

 PRESIDENT: LADY MILLS PATRON: THE VISCOUNTESS DE L'ISLE

Website: [www.friendsoftwhospital.org](http://www.friendsoftwhospital.org.uk)

 Tunbridge Wells Hospital Tonbridge Road Pembury Tunbridge Wells Kent TN2 4QJ

**THE LEAGUE OF FRIENDS NEWSLETTER 2024/25**

**Welcome to our 2024/25 Newsletter**

As I write this it is hard to believe that I have been Chairman of the League for 25 years, the time has gone so quickly. As a Pembury resident I used to pass what was then Pembury hospital on almost a daily basis, so when I was invited to join the League, I was happy to give my support and help in any way I could. During these years I have met many wonderful people, and I have found it both an enjoyable and rewarding experience. Of particular significance has been the creation of the modern new hospital that we have today and the successful merger of the leagues of the Kent & Sussex and Pembury hospitals.

In June this year, much to my surprise, a party to celebrate this milestone was hosted by Lady Mills, our President and I was overwhelmed and touched by the number of people who came along, including past and present members of the League, representatives of the hospital and some of our amazing volunteers.

I would like to thank Lady Mills and everyone who has supported me and the League over the last 25 years. During this time, we have donated over £1.8 million to the hospital for a wide variety of projects, and it is a record of which we can be justly proud.

With sincere thanks and best wishes

Gary Purdy, Chairman

**The ‘Surprise’ Party**

Miles Scott, CEO of the Trust took the opportunity to present Gary with an award for his 25 years of dedication and service and hoped that he would be willing to continue for the foreseeable future.

Miles also acknowledged the important role that the League plays in the life of the hospital and the projects that it has funded over the past years.

**Requests**

It is always a pleasure to be able to agree to the various requests that are put forward at our meetings. Recently the League was happy to provide the funding for six defibrillators to be placed at various locations in and around the hospital at a total cost of £6,200. These were inaugurated on 7th August in the presence of the new Chair of the Trust Board, Annette Doherty, shown here with Gary.

Annette comes to the Trust with 35 years’ experience in the pharmaceutical sector and was awarded an OBE in 2009 in recognition of her services to this industry. She is currently president of the Royal Society of Chemistry, and the League looks forward to working closely with her during her term of office.

**Garden Evening** As well as hosting Gary’s party, Lady Mills opened her garden to visitors earlier in June raising over £1,600 for the League. Despite some challenging weather conditions, the gardens were as colourful and as delightful as ever, the roses being a particular feature. Our thanks to Sir Keith and Lady Mills for their generous hospitality.

**Our table sales** have gone from strength to strength and though Francis Grimes has stepped down from organising them, they continue to run successfully on the last Friday of the month thanks to the efforts of Glenys McDonald and a group of dedicated volunteers, all of whom recently enjoyed a summer get-together, hosted by Glenys. This was a great opportunity for the various helpers to get to know each other better. As well as raising money, the table sales serve to make hospital visitors, patients and staff more aware of the League’s existence and its aims. Thank you, Francis for making them such a success.

**Tonbridge Model Engineering Society** has beenbringing steam trains and much more to Tonbridge for 80 years. Founded in 1944 it has been in its present location, just behind the swimming pool, for over 70 years. On regular weekends during the summer, drivers and members of the society run the diesel, electric and steam model trains along the third of a mile track and on the Sunday of the August bank holiday, all moneys raised are generously donated to the League of Friends. This year these amounted to over £650 and as the picture shows, the rides are hugely popular with all ages. Many thanks to TMES for so generously supporting the League.

For more details about the society see [www.tonbridgemes.com](http://www.tonbridgemes.com)

**Raffles** An unusual and highly successful raffle took place earlier in the year with the prize being a ride in a helicopter. Organised by Diana Barber and kindly donated by Peter Seldon, it raised £1300 and was won by Bidborough local Mrs Jane Parish who is very much looking forward to her trip. Many thanks to Peter for this original and generous prize.

Our **Grand Christmas Raffle** which raised over £2,700 last year will take place as usual with tickets on sale from early November in the main hospital entrance. There will be generously donated prizes of £300, £250, £200, £150 and many more to be won.

**Diana Barber’s coffee morning** – a regular feature of the League’s calendar, will take place on 14th November. This is always a wonderful opportunity to stock up on all things Christmassy, from cards to cakes and chutneys to children’s toys. In 2023 this raised the magnificent sum of over £5,400.

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**And finally …….. how you can support us -** Buy some of the raffle tickets! Become a member! Tell your friends!

To donate to the League, scan in the QR code or visit our website [www.friendsoftwhospital.org](http://www.friendsoftwhospital.org) for details of how to do all this, as well as how to raise money for the League when shopping on-line.

 ***Thank you.***