



# NEWSLETTER

No 59 Autumn 2003

**Letter from the Chairman**  
**82 Bootham York YO30 7DS**

Dear Member

By the time you read this, our 30th Reunion and AGM will be behind us for this year. It has been decided that in future the Reunions and AGM's will be held on the last weekend of September, members will therefore know when it is to be held and can make their own arrangements accordingly. It was also suggested that it be rotated round the geographical area's of the country e.g. SW, NW, SE, and NE, next year 2004 it will be held in the South East.

I know many of you are concerned that we have not had a copy of Action since the Spring edition, having spoken to WRVS Head Office I find a lot of things are under review, Action being one of them but, we will be getting a copy later in the year.

As we inevitably get older we are aware that many of you have difficulty reading our Newsletter and Action due to poor eyesight. We are trying to find a way to overcome this but are not sure of the number of members involved. If you are one of these I would be grateful if you would let the York office know Tel: - 01904 634500.

I know some of you have had serious health problems during the Spring and Summer, I do hope whatever your problems, big or small that you are soon feeling much better and able to take part in everyday activities again.

My very best wishes to you all.

*Pat Copping*

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## From the Editor

Dear Members

Greetings from Surrey to you all and thank you so much for the very kind words that you sent regarding my first edition. I had great pleasure in editing all the news that you sent in and only had to phone a few ladies to check on the spelling of names of people and places. My Geography is certainly going to improve if I carry on here. So much of it was learnt originally on Saturday mornings listening to Uncle Mac with his Children's Favourites. I suppose then it was on the Light Programme of the BBC wireless. Long before radios, transistors, Radio 1,2,3 and 4; disc jockeys and all the blurb that we have on the airways nowadays. Anyway, I digress. If you remember, he always read out the address giving the town and county; Wilmslow, Cheshire; Witham, Essex; Looe, Cornwall. But then, in the great reshuffle of 1974 we lost some of the County names and gained new ones, and now with postcodes we do not seem to be using Counties at all.



I do not believe in fixing things that are not broke but I do like a change so instead of News from the Divisions always starting with the North East, this edition starts with the North West! Hopefully not too radical for you all, and be warned, it will change again next time so you will have to read on to find where your area is mentioned.

Amongst all the letters from Div Reps, there have been a couple of members who have written individually, so I propose making space for these as well. We are a Newsletter, so cannot have the letters to the editor page that most magazines have but this way everyone will get a chance to send in some news or comment, especially useful if there is no Div Rep for an area.

I have the distinct advantage of being the last entry before publication and of course on this occasion it is after our 30th AGM in Chester. Fifty people enjoyed the weekend and there were 27 day delegates for the AGM - full report next time.

Paulene

All contributions for the next Newsletter should be with me by 27th February 2004.  
By post to Paulene Lambert,

## NORTH WEST DIVISION

**CUMBRIA AND LANCASHIRE** - Div. Rep. Vacant

**MERSEYSIDE AND CHESHIRE** - Div. Rep. Vacant

Merseyside County Rep  
Mrs D. Whittingham,

**NORTH AND SOUTH MANCHESTER**  
Div. Rep. Mrs Jean Matthews BEM

Once again Bury members enjoyed home made meat and potato pie followed by sherry trifle at our AGM in March. We had a very good attendance and our guest speaker, Miss Betty Boardman, gave a very interesting talk about the History of Teddy Bears. From her wonderful collection of bears she brought a fascinating selection for us to see and hear about. In June forty-nine members and friends travelled through the pretty Fylde countryside to the Springfield House Hotel in Pilling. It was a perfect day to relax in the beautiful walled gardens after eating an excellent lunch and everyone was reluctant to get back into the coach to continue our drive to Fleetwood where some members spent time in the Marine Gardens etc. whilst others picked up some good bargains at the Free Port. We were very sorry to hear of the recent death of Mrs Connie Branch - for many years she was a very conscientious helper at the WRVS hospital tea bar and also delivered meals on wheels. Connie was a well-respected member of the Association in Bury and will be sadly missed by us all.

In spite of the inconvenience of wheelchairs and walking sticks, nine members in Romiley still enjoy each other's company on the second Tuesday of the month. We are fortunate in having so many friends who do not mind giving their talks to such a small group. Mr Frost, a historian, Mrs Potts who takes her camera with her everywhere she goes then delights us with her beautiful slides, and Mrs Hammond who collects old books etc. The annual outing for lunch to The Country Cafe in Bollington was a great success and so was the Strawberry Cream Tea Bring and Buy Sale to finish off the first half of the year.

For Sale members the New Year began with a talk and slides about Flanders, Bruges in particular, with its lovely river and swans, and the surrounding area where the war was fought - forts, gun emplacements, memorials and cemeteries.

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In February we learned about deer, red deer, fallow deer, hinds and bucks, their size and different antlers - most interesting. We were able to hold these different types of antlers, realise their weight and how they grew and were shed each year. The AGM was held in March and we were able to meet old friends and enjoy a super buffet lunch provided by our Food Organiser Anne Thomas, and to hear reports of other activities in the area. Bill Newton gave us a wonderful talk with slides about the local history of Stretford, showing old houses, shops (some still there today) streets, horses and carts and the arrival of the motor car. By May we were ready for a cruise, via slides, to Russia, and Margaret Moor gave us a real taste of how life was lived in the grand palaces in countries round the Baltic Sea. We had a Bring and Buy Sale in June, with a strawberry tea, when we were very pleased to welcome Jean Matthews. We managed to raise £47 towards paying some of our speakers and had a very 'chatty' afternoon. Joan Ford came to talk to us in July about her adventures in the Commonwealth Games that were held in Manchester just a year ago. She and her husband offered to help in any way they could and were asked to take part in the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the Games, dancing, singing and getting wet, seeing the Queen and lots of athletes and generally in the middle of things. She brought her uniforms along to show us, spoke of her training and rehearsals, the fun, the excitement, the happiness and goodwill that arose from the Games and indeed from the whole of Manchester itself. What a super season we have had. On a sad note, we have lost three members this year who will be missed so much. Our membership is down to twenty now and we will need new members if we are to carry on in our present meeting place.

**STAFFORDSHIRE. SHROPSHIRE, DERBYSHIRE - Div. Rep. Vacant**

Derbyshire County Rep  
Doreen Martin,

The Dronfield members continue to meet monthly, under the leadership of Betty Hills and Joan Muscroft, and in July other Derbyshire members joined them at lunch. It was a very happy occasion, on a lovely summer's day, and I was very pleased to become acquainted with several of the dozen or so new members who have joined the Dronfield group during the past months. Sadly there seems little interest in the Association throughout the rest of the County, but I was invited to speak to a small group of WRVS members in Erewash District some months ago. However, we will pass the word around, and hope for the best!

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Always buy good shoes and a good bed, because if you are not in one you will be in the other  
From Mrs McCormack Northumberland

## **SOUTH EAST DIVISION**

### **CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

Div. Rep. Mrs Barbara Titcomb

Cambridge members have been enjoying lunches at the Regional College while their usual meeting place is being refurbished. About thirty members enjoyed a visit to Dersingham Flower Show in July.

Peterborough members have been sadly depleted by the passing of three members, firstly Mrs Marie Weaver who did most of her WRVS work in Norfolk, secondly Mrs Gwen Braybrook who helped with the trolley service in residential homes in Peterborough and thirdly Mrs Edna Wright who had played a large part in WRVS activities in Peterborough during the Second World War and then was County Organiser for Huntingdon and Peterborough for many years.

### **OXFORDSHIRE, BEDFORDSHIRE AND BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

Div. Rep. Mrs Jean Callaway

I regret that I have no news to report from either Oxfordshire or Buckinghamshire.

However, in Bedfordshire the AGM got the year off to a good start. After one year without a Treasurer and two without a Secretary the Bedfordshire Association acquired both from among recently joined members. That was not all - another member and her National Trust husband (Sheila and John Deamer) offered to organise an outing in the summer, and in June a very happy coach load had a good day out at Waddesdon Manor. John made sure that even the less able ones were able to get around on both floors and down to the Bachelor's Wing. From what I have read of Edwardian house parties I have doubts about the efficacy of these wings, but it is nice to know that they tried.

Earlier, Jeanette Taylor returned to talk of her second journey to help raise money for the treatment of leprosy. This time she had courageously trekked in the mountains of Nepal. We were alternately uplifted by views of the mountains and entertained by her accounts of such problems as getting up in the night to go to the loo. It required, I think, twenty zips to be dealt with as well as careful reconnaissance to avoid joining the tents on the ledge some way down the mountain. Once again members were charged no fee, but gave donations to the fund for the treatment of leprosy.

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A popular Coffee Morning at Dorothy Ward's was also free, but it has been decided that in future members will be asked to give a donation to a charity of the hostess's choosing. In recognition of Dorothy's work on the Board of the WRVS Benevolent Trust, the Autumn Coffee Morning will be for that good cause.

Three members represented the Association at the Service of Thanksgiving for Volunteer work in June at St Paul's, Bedford. The Reception afterwards was in the Victorian Gothic building that houses the Magistrates Courts. Two resplendent ushers grandly escorted two of them who were having a little knee trouble, down the un-railed steps.

Finally, the traditional Garden Party ended the summer programme. To commemorate the Association's Pearl Anniversary members were asked, if possible, to wear pearls and a pearly hat. The prize for the best hat went to Beryl Rees, who had added pearls to an already pretty flowered hat kept from the stage props of her Drama Club. The Association owes a great debt of gratitude to 'Do' and Godfrey Vesey for their generous hospitality every summer.

**NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK**

Div. Rep. Mrs Mary Taylor

I had an operation on my right shoulder recently so have been and will be incapacitated for a while. Of course I am right handed so am learning to use the left with great difficulty. It's amazing how much you depend on two hands. Makes you realize how some people have to manage in this situation permanently.

As usual Gt. Yarmouth have had a number of coach outings through the summer months namely Ely, Woodbridge & Christchurch Mansions, Fakenham and Sheringham Park, all very well supported and thoughtfully enjoyed. They held their Annual Branch Dinner in March followed by entertainment from 'The Banjo Boys', which everyone sang along to.

Sudbury branch enjoyed an Informal get-together luncheon attended by twenty members and joined by friends and guests from Gt. Yarmouth.

North Norfolk members, friends and guests from Gt. Yarmouth met at the Sea Marge Hotel, Overstrand, on a very wet and murky day in April for their most successful Spring Luncheon. This was a new venue for the group and with its log fire and Minstrel gallery was a great success. In dryer and warmer weather in May the group went to Cromer Pier to enjoy a gusty (or perhaps gutsy?) rendering of 'Fiddler on the Roof' by the local operatic society. In July, again in somewhat damp weather, there was a very convivial coffee morning at the home of Mrs Mary Harris in Holt. The September 30th Birthday Party is still in planning at the time of writing. (Contribution from Jan Gilderson)

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## ESSEX AND HERTFORDSHIRE - Div. Rep Vacant

Hertfordshire County Rep - No report  
Mrs Gwen Rowley,

### SOUTHEND ON SEA, ESSEX

Chairman Mrs B Tytherleigh MBE

Although a small club, we continue to enjoy our meetings every month. Last year a very kind gentleman paid our year's rent on our venue, The Friends' Meeting House. This year, family and friends of the club are being asked for £10 in order to raise the rent for the forthcoming year. It is a great compliment to the WRVS that people are happy to give a donation!

We have had some most interesting speakers at our meetings in recent months. Shelia Appleton, a local artist, who paints beautiful pictures of nearby Old Leigh Town and the cockleboats, was a very lively speaker and most amusing. We also had a very enjoyable and informative afternoon when Major Diapa of the Salvation Army came to speak to us. He told us all about the beginnings of the Army and the work they continue to do in the community. Another of our speakers, a member of the family who own and run one of the oldest established and best-known china and glassware stores in this area. He explained to us how colour and design has developed over the years to reflect the change in the public's taste.

On June 30th we celebrated the 20th anniversary of our club. The Mayor and our local MP, David Amies and his wife were our honoured guests. It gave me a unique opportunity of giving thanks to some wonderful ladies who are the backbone of the local WRVS. The organiser of the hospital shop, Joan Walker; Mary Smith who runs the trolley service, and Brenda Bowen of Meals on Wheels. Also not forgetting our unsung secretary Rita. Everyone present gave them a standing ovation. The Mayor and David Amies made short speeches praising the marvellous work carried out in the town by the WRVS. The Mayor then cut our huge celebration cake, which we enjoyed with a cup of tea while chatting to all our friends and guests. It was a wonderful afternoon.

On a personal note, I had the great pleasure of going to the House of Commons on 3rd July to receive a certificate for an "Older Volunteer Hero". Everyone who received this honour had been nominated by their local MP. After receiving our certificates we all had tea on "The Terrace" with our guest friends and the MP's. It was a most wonderful experience for me.

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From Lancashire Life: Christmas Cookery Demonstrations £10, including mulled wine and mice pies

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## **SURREY, EAST & WEST KENT, EAST & WEST SUSSEX.**

Mrs Joan Rosling,

Looking at my report for Surrey it does seem that they do enjoy their lunches!

Farnham held a lunch in June at member Vi Ommanney's house. This proved very enjoyable and lunch was followed by a splendid talk by Jill Walden-Jones on The Association. This was the last event organised by Betty Ashford who is moving to East Sussex. Sadly Betty was ill on the day so could not be there. Elaine Maggs has agreed to take over the organising of Farnham and my thanks go to her. Many thanks must also go to Betty for all the many years she has devoted to Farnham.

Guildford enjoyed their annual lunch and AGM at Mellow Church Hall in April. This was well attended and everyone tucked into a delicious lunch prepared by the committee.

Woking Branch has had a successful year starting with a very enjoyable time at their post-Christmas lunch held in the New Year. This was held at the Red Lion in Horsell, which is known for good food. In March there was a visit to the Theatre to see the Nutcracker and the AGM took place in April. In June we saw a marvellous production of Fiddler on the Roof.

We had a very happy afternoon at the garden party in August at the home of chairman Pat Wheeler. It was a lovely sunny day so everyone enjoyed tea in the garden (unlike last year when it poured). Vera Hawkins showed us her lovely card sent from the Queen on her and John's Diamond Wedding Anniversary in July, and we all enjoyed the delicious cakes made by committee member Maureen Royle. We are very sad to announce the death of Committee Member Dorothy Davenport. Dorothy worked hard for the Association and will be greatly missed.

Contributed in part by Shirley Mason

### **WEST KENT**

As I reported in the spring Kath Dyer has resigned as County Rep. but we are very fortunate to have Julia Cooper who has taken over from Kath. Julia is a past County Organiser for Kent. Thank you Julia.

### **EAST SUSSEX**

Norah Alston tells me that Eastbourne continues to meet monthly and they had a delightful outing in the spring to Bodiam Castle with a tea. Members enjoyed a lovely drive with the countryside looking its very best. Sadly Mrs. M.G. Evans, a longstanding member, has died. She was a great support to Eastbourne.

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Just remember, whenever you start to feel blue, start breathing again

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**LONDON N.E. - No report**  
Div. Rep: Mrs W. Taylor OBE DL

**LONDON N.W. - No report**  
Div. Rep. Mrs Dorothy Stevens

**LONDON S.W.**  
Div. Rep Mrs G Cleverly

No new members have joined this quarter, but we still have 38 loyal members. We met in July for our Summer Buffet luncheon here in Eltham. So many members live a distance from Eltham and have to use buses and trains to get here so I thank you all for your support and for making the effort. The coffee mornings that members arrange between themselves are still going strong. These little 'get togethers' do help to keep people interested in WRVS, which is what we all want. I hope to meet some of our new members at our 30th luncheon to be held in Napier Hall in October, and look forward to seeing the regulars who I know never miss that day. You will hear from me nearer the time but do give me a call if any of you have any questions 01 706 646 706. Enjoy the rest of the summer.

**LONDON S.W. - No report**  
Div. Rep: Mrs Ava Christophersen

Due to ill health, Mrs Christophersen has had to resign as Div Rep. We send good wishes and grateful thanks for all she has done over the years. Mrs Grace Cleverly has agreed to be contact for members in this region, see London SE for contact details

**HAMPSHIRE AND ISLE OF WIGHT**  
Div Rep Mrs Beryl Adams

Once again I have to report our most successful annual dinner – it has become almost routine now to hold this in our usual pub near Petersfield. They provide us with a very pleasant room and lay out with good food and excellent service as well as a table to lay out our raffle, for which everyone supplied a gift. In April we were all invited to Carol Webb's beautiful house and garden near Beaulieu. Unfortunately I could not attend as our holiday flight home was changed. I have been told it was a beautiful day and the extensive gardens were lovely.

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Everyone took a picnic lunch and after a short business meeting members could stroll around the gardens and mingle and chat as they wished. Sadly, this was probably the last time we shall be asked to go there as Carol will be moving. Carol was the co-County organiser here some time ago and we have been to the house several times and watched all the improvements and changes to the house and garden

**BERKSHIRE - Div. Rep. Vacant**

Berkshire County Rep: - No report  
Mrs Morag Gordon, :

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*As mentioned, here are just a couple of the letters received from members. Should I print those I have from the following people?*

Heidi Vodka  
Theresa Green

Dwaine Pype  
Isabel Ringin

Edina Cloud  
Penny Sillen

Olive Hoyle  
Pat Meddog

Iseabal Bradley-Feary, Woking, Surrey writes

2003 began badly with the news that WRVS Trustees had decided to make us redundant. ('Volunteers' have become an endangered species so this decision was very hard to understand!) Yes, change can be a good thing; we must keep up with the times... tra la, tra la. So we have moved on and continue to serve at the Tea Bar but under a new logo, new loyalties, new blue aprons. But what was to become of the faithful old green tabards, which had seen so many hours of loyal service? No point in leaving them to languish in the airing cupboard, so with great affection for the old green pinnies I began to turn them into gardening aprons. Bright crochet flowers evolved, bursting into bloom and growing up bravely from the pockets. Both aprons were taken to the village Bring & Buy coffee morning, and both disappeared quickly. Long live the old green WRVS Image.

From Ann Parry, Buntingford, Hertfordshire

I wonder how many members have, like me, converted from Life Membership to an annual subscription? Since Life Membership was terminated for new members joining the Association, a number of existing Life Members have voluntarily converted to become subscribing members. Of course, they were not obliged to do so as after all Life membership means what it says, but how wonderful it would be if more members chose to pay a subscription of £5 a year (Preferably by bankers order). It would be the equivalent of so many new members of the Association and would greatly assist the funds.

## SOUTH WEST DIVISION

### HEREFORDSHIRE, WORCESTERSHIRE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Div. Rep. Mrs Jean Connop

Mrs. Susan Marshfield a most enthusiastic and gifted speaker of great experience gave us a most interesting talk at our Luncheon held on the 17th June 2003 in the Tewkesbury Masonic Hall, Her account of her visits to Buckingham Palace garden parties - what to wear - how we travel to London - what her husband should wear - this all took some weeks of preparation before the great day. To return to the subject of her talk - we have all been there I think - beautiful outfit chosen with great heartache and care - splendid hat and then shoes to match, no matter that they are not quite as comfortable as usual, you can always slip them off in the car. Unfortunately the car was rather warm and her feet did swell and the shoes would not fit. Supported by her husband Mrs. Marshfield managed to reach the garden in Buckingham Palace then spent the afternoon in the Red Cross tent under the care of an autocratic lady. Regrettably Mrs. Marshfield saw very little of the garden party but did get to Buckingham Palace albeit "Barefoot". We regret to announce the death of Mrs. I. Nicholson who was for a number of years Gloucester City Organiser and will be sadly missed by her many friends. The next Luncheon will be held on the 20th November 2003 in the Christ Church Hall, Cheltenham

**DEVON AND CORNWALL** - Div Rep Vacant

### SOMERSET AND AVON

Div. Rep. Mrs Sheila Scholey

May I thank members of the WRVS in Frome for inviting me to an afternoon Get-Together with very humorous entertainment and a delicious tea. I also was delighted to attend a lunch with members and guests at Melksham, Wiltshire where Bob and I were made so welcome and had a most enjoyable day. Hoping the summer was enjoyed by all, and the gardeners among you enjoyed colourful, picturesque areas of tranquillity. Plants certainly grow in the West - despite the salt winds!! Do let me know any news of interest and if I can be of help in any way; also a possible venue for a lunch. My telephone is

Several members have been lost to us during recent months and our thoughts go out to their families and friends. In particular, we are sorry to report the death of Mrs Dilys Knight. She was a member of the Clothing Store in the Kingswood

District for many years and was a dedicated member of the Sewing Circle. Dilys was in her nineties and will be remembered with affection by her many friends and colleagues.

**WEST MIDLANDS** - No report  
Div. Rep. Mrs J.M. Smith BEM

Group Organiser: Endington \ Sutton Coldfield Group, West Midlands  
Joan Wortley,

**DORSET** - Div Rep Vacant

Wiltshire County Rep  
Mrs Marjorie Darby,

Wiltshire has followed its usual pattern of activities, as this seems to suit our members. It is sad that our numbers are now falling, but with our rural population, age, and transport problems, attendance for some is now a thing of the past. But I know they appreciate receiving their copies of the Newsletter and Action. In March 27 members enjoyed Our Annual Luncheon and we were glad to welcome Sheila Scholey and her husband from Somerset. We found we had chosen one of the hottest days in August for our Garden Tea Party. Denise's garden looked lovely, but the 13 of us who attended found the cool of her house most welcome.

I have to report the death of another of our members - Mrs Elsie Harris. Having worked in the 'posh' women's clothing department in a Bath store, she came to the Trowbridge local office to volunteer when she retired. We signed her up to work in the Clothing Store, which she continued to do until its closure. This in itself was a very sad day for her and many others.

Another good year for Swindon. Our Annual Lunch in December was again successful and well- attended and we had a Coffee Morning in the Spring which also went well. Unfortunately, a number of projects have been closed for different reasons so to meet up with other WRVS members is doubly welcome. I think we are getting to know each other better which is good, as our WRVS projects have been spread over the town and we did not always meet.

Our Strawberry Tea with a new venue was delicious and much appreciated. The weather was very hot but thank goodness there was some air conditioning provided in the end! We were lucky that Alice Cleland was able to attend in the midst of her very busy work schedule. Contributed by Jacquie Roe

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Lack of planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on our part

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## WALES

Div. Rep. Mrs Mary Gibbons. OBE

I'm afraid this is all our news. I have had a few moans about the last newsletter having no Welsh news in - members might complain but never think of sending me in reports!

The Abergavenny members continue to meet on a regular basis for lunch and earlier in the year had a very successful celebration to commemorate 10 years of their membership of the Association. They also organised a day-out visiting Hampton Court, the one in Herefordshire near Leominster, not the 'London' one.

The Dyfed Group met before Christmas at Carmarthen for lunch. It was good to get together again after a break of nearly 2 years. Their Co-ordinator, Elizabeth Rowland-James, who was Emergency Services Organiser for Wales at one time, has recently remarried and we all send her our congratulations.

Despite not being as mobile as they once were, the 6 remaining Newport (Gwent) ladies still meet once a month for lunch. Few of them continue with WRVS work but they still find much to talk about.

The only North Wales report in is from Colwyn Bay where 11 members again meet every 5 or 6 weeks at a local restaurant for coffee and a chat. They recently had a collection amongst their members to add to a donation they were given and this they passed to the local 'Air Ambulance' rescue service.

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We have heard from Lionel Wood about a book written by his mother, Florence Wood. It is called 'Oxford Life in the Twentieth Century' and contains about 60 illustrations. Printed by Carnegie Publishing Ltd at £12, it can be ordered through local booksellers. Pat Copping bought her copy and says that it is very good

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Smiling is infectious; you can catch it like the flu  
When someone smiled at me today, I started smiling too.  
So if you feel a smile begin, don't leave it undetected,  
Let's start an epidemic and get the world infected

*Submitted by Mrs E. Dawson*

## CHANNEL ISLANDS

**JERSEY** - No report

Ass. Rep. Mrs Doreen Jennings

*The editor would like to offer personal thanks to Doreen who made her very welcome whilst on a trip to the island at the end of March 2003. It was a pleasure to meet several members at Doreen's home where we all enjoyed coffee and cakes. Later I managed to find a clothing store with a very big WRVS sign outside and I send thanks also to those active members I met there. As we agreed at the time, no WRVS member is a stranger, just a friend in the offing, one that we have not yet got to know.*

**GUERNSEY**

Ass. Rep. Mrs Margaret Brockway

On a fine sunny day in April, members met up for lunch at one of the south coast hotels for the first of our twice-yearly lunches. There is usually quite a buzz with all the chatter, some members not having met up since the previous lunch in November.

Although supposedly retired, many of us still do meals on wheels, help at Jubilee House our day centre for the elderly; also helping to transport them there and to The Russell's another centre for the elderly. Helping with the trolley shops at the retirement homes too. So we carry on doing our bit for the community, and enjoy doing so.

We sadly lost one of our members with the death of Freda Loaring. Freda at 92 was one of our oldest members and helped with meals on wheels when the service was first started, back in the days when soup was carried in a large container. She recounted a few incidents that happened with the soup when the van stopped suddenly! Freda was also a very good pianist and played for the entertainment group. She is sadly missed

Our next lunch is planned for 10th of November with the venue to be chosen nearer the date

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The man who does not read good books has no advantage over the man who cannot read them - Mark Twain

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## SCOTLAND

Chairman Mrs Audrey Wilkinson

All roads led to Stirling last April for the AGM of the WRVS Association Scotland. Thanks to the generosity of Stirling County Council we met in the recently refurbished Council Chambers where the facilities were excellent. After the business matters were dealt with our first speaker was Mrs. Alison McGilvray, who spoke of her role as a member of the Vice-Chairman's Committee. Following a superb buffet lunch, we welcomed Mrs. Eileen White from CRAS. She told us of the work done in Rachel House, Kinross, Scotland's first Children's Hospice and of the plans to build a second Home - Robin House - at Balloch, Loch Lomond. Reports from our Branches show they are all very active with Coffee Mornings, Lunches and Outings, with a wide variety of Speakers. We look forward to extending a Highland welcome to all our members to next year's AGM at the Lochardil Hotel, Inverness.

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News from the WRVS Benevolent Trust.

The WRVS Benevolent Trust continues to help more people thanks to the extra publicity we have been given. This year we have helped several flood victims in addition to the usual requests for glasses, worn out appliances, scooters, installation of showers, replacement of worn out beds, and, a sad reflection of our times, help after mugging.

This help has been made possible by the gifts, donations and legacies that we have received, and I would like to thank all those concerned.

All applications for help should be sent to our Hon. Sec, at  
in the strictest confidence.

Mrs Evelyn Boot, Chairman,"

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Take comfort ladies - there are 3 billion women in the world who do not look like super models and only eight who do and if Barbie were a real woman, she would probably have to walk on all fours due to her proportions.

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## NORTH EAST DIVISION

**NORTHUMBERLAND, TYNE & WEAR**  
Div.Rep. Mrs S. McCormack BEM

To celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the Association, the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Newcastle hosted a Coffee Morning at the Mansion House for all the members in the Northumberland, Tyne and Wear area. We were warmly welcomed and enjoyed the opportunity to meet old friends and admire the lovely paintings, china and artefacts in the house. We received sad news from Northumberland that Miss Ora Carse, BEM, had died in July. Ora was for many years Transport Advisor in the area office in Newcastle and will be greatly missed

The year began for Sunderland with the AGM, which was well attended. As usual, Mrs. A Oliver visited us in February to accept a cheque amounting to £300 for St Benedict's Hospice, the charity our group supports. We had several interesting speakers; Mrs F Somers spoke on her experiences representing WRVS at the Cenotaph, Wimbledon and at the ceremony when Sunderland received the Charter naming it as a city. Mrs C Dobson, Senior Volunteering Manager (Scotland and the North) told us of the changes in WRVS and the Rev D Aldridge made a return visit to talk on Elvis Presley and his religious music. Mrs S McCormack joined us for our May meeting, when we decorated the room and celebrated the Association's 30th Birthday. We were entertained by Mrs A Donan at the piano and finished off the celebrations with scones and gateau. The Sunderland Group were last to arrive at the Mansion House Coffee Morning having had to negotiate all the road works from the metro station. Regardless of this they enjoyed their morning out. Fourteen members served refreshments at an Open Garden Day in aid of charity, the proceeds from our stall going to St Benedict's Hospice. We sadly said goodbye to Mrs V Lisle who has gone to live near her son at Darlington. Vi has been a valuable worker in several projects and at the Association meetings. Best Wishes Vi in your new home. Congratulations to Miss Jean Payne on receiving her 15 years long service medal. In July twenty nine members and friends had a good day out in beautiful weather to Skipton. Contributed by Mrs Hardy

Whitley Bay and North Shields send thanks to Mrs Reed for the Coffee morning that was held at her home in March; sixteen members enjoyed putting the world to rights. In May we all met up at the Mansion House to celebrate 30 years of the Association and to be shown the beautiful house with a short talk on it's history by a member of staff. We look forward our next meeting in September at the home of Mrs Lewis and to joining The Willow Club for their Carol Service at St Johns



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Church on December 11th. Contributed by Mrs E. Dawson

In April this year Newcastle members visited the Theatre Royal to see "Annie Get your Gun". It was an excellent production by our local Operatic Society who gave us "Carousel" last year. The theatre is always packed at the Thursday matinee with mature groups, a sea of grey hair and a very few brave men! July's outing was to Keilder Water- not a very propitious start as we boarded the bus in heavy mist and rain! However, as we went further into Northumberland the rain stopped - the mist cleared and we all cheered up. Lunch by Keilder Water in Leaplish Water Park was followed by an hour's cruise on the M.V. Osprey. There was a commentary during the cruise but the P.A. system was poor so we did the talking instead! When we landed a cup of tea and some cakes set us up for the drive home. A good outing in spite of its dubious start! We continue to meet once a month, usually with a speaker but alas we are slowly losing members to various infirmities and find it hard to replace them due to the total lack of the old lines of communication

**DURHAM, CLEVELAND, NORTH & EAST YORKSHIRE, HULL**  
Div Rep. Mrs R. Thompson. OBE

ROYAL  
VOLUNTARY  
SERVICE

Hartlepool group leader, Mrs Edith Stamp, reports that since January they have enjoyed some very happy sessions together. In February they visited Stokesley market and then lunched at Great Broughton - a nice break for February. In May in lovely sunny weather they journeyed to Shap Wells Hotel for lunch, returned via Kendal. Each month every effort is made to vary the type of subject their speakers' share with them. There was a very interesting talk on the Corrymeela Community in Northern Ireland, a Centre for Peace and Reconciliation; and also one about the Missions to Seamen for which a lot of work is done in Hartlepool. Mrs Stamp emphasised her pleasure in the number of members who turn up each month so loyally. Mrs Joan Altass says her last report finished just before the Selby group had their Xmas/New Year lunches. Mrs Venables was their guest on that happy occasion and Jonathan Stockwell entertained them with lovely slides and music to accompany them. This was much enjoyed by everyone. They were joined by Peggy and Bill James and also by a number of the York group with their leader Mrs Millie Wilkes. Their monthly luncheons continue in the Selby Bowling Club where the food is always good and reasonably priced. They are always pleased to welcome visitors when members bring a friend. The group is pleased to welcome a new member, Irene Greasley, but very sad to report the deaths of four of their members, Mrs Sharp, Mrs Blenkiron, Mrs Thorlby and Phylis Lock. Mrs Altass gives her thanks to Mr. Kay, Mrs Bell, Mrs Knowles and Mrs Loch for all their help.

Mrs Millie Wilkes writes that York members met on 4th March at the Friend's

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ROYAL  
VOLUNTARY  
SERVICEROYAL  
VOLUNTARY  
SERVICE

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Meeting House. There were 24 members present to hear Mr Geoff Cushing, a retired headmaster, talk about "Touring Europe by Lorry". Over a number of years Mr Cushing had taken 6th Form boys on trips to Europe, at first by lorry and then by coach to various destinations. A five-week visit to Greece in 1960 had cost £33 per head! The planning, logistics and amusing incidents made for an interesting and lively talk. Several members helped to stuff newsletters into envelopes on two days in March at 82 Bootham: always an enjoyable occasion, which seems to take less time as the years go by. In June 28 members and friends enjoyed an outing to Burton Constable Hall where tea was also taken. Great consternation when tickets were to be purchased (as the chairman, who had temporary charge of the financial records, had inadvertently taken the paying-in book instead of the cheque book! However, two kind friends offering cheques averted "disaster". Members were very sad to learn of the death of Mrs Ivy Saunders at the age of 88, who died only weeks after leaving York to live in a residential home in Whitley Bay to be close to her own. We understand that she enjoyed her life to the end. Ivy was a faithful member of WRVS for many years working with M.O.W., B.O.W. and helping with the Club for the Visually Handicapped. The President and Chairman attended the Thanksgiving Service for Ivy's life at Clifton Methodist Church, York.

East Yorkshire and Hull have had rather a sad time this half-year, learning of the deaths of three members. First was Regina Finestein, who died before Christmas. Sadly no-one informed us of her death and so there was no Association representative at her funeral. In March we lost Connie MacNeish, who worked from the Hull Office, particularly with Meals on Wheels, and was one of the small diligent band who kept the East Yorkshire Association together. July saw the death of Sally Moverley - a WRVS member throughout the war years and afterwards. It was so interesting to hear her tell of her involvement with Children's Holidays. She also ran a very successful Darby and Joan Club in Flamborough for many years. Three members have also moved away - Mary Norfolk-Brown - ex-Local Organiser for Bridlington moved to be near her family; Olive Coulton from Beverley moved to be near her son because of her ill health; Doris Rimer of Cottingham moved to be near family after the death of her husband. We all send her our sympathy as we do to Jean Ellis of Wilberfoss and Una Parkinson of Stamford Bridge who have also lost their husbands. We have pleasure, however, in welcoming a new member to our midst. Margaret Buckton who was what used to be called Local Organiser at Bridlington. Amongst all of this, our Lunches have kept going and many members have travelled far and near on interesting holidays while others are kept young with grandchildren coming for holidays - we luckily live in a wonderful area for this. Contributed by Mrs Robina Priestley.

In March, Scarborough had another visit to Cober Hill Hotel, when Mr Max Payne OBE gave a most interesting talk (with video) of his investiture at Buckingham Palace, after which we were provided with mid-morning refreshments.

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The Annual Outing - a visit to Duncombe Park when an Antiques Fair was in progress. Members were also able to look around the house and the garden. The weather was good and it was an enjoyable outing. Another coffee morning in July brought members together again. Sadly the news of the passing of Barbara McKenzie had to be conveyed - a much valued member and friend who had been our Chairman for many years. Barbara has left us with many happy memories, a great appreciation of her efficiency and kindly manner to all and a feeling of privilege to have shared that friendship. Too soon afterwards we were to lose another member who had given many years of service, despite her fight to overcome several serious illnesses. Min Clark will be missed for her sense of humour at all times. We were all very sorry to hear of Miss Lesley Hyatt's stay in hospital and in turn pleased to know of her return home and continued progress. We are indeed grateful for all her help and for her efforts in visiting the branch as frequently as she does. Contributed by Mrs Barbara Gardiner

Mrs Sheila Pautin writes to say that many members are disappointed that there is not to be our usual Annual Luncheon and AGM for Harrogate this autumn. This has taken place annually in September/October. However, as the Association is celebrating its 30th Anniversary the last weekend in September we thought that we would postpone ours until the Spring. The members continue to meet on the first Friday of each month at St Paul's Church Hall for about an hour for coffee and a chat. Sometimes there are 14 and at others (especially in bad weather) as few as six. Several members are incapacitated and cannot attend meetings and functions but always send messages of apology and are very interested to hear about all that is going on. The group supports all the local Dramatic and Operatic Associations and Saturday Matinees are a very popular "date". A new service to Skipton - a "through bus" on a scenic route for only £2.50 return - (thanks to bus passes) has proved to make for a lovely day out. The Group now also has lunch two or three times a year at Grant's Hotel. They are sad to have lost Mrs Joni Bennett in March - "a lovely person and a great worker".

The Darlington group was devastated to lose Mrs Grace Evans, their Leader for many years, in early August. She will be a hard act to follow - but the group are meeting in October in the usual place and I expect a large and very positive gathering. The group had enjoyed a lively, happy luncheon at Neashan in July where Grace was planning an outing and taking further suggestions. Her death was sudden, but peaceful, and many members attended her cremation service.

The Middlesbrough members continue to meet and are happy to do so - but not to reform the group. I keep in touch with them through Mrs Kit Bregazzi, a previous group leader.

We do seem to have suffered rather a lot of loss lately. I hope for better news in the rest of the year and send my grateful thanks to all group leaders and their helpers.

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**SOUTH AND WEST YORKSHIRE**  
Div. Rep. Mrs June Pitts BEM

*Gillian Highley from Calderdale Association has sent in this report as June is nursing her husband. We wish them both well and thank Gillian for stepping in.*

It is with sadness that we report the death of Mrs Dorothy Ford our Treasurer, who died in April. Dorothy was still an active member of WRVS and was treasurer at WRVS King Cross Afternoon club. She had been a member for many years and received her Long Service Medal some years ago. She was a Club Leader for 15 years and also ran the Clothing Store in Halifax for several years. Despite poor health Dorothy always fully supported everything WRVS did.

The group meets every two months and are lucky to have the use of Halifax Town Hall, which is centrally situated. We are able to order coffee and tea, which we enjoy before our meeting starts. In March we learnt about Henry the Eighth and his wives. The talk was given by Canon Frank Carless and was both entertaining and informative. Canon Carless is well known in Halifax and has spoken at many of the Afternoon clubs. Following the success of the Golden Jubilee Afternoon that the Association gave last year, it was decided to hold an Ascot Afternoon. This went down very well and was attended by over 90 elderly people. Each person attending was asked to come dressed for Ascot and many people came in lovely hats both bought and home made. Association members baked cakes and made sandwiches and trifles so that a lovely afternoon tea was served. The room was decorated on an Ascot theme. We were helped with the finances by a grant from the Community Foundation for Calderdale a local organisation that raises money and offers grants to local organisations. The meeting in May was informal and we made arrangements for the Ascot Afternoon and caught up on the news.

The Building of the Channel Tunnel was the title of a talk at our July meeting and contrary to the expectations of some members turned out to be quite fascinating. We learnt how the machinery was designed, how the earth and chalk was removed and how the Euro Tunnel works. It was reassuring to hear how many safety precautions are built in. Mrs Gillian Highley went to Buckingham Palace in July and was invested with her MBE by Prince Charles who asked about her work with WRVS, in particular about the luncheon club that she runs. It was a lovely day with warm weather to make London look at its best. *I felt a little bit strange writing about myself but did want members to know that I had at last been for my medal and what a lovely day it was. I was very proud to wear my WRVS badge-- I hope Prince Charles saw it. I'm sure the Queen would have noticed it.* Four members will be attending the National get together in Chester. We have 18 members, seven of whom are still active in projects or Emergency Services.

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LEICESTERSHIRE, LINCOLNSHIRE AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Div. Rep. Mrs Joan Newman

This period has been a busy and enjoyable one for most of the Districts. Again there have been a number of new members joining the Association but, sadly, there have been deaths, particularly of long-standing members, which has left a big vacuum in their particular Districts, and they are much missed by their fellow members. During this time I have been able to visit most of the Districts, very much enjoying the warm welcome and positive attitude of members.

Mrs. Russell reports that the highlight of this half-year for Leicester has been the Luncheon to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the Association held in February and attended by 62 members. Those of us who still retained uniform (and were brave enough) wore it proudly and WRVS colours were in evidence everywhere. Tables had been decorated in green and maroon with delightful flower arrangements in our colours. A sprig of rosemary with ivy was presented to each member on arrival, thanks to Mary Davis who generously denuded her rosemary bush! Members brought photographs of past events and their cameras. The meal was splendid and we all enjoyed a special day. Regular meetings/coffee mornings have been held, birthday cards are sent to members, and a summer coach trip arranged for a visit to National Trust property, Caughton Court in Warwickshire. Sadly, some of the officers of Leicester have not been well and unable to attend meetings, where they were much missed. It is hoped that the summer weather will bring improvement to their health and they will be taking their places at meetings again.

Though the Lincoln group is small, members are keen and the luncheon meetings were re-started in the spring after the cold weather ended. One member, Mrs. Agnes Staton, celebrated her 100th birthday. Though not in the best of health, she enjoys visits from her WRVS friends at the retirement home where she is being cared for. Members are looking forward to the autumn meetings.

NE Lincolnshire members were greatly saddened by the unexpected death of Mrs Agnes (Nancy) Wilson in February; a stalwart member of the WRVS and the Association - a lovely lady and good friend to so many - reports Mrs. Blanchard, Chairman of the District.

A successful luncheon was held at the Hotel Elizabeth, Grimsby, in May, attended by 37 members who enjoyed the meal and an afternoon meeting old friends and colleagues. About 140 members attended the annual dinner/tea held in July at the Church Hall at Waltham. Members sang along to a selection of songs led by two ladies on piano and guitar. Thanks must go to the members who made a selection of tasty sandwiches and melt-in-the-mouth cakes that were much enjoyed by all attending.

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Nottinghamshire has several active groups, although the Ashfield District has not been able to meet during this period due to the area being rather scattered and most of the members still active in various WRVS projects. The Secretary, Mrs. Mills, hopes to be able to arrange a suitable meeting within the next six months.

Mrs Heason reports that the Bassetlaw membership continues to grow and at the present time we have 48 members. The year started off with our AGM in March at which we had 20 members present. The committee was elected and our programme for the year was decided. Everyone was very enthusiastic and we all enjoyed a nice lunch together. In April we had a Buffet Lunch at the home of Mrs Jean Heason. This was a very special lunch that we arranged as a surprise for one of our members, Mrs Jean Moore, who had just reached her 50 years' service for the WRVS. Our members were delighted to be able to share this celebration with Jean and a gift of a crystal atomiser was presented to mark the occasion. In May we had an excellent talk and demonstration on Hand-Made Chocolates and members were able to try their hand at making the chocolates and eating them. In June we were fortunate to have a lovely day for our annual Strawberry Tea, which was held once again in the delightful garden of Mr & Mrs M Smith. We arranged an Activity Afternoon for July and everyone present participated in a Beetle Drive, Bingo, and a Quiz. Lots of prizes were distributed to the winners and we realised what clever ladies we have in our branch!

The Broxtowe AGM in May was well attended so says Mrs Barbara Kiernan. Chairman, Val Haigh, welcomed Joan Newman, our Div Rep, who spoke after the meeting. Val again asked for volunteers to serve on the committee - but, as usual, the long-serving Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer and Committee Members continue to soldier on. On a hot, cloudless summer day, 30 of us enjoyed the outing to Derbyshire; coffee in Bakewell (with the added attraction of the Monday market in full swing), then through the lovely countryside to High Peak College for lunch. Under their tutors' supervision, catering students staff the kitchen, bar and restaurant. The menu was varied and interesting. Presently we look forward to a talk by Anne Tribble, a representative of VCC. Meetings are held monthly where members can meet up with their friends and exchange views.

Miss Eileen Cramp reports that the Gedling meetings are held monthly with a varied agenda such as talks and slide shows on the work of the Salvation Army and about "Children in Distress in Romania". These must make us a well-informed group of semi-retired ladies! Our monthly meetings are not all "sit and watch" though - we have enjoyed a happy New Year Party; an outing and tea at a country farm; a river trip along the Nottingham River Trent; an interesting and amusing talk about DICKENS, given by one of our own members (which prompted the Secretary to go home and re-read three of his books!); and, of course, we always enjoy our happy and excellent Luncheon and AGM.

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We do have some difficulty in finding suitable venues for our meetings, not being able to find a permanent one, and this does sometimes affect our attendances. However, most members are fairly regular, and we look forward to our new programme.

Mrs Ball, Chairman of the Mansfield District, reports that twenty members enjoyed a very late 'Christmas Luncheon' in February. As most members are active WRVS workers, difficulty is experienced in finding a date convenient to all. At the moment, the District is lacking a Secretary, as the previous one has moved from the area. Mrs Drozdizol was a very hard-working member and is missed by her friends and colleagues who wish her happiness in her new home.

The quarterly luncheon meetings are being maintained in Newark, reports Mrs Alderton, Chairman. Unfortunately, numbers are dropping, so not so many people to exchange news with, though there have been new members. The unexpected death of Mrs Daisy Proctor, a tireless worker for the WRVS Association, saddened the members. The luncheon venue is still proving a problem, but trying a variety of venues makes life interesting.

Mrs S Court tells us that the Rushcliffe group started the year with a local speaker from the RNLI, -what a marvellous organisation this is. The vast amounts of money needed, and raised, from voluntary donations is staggering. Mrs Jordan, the speaker, told us of the new boats being launched all over the country, because the service now covers inland water as well as the sea. A fish and chip lunch at our local pub, filled in our February meeting and the one in March was a general chatting and catching up with events coffee morning. The AGM was in April, no alterations to the committee but a pleasure to welcome a new member. John Fox, the former Director of Education for Nottingham, gave us a talk and slide show in May about Karlsruhe, one of the cities twinned with Nottingham. He is an excellent speaker, making history come alive especially to some of us who had not been switched on to history at school. I put it down to a lack-lustre teacher, but perhaps it was that I was more interested in more practical things. We had a splendid lunch in June at a restaurant on the River Trent - this was our outing to celebrate the 30th Anniversary. Because our finances are thriving at the moment, it had been decided at the AGM to subsidise this meal by £5 for each of the 30 members who attended. July ends this half-year with a coffee morning, and we return to meetings in September. To start the next half year we are looking forward to a Luncheon to celebrate the 30th Anniversary. Hopefully, the remainder of the half-year will be as busy and successful as the first half.

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"What is cross-pollination?" asks a question in a general knowledge test for pupils at a local school. A twelve-year-old girl answered: "This is when the female flower is not in the mood."

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I believe some members have been asking how the money from their subscriptions is spent. The following is a simple summary of the income and expenditure for the last financial year.

**Financial report for the year ended 31 March 2003**

	£		£
Income from members	5,111	Divisional Reps. expenditure	408
Interest on bank accounts	972	Officers Travel expenses	147
Donations	555	Postage & Photocopies	468
Total income	6,638	Office expenditure	324
		Office Honorarium	500
		Office cleaner	166
		Newsletter	3,278
		AGM	382
		Total expenditure	5,673
Deduct total expenditure	5,673		
Surplus for the year	965		

May I take this opportunity to thank all those members who responded generously as a result of the deficit in the previous financial year, resulting in a surplus for the current year.

We do not send out reminders when subscriptions are due, regrettably if subscriptions lapse for two years or more we have no alternative but to discontinue membership of the Association, which means no further copies of the newsletter will be received.

**Maureen E. Hudson**

Hon. Treasurer

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**CHANGE / NEW ADDRESS DETAILS** message from **Jean Pickard**, Hon Sec

Would all members please note that York Head Office have to cross check addresses with the Post Office database to ensure that no extra postal charges are levied against the Organisation for addresses that do not conform to what is known as the "preferred postal address". It is possible, therefore, that address labels will not show the address as given by the members but the official one listed by the Post Office. This also ties in with some newsletters being returned because of 'unrecognisable' addresses. Just because you have actually lived there for forty years . . . . .Ed

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