It was heartwarming to watch old friends meeting and thoroughly enjoying the opportunity of getting together. It is a great satisfaction to feel that in this splendid district where WRVS has been very strong for years, we now have a new branch of the Association which promises to follow the same tradition."

Selby. Mrs J. Altass. Numbers grow steadily. Events included lunch at the local Technical College.

York. Mrs A. Venables. A flourishing group, arranging a holiday in Wales this year after the great success of last year. With the help of Mrs Brotherton they are hoping to make contact with Association members.

NE AREA 3. Mrs P. JAMES MBE

This Area has started its own newsletter with the help of (who else?) Vi Price. Visits and telephone calls have been made to housebound and less mobile members.

Lincolnshire. Miss D. Cook BEM entertained the Market Rasen members in the Spring, and the Sutton-on-Sea members in July. Knitters continue to turn out very nice children's items.

Skegness have regular meetings and enjoyed a Christmas lunch at the Crown Hotel.

South Humberside. Sixteen members thoroughly enjoyed lunch at a Country Farmhouse restaurant in December.

North Humberside Mrs M. Allison. Members are very active knitting for Polish children. In June members enjoyed a trip to Burnby Hall gardens, particularly the lily ponds, renowned for being the biggest and best collection of lilies in Europe. The County Representative entertained 29 members to tea in September, and in July at Cottingham, Peggy James gave a talk on her journey through China and Russia on the Trans-Siberian Railway. 42 members enjoyed their third Christmas lunch in a Beverley Hotel.

There was an inaugural meeting in Pocklington in the home of Miss M. Binks. They will be arranging their own meetings on a quarterly basis, and met for Christmas lunch in a nearby village. Hull Mrs R. Tomlinson: a surprisingly small group, who join North Humberside in most of their activities and enjoy them very much.

NE AREA 4. MRS L. ZIEGLER MBE

On May 21 members enjoyed a visit to Lotherton Hall. In June, an Area meeting was held at the Citadel, Wakefield. Forty members were present, Mrs H. Foster was in the Chair, and Mrs J. Wynne-Jones gave a talk on the trends of local WRVS. In July the annual Sunday lunch was as popular as ever. Membership is now 45.

MIDLANDS AREA 1. MRS V. PENGILLEY

Shropshire and Staffordshire hope to start meetings of local groups in the Spring. Burton-on-Trent: The District Organiser and Secretary arranged two successful lunches for 20 members at the Technical College. Hereford, a newly-formed group, held a tea party at the County Office. Worcestershire: Forty members met at a member's house for a pre-Christmas lunch. They were delighted to have as their guest Mrs Ava Christophersen.

MIDLANDS AREA 1. Mrs W. PENGILLEY

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Gedling. At a lunch in May at the home of Mrs Hustwayte, Superintendent Gill gave a talk on the day-to-day work of the police. At a coffee morning in June, Mr I. Franklin of a firm of florists talked about his chosen profession. In July members visited Tutbury Crystal factory. In September there was a tour of the Home Brewery at Daybrook, and a coffee morning where Mr J. Arnold spoke about stained glass. The Christmas lunch was held at the Savoy Hotel. Ashfield had a delicious strawberry tea at Mrs Knighton's house, and in September a coach tour to Dovedale. Broxtowe had a September coffee morning at Mrs D. Smith's house. Rushcliffe had an outing to Walden's Frozen Food Factory in Trowbridge, finishing the day with a journey through the delightful Cotswold scenery. The first AGM was held in September. The speaker was Mrs C. Hill on the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association. A collection for the Blind Dogs realised £108. In December they went to the Nottingham Playhouse. Mansfield. Mrs E. Johnson, Chairman, presided at the AGM in November.

ANGLIA H/C AREA 1

Northamptonshire. Mrs A Perkins MBE, reports a busy year with coffee mornings and luncheons in Rushden Hall. They do their own catering. One new member who has moved to Exmouth organises visits to friends to coincide with the luncheons. Four members enjoyed the AGM in Bristol.

ANGLIA H/C AREA 2

Reading. During the year a small group met quarterly for lunch and chat about old times. 20 people attended a Christmas lunch, prepared by members, which was much enjoyed.

ANGLIA H/C AREA 3. Mrs E.D. CLAYDON

Norfolk. Great Yarmouth (Mrs D. O'Mahoney) held three luncheons with 80% attendance, and there was an outing to SNAPE. North Norfolk (Mrs Prior) have set up a new group and have quickly paid off the promotion loan after two events! Suffolk County. Mrs S. Laverton. They were planning a County Reunion for January. Comments from Mrs Claydon: "I trust that the Hotel selected has adequate acoustics to cope with the decibels of chat that I think will be raised in my County."

Essex County. Mrs H. Bostock. In Southend, (Mrs B. Tytherleigh), thirty members had tea in the Mayor's official residence, a beautiful old 18th century mansion, visited the new Post Office sorting office and had a talk from the Chairman of the Council. They again sent a huge box of groceries to "Queen Elizabeth Foundation for the Disabled" at Christmas.

Malden. (Mrs B. Perks) had a cheese and wine lunch at the District Office.

All branches keep a careful eye on any members who are ill, very frail, or lonely.

SE AREA 1. Miss M.T. COOKE MBE

Kent. East Kent (Mrs B. Wright) had a lunch party for 20 and a talk on Neighbourhood Watch. West Kent (Mrs C.R. Bright) had a successful buffet lunch in Area office. One member was wearing a pendant alarm call system which she found very reassuring but which tended to be too easily activated!

Surrey. Mrs B. Stirling. Guildford finished with a lunch in November to which members from Waverley and Woking were welcomed. Woking (Mrs J. Feltham) had a mystery drive, a garden party in August, and an annual luncheon in October.

East Sussex. Mrs A. Freeman. All branches will be invited to a buffet lunch in Eastbourne in April. Brighton held a Christmas Sherry party, and Eastbourne a Christmas lunch. In Hove, 42 intrepid members met on a pouring wet day in December for the annual get-together. Hastings and Rother: Mrs D. Edwards kindly gave a tea party for members in November. Wealden: a ploughman's lunch was held in Mayfield in November. It was good to see several new members.

SE AREA 2. Mrs D. SIMPKINS BEM

Hampshire. Fareham is a very active group, many of whom are members of "Mobilities", who took the Handicapped to St. Stephen's hospital just before Christmas. They gave a demonstration of their exercises and singing, which the patients joined in. Members made 46 bags for them to hang on the handles of the wheelchairs to hold all their treasures.

West Sussex. Miss D. Yardley reports that Arun district enjoyed a Harvest lunch at the home of Mrs Reynolds in Bognor. Rustington had a pre-Christmas get-together in the WRVS office. Members are busy knitting for SCF.

SW AREA 1. Mrs K. BARKER BEM

Gloucestershire. A County meeting was held in November in Cheltenham. 200 washable toys had been sent to Tigray, and more are ready, as well as children's clothing. Mrs Sell has resigned as County Organiser and will be replaced by Mrs J. Connop.

Avon. Mrs R. Matthews has agreed to be County Rep.

SW AREA 2. Miss M.S. SCOTT

The past few months have been very quiet. It was good to meet several Somerset members at the Carol Service in Taunton. They are making plans for the Spring. In Devon a small gathering in Kingsbridge met in the Autumn and mid-Devon is showing some interest.

LONDON. Mrs M. JULIAN London NW

The London Areas had their AGM in October and were pleased to welcome Mrs Christophersen, Miss Halpin and over 90 members. Over the years we have discovered that they like to meet in an accessible central hall, have a good meal and plenty of time to talk and talk. This year the Association catered for the meal themselves. A Bring & Buy Sale was well supported. The afternoon was rounded off with a fun quiz on WVS/WRVS.

Mrs M. Downing (London North) writes: "Our very happy London reunion was marred by the news that Mary Julian was moving out of London. Mary has been the hard-working co-ordinator of our London reunions for the past few years and their increasing success has been due to her efforts. We shall miss her."

JERSEY. Mrs R. FISHER. Members meet monthly in good weather for chat, soup and sandwiches. There are 12 members this year. We have been kept busy. We have marked all the new Civil Emergency blankets, 400 to be done in red wool cross stitch!

I thought the Area Representative job would be just right for my retirement: filling in a few forms and answering queries. I couldn't have been more wrong. I have become involved with individuals and groups in a most delightful way. My husband always refers to us as "Vintage WRVS". Like old wine, I have found that we are mature, well-rounded (some of us) and produce a lot of merriment and good humour.

Beryl Burkitt

AREA REPRESENTATIVES

LONDON

North Area Mrs M. Downing BEM,

N.E. Area Mrs I. Millington,

S.E. Area Mrs. E.G. Block MBE,

S.W. Area Mrs M. Forsdick MBE,

N.W. Area Mrs D.M. Stevens,

NORTH WEST

Area 1 Mrs B.F. Wilson MBE,

Area 2 Mrs O. Churchill,

Area 4 Mrs M.J. Preston.

Area Representatives (continued)

NORTH EAST

Area 1 Mrs C.V. Smurthwaite MBE.

Area 2 Mrs B. Burkitt,

Area 3 Mrs P. James MBE,

Area 4 Mrs L. Ziegler MBE,

MIDLANDS

Area 1 Mrs W. Pengilley,

Area 2 Mrs H. Smith,

HOME COUNTIES, ANGLIA

Area 3 Mrs E.D. Claydon,

SOUTH EAST

Area 1 Miss M.T. Cooke MBE,

Area 2 Mrs D.J. Simpkins BEM,

SOUTH WEST

Area 1 Mrs K. Barker BEM,

Area 2 Miss M. Scott,

WALES Mrs L. Brotherton,

SCOTLAND Chairman, Scottish Section:

Mrs A.P. Hart,